

Societal relations are fragile, need constant nursing: Hamid Ansari  
page 6



Centre effects reshuffle of officials, Tarun Bajaj is DEA Secretary  
page 8



Don't alienate entire community for mistakes of few, says Bhagwat  
page 10



New York-based Indian artist Zarina Hashmi passes away  
page 14

## NEARBY



People of all faiths must fight virus together: CM

NEW DELHI  
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said that people of all faiths were coming forward to save the lives of COVID-19 patients by donating plasma, and stressed the importance of unity among all religions to fight and eradicate the virus. The CM added that there have been fewer cases and fatalities this week.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

### No relaxation of lockdown measures in Ghaziabad

GAZIABAD  
In line with the Uttar Pradesh government's decision not to extend the Home Ministry's directive — permitting shops of some non-essential items outside containment zones to open with riders — to the State, the Ghaziabad administration maintained status quo in the city.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

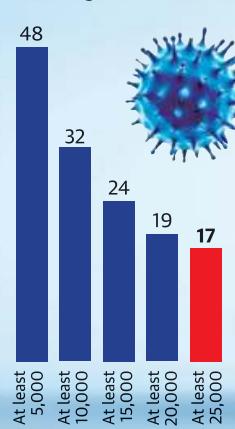
## Cases near 27,000-mark with increase of 1,975 in 24 hours

Health Minister puts recovery rate at 21.9%, with 5,913 patients testing negative

### India's progression

While India's COVID-19 cases and deaths are progressing much slower than in many countries, these figures have been steadily crossing certain milestones, not yet reached by many other nations

**Cases comparison:** As of April 26, 48 nations recorded at least 5,000 cases. Of them, 17, including India, have crossed the 25,000 mark



■ India took 4 days to progress to 25,000 cases from 20,000. Among the 17 nations, only Switzerland (7) took more days than India

**Deaths comparison:** As of April 26, 39 nations recorded at least 200 deaths. Of them, 19, including India, have crossed the 800 mark



■ India took 4 days to progress to 800 deaths from 600. Among the 19 nations, Ireland (5 days) and Portugal (7) took more days than India

nationwide death toll stood at 880, while 6,425 people have recovered.

Maharashtra accounts for the highest number of fatalities, followed by Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, and Andhra Pradesh.

"Through a graded, preemptive and pro-active approach, the Central government is taking several steps along with the States/Union Territories for prevention, containment and management of COVID-19. These are being regularly reviewed and monitored at the highest

level," said Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Sunday.

### 'Situation improving'

Speaking after a visit to the Trauma Centre of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences here to take stock of COVID-19 preparedness, he noted that 5,913 people have recovered, with a recovery rate of 21.9%. "The situation is improving in India as Hotspot Districts are moving towards becoming Non Hotspot Districts," said the Minister.

Dr. Vardhan said people

should observe the lockdown in letter and spirit and treat it as an effective intervention to cut down the spread of COVID-19.

The Minister said the doubling rate had been showing regular improvement and stood at 10.5 days when seen over a period of 3 days, 9.3 days over a period of 7 days and 8.1 days over a period of 14 days. "These indicators may be taken as positive effects of the lockdown along with the cluster management and containment

strategies," he said.

Dr. Vardhan said, "As on date, 283 districts have not reported any COVID cases till date, 64 districts have not reported a fresh case since the last 7 days, 48 districts have not reported a fresh case since the last 14 days, 33 districts have not reported a fresh case since the last 21 days and 18 districts have not reported a fresh case since the last 28 days."

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGES 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 & 12

## Do not lower guard against virus, urges PM

India's fight is people-driven: Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Acknowledging that India's fight against the COVID-19 is people-driven, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked citizens to "remain careful and not lower their guard against the pandemic on the assumption that it will not affect them".

Addressing his monthly radio broadcast, *Mann Ki Baat*, exactly a week before the second phase of the nationwide lockdown is scheduled to end on May 3, Mr. Modi stressed on strictly following social distancing protocols, not spitting in the open, wearing masks or covering faces with *gamchhas* [towel] while stepping out.

Though he didn't give any



indication about the government's thinking with regard to the current lockdown, Mr. Modi did express the hope that "the world may be able to somewhat free itself from the virus by the time Id is celebrated".

"Do gaj doori, bahut hain zaroori [Two metres distance is very essential]," the Prime Minister said while explaining the need to follow COVID-19 protocols. "I would like to appeal that don't ever get caught in this overconfidence that our city, our village, our lane, our office has not seen corona so far and that's why it won't affect us. Don't ever entertain such a wrong notion," Mr. Modi said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Bird's-eye view



**Feathered friends:** With pollution dropping due to the COVID-19 lockdown, a flock of flamingos has found a safe haven in a wetland in Pallikaranai near Chennai. ■ SHAJU JOHN

## Man jumps quarantine, infects six

SIDHARTH YADAV  
BHOPAL

A man who escaped quarantine and went to a barber for a haircut is believed to have caused at least six COVID-19 infections in a village in Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh.

Six men who went to the same barber tested positive for the virus.

"We don't know yet whether they used the same napkin or had direct contact with each other," said Collector Gopal Chandra Dad. The first patient, who escaped quarantine, had carried back the virus from Indore, officials said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Red tape stalls return of bodies from Gulf

Decision of Delhi airport officials, despite MHA nod, leaves envoy shocked

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
KALLOON BHATTACHERJEE  
NEW DELHI

DELHI TEAM

**W**hat's possibly worse than being infected with COVID-19? Living with a health condition that requires instant or regular medical care, say many who have been struggling to get their chemotherapy sessions, or dialysis, or even a diagnosis of a life-threatening ailment amid the nationwide lockdown.

A nine-month-old toddler with a possible malignant tumour on his spine, a woman in the 17th week of her pregnancy and a 68-year-old kidney patient requiring dialysis thrice a week are among several such people coping with much more than just their medical conditions as the healthcare system fights a pandemic with limited resources.

Whether one is rich or poor seems to matter little in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak as hospitals - both State-run and private - reel under staff crunch and lack capacity to tackle the contagion as well as other chronic and common ailments. The patients, on the other hand, are grappling with an endless wait for medical intervention while living with the fear of contracting the virus during procedures at hospitals.

#### Stranded without care

Several people staying in night shelters near the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in south Delhi said they are facing a double setback as their medical treatments have been halted and they cannot even return to their villages, mostly located in Bihar.

Among them are Salma Khatoon, whose nine-month-old son Ayaan requires a surgical removal of an aggressive tumour on his spine; Sonu Kumar, 27, who needs an open-heart surgery and injections are available only at facilities such as AIIMS; Sunita Devi (42) and Rekha (28), both breast cancer patients awaiting attention, and Shobha who, after living for three months in the Capital, is still waiting for her cancer treatment to begin.

"The doctor told us that my son needs to be operated upon to be able to walk. We made the payments and did the paper-work... we have been here since February, look how much the tumour has grown," said Ms. Khatoon as she showed the growth on the toddler's backbone. "We took money on interest for his treatment. What do we do now?"

#### Stalled treatment

Lal Bahadur Chaudhury, 78, a resident of Samastipur in Bihar, came to the Capital in December last year to get treatment for throat cancer. While his treatment was halted following the lockdown, the eye surgery of his wife, Ramlekh Devi, scheduled for April 24, was postponed indefinitely.

"All kinds of tests were conducted and I was undergoing treatment but now everything has been stopped. I was asked to visit the doctor on April 17 but when I went, they changed the date and asked me to come on April 29. I am not sure if I will be able to meet the doctor that day," said Mr. Chaudhury.

Mohammed Rizwan, 55, had arrived in the city from Bhagalpur in Bihar on March 20 for treatment of a tumour in his neck. As all OPD services at AIIMS were temporarily suspend-



(Clockwise from top) A crowd outside a mohalla clinic in New Seemapuri; medical staff and patients at Lok Nayak Hospital; a father and child outside AIIMS and people wait outside a dispensary in Nand Nagri.

■ R.V. MOORTHY,  
V.V. KRISHNAN



# Lesser patients in a pandemic

Amid a nationwide lockdown, people suffering from chronic and common diseases struggle to get medical attention as the healthcare system, given its limited resources, prioritises COVID-19 cases

ple like me can handle such issues, what about those who don't have resources?" he said.

#### Restricted hospital visits

For those whose relatives are already admitted in hospitals, the going has gradually got tougher. "My father-in-law, in his late 60s, is in ICU at a private hospital for the past two months after a severe brain injury. Earlier, we were able to meet him at least twice a day, but now our visits have been restricted. Regularly meeting family members helps improve brain activity, which I worry has been impacted somewhat due to our lack of access to him," said a south-east Delhi resident.

"My father visits the National Heart Institute dialysis centre every alternate day. We got a COVID-19 test done which came out negative, but someone else who used to visit the centre tested positive and passed away. My father was then placed under home quarantine," said Mr. Agarwal's son Karan, a businessman. "Patients at centres like these are facing issues mainly due to lack of adequate technical staff. Another issue is that the third-party administrators of insurance companies are not reimbursing the claims as they, the backbone of the insurance sector, have not been allowed to function. Claims worth lakhs of rupees are pending. While peo-

The lockdown has been particularly tough for Gurugram resident Manavi, an 18-year-old with intellectual and developmental disability. Her mother Ruchi-

ka Sethi, a waste management activist, said Ms. Manavi used to spend four-five hours outside the house daily, going to the market and cycling, to keep herself busy.

"Since we have restricted settings now, we use a lot of music and dance and get her involved in housework. It is very challenging and lengthens housework but it is the only way we are able to sustain ourselves in this period," said Ms. Sethi, who runs the 'Why Waste Your Waste' campaign.

An 80-year-old retired professor of zoology, diagnosed with stage-III carcinoma of tonsil, however, has chosen to see the silver lining and is counting on small mercies. "At the hospital, he doesn't have to wait long for his turn for radiotherapy. In fact, on many days, the staff seem to be waiting for him. There are no traffic, parking issues," said his son.

#### Online help

Lack of physical access during the extended lockdown has pushed many towards social media. Renuka Rautela, 29, who is 17 weeks pregnant, said when the OPD of the hospital she was visiting shut down, she started contacting her gynaecologist via WhatsApp and phone calls. A resident of Gurugram, Ms. Rautela said accessing good doctors and certain facilities like ultrasound remains largely challenging.

"I called five big hospitals for an ultrasound; three of them said they were not conducting it, and one did not have any dates for a month. That put me in a lot of stress. Later, I went to a hospital I would not have visited normally. I was worried about contracting the virus as immunity depreciates during pregnancy," she said.

Reefika Kalita, 25, spotted rashes on her eyelids a few days ago. "I thought it would go away but it kept getting worse," said Ms. Kalita, who believed she had contracted tinea or ringworm. When go-

ing to the hospital seemed too risky, she reached out to a dermatologist using a mobile application. Following a text chat, Ms. Kalita sent the doctor photos of the rashes, which were used for her diagnosis.

For 24-year-old Ambika, a resident of Manipur who studies in Delhi, the lockdown brought added stress when her hair loss problem returned. She had been suffering from alopecia (spot baldness) for the past six months and was undergoing regular treatment at a clinic here.

Fearing contracting the virus and in absence of public transport, she decided to ring up the clinic, which then set up a video chat with her doctor. The doctor assessed her condition and wrote a prescription. Ms. Ambika then made the payment for the consultation through an e-wallet and ordered the medicines online. She said hair fall has stopped now.

#### Race against time

Saundarya Srinivasan, 29, from Ghaziabad, has had a congenital heart condition since she was six months old. With two surgeries behind her (at 6 and 23 years) and a great deal spent on medication over the years, she and her family were devastated to find that her aortic valve was 70% damaged. "I asked my mother and brother if they would be open to the idea of crowdfunding," said Ms. Srinivasan. They told her to do what she felt she needed to, and Ms. Srinivasan raised ₹11 lakh in about 10 days.

Her surgery was fixed at Medanta - The Medicity, Gurugram, but as the number of COVID-19 cases started increasing, the family had to shift the date twice. "I would have had to ask my friends to donate blood, but I didn't want to expose them to the virus," said Ms. Srinivasan.

For her family though, it was a double-edged sword. "They were nervous about going to a hospital, but also about delaying the surgery." Finally, her surgery has been fixed for May 15. "I am in a bad state, and I really need to do this," she said. "It's a pandemic - we just don't know how long it will last."

## Reconsider decision on freezing DA, DR, teachers' body tells Centre

'Move will impact staff of Central universities, colleges'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Federation of Central Universities Teachers' Associations (FEDCUTA) has urged the Central government to reconsider its decision on freezing the Dearness Allowance (DA) of government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) of pensioners at current levels till July 2021.

The federation said that the move would impact teaching and non-teaching staff of Central universities and their affiliated colleges.

"The freezing of DA has in one stroke been applied to a period of one-and-a-

half years, which scarcely fits the description of a temporary measure taken under exigent circumstances. All of this suggests that the government is perhaps taking advantage of the current crisis to impose an unjustified pay cut on employees in order to balance its books," the teachers said.

The teachers also alleged that the decision to freeze DA also comes in the background of the government suffering significant revenue losses on account of recent concessions given in corporate taxes which have not been reversed in view

of the COVID-19 crisis.

#### Sanction for pay cut

"The government's decision will mean that a significant loss of income will be imposed on employees and pensioners, many of whom survive on very tight budgets. This in effect gives a sanction to private sector employers to impose a pay cut on their employees at a time when the government has the responsibility of ensuring that the wages and salaries of employees are protected," the FEDCUTA said while urging the government to review its decision of freezing DA and DR.

The teachers also alleged that the decision to freeze DA also comes in the background of the government suffering significant revenue losses on account of recent concessions given in corporate taxes which have not been reversed in view

## Woman narrates ordeal of arranging bed, ambulance

Unani doctor claims hospitals refused to admit her uncle who had tested positive

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A resident of Old Delhi took to Facebook on Sunday to detail the harrowing experience involved in arranging a bed and an ambulance for her uncle who had tested positive for COVID-19 on Friday.

Describing her experience, Saima Furqan, an Unani doctor, questioned the government's way of handling the COVID-19 crisis.

"Exactly at 10:30 AM [on Saturday] I started contacting the big names [hospitals] in the city [sic]," Ms. Furqan wrote.

"The first one to be contacted was Max Saket who refused admission due to unavailability of beds.

This was followed by ringing all designated private hospitals in the city. The BL Kapoor, the St. Stephens who appeared to be designated only on paper. They are not even admitting COVID-19 positive patients. My colleague tried the other big names like Artemis, Fortis but all in vain. Ultimately we decided to give a last try to Ganga Ram Hospital. Thankfully with the support from another colleague doctor who has some known person in the administration, we were able to get a bed reserved for my patient [sic],"

the post also read.

While reserving a bed had

taken half of the day, it was 2 p.m. when she started trying to arrange a COVID-19 designated ambulance, she wrote.

"I and my other colleagues initiated the process of call-

ing the ambulance at the ambulance emergency number which could not be connected, one number after the other. The Delhi police, the state helpline, the national helpline, the private ambulance service providers, the DSO, the SSO, the central ministry and so on... We tried every single number and 100s of calls. We used all possible sources and all possible measures [sic]," Ms. Furqan said.

#### COVID-19

When she reached out to the police, she said they were allegedly "more interested in knowing whether my patient had any contact with Tablighis or I intentionally did not report the case

## Petition seeks feeding of stray animals

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A plea has been moved in the Delhi High Court seeking directions to the Central government, the city government and civic bodies here to provide food and water to stray animals during the lockdown.

The plea said stray dogs and other animals are largely dependent on garbage and leftover food from restaurants, canteens and marketplaces, all of which are shut at present.

It said that the people who used to feed them are not venturing out of their homes due to the lockdown, and therefore, the strays have been starving.



Timings  
DELHI

MONDAY, APR. 27
RISE 05:44 SET 18:54
RISE 08:35 SET 22:50
TUESDAY, APR. 28
RISE 05:44 SET 18:55
RISE 09:24 SET 23:46
WEDNESDAY, APR. 29
RISE 05:43 SET 18:56
RISE 10:19 SET 00:00

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	31	24
Safdarjung	31	24
Palam	31	21

Delhi Palam Today
34°C The weather will be warm and cloudy. Spell of duststorm and thundershower with gusty winds is likely.
Dust storm and thundershower with gusty winds is likely.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
36°C The weather will be warm with cloudy sky. Chances of duststorm and thundershower. Night will be pleasant.
Copyright Skymet Weather 2019 All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiry about the accuracy of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD, the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, shall not be liable for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products or services. Employees of this newspaper/company will be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.
AIR quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	120	Gurugram	113
Ghaziabad	150	Faridabad	130
Noida	136	Greater Noida	164
Good 0-50	Satisfactory 51-100	Moderate 101-200	Poor 201-300 Very poor 301-400 Severe >401
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) SOURCE: CPCB			

COVID-19	suspects kept in quarantine for 28 days: DMC
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI	

The Delhi Minorities Commission (DMC) on Sunday alleged that the people brought to quarantining camps from the centre in Nizamuddin will be completing 28 days on April 27, which is twice the mandatory period for COVID-19 suspects.
The DMC in a letter to Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain said: "It will in the fitness of things that all such people who have spent 28 days in these camps and did not test positive should be allowed to go home...while the lockdown continues." It added that keeping these people in detention for more than twice the mandatory quarantine period is creating ill-will in the Muslim community and may lead to court cases. The DMC also alleged that on the first day of Ramzan, inmates at Wazirabad quarantine centre were kept hungry as pre-dawn food was not supplied to them.

Shops in containment zones, he said, would continue to remain shut. "Markets, complexes, and shopping malls will remain shut. Only standalone and neighbourhood shops such as those in residential areas will be allowed to open and those that fall under the containment area will remain closed," the CM said.
However, out of approximately 75,000 eligible stores, only about 300 may have opened, said President of Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), Praveen Khandelwal. Crucially, there was "no established meaning" for standalone and neighbourhood shops, Mr. Khandelwal said. Consequently, police personnel who themselves did not
know how to identify them were not allowing stores to open. Such complaints were received from market leaders across the city, some of who justified the action as the directives were ambiguous.
<b>Practical difficulties</b>
Suresh Bindal, a garments trader in Chandni Chowk and president of the IPEX group housing society, said that most people who inquired with police about reopening stores were informed that no such order had been received. Besides, Mr. Bindal

CRPF soldiers patrolling a market during the lockdown at Vishal Enclave in west Delhi on Sunday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR
---

On the front line
-------------------

Sanitisation drive in Jahangirpuri
------------------------------------

Drive carried out with special focus on containment zones
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Four-hour exercise
--------------------

The drive, which lasted four hours, covered seven square kilometres of Jahangirpuri and Sanjay Enclave on Sunday.
---

The drive was carried out with a special focus on
---

containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Legal action
--------------

On Sunday, police made announcements informing people that if domestic helps were seen exiting from households, legal action would be taken against them.
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Four-hour exercise
--------------------

The drive, which lasted four hours, covered seven square kilometres of Jahangirpuri and Sanjay Enclave on Sunday.
---

The drive was carried out with a special focus on
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Legal action
--------------

On Sunday, police made announcements informing people that if domestic helps were seen exiting from households, legal action would be taken against them.
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Four-hour exercise
--------------------

The drive, which lasted four hours, covered seven square kilometres of Jahangirpuri and Sanjay Enclave on Sunday.
---

The drive was carried out with a special focus on
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Legal action
--------------

On Sunday, police made announcements informing people that if domestic helps were seen exiting from households, legal action would be taken against them.
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Four-hour exercise
--------------------

The drive, which lasted four hours, covered seven square kilometres of Jahangirpuri and Sanjay Enclave on Sunday.
---

The drive was carried out with a special focus on
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.
--

Legal action
--------------

On Sunday, police made announcements informing people that if domestic helps were seen exiting from households, legal action would be taken against them.
---

Containment zones here, area officials said.

<tbl\_r cells="1" ix="1" maxcspan="1" maxrspan

# U.P. workers in Gurugram return home

550 of them transported back in buses; they were staying at different relief camps in the district

**ASHOK KUMAR**  
GURUGRAM

More than 500 migrant workers staying in various relief camps across the district were on Sunday transported back to their native places in Uttar Pradesh in State roadways buses. The workers from other parts of the State were also transported back in large numbers through the day.

More than a month after the lockdown was announced to contain the spread of COVID-19, around 550 migrants workers, including women and children, were transported back to their native villages in different parts of Uttar Pradesh in 19 State buses on Sunday. Fourteen people belonging to Uttarkhand and five from Punjab were sent back on Saturday.

Sub-Divisional Officer-cum-Duty Magistrate Arvind Kumar, in-charge Manesar



Migrant labourers all set to return home from various relief camps in Gurugram on Sunday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

IMT Sector 8 relief camp, said that thirty people were transported back to Bulandshahar and Budau in a bus on early Sunday morning. Mr. Kumar said that two people from Uttarakhand at the relief camp were sent back on Saturday. He, however, said there was no official communication on the work-

tancing norms. A bus with a capacity of 50-odd people has only 20 people travelling," said Mr. Kumar.

Ramesh Chand, who along with his wife, two daughters and a son, had boarded the bus for his home town Etawah, said they had been staying at Sector 15 Part-I relief camp for more than a month after their landlord forced them to vacate the room as they could not pay the rent. Mr. Chand, who recently underwent an eye surgery, said that he was out of job, but his wife and children worked.

## Long walk

Amjad, working at a furniture unit in Jaipur, said he had walked several hours and taken lift in different vehicles to reach Gurugram after the lockdown in a hope to go back to his place at Shahranpur in Uttar Pradesh. But he was caught by

the police and sent to a Sohna relief camp. "The staff at the camp was very cordial and after a month they felt like our family," said the 26-year-old.

A highly placed source in Haryana government said there were many women, young girls and children among the inmates and keeping them in the camps for so long was a huge responsibility.

the police and sent to a Sohna relief camp. "The staff at the camp was very cordial and after a month they felt like our family," said the 26-year-old.

A highly placed source in Haryana government said there were many women, young girls and children among the inmates and keeping them in the camps for so long was a huge responsibility.

Niyaz Ahmad, a trader associated with cross-Line of Control (LoC) trade, which was suspended by the Union Home Ministry in March 2019, said: "Over 1.99 lakh kg of dates worth ₹6 crore would hit the Valley markets every Ramzan from the now-banned route connecting J&K with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir."

Due to the rising cases of COVID-19, locals are not visiting mosques for congregational prayers, including for the essential two-hour-long Ramzan prayer called 'Tarawih', which is held after



A man prays on the banks of the Dal Lake in Srinagar on Sunday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

"For the first time, families are holding Tarawih prayers at home. I have never seen such a sombre Ramzan," said 73-year-old Rashed Khan, a resident of Rajouri Kadal.

Even Iftaar parties, where people gather to break fast, have been cancelled. "We would hold Iftaar for over 300 people every evening," said a caretaker of the Masjid Bilal Mosque in Lal

Chowk. Deputy Commissioner (Srinagar) Shahid Choudhary said this Ramzan is not the same anywhere in the world.

"But we are trying to make it less difficult in Srinagar. Over 50,000 packets of Ramzan food and essentials kits are ready for dispatch," he added.

**No beating of drums**  
Sehar Khans, who beat drums to wake people up for *sherī* (pre-dawn) meals, have also stopped doing the rounds in the city, which has over 15 red zones where movement is restricted.

"The best way to protect ourselves is to offer prayers at home... People should not rush towards mosques," Kashmir's grand mufti Nasirul Islam said, adding: "People across Kashmir should donate food and clothes to the needy in these challenging times."

# No lockdown relaxation in Ghaziabad

By easing curbs we don't want to negate the advances made, says District Magistrate

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
GHAZIABAD

In line with the Uttar Pradesh government's decision not to extend the Home Ministry's directive, permitting shops of some non-essential items outside containment zones to open with riders, to the State, the Ghaziabad administration maintained a status quo in the city.

"We are in a crucial phase in the fight against COVID-19 and the lockdown has helped us counter its threat. By giving relaxation, we don't want to negate the advances made," said District Magistrate Ajay Shankar Pandey.

## Stringent steps

In fact, the district administration made the conditions of the lockdown even more stringent. The grocery store now could open only till 4 p.m. and the vegetable and fruit shops have to close down their shutters by 2 p.m.



A deserted market in Vaishali area on Sunday ■ ANUJ KUMAR

The administration has also issued an advisory to government officials who travel to Delhi. They have been asked to leave the city by 9 a.m.

The advisory further said that a larger number of third and fourth-grade officials of Delhi and Central government reside in Ghaziabad. "According to the directions of the Central and Delhi government only 33% of them are required to be present on

# COVID-19: Meerut man alleges negligence in uncle's death

He claims doctors sent him back with medicines despite symptoms

**ANUJ KUMAR**  
GHAZIABAD

The ends meet. The Sector 5 market of Vaishali, the hub of commercial activity, wore a deserted look on Sunday. The physically-challenged Vijay Kumar Diskhit was trying to knead the flour.

## Beggars better placed'

"I didn't have the physical strength to walk down to Kannauj, my home town. My friend, who somehow managed, has left the responsibility of his tea stall to me. But who knew that people would stop even having tea." Pointing at beggars, who could be seen in large numbers in the marketplace, Mr. Dikshit said they were placed better than him. "At least people show sympathy towards them." Before he could complete his sentence, Toofan walked in and spat on the road. When reminded of the Prime Minister's *Man Ki Baat*, the auto mechanic said, "Sahib, old habits will take time to change."

A relative of the deceased has alleged that his uncle was not admitted to the district government hospital despite showing symptoms since April 20. His COVID-19 report came 12 hours after his death, three days after sample was taken," alleged Rajan Singh, nephew of the deceased. "On Monday, when he showed symptoms, he went to the hospital but the doctors gave him medicines for cough and fever and sent him back. When he started showing clear symptoms, we informed the Chief

Medical Officer and the District Magistrate's office. On Tuesday, an ambulance took him to Meerut Medical College and Hospital but he was sent back on foot with some medicines," Mr. Singh told *The Hindu*

## Samples taken

According to Mr. Singh, on Wednesday, a three-member team visited the man's residence and took his and his wife's sample. "On Friday, when his condition deteriorated, both again went to the hospital. There, he suffered a paralytic attack. After that, my uncle was admitted and was sent back."

On Saturday, when the family members inquired about his health, they were told that he had passed away.

"When we insisted that we won't take the body without

Covid-19 report, on Sunday morning we were told that he tested positive. The hospital health staff took the body to the cremation ground and performed the last rites," he added.

R.C. Gupta, Principal of Meerut Medical College, told *The Hindu* that an explanation had been sought from the doctor on duty. He said, "The sample that was taken on April 22 was for pool testing and it came out negative. When he came on April 24, he had very high blood pressure, cough and fever. He suffered a brain stroke... He was admitted in the evening and his sample for COVID-19 was sent on Saturday and within 24 hours the report came."

The CMO could not be reached despite repeated attempts.

# Hizbul activist arrested in Punjab

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Police on Sunday said it had arrested an activist of the Hizbul Mujahideen outfit and recovered Indian currency worth ₹29 lakh from his possession.

Punjab Director General of Police Dinkar Gupta said the arrested activist has been identified as Hilal Ahmed Wagay, a resident of Nowgam, falling in Avantipura police station of Pulumā district of Kashmir.

"Hilal was nabbed by a team of Amritsar Commissionerate Police, which was on patrol duty late evening on April 25 near Metro Mart in the city. An FIR under Sections 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 20, 21 of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (Amendment 2012) has been registered," he said.

# Bangladeshi handed over

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
GUWAHATI

A Bangladeshi national who claimed to be a COVID-19 patient was on Sunday handed over to the border guards of Bangladesh after he swam across the Kushia river into southern Assam's Barak Valley.

Officials of the Border Se-

curity Force said an Indian fisherman spotted the Bangladeshi national and alerted them.

"The Bangladeshi border sentinels took him into their custody with precautionary measures as the man claimed he had been infected," a district official said.

# Wedding industry loses its shine in U.P.

Thousands of families, host of allied businesses worry about the future

**ANUJ KUMAR**  
GHAZIABAD

Snehlata spent the better part of Saturday calling up friends and relatives to inform them that her daughter's wedding has been postponed. The ongoing lockdown has put a damper on their plans.

"We had scheduled the wedding on Akshay Tritiya as the three-day period is considered auspicious... I was hoping against hope that somehow we would be able to go through with it," said Snehlata, a senior bank official in Delhi.

"My daughter was ready to go ahead with 10 guests, as per the government order, but the groom's side did not agree," she said, adding that they had booked a banquet hall and paid ₹1 lakh in advance. "Now, the manager is requesting us to reschedule

the wedding after the lockdown ends," she said.

With the Uttar Pradesh government extending the ban on public gatherings till June 30, marriage plans of thousands of families are in the lurch while the big fat wedding industry is bracing up to lose some of its mass.

## Can't afford salaries'

Vivek Mohan, a caterer who runs a banquet hall on lease, said the lockdown will cause high unemployment. "Ours is a seasonal industry. What we earn during the season, we spend for the next four-five months. After June, the auspicious dates are in November. I can feed my permanent employees during the lockdown but I will have to take a call on how many I would like to retain once the lockdown ends. I cannot afford to pay salaries

for six months without work," he added.

The farmhouses on NH-9 and Delhi-Meerut Road host lavish weddings during the season.

"They take bookings for minimum 500 people. I do not think even after June, the government will allow such large gatherings. Many of them will have to shut shop or turn into smaller banquet halls. My halls were booked till May 8 but all the events have been cancelled. This will affect caterers, flower providers, bandwallahs, as well as the jewellery and clothing industries," said Pawan Singh, who runs one of the biggest banquet halls in Modinagar.

The priests too have not been spared grief. "With temples in residential complexes shut and weddings postponed, the priests are suffering," the priest added.

ing," said Surendra Sharma, the head priest of a temple in Ghaziabad's Raj Nagar Extension, which was sealed after two residents tested positive for COVID-19.

"The RWA president issued a letter that I would be held responsible if people assembled at the temple, but nobody asked me how I will make ends meet during the lockdown or who would clean the temple or perform the daily aarti," he added.

"I still have some savings, but what about priests in rural areas and small towns who depend on what they get from yajman (host) from day-to-day rituals," he asked, adding: "Unlike other daily wagers, priests are not trained to do any other job and their social standing does not allow them to do menial jobs," the priest added.

# Officer who made policeman do sit-ups transferred to HQ

Agriculture Dept. says he is not promoted

**AMARNATH TEWARY**  
PATNA

The Bihar officer, who had made a policeman do sit-ups for 'daring' to check the valid pass for the movement of his vehicle during lockdown in Araria district on April 20, was transferred to Patna Headquarters through a department notification on Saturday.

Araria District Agriculture Officer Manoj Kumar has been transferred to Patna as Deputy Director in the department.

Kishanganj District Agriculture Officer Santal Prasad Shah has been given the additional charge.

Mr. Kumar had shot into limelight after a video went viral on social media in which a policeman, Ganesh

Tatma, was seen doing sit-ups while holding his ears. He was reportedly angry when his vehicle was stopped by Mr. Tatma.

The State Agriculture Department tweeted to clarify that "1. DAO, Araria, transferred out of Araria as Dy Director, training in HQ. He is NOT promoted.... 2. Department proceedings against him already been initiated. 3. FIR already filed".

Meanwhile, the Opposition leaders have questioned the Nitish Kumar government over the transfer. "Is it good governance? ... this action will downplay the morale of the State police," said Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) leader Danish Rizwan.

# 'Relax moisture norm for wheat purchase'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
CHANDIGARH

Congress leader and chief party spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala on Sunday urged Haryana government to give relaxation in moisture specifications for the wheat procurement from 12% to 18% in the wake of untimely rainfall that had damaged the harvested wheat crop lying in the grain markets and fields across the State.

Mr. Surjewala alleged that the State government has failed to provide adequate procurement arrangements.



State govt.'s push for crop diversification could also tilt the decision towards cotton cultivation. ■ FILE PHOTO

farmers will prefer sowing cotton instead of paddy, whenever it's possible. Labour from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have an expertise in planting paddy but with many of them back to their native places there will be some difficulty," said Rakesh Rathi, former

president of India Cotton Association Limited.

"Also farmers may sow less guar crop as its prices have remained subdued and shift to cotton, especially in Abohar, Mansa and other surrounding areas. In Haryana also area under cotton

go a little up," he added. In Punjab and Haryana, Bt cotton is sown in over 95% of the total area, the rest 5% cotton is usually the indigenous (desi) cotton varieties. Cotton is usually planted from mid April to till late May in most parts of the two States. .

"Paddy is a labour intensive crop and if migrant labour doesn't return in the coming months then surely many farmers, where sowing cotton is a viable option will go for it. I am sure the area under cotton will increase this season in Punjab. Also the government is promoting cotton sowing," said Surjeet Singh, president Bharatiya Kisan Union (Krantikari).

Amid the ongoing curfew, following the COVID-19 outbreak, the agriculture department has coordinated with the Cotton Corporation of India to buy last season's remaining cotton produce from farmers at the MSP and for this – 19 markets in the cotton belt have already been made operational.

## In memory of your loved ones

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:

011-43579797

from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For Placing Advertisements Online log on to

[www.thehinduads.com](http://www.thehinduads.com)

DEATH

MR. R SAMPATH (76), Retired Junior Engineer (Composing), The Hindu, Chennai, passed away on 26-04-2020. Address: 168, Singana Street, Chintadripet, Chennai - 60002. Contact: 988409670

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

# In fresh spike, Andhra Pradesh records 81 cases

One patient dies in Karnataka, 11 test positive in Kerala, Telangana tally 1,001

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

VIJAYAWADA/HYDERABAD/  
BENGALURU/  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/CHENNAI

Andhra Pradesh witnessed another spike in the number of COVID-19 positive cases on Sunday, the highest so far, with 81 new ones being reported in eight districts. The tally went up to 1,097, although no deaths were reported.

**COVID-19**

A 45-year-old woman, who tested positive for COVID-19, died at a designated hospital in Bengaluru, raising the virus deaths tally in Karnataka to 19.

Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh, particularly Vijayawada, was in focus with 52 cases in a single day, taking the tally to 177.

The cases in the district doubled in three days, as two "super spreaders" met several people and played indoor

games in different areas of the city despite having a history of travel outside the State.

West Godavari reported 12 new cases and Kurnool four. Guntur, Kadapa and Prakasam reported three new cases each, and Anantapur two.

Meanwhile, 60 persons recovered and were discharged.

In a bid to track people showing symptoms related to COVID-19, the Health Department has launched a mobile application for pharmacies.

The total number of COVID-19 cases in Telangana stood at 1,001 as 11 more were detected up to Sunday evening.

While the Union Ministry of Health data indicated that one more death was reported in the State, the Telangana Health department stated that there were no deaths.

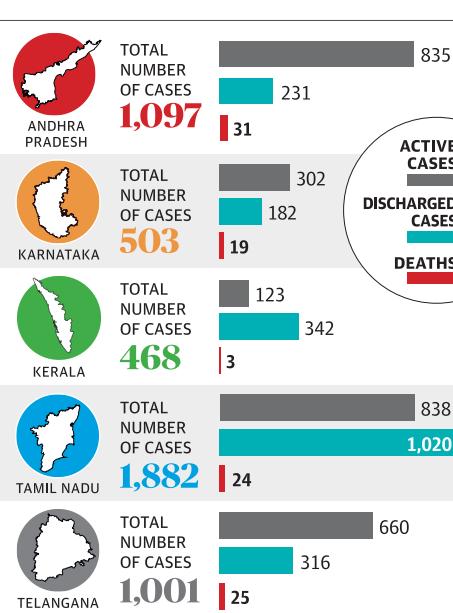
Among the people in isolation wards of government

## Ensuring safety

States across the country are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that all measures are taken to curb the spread of COVID-19



**Preventive measures:** Health workers in protective suits preparing to disinfect a locality in Hyderabad on Sunday. ■ PTI



hospitals, nine were discharged. The State Health department said of the 1,001 cases, 660 were active cases, 316 were discharged, and 25 people had died.

### Karnataka toll touches 19

A Karnataka Health department bulletin said the woman who died was admitted

on April 24, and was a resident of Bengaluru Urban district with a history of Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) and pneumonia. She was also diabetic, and had a history of tuberculosis.

Three new cases were reported in Karnataka on Sunday, two of them from Kalaburagi, and one from

Dakshina Kannada. All three were in contact with those who had tested positive earlier.

The total number of COVID-19 cases in Karnataka stood at 503.

A total of 24 patients were discharged on Sunday, eight from Bengaluru Urban, and the total going up to 182. Of

302 active cases, six were in the intensive care unit.

In Kerala, new COVID-19 cases with no epidemiological link from districts not designated as "red zones", including among health workers sent alarm bells ringing about possible silent transmission at the community-level. Of 11 new cases on Sunday, six were from Idukki and five from Kottayam district. In Idukki, one person had returned from Spain, and two from Tamil Nadu. The other three were contacts of people who contracted the disease from the community, one of them a doctor.

### One more dies in T.N.

Among 64 who tested positive in Tamil Nadu, 28 are from Chennai

A 42-year-old man, who was admitted to a private hospital in Chennai, died due to COVID-19 infection on Saturday evening, taking the total number of deaths to 24, the Health department said.

As of Sunday, 838 active cases were recorded.

# Kerala set to seal all inter-State borders

Rise in fresh cases in border districts

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has directed the police to seal all inter-State borders to discourage the movement of people between Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Chairing a meeting of District Collectors and District Police chiefs by video link on Sunday, Mr. Vijayan reportedly flagged the up and down travel through the porous boundary Kerala shared with neighbouring States as a significant cause for fresh COVID-19 flare-ups in border districts such as Idukki.

He said Tamil Nadu was in the middle of an intense lockdown in five districts from April 26 to April 29. They included Coimbatore and Tirupur, which shared a common frontier with Kerala. Hence, it was essential for the police to seal the borders of Kerala tightly.

Law enforcers should sanitise cargo vehicles at borders, and examine drivers and crew for COVID-19 symptoms, the Chief Minister said.

He made temperature checks at border checks posts mandatory.

### Racketeers at work

The police had earlier told the government that tightening of lockdown restrictions had spawned a mafia that moved people between States and districts for cash. The racketeers had contracted a network of ambulance, cargo and container lorry drivers to facilitate the illegal movement.

An official said some persons living on properties straddling inter-State borders helped the racket flourish, and used the same method and routes to smuggle bootlegged liquor and other contraband.

### 164 tourists from Europe leave Kerala

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

KOCHI

Stranded in Kerala since the national lockdown came into effect on March 23, 164 tourists from Europe left for Zurich on Saturday night from the Cochin Airport by a flight operated by Swiss Air.

This is the fourth flight to take tourists from Kerala to Europe after international flights were called off on March 23. There were 115 Swiss citizens in the flight, which also carried tourists from Germany, Austria, Norway, Denmark and France. Most were tourists to Kerala, while others were brought from neighbouring States.

### Game on



**Taking a break:** Policemen on COVID-19 duty playing a game of carrom at Majestic area in Bengaluru on Sunday. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

### IN BRIEF



#### Body of second Forest staff found in Kabini

MYSURU

The authorities on Sunday retrieved the body of a Forest Department employee who went missing during an operation to thwart illegal fishing in the Kabini backwaters that led to clashes with unidentified miscreants. The body of Shivakumar, 33, was found floating in the backwaters and was retrieved. Two Forest Department employees died due to drowning. The body of Mahesh, 26, was retrieved on Saturday.

#### Donate blood, TRS leader tells party cadre

HYDERABAD  
Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) working president K.T. Rama Rao called upon the cadre to raise the party flag at their homes and to donate blood to mark the 20th formation day of the party. Mr. Rao donated his blood at the Pragathi Bhavan on Sunday. Maintain social distance and coordinate with the hospitals to donate, he said, asking them to continue the programme for a week to avoid large gatherings.

#### 'Doodh Duronto' starts from Chittoor for Delhi

TIRUPATI  
The South Central Railways came up with a major intervention by taking milk from Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh to Delhi. Scheduled to run between Renigunta and Hazrat Nizamuddin to meet the requirements of Delhi, the first of the proposed two 'Doodh Duronto Special' trains (milk tankers) started here on Sunday. This is in tune with the nod given to the Railways to operate both freight and parcel trains on a continuous basis to ensure transportation of essential items.

## Actor donates money after simple wedding

Manikantan marries Anjali in temple

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

KOCHI

Actor Manikantan Achary tied the knot at a simple function at a temple at Eroor, Tripunithura, on Sunday.

His bride Anjali and he were engaged six months ago. Despite advice that the wedding should be postponed due to the lockdown, they decided to get married on the scheduled date and donated a part of the funds earmarked for the marriage to the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund (CMDRF).

The gathering at the Ayambillykavu Bhagavathy temple was limited to close family. Most people who attended the small function wore masks.

After the wedding, the couple handed over the amount to Tripunithura MLA M. Swaraj.

Mr. Achary shot to fame with Rajiv Ravi's film *Kammippadam*. He later acted

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

In the wake of the controversy surrounding the Sprinkler deal, the Kerala government has decided to carry out a security audit by CERT-In, the nodal agency responsible for dealing with cyber security threats, of the various data collected by government departments and agencies related to COVID-19.

The Kerala State IT Mission (KSITM) Director has been authorised to entrust the agency empanelled under CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) under the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to carry out the audit work. The agency will have to execute the security audit of the data stored in the Amazon cloud platform in line with the guidelines of the govern-

## CERT-In to conduct security audit of COVID-19 data

It will ensure safety of details collected on cloud platform

ment. The KSITM Director has been asked to execute a Non-Disclosure Agreement with the agency before commencing the audit, which shall include conditions to ensure security of data shared for audit purposes.

### High-level meeting

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. The Information Technology Department had made a presentation to the Chief Minister, who also handles IT portfolio, on processing and utilisation of data for containment activities of COVID-19.

The government felt it necessary to analyse the data collected using data analytics techniques and tools and to ensure the security of the data collected and captured in the Cloud system, says the order issued by the Cabinet.

ics and Information Technology Department.

Incidentally, the government order has been issued on April 21 when the Sprinkler row was raging in the State. The Left Democratic Front (LDF) government has roped in the U.S.-based company to collate the personal health data collected by field-level workers from nearly 1.75 lakh people categorised as "vulnerable and potentially exposed" to the pandemic.

### Opposition slams govt.

The Opposition was critical of the government for procuring a healthcare worker mobile application from the firm using disaster management funds to input the details of persons under surveillance without inviting tenders, seeking legal opinion, and the approval of the Cabinet.

## Karnataka plasma donor wants to inspire others

The recovered HR professional hopes more will come forward and donate

**STAFF REPORTER**

BENGALURU

was my moral responsibility. I wanted to make a difference," he said.

He contracted the virus in the end of March after travelling to Dubai. "As soon as we landed at the Bengaluru airport, we were taken to a hospital and given strict instructions to follow home quarantine. A week later, I started showing symptoms."

He spent over a fortnight in the hospital and initially found it challenging as he had high fever. The HR professional said that he too had done his homework and read up extensively on plas-



**Ray of hope:** The therapy will be tested on at least 12 critically ill patients.

ma therapy.

As Karnataka's first donor, he hopes that more people who are hale and hearty and

have recovered from COVID-19 would come forward and donate their plasma. The team at HCG Hospital conducted a series of blood tests on Sunday and he will be able to donate his plasma in a day or two.

### Uses antibodies

Vishal Rao, associate dean of HCG, said the plasma therapy used antibodies from the blood of cured patients, to treat severely ill COVID-19 cases in the clinical trial setting.

"The recovered patient's blood develops antibodies to fight against COVID-19 and the plasma of this cured patient has medicinal properties that when infused to the

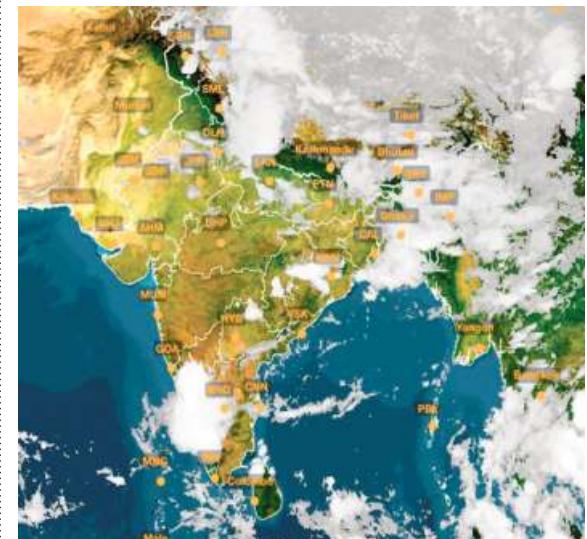
infected serious patient, will assist in elimination of coronavirus in infected patients who are in a serious condition," he said.

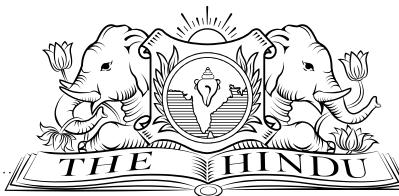
HCG Hospital has tied up with the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMRCI) for plasma therapy.

The Central Drugs Control Organisation under the Director General of Health Services has approved a research proposal to study the use of convalescent plasma therapy in treating COVID-19. The therapy that holds promise in treatment of COVID-19 cases will be tested on at least 12 critically ill patients in the State in the initial phase.

### WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY





## Safe return

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, the distress faced by migrant workers must not be ignored

A month after one of the most stringent global lockdowns was imposed in India to tackle the pandemic, the travails of the migrant worker have shown no signs of ending. The government told the Supreme Court in late March that arrangements had been made to provide temporary shelters with food for migrant workers and as of then, none of them was on the road, just days after the lockdown had triggered an exodus of people to their native places. But reports have shown that thousands continue to travel long distances, most of them by foot, to escape distress conditions or to their families. Meanwhile, lakhs of workers, who were dependent upon daily and casual labour, are still stranded in Mumbai and Delhi without wages. The functioning of shelters in several places has been uneven across States and metropolitan cities. With the ongoing lockdown hurting the economy, the Finance Ministry's relief measures have been insufficient in providing for their needs. Some migrant workers, who stare at a continuing loss of livelihoods in their adopted places of work, are better off depending upon the social safety nets and familial support structures in their native places. They should be allowed to avail these in a dignified and humane way. Restarting work under the MGNREGA that went dormant in the earlier period of the lockdown, has provided an incentive for workers to leave for their native places. It is evident that the option of keeping workers at their respective places is no longer viable and the Centre must work at ways to allow for their transport to their native places.

India, among other Asian countries such as its neighbours in the subcontinent, Malaysia and others, has managed to avoid the high fatalities and infection rates that have been seen in Europe and North America. The lockdown has helped, but it has come at a huge humanitarian and economic cost. The question of whether to extend a lockdown amid an economic crisis is a moral dilemma that can be resolved only through practical steps that compensate the poor and the workers in the unorganised sector, and protect the old and the infirm. Maharashtra, the State with the highest incidence of COVID-19 cases, besides having the largest number of migrant workers, has urged the Centre to plan and resume railway services for the labourers once the lockdown ends on May 3; it is a request the Centre must heed. It is futile trying to blame workers for flocking to railway stations as had happened in mid-April. States such as Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh are also gearing up to facilitate their return. These steps are welcome. Allowing migrant travel in a safe way by train that provides for the necessary physical distancing is the least that the government can do.

## Pandemic and panic

While ensuring distancing, govt should not trigger crowding through abrupt changes

The Tamil Nadu government's order intensifying the lockdown in Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Tirupur and Salem from April 26 briefly convulsed these cities with panic, threatening to undo the gains achieved from avoiding crowding, maintaining physical distancing and preparing the public for a calibrated exit from restrictions. If the idea was to halt the rising rate of infections, which cumulatively touched 1,821 on April 25, the government's announcement of a 'complete lockdown' was counterproductive. Thousands crowded grocery stores, vegetable shops and petrol pumps, with many ignoring safety norms. Anxiety over access to essential goods, particularly among those who do not store articles for long periods, triggered panic buying. Confusion also marked the issue of new passes for delivery agents in places such as Madurai, attracting massive crowds. Such chaotic events are an invitation to disaster, since the dangerous virus is also highly contagious. Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami must worry that the government's commendable efforts to manage the pandemic while raising health system capacity during the lockdown have suffered a jolt. Tamil Nadu's hard-won gains from quarantine of travellers, systematic screening and monitoring of individuals at higher risk, contact tracing and community surveillance face an unexpected challenge.

Although its fallout will be known in the days ahead, the crowding episode could pass off as an aberration if the focus returns to raising administrative efficiency. This should not be difficult, since the government has a white list of permitted activity. Barring emergencies, care needs of patients with chronic non-COVID conditions and death of kin, the average citizen can weather a lockdown reasonably well if food, medicines and other essentials are available. Longer shutdowns will create other stresses, since no household maintenance work is possible and spares are not available. But the crowding challenge during the lockdown is posed mainly by the use of personal vehicles. Restricting this is feasible if governments can bring essential articles virtually to one's doorstep or make them available within walking distance. Physical distancing and a 'no mask, no service' rule should apply. An expanded permit system for delivery agents not just from online platforms, but authorised local merchants could address this. Such an approach was envisaged even in the Home Ministry's lockdown order last month, and it assumes greater significance now. Creating scannable codes can help essential services function smoothly and enable easier policing. A system of codes may be inevitable, when select activity such as movement of industrial workers is permitted in future. Periodic lockdowns may also become common, when there are infection spikes. The administration needs refined tools and a consultative process with all sectors for this new normal.

# At the edge of a new nuclear arms race

The U.S.'s moves to resume nuclear testing, also signalling the demise of the ill-fated CTBT, could be the first signs



RAKESH SOOD

In mid-April, a report issued by the United States State Department on "Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments (Compliance Report)" raised concerns that China might be conducting nuclear tests with low yields at its Lop Nur test site, in violation of its Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) undertakings.

The U.S. report also claims that Russia has conducted nuclear weapons experiments that produced a nuclear yield and were inconsistent with 'zero yield' understanding underlying the CTBT, though it was uncertain about how many such experiments had been conducted.

Russia and China have rejected the U.S.'s claims, but with growing rivalry among major powers the report is a likely harbinger of a new nuclear arms race which would also mark the demise of the CTBT that came into being in 1996 but has failed to enter into force even after a quarter century.

### What does CTBT ban mean?

For decades, a ban on nuclear testing was seen as the necessary first step towards curbing the nuclear arms race but Cold War politics made it impossible. A Partial Test Ban Treaty was concluded in 1963 banning underwater and atmospheric tests but this only drove testing underground. By the time the CTBT negotiations began in Geneva in 1994, global politics had changed. The Cold War had ended and the nuclear arms race was over. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or the USSR, had broken up and its principal testing

site, Semipalatinsk, was in Kazakhstan (Russia still had access to Novaya Zemlya near the Arctic circle). In 1991, Russia declared a unilateral moratorium on testing, followed by the U.S. in 1992. By this time, the U.S. had conducted 1,054 tests and Russia, 715.

Negotiations were often contentious. France and China continued testing, claiming that they had conducted far fewer tests and needed to validate new designs since the CTBT did not imply an end to nuclear deterrence. France and the U.S. even toyed with the idea of a CTBT that would permit testing at a low threshold, below 500 tonnes of TNT equivalent. This was one-thirtieth of the "Little Boy", the bomb the U.S. dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945 – its explosive yield was estimated to be the equivalent of 15,000 tonnes of TNT. Civil society and the non-nuclear weapon states reacted negatively to such an idea and it was dropped. Some countries proposed that the best way to verify a comprehensive test ban would be to permanently shut down all test sites, an idea that was unwelcome to the nuclear weapon states.

Eventually, the U.S. came up with the idea of defining the "comprehensive test ban" as a "zero yield" test ban that would prohibit supercritical hydro-nuclear tests but not sub-critical hydrodynamic nuclear tests. Once the United Kingdom and France came on board, the U.S. was able to prevail upon Russia and China to accept this understanding. After all, this was the moment of the U.S.'s unipolar supremacy. At home, the Clinton administration in the U.S. satisfied the hawks by announcing a science-based nuclear Stockpile Stewardship and Management Program, a generously funded project to keep the nuclear laboratories in business and the Pentagon happy. Accordingly, the CTBT prohibits all parties from carrying out "any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear ex-



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

plosion"; these terms are neither defined nor elaborated.

### Why it lacks authority

Another controversy arose regarding the entry-into-force provisions (Article 14) of the treaty. After India's proposal for anchoring the CTBT in a disarmament framework did not find acceptance, in June 1996, India announced its decision to withdraw from the negotiations. Unhappy at this turn, the U.K., China and Pakistan took the lead in revising the entry-into-force provisions. The new provisions listed 44 countries by name whose ratification was necessary for the treaty to enter into force and included India. India protested that this attempt at arm-twisting violated a country's sovereign right to decide if it wanted to join a treaty but was ignored. The CTBT was adopted by a majority vote and opened for signature.

Of the 44 listed countries, to date only 36 have ratified the treaty. China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the U.S. have signed but not ratified. China maintains that it will only ratify it after the U.S. does so but the Republican dominated Senate had rejected it in 1999. In addition, North Korea, India and Pakistan are the three who have not signed. All three have also undertaken tests after 1996; India and Pakistan in May 1998 and North Korea six times between 2006 and 2017. The CTBT has therefore not entered into force and lacks legal authority.

Nevertheless, an international organisation to verify the CTBT was established in Vienna with a

staff of about 230 persons and an annual budget of \$130 million. Ironically, the U.S. is the largest contributor with a share of \$17 million. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) runs an elaborate verification system built around a network of over 325 seismic, radionuclide, infrasound and hydroacoustic (underwater) monitoring stations. The CTBTO has refrained from backing the U.S.'s allegations.

### Competition is back

The key change from the 1990s is that the U.S.'s unipolar moment is over and strategic competition among major powers is back. The U.S. now identifies Russia and China as 'rivals'. Its Nuclear Posture Review asserts that the U.S. faces new nuclear threats because both Russia and China are increasing their reliance on nuclear weapons. The U.S., therefore, has to expand the role of its nuclear weapons and have a more usable and diversified nuclear arsenal. The Trump administration has embarked on a 30-year modernisation plan with a price tag of \$1.2 trillion, which could go up over the years. Readiness levels at the Nevada test site that has been silent since 1992 are being enhanced to permit resumption of testing at six months notice.

Russia and China have been concerned about the U.S.'s growing technological lead particularly in missile defence and conventional global precision-strike capabilities. Russia has responded by exploring hypersonic delivery systems and theatre systems while China has embarked on a modernisation programme to enhance the survivability of its arsenal which is considerably smaller. In addition, both countries are also investing heavily in offensive cyber capabilities.

The new U.S. report stops short of accusing China for a violation but refers to "a high level of activity at the Lop Nur test site through-

out 2019" and concludes that together with its lack of transparency, China provokes concerns about its intent to observe the zero-yield moratorium on testing.

The U.S. claims that Russian experiments have generated nuclear yield but is unable to indicate how many such experiments were conducted in 2019. It suggests that Russia could be testing in a manner that releases nuclear energy from an explosive canister, generating suspicions about its compliance.

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) limits U.S. and Russian arsenals but will expire in 2021 and U.S. President Donald Trump has already indicated that he does not plan to extend it. Instead, the Trump administration would like to bring China into some kind of nuclear arms control talks, something China has avoided by pointing to the fact that the U.S. and Russia still account for over 90% of global nuclear arsenals.

### Current context

Both China and Russia have dismissed the U.S.'s allegations, pointing to the Trump administration's backtracking from other negotiated agreements such as the Iran nuclear deal or the U.S.-Russia Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Tensions with China are already high with trade and technology disputes, militarisation in the South China Sea and most recently, with the novel coronavirus pandemic. The U.S. could also be preparing the ground for resuming testing at Nevada.

The Cold War rivalry was already visible when the nuclear arms race began in the 1950s. New rivalries have already emerged. Resumption of nuclear testing may signal the demise of the ill-fated CTBT, marking the beginnings of a new nuclear arms race.

*Rakesh Sood is a former diplomat and presently Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation*

## Rollback the distrust, remember the core values

Societal relations are fragile and need constant nursing; social peace is a pre-requisite for progress



HAMID ANSARI

Sanity, said a line in an old movie, exists in every contract. It is so in every social compact that precedes the establishment of any society or social grouping. One is reminded of it by recent reports of expressions of hostility and downright hatred by a section of our people against another. Are these expressive of atavistic impulses of yore or generated by more recent trends seeking social hegemony premised on an imaginary past?

### Foundational values

The basic values of India's Constitution assert the principles of justice, equality and fraternity and are reiterated by all sections of social and political leadership. Yet, those who profess to be their followers tend to forget them time and again.

### Approach worth reiterating

This same approach in a more practical sense was reflected in the Inter-communal Unity Appeal made in October 1923 by a group of Indians led by Lala Lajpat Rai, Mufti Kifayatullah, Swami Shraddhanand, Maulana Azad, Kasturba Gandhi and 95 others. All sections of our public need to be reminded of its pragmatic approach:



We have in recent weeks witnessed social debates and contestations, normal in a democracy, derail into aggressive assertions that typecast fellow citizens as enemies or undesirable creatures. The trend even finds its reflection in pronouncements of public figures and officials. Both have been prone to forget that even if a citizen is charged with an offence against the law or found to be guilty of it by the due process of law, he or she does not cease to be a citizen and stands deprived of rights and duties of citizenship. The conclusion is inescapable that the sole purpose of such typecasting is to find an excuse for an administrative failure and instead cast a slur, stigmatise and socially degrade a group of fellow citizens.

The trend is so pervasive that it finds expression in sections of our citizens living in foreign lands; it is so aggressive that it offends local sentiments and norms of behaviour; so alarming that it has invited reaction from otherwise friendly local hosts and compelled our authorities, belatedly, to state the official position at the highest level.

This ailment of the mind is being reflected in the discharge of normal duties by officials at different levels and is alarming enough to induce a group of 100 of our most eminent former civil servants to appeal, recently, to State Chief Ministers "to instruct all public functionaries to be particularly vigilant to prevent social boycott of any community in the State and to ensure that all the entitlements including medical and hospital care, rations and financial assistance are available equally to all those in need".

Why is this happening? What have we forgotten or disowned?

The plurality of our society and its diversity is an existential reality. The imperative of coexistence and tolerance has been accepted

down the ages. Sages and society leaders have reiterated it time and again. We need only to recall Swami Vivekananda's advocacy of religious pluralism, to his vision of India "being the junction of two great systems – Hinduism and Islam – having a Vedantic brain and an Islamic body".

### Approach worth reiterating

This same approach in a more practical sense was reflected in the Inter-communal Unity Appeal made in October 1923 by a group of Indians led by Lala Lajpat Rai, Mufti Kifayatullah, Swami Shraddhanand, Maulana Azad, Kasturba Gandhi and 95 others. All sections of our public need to be reminded of its pragmatic approach:

"If any individual or group of individuals belonging to any community commits an act of violence against, or attacks the person, property or honour of women or places of worship (mandir, mosque, church or gurdwara, etc) of his neighbour or townsman or helps those who indulge in such misdeeds, he is, from the religious point of view, guilty of a great sin; and that it is the duty of co-religionists of such offenders to stand up and resist such miscreants and to protect those who are so attacked."

Why can we not show the mirror in this shape to our professedly religion-minded public and urge it to follow in word and deed? The present approach of distrust is disquieting, resulting in resentment, and injection of suspicion and viciousness in social relations. It impacts adversely on the promotion of fraternity. Is it serving any purpose, either of fighting the pandemic or of expediting the process of proceeding against those who may have transgressed the law? Alternatively, is it serving a political purpose?

History tells us that human relationships are fragile and need constant nursing; the same holds for societal relations. We have in our own times witnessed the fragmentation, even destruction, of societies elsewhere. Social peace is thus a pre-requisite for progress and development. Let sanity prevail. Let this be our motto.

*Hamid Ansari is Former Vice President of India (2007-2017)*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Trump's musings

It is not surprising that U.S. President Donald Trump's thoughtless suggestion of "injecting disinfectants" into people to combat the COVID-19 virus, has drawn ire from many quarters ('World' page, "Uproar after Trump suggests 'injecting disinfectant' as cure", April 25). POTUS has never failed to shock the world with such statements beginning with threatening India with consequences if it did not send hydroxychloroquine across.

E.S. CHANDRASEKARAN, Chennai

When the world is working hard to try and control the pandemic, controversial statements from responsible leaders are disappointing. Even since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the U.S. the American leader has made statements which are least expected from a person of his standing. With the presidential elections round

the corner and with the disease at its peak in the U.S., the President should avoid controversy.

AJAY S. KUMAR, Thiruvananthapuram

### WHO is wrong again

Early on, the World Health Organization (WHO) denied person-to-person transmission for want of evidence – subsequently proven wrong. Later, WHO did not assess the spread of infection to countries on all continents as pandemic; its declaration was thereby delayed by at least four weeks, misleading the world. Then, WHO advised that mask-wearing was not necessary for the uninfected, based on the knowledge that a mask on the infected person cuts down transmission. Apparently evidence for infection-reduction by the uninfected wearing mask was not available, but the protection from inhaling droplets was not appreciated. Now,

everyone appreciates the value of the universal use of masks. WHO now says there is currently no evidence that people who have recovered from COVID-19 and have antibodies are protected from a second infection ('World' page, "Recovered patients not immune to re-infection", April 26). If true, recovered persons do not necessarily have virus neutralising antibodies to prevent infection. That is indirect discouragement of convalescent plasma therapy for severe COVID pneumonia. Absence of evidence is conflated as evidence of an absence of antiviral immunity. Unless proven otherwise, recovered persons have antibodies that can be transfused to save lives. There is no precedent for a virulent virus infection not inducing antibodies in humans – that is applicable only to the original hosts, bats. The human immune system is different and recovery from an infection

means immunity.

Ds. T. JACOB JOHN, Vellore, Tamil Nadu

### Textbook examples

It needs to be stated that notwithstanding the pitfalls in handling of the crisis in certain areas – the most prominent among them being the inability to address the concerns and grievances of migrant labourers – the response of the Centre in imposing a nation-wide lockdown was swift and calibrated keeping in mind the urgency of the situation. The Union government has done a creditable job of containing the quantum of deaths as compared to the situation in developed countries that have floundered on the basics (Editorial page, "Troughs and crests in the pandemic response", April 25). In addition to Germany and Kerala, it is relevant to mention the invaluable efforts taken by Cuba in fighting the novel

coronavirus and helping other nations in these times of crisis. And this has been despite hostility by way of economic sanctions imposed on it by the western world. In this hour of crisis, it is imperative to remember Cuba's iconic Fidel Castro, who strengthened the vital pillars of a welfare state.

B. SURESH KUMAR, Coimbatore

### Wet markets

If there is a possibility that the coronavirus pandemic has its origins in a wet market, it only calls for scrutiny of such facilities. As wildlife is sold too, despite policies designed to protect them, there is only a blurred distinction between a wet market and a wildlife market, if at all it exists. Poorly maintained wet markets are thus conducive to the transmission of pathogens. Perhaps the enforcement of a ban on the trade in wildlife for food, ensuring strict food safety and hygiene

# Protecting the poor from becoming poorer

Governments need to take a long-term view of mitigating the health and economic effects of COVID-19



KRISHNA RAO

Globally, governments are faced with hard choices in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Prioritising public health through social distancing and population lockdowns comes at a huge economic cost. While there is still considerable uncertainty about how badly India will be affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, there is no uncertainty that the population lockdown will force significant and widespread deprivations on people at the lower end of the income distribution. Within a short time after the population lockdown was imposed in India, the slowdown in economic activity has resulted in the loss of livelihood among the economically vulnerable. Seen another way, economically vulnerable groups are being forced to sacrifice disproportionately more for the better health of society.



"Economically vulnerable groups are being forced to sacrifice disproportionately more for the better health of society." Migrant workers in India walk home to their villages. ■ REUTERS

**Short- and long-term effects**  
The morbidity and mortality rates are disproportionately higher in countries, and among people, at the lower end of the income distribution. The Spanish flu in 1918 left about 50 to 100 million people dead worldwide. Poor countries like India bore the brunt of the pandemic. India lost 18 million lives, or 6% of the population, the highest anywhere. In contrast, the U.S., where the flu might have originated, experienced 6,75,000 deaths. Similar social inequities are seen in the current COVID-19 pandemic – note, for instance, the disproportionately higher mortality rates among minority groups in the U.S. These inequities are not surprising: economically vulnerable people have poor nutri-

tion which lowers immunity; they live in crowded spaces making it easier for a disease to spread; and they have inadequate access to safe water, sanitation, and quality health care. Deaths and illness due to COVID-19 will directly cause economic losses. The death of an earning family member is a huge financial loss anywhere, but particularly so for those living on the margins of the economy. Those unable to work, particularly those in the informal economy, due to COVID-19-related illness will experience substantial income losses. Studies on productivity losses due to other infectious diseases have reported that the poorest households lose as much as half their income.

Epidemics continue to affect survivors long after they are over. Studies on populations exposed to tropical diseases and poor nutrition in-utero or during early childhood have found that the effects of the disease continue into later years of life by affecting cognitive ability, educational achievement, and income as adults. A study on the long-term effects of the Spanish flu, "Is the 1918 Influenza Pandemic Over? Long-Term Effects of *In Utero* Influenza Exposure in the Post-1940 U.S. Population", by Douglas Almond, reported that children born to infected mothers were 15% less likely to graduate from high school, the wages of men were 5%-9% lower because of infection,

Historically, economic downturns are associated with loss of livelihoods, decreases in dietary intake, poorer dietary quality and poorer health care consumption. The effect of the lockdown on pregnant women and children is particularly impor-

tant. Studies have shown that women's nutrition or access to health services like tetanus immunisation during pregnancy can have long-term effects on the future educational achievement of children. Poor nutrition during pregnancy or in early childhood has been associated with increased infant and child mortality. The closing of schools due to the lockdown has deprived many children of their only nutritious meal through school-feeding programmes. Moreover, children who experienced poor nutrition in-utero or during their early years find that their cognitive levels, educational achievement, and adult incomes are impacted.

## Extending safety nets

The Central government and several State governments have announced a range of important measures to address the economic hardship faced by vulnerable households. They promise to provide free or subsidised food to low-wage households, and direct cash transfers to vulnerable groups such as senior citizens, farmers, rural workers, construction workers and widows. The effectiveness of these safety nets will depend on the adequacy of the relief package, how well they reach the neediest groups, and efficiencies in the delivery system. It is important to note that these are one-off measures intended only for a short period of time. However, the economic and health deprivation caused by COVID-19 will have long-term effects.

More challenging is addressing the long-term health and economic effects of COVID-19. It will require extending current relief measures for a longer duration, to a few years. To prevent human capital deprivation in the future, both long- and short-term relief measures will need to target specific populations like pregnant women and young children. Recent government actions in this direction are helpful but they are focused on the short term. As such, governments need to take a long-term view of mitigating the many economic and human capital effects of COVID-19 and its control measures.

Krishna Rao is Associate Professor, Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins University

## FACT-WISE

### Did SARS-CoV-2 begin from a lab?

The answer is best left to scientists

#### ANANTH KRISHNAN

Theories about the origins of the COVID-19 outbreak have been spreading as fast as the virus itself. Many have focused on the presence of one of China's most advanced virus research laboratories, the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), to suggest SARS-CoV-2 may have originated in a lab.

What does the evidence tell us? The first popular lab theory, put forward in a January 26 article in the *Washington Times*, suggested COVID-19 was the result of biological warfare gone wrong. The article, which likely spawned a million WhatsApp forwards, quoted a former Israeli military officer as saying the virus "may have originated in a laboratory in the city of Wuhan linked to China's covert biological weapons program."

A March 17 study by several virologists, including Kristian Andersen of The Scripps Research Institute and Ian Lipkin at Columbia University, concluded the evidence suggests SARS-CoV-2 was not engineered. The study, "The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2", concluded based on available genome sequence data, that has now been mapped in several countries, that "it is improbable that SARS-CoV-2 emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus." The virus sequence was 96% identical at the whole-genome level to a bat coronavirus. It suggested two possible origins: "natural selection in an animal host before zoonotic transfer" and "natural selection in humans following zoonotic transfer."

If we can now assume the origins were natural, the source remains a mystery. Whether the original source, presumably a bat, was being studied at a lab (we know the WIV did indeed research bat coronaviruses), sold at a market, or infected another animal that was sold at a market remains a matter of pure conjecture.

Could the virus have leaked from the lab in an accident? Some lab leak advocates have pointed to 2018 U.S. State Department cables expressing serious concerns over safety practices at the WIV. Others cite a February 6 study by Xiao Botao of the South

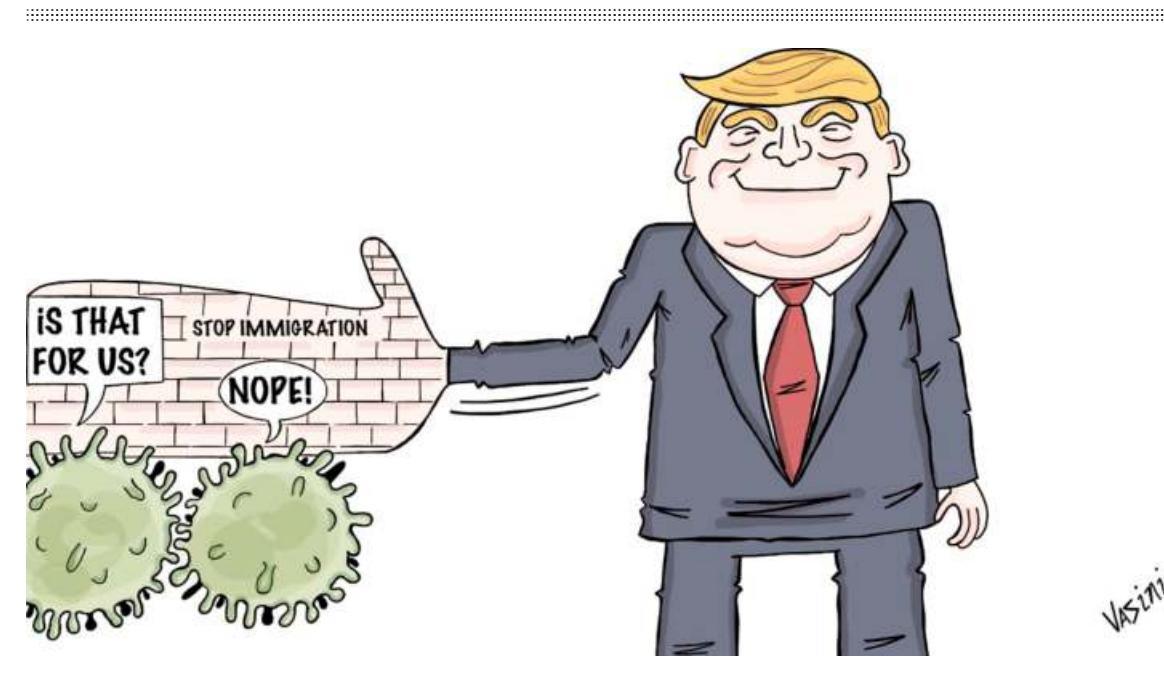
China University of Technology, which has since been deleted. Though widely cited, the paper has not been peer-reviewed, is just one page long, and only cites circumstantial evidence, pointing to the WIV and Wuhan Center for Disease Control being 12 km and 280 metres from the first infection cluster at a seafood market.

The likelihood of lab origins hinges on whether SARS-CoV-2 was one of the viruses being studied at the lab. Scientists at the WIV have denied this was the case. Opening up the lab to foreign researchers might shed some light, but even that may not quell doubts given the secrecy with which such labs operate, more so those located in China. The Chinese government putting in place new rules that require research on the origins to be vetted has only raised more doubts.

What may disprove a lab origin theory is if an intermediate host is identified, suggesting a natural spillover, but that could take years. In a strange irony, scientists at the WIV, including top expert Shi Zhengli, published a paper in *Nature* in December 2018 on the "Origin and Evolution of Pathogenic Coronaviruses" warning of the increasing dangers of spillovers of bat coronaviruses, because of human activities bringing them in close proximity to bats. Their prior research, in fact, helped map the SARS-CoV-2 genome in record time. Now that their warnings have come true, they find themselves being blamed for the new virus.

There is no evidence to prove or disprove a lab leak. In the scientific community, new theories are usually regarded as credible based on the evidence with which they are offered; they aren't believed to be true until evidence disproves them. That isn't, however, how the rest of the world operates. This may explain why the lab leak theory appears to be less popular with scientists than it is with politicians, journalists and foreign policy experts. Which side of the debate you stand on may have less to do with a question of science than your political beliefs, even if this still unanswered question is one perhaps best left to the scientists.

ananth.krishnan@thehindu.co.in

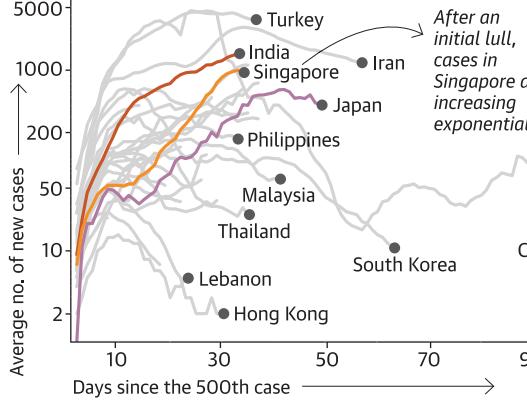


## DATA POINT

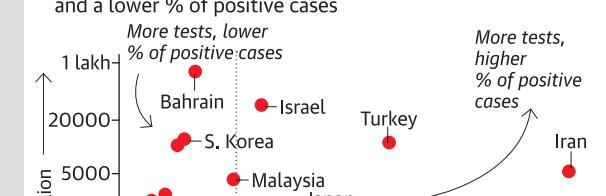
### COVID-19: India's position in Asia

India is among the four Asian countries with at least 25,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 800 related deaths as of April 26. China, Turkey and Iran are the other three. India is among the few Asian countries where the number of cases and deaths everyday are still rising. Importantly, it is among the bottom five Asian countries in terms of testing. While the data on cases and deaths in most Asian countries were available, testing data were available for only 19 nations. By Suman Sen and Naresh Singaravelu

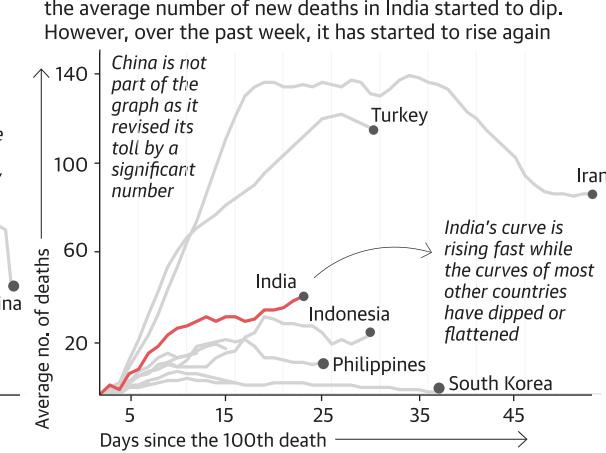
**CASES RISING FAST** | The graph shows the seven-day rolling average of new COVID-19 cases recorded since the 500th case in each Asian country. While the average number in India is rising consistently and at a faster pace than many other countries, it is falling in Turkey and Iran



**TESTING RATES** | The chart plots the number of tests conducted per million people in a country and the % of positive samples among them. India has a low testing rate and a lower % of positive cases



**DEATHS ON THE RISE** | The chart shows the seven-day rolling average of new COVID-19 deaths recorded since the 100th death in each country. After an initial surge, the average number of new deaths in India started to dip. However, over the past week, it has started to rise again



## FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

### Separating the wheat from the chaff in journalism

Journalism will suffer irreparable damage if legal relief is denied to those who provide us the wheat



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

The Press Council of India's (PCI) statement against the attack on the Editor of *Republic TV*, Arnab Goswami, reminded me of a recent Twitter crowd-sourcing effort by Alan Rusbridger, Chair of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and former Editor of *The Guardian*. Mr. Rusbridger wanted readers to provide "examples of chaff". He was referring to American politician Adlai Ewing Stevenson II's assertion that "newspaper editors are men who separate the wheat from the chaff, and then print the chaff." An interesting sentence of the PCI's statement read: "Violence is not the answer even against bad journalism." It is important that not only the PCI but also the government and the courts notice the difference between editors who put out the chaff in the public domain and those who strive to deliver the wheat.

Mr. Goswami moved the Supreme Court seeking a stay on the FIRs filed against him for allegedly defaming Congress President Sonia Gandhi. He approached the apex court a day after at least 16 complaints were filed against him in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Chhattisgarh. His plea was filed on April 23 evening, and the Supreme Court, on April 24, granted him a reprieve for three weeks. One yearns for the courts to display the same swiftness in hearing journalists who, against multiple odds, try to give their readers and the audience substantive news and credible analysis.

## A case languishing in the court

Let us first see the fate of a case in the Supreme Court. A PIL sought permission for private FM and community radio stations to air news. In my column, "Liberating the radio?" (October 21, 2013), I pointed out that news is not permitted and politics is proscribed under clause 5 (vi) of the Policy Guidelines for setting up Community Radio Stations. Many community radio stations have had to confine themselves to broadcasting the developmental agenda of the NGO concerned or the donor agency. The irony is that while several of them have 'community radio'

reporters', these reporters are not expected to produce and broadcast any news. The only news that is permitted is All India Radio's bulletin without any modification whatsoever. When the case came up for hearing before the first Bench of the apex court in 2013, comprising then Chief Justice of India (CJI) P. Sathasivam and Justice Ranjan Gogoi, the judges said, "You rightly mentioned that radio is accessible to everybody. There is no problem in case of TV channels. Only TV channels are allowed to broadcast news. Radio channels have access to every village, nook and corner. We will examine the issue. We will impose some conditions.... (before granting permission)." Justice Sathasivam went on to complete a full term as Governor of Kerala after retiring as CJI, and Justice Gogoi, who was elevated later as the CJI, is now a Member of Parliament. But there is no progress in this case.

## Providing little relief

The Executive Editor of *Kashmir Times*, Anuradha Bhasin, moved the Supreme Court in August 2019 seeking directions to ensure that mediapersons and journalists from Jammu and Kashmir are able to freely practise their profession. "The information blackout set in motion is a direct and grave violation of the right of the people to know about the decisions that directly impact their lives and their future. The Internet and telecommunication shutdown also means that the media cannot report on the aforesaid developments, and the residents of Kashmir thus don't get access to information that is otherwise publicly available to the rest of India," she said.

Early this year, the court came up with some progressive observations but little in terms of relief. The declarations of the Bench of Justices N.V. Ramana, R. Subhash Reddy and B.R. Gavai, on the freedom of speech and expression and the freedom to practice any profession, and about the medium of the Internet, were commendable. However, the Bench did not accept the plea of the petitioners to quash government orders suspending and later shutting down Internet, mobile and fixed-line telecommunication services.

It is ethical to protect the rights of even those who provide the chaff. Journalism will suffer irreparable damage if legal relief is denied to those who provide us the wheat.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 27, 1970

A nation-wide clean-up campaign

Americans across the country observed Wednesday last (April 22) as 'Earth Day' in a massive demonstration of their concern over problems facing the planet and all forms of life – not only man – who live on it. Politicians of all hues, workers and students all joined in the countrywide teach-ins, marches and clean-up campaigns. In New York, the city officially closed down two main thoroughfares to automobile traffic and there were rallies even on Wall Street. Kids, who normally throw trash on streets, were busy cleaning up. Most speakers dealt with what they called the threat to biosphere and man's existence and the need for world-wide action to save environment from pollution. The New York Mayor John Lindsay rode an electric-driven car to an engagement in Brooklyn, then returned by subway to walk with his wife down Fifth Avenue to Union Square. Behind him demonstrators pushed a tree mounted on wheels, their contribution to a healthy environment.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 27, 1920

Educating citizens on law  
(From second editorial)

A writer in the educational supplement to the Times of April 1st, while discussing the sufficiency of the existing foundations of education to meet the growing needs of a complex and delicate social system, considers the importance of the legal element in the production and training of good citizens. The imperative necessity for the infusion of the legal spirit, the spirit of orderliness, of mutual forbearance and acknowledgement of reciprocal rights and duties in the citizens of a State will be quite evident from the prevalence of anarchy and excesses in nations where legality is abused and the legal spirit is decadent. And with the growth of democracy, when legislative responsibility from the hands of the few, more and more into the hands of the people, and the ideas of the average citizen begin to have a direct and immediate influence on matters municipal, imperial and universal, it becomes the duty of the State to prepare the masses for the increased responsibilities of citizenship by giving them an adequate knowledge of the machinery of the Government, an appreciation of the meaning and importance of legal institutions, their justification and plans in national life and thus help them to understand the correct relation between the individual and the State.

ANAND KRISHNAN

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Cases near 27,000-mark with increase of 1,975

On the status of availability of medical equipment and facilities in the country, Dr. Vardhan said the government had already made available sufficient quantities of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) at the State level. "Now we have around 106 manufacturing units which are capable of making them in India itself which will be enough to meet the increasing requirement of our country in future."

"There are now 10 manufacturers of N-95 masks in the country," he said.

Speaking about the availability of ventilators, he said, "Through the efforts of

the government and our various research labs, the production of ventilators by domestic manufacturers has also started and orders have been placed for more than 59,000 units through 9 manufacturers."

Elaborating on the adequacy of the ventilators, oxygen supplies and ICUs that have been made available by the Centre and the States, he said "When we compare the number of active patients who are currently hospitalised, we find that only 2.17% patients have been admitted to ICU, 1.29% patients have required oxygen support and mere 0.36% are on ventilator."

## Industries hobbled by curbs on mobility of staff

Almost 40% of companies faced delays and disruptions, while 23% said such movement was not taking place at all. Even those businesses which have restarted work are still functioning at partial strength. Only 10% of plants were functioning at more than 50% of their full capacity, while only 9% of firms have more than half their workers back on site. "The return of workers is

critical to commencing business operations. Timely and effective transport and safety strategies are imperative to ensure that workers have the confidence to return to workplaces as well as commute on a daily basis," said CII Director General Chandrapratap Banerjee. Almost 70% of respondents expressed fear that they would face criminal cases if any of their workers tested positive.

## Do not lower guard against virus, urges PM

Quoting ancient Indian knowledge, the Prime Minister said, "If you take a small fire, loan or a disease lightly, it will strike back the moment it gets an opportunity... So, there should not be any carelessness at any local place because of over enthusiasm. We need to be always careful."

"India's fight against the coronavirus is people-driven in the truest sense of the term. Along with people, government and administration are fighting it as well. This is the only way we can win over the virus... Every Indian is a soldier in this fight," the Prime Minister

said while noting that everyone is contributing as per their means.

He also asserted that India's decision to supply medicines to countries including the developed ones to fight the pandemic was guided by its ethos and said he felt proud when world leaders thanked India and its people for the assistance.

Mr. Modi lauded the contribution of the States for playing an "active role" in the fight along with efforts of the aviation industry to operate special flights and the Railways in running parcel trains for the movement of medicines and essentials.

## Red tape stalls return of bodies from Gulf

Last week, the bodies of two citizens from Kerala were flown to Chennai from Dubai and were held at the airport for hours because of "protocol" issues, while the bodies of two workers in Kuwait city were prevented from being flown back.

The spurt in such cases prompted Delhi-based activist Jose Abraham of the "Pravasi legal cell" to file a PIL in the Supreme Court, demanding directions to the government to remove restrictions on the repatriation of bodies. According to Mr. Abraham, the PIL could be taken up by the Court this week.

All embassies in the Gulf region are aware of the importance of such situations as often the deceased is a bread earner for the family back home. This particular issue could have been handled better and that is why even the Ambassador ex-

pressed his unhappiness about the development," former ambassador to the UAE, Talmiz Ahmad said about the case of the bodies being returned to Abu Dhabi.

According to NRI activist in the UAE, Girish Pant, who has been assisting families with such cases, at least 12 other bodies of people belonging to different parts of the country including Delhi, Chennai, Trivandrum, Lucknow and Ahmedabad are also in Dubai, awaiting clearances to be repatriated to their families.

"They have a right to see their loved ones and to conduct their last rites with dignity," Mr. Pant said to *The Hindu*. "The government must sort out the regulations to accept and release these remains as soon as possible, so as not to deepen the trauma and grief for their families," he added.

## 6 men who went to the same barber test positive

A waiter at a restaurant there, the man was quarantined after some of his colleagues tested positive. The man, however, escaped to his native Badgaon village in the district.

"We got to know that he had visited a barber who was offering services at home. We traced the contacts of the patient, and took samples of 12 persons,

including the barber," said District Superintendent of Police Sunil Kumar Pandey. Their samples were collected on April 7. But the results came in only on April 23. By then, six asymptomatic patients had already completed their 14-day isolation period. "We will test their samples again before discharging them from hospital," said Mr. Dad.

# Do more testing: Manmohan

Congress calls for comprehensive strategy in dealing with the lockdown-exit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

 There are problems with regard to the inadequacies of the testing facilities. Without aggressive testing facilities, we are not going to conquer this menace

MANMOHAN SINGH, Former Prime Minister



tive. Is there any attempt to play down the magnitude of the problem or is the government unsure that if we go in for enhancing the testing capacity, it does not have the capacity to deal with its implications," he asked. "We hope that the Prime Minister puts out a comprehensive, holistic strategy in dealing with the lockdown-exit and the situation for the next three months, during his meeting with chief ministers on Monday," he said.

Mr. Tewari said that until there was a national plan to deal with disasters or pandemics under the relevant laws, the State governments could not formulate plans to deal with post-lockdown issues. He stressed that information from experts indicated that "the virus is here to stay and India needs to work out a strategy with the virus around".

It is incumbent upon us to collectively apply our minds and see if we can suggest a smart plan as to how do we transition out of this lockdown because of all the issues which have been flagged," Mr. Tewari said.

At an online press conference, Mr. Tewari questioned the government's mo-

the bulk will remain where they are and they need to be given cash and foodgrains," he said.

While Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the government's first financial assistance plan was inadequate, Lok Sabha member Manish Tewari called for a plan for the country to come out of the lockdown.

"It is incumbent upon us to collectively apply our minds and see if we can suggest a smart plan as to how do we transition out of this lockdown because of all the issues which have been flagged," Mr. Tewari said.

He also asked the government to prepare a plan to mitigate the pain of the migrants.

## Assam's BTAD might see Governor's rule

Polls were deferred due to the pandemic

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The COVID-19 pandemic may earn Governor's rule for the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) in Assam.

The State's Governor is the constitutional head of the BTAD that falls under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and is administered by the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).

The BTAD covers four districts of western and northern Assam.

Elections were scheduled to be held for the BTC on April 4 but was deferred indefinitely in view of the pandemic.

The council's current term expires on April 27.

Some political parties, including the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), do not want the term to be extended.

After a meeting with Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal last week, a BJP de-

legation met Governor Jagdish Mukhi and sought imposition of Governor's rule in BTAD.

The delegation argued that the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath would make it impossible to hold the elections in the near future.

The BJP rules Assam in alliance with the Asom Gana Parishad and the Bodoland People's Front (BPF), which has been ruling BTC since its creation in 2003.

The All Bodo Students' Union, an influential organisation, has also appealed against extending the council's term.

The BPF, on the other hand, wants the term extended by six months or elections held soon.

Party leader and Social Welfare Minister Pramila Ranjana Brahma said the election can be conducted as BTAD does not have a single COVID-19 case.

## IN BRIEF



Kanika Kapoor responds to quarantine allegations

LUCKNOW  
Singer Kanika Kapoor on Sunday responded to the allegations of not adhering to quarantine norms after testing positive for COVID-19 last month. "Every person that I have come in contact with be it in the U.K., Mumbai or Lucknow has shown no symptoms of COVID-19, in fact all those tested have been negative," she said. "I stayed quiet not because I am wrong but in fact being fully aware that there have been misunderstandings and wrong exchange of information," she added.

## 2 militants killed in J&K's Kulgam, say police

Srinagar  
The J&K police on Sunday said they killed two militants and were engaging two others in a gunfight in Kulgam. "Two terrorists were killed and two others are trapped. The operation is on," a police spokesman wrote on Twitter. The militants were encircled by a team of the Army, the police and the CRPF during a search operation in Kulgam's Asthal.

"The police and security forces are on the job. Further details shall follow," the police said. The identity of the slain militants or the outfits they belong to are yet to be disclosed. It's the fourth operation in the past one week in south Kashmir.

## Thunderstorm leaves 12 dead in Bihar

Patna  
At least 12 people were killed in rain and thunderstorm, accompanied by lightning, that lashed several parts of Bihar on Sunday. Nine people died and 10 were injured in the Khalbura riverine area of Saran district. The injured were admitted to the district government hospital and some of them were in a critical condition, a district police officer said. Two boys, aged 15 and 12, died at Khaira and Abhaypur in Jamui district. One girl died in Bhojpur district.

## CBI takes custody of Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan

New Delhi  
The CBI on Sunday took custody of Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan in connection with the Yes Bank case. The two were earlier kept in quarantine after they were tracked down to Satara in Maharashtra.

"Non-bailable warrants were pending against the Wadhawans in the case registered in March. The warrants have been executed by taking them into custody," said a CBI official. Both the accused were absconding since the beginning of the investigation, the CBI said. They had also not joined the money-laundering probe being conducted by the Enforcement Directorate.

## Centre effects major reshuffle of officials

Two senior officials from the Prime Minister's Office moved out to important positions

MAHESH LANGA  
AHMEDABAD

In a much-awaited large-scale reshuffle in the Central administration, the Modi government has appointed or reshuffled 23 Secretary-level officials.

Two senior officials from the Prime Minister's Office have been moved out to important positions – A.K. Sharma as Secretary of MSME and Tarun Bajaj as Secretary of Economic Affairs in place of Atanu Chakraborty, who is retiring this month.

The most notable appointment is that of Mr. Sharma, who was one of the most powerful officials in the PMO as he has been with PM Modi since October 2001 when he took over as the Chief Minister of Gujarat.

"The fact that he has been moved to a not very significant department is telling," an insider told *The Hindu*.

However, a corporate honcho said since the Small and Medium Enterprises

(SME) would be the focus of the government after the pandemic, Mr. Modi has posted his trusted aide to concentrate his efforts and energies on it, which forms the backbone of the industrial sector.

Mr. Bajaj's exit from the PMO was expected as his name was doing the rounds for a prized posting in the Finance Ministry.

Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary, Rural Development, has been moved to the Health and Family Welfare Ministry as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) and will take over from Preeti Sudan, who is scheduled to retire this month but has been given an extension in view of the pandemic. However, Mr. Bhushan will take over from her three months after April 30.

*The Hindu* mentioned on Saturday that Mr. Modi is expected to carry out a large reshuffle in the top administration over the weekend since seven Secretaries are scheduled to retire this

month and there are already several vacancies.

Under the orders issued by the Department of Personnel and Training after the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approval, a Gujarat-cadre IAS officer and chairperson of the CBSE Anita Karwal has been made Secretary, School Education and Literacy as mentioned in these columns.

Another Gujarat-cadre officer, R.P. Gupta, has been made Secretary, Environment and Forest and Climate Change.

Tarun Kapoor, Vice-Chair-

man of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), has been made Secretary, Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Information and Broadcasting Secretary Ravi Mittal has been shifted as Secretary, Youth Affairs and Sports. Amit Khare, who was earlier Secretary, I&B, has again been given additional charge of Secretary of the Ministry.

Ranjeet Ranjan, Secretary, Road Transport and Highways, has been made Secretary, Shipping.

Anand Kumar, Secretary, Renewable Energy, has been

shifted as Secretary Culture.

Ravi Kant, Secretary, Food and Public Distribution, has been made Secretary, Ex-Servicemen Welfare in the Ministry of Defence. Interestingly, Secretary, Consumer Affairs, Pawan Kumar Agarwal, has been shifted to the Ministry of Commerce as Special Secretary (Logistics). Nagendra Nath Sinha moved from the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Ministry of Border Management, to the Ministry of Rural Development as the Secretary. P.K. Tripathi, Establishment Officer in the DoPT, has been made Secretary, Steel. Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi has been taken from Jharkhand cadre to be appointed as Secretary, Renewable Energy. Leenaandan is the new Secretary, Consumer Affairs, and Rajesh Verma is new Secretary, Corporate Affairs. Rajesh Chaturvedi is new Secretary, Chemicals and Petrochemicals, while Ajay Tirkey is Secretary, Women and Child Development.

## Go into quarantine, M.P. migrants told

Chief Minister advises returnees to follow lockdown protocols, social distancing

SIDDHARTH YADAV  
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday advised a bunch of migrant labourers who had returned home from other States to isolate themselves for 14 days, maintain social distancing and follow the lockdown.

Interacting with labourers who had returned from Rajasthan and Gujarat in buses arranged by the State government, Mr. Chouhan, through video conferencing, said, "Please keep distance from your family members at home, and stay separately.

Wear masks and wash hands frequently. Follow the lockdown completely."

One of the labourers told Mr. Chouhan, "We were eager

to return home though we were getting food and were provided with stay there. We

will not let them

were missing our families."

Raju, a resident of Alirajpur district who had returned from Gujarat, said, "We had been stuck in Navsari for a month. I am extremely happy to return home." Mr. Chouhan also interacted with residents of Shippur, Sheopur, Guna and Vidisha districts who had returned from Rajasthan.

On Saturday, Mr. Chouhan had announced the State government was making arrangements to bring back its native labourers stuck in different States in buses.

"We have seen them walk back home on roads and rail tracks in the heat. They must be a worried lot. So, we will make all arrangements for their travel, send them back to their villages in buses."

Before boarding buses, the labourers would be screened for illnesses. "I request all villagers to behave in a humane way with them. The returnees will be home quarantined," he said.

Mr. Chouhan said though the government was taking steps, it was doing so keeping the strategy to contain the virus in mind.

## Long drive for CJs to assume charge

Justice Dipankar Dutta and Justice Biswanath Somadder were elevated recently

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA

With air and rail passenger services suspended due to the COVID-19-induced lockdown, two judges embarked on road journeys – each covering over 2,000 km – to take charge as chief justices of high courts at two ends of the country.

President Ram Nath Kovind had on Thursday elevated Justice Dipankar Dutta of the Calcutta High Court as the Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, and Justice Biswanath Somadder of the Allahabad High Court as Chief Justice of the Meghalaya High Court.

Justice Dutta is taking turns with his son at the steering wheel of his car, as the family moves to Mumbai, sources privy to the development said.

He left for Mumbai from Kolkata on Saturday morning and plans to reach the country's financial capital by Monday afternoon with overnight breaks on the way.

Travelling in the opposite direction from west to east, it is Allahabad High Court judge, Justice Somadder, who is driving to Shillong via Kolkata. Justice Somadder, who had served at the Calcutta High Court before being transferred to Allahabad,

set out on the journey from the north Indian city along with wife on Friday evening in an official car, sources said.

Taking turns at the wheel with his chauffeur, the judge reached Kolkata on Saturday afternoon.

He left for Shillong in the evening, after a few hours of rest at his Salt Lake residence here, to reach the Meghalaya capital on Sunday afternoon.

In the south, Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court S. Manikumar who went to his native place Tamil Nadu following the



INTERVIEW | S.A. BOBDE

## 'Executive is better suited to deal with the COVID-19 crisis'

CJI says courts ensure that the rule of law does not suffer and people's lives and properties do not suffer, but they cannot deal with the situation on the ground

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

**Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde** says that the three 'Ms' – money, men and material – are with the Executive, which is the most suitable organ of governance to deal with the problems arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. In a telephone interview, the CJI clarified that hearing of cases through videoconferencing are not in-camera hearings and virtual courts are not closed courts.

The Supreme Court has acted with certain restraint during the lockdown days

■ Imagine if this was an earthquake or floods or whatever... This is really a situation when the Executive gets into action. The usual three 'Ms' are 'men, material and money'. It is very difficult for the court to assume charge and say 'this is what the priority should be' and 'this is what it should be like'. The

Executive is better suited to decide on the 'whats', 'hows' and 'whens' of deploying money, material and men.

Of course, the courts ensure that rule of law does not suffer and people's lives and properties do not suffer. But courts cannot deal with the situation on the ground. What do courts normally do? Courts declare rights, which are given effect to by the Executive. This is not a situation where declaration of

rights has much priority or as much importance as in other times.

So, it comes down to the question of which organ of governance is best suited for the situation. Other than looking at the validity of administrative and executive action and protecting, say, the right to life, the courts have little to do.

The virus has changed the way cases are heard, from open court system to videoconferencing

■ Videoconferencing does not mean courts are closed. Virtual courts are not in-camera courts. When the video links are given, there are people who can see what is happening on the screen



from where the lawyers address the court. We are not prohibiting that. It is not a binary situation.

The distinction made between videoconferencing and open court system is not accurate. A better description would be virtual courts and 'courts in congregation'.

There is no absence of openness in the present videoconferencing proceed-

C Courts are doing their best to cope... they are selecting and prioritising matters they must hear. They are continuing to hear cases through videoconferencing despite constraints

ings. Things are not being decided without anybody coming to know. Litigants can watch the proceedings. Lawyers are present. The other side is there. The court is there. Court staff is there. Live reporting by the media is happening. Even people who are waiting for their cases to be called out are watching.

Yes, maybe the number of

people who could attend like in a court in congregation is reduced. That is because a social distancing norm is in place as it is being done all over the country.

What has changed in the justice administration system after the lockdown?

■ The fact of the matter is there is much less pressure on the courts as very few actions are being taken in the country which normally generate litigation.

Lawsuits are not executing decrees, landlords are not throwing tenants out, there is no employer-employee trouble. Yes, there was total disarray in the labour field... But what I am saying is, normally problems come from recovery,

execution, tenants and landlords, administration action... The police are not as active in law and order area as it was earlier. I suppose criminals are less active in their areas, I suppose, I don't know... So, generally, events that generate litigation are few and far between. To that extent, pressure is also less on the courts and filing of cases is not what it was.

The court is going through a unique experience during the time of the COVID-19 lockdown which has crossed 30 days

■ Too hazardous to say anything now. WHO projection for Maharashtra is a huge number. We don't know what is going to happen in Delhi. We are watching the situation closely and reviewing it once or twice a week. I am doing it. There is a committee set up by the judges to meet with the members of the Bar and take a decision.

with the situation, in particular, they are selecting and prioritising matters they must hear. Courts are continuing to hear cases despite constraints through videoconferencing.

Will the functioning of the court return to normal after May 3?

■ Too hazardous to say anything now. WHO projection for Maharashtra is a huge number. We don't know what is going to happen in Delhi. We are watching the situation closely and reviewing it once or twice a week. I am doing it. There is a committee set up by the judges to meet with the members of the Bar and take a decision.

Over 30% ED officials resume work from office

## 'Blaming a community unfair'

Crisis due to the pandemic is an opportunity to build a new India: RSS chief

ALOK DESHPANDE

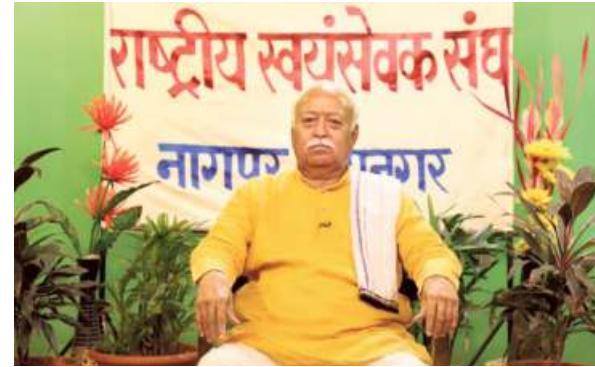
MUMBAI

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday said an entire community could not be blamed for the acts of a few. He appealed to leaders of communities to urge their members not to be part of such acts.

In an address to RSS workers through social media, Mr. Bhagwat said the crisis arising out of the spread of the novel coronavirus should be taken as an opportunity to build a new India that would lead the world. "Both sides should stay away from fear and anger. Those who lead the respective communities must save their communities from it. They should teach their communities that we must not be part of any act that takes place out of fear or anger," he said.

Mr. Bhagwat said that when such a precaution was not taken, two saints were killed in Maharashtra. "Keep the debate over it aside. But should that act be allowed? What should the police do when such an act takes place?" he said.

Earlier, he said the RSS decided in March itself to postpone all its programmes till June-end. "But someone might feel that the government is obstructing their



Swadeshi chant: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat addressing workers online from Nagpur on Sunday. ■ TWITTER

programmes. There is no dearth of people who ignite a fire. It leads to anger and losing sense, resulting in an extremist act. We know that there are forces that want to benefit from it. It is one of the reasons for the manner in which the novel coronavirus has spread in India," Mr. Bhagwat said.

He added that even if someone committed any act

out of fear or anger, the entire community could not be blamed for it. "People with faults are everywhere. Ordinary people must realise that their position should be of co-operation and not of opposition. There are people who use doubts to spread fear and anger. They are playing games. For selfish reasons, many with thoughts like 'Bharat tere tukde honge' work towards this," he said.

Mr. Bhagwat said the crisis stemming out of the novel coronavirus should be converted into an opportunity to create a new India. "Not only the government but also society should participate [in the process]. We will use what is made here. We will buy foreign-made essentials on our own terms. We will have to use swadeshi [products]. We have to encourage swadeshi businesses," he said.

## Food controller answers RTI queries in 12 hours

SIDHARTH YADAV

BHOPAL

Information sought under the Right to Information (RTI) Act usually takes days, even months, to reach applicants. However, a social worker in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district was in for a pleasant surprise.

Raghvendra Dubey, the social worker, got a reply to his query in just 12 hours – that too on WhatsApp. He had submitted the application through email at 9.30 p.m. on April 23. He wanted to know how many people in Kot village had been given free rations under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana, to tide over the lockdown. "Villagers had informed us that rations were not distributed to those eligible," said Mr. Dubey.

On the next day, at 9 a.m., his WhatsApp chimed. The district's Food Controller, Rajendra Singh Thakur, informed him that the supply of 113.75 quintals of rice to 2,275 individuals for each month was pending for two months.

Mr. Thakur was on a previous occasion fined by the State Information Commission for delay in giving out information.

han Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana, to tide over the lockdown. "Villagers had informed us that rations were not distributed to those eligible," said Mr. Dubey.

Australia has informed India that its premier multilateral air combat training exercise – Pitch Black 2020 – scheduled from July 27 to August 14 has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation, defence sources said.

This was conveyed by Air Marshal Meg Hupfeld, Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), in a letter to Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria, in mid-April.

"The RAAF Chief informed of his decision to cancel the exercise this year

due to the current and anticipated impacts of the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19," a defence source told *The Hindu*. He also noted

## Australia cancels premier air exercise

Pitch Black 2020, scheduled to be held in July, scrapped in view of COVID crisis

DINAKAR PERI

NEW DELHI

Australia has informed India that its premier multilateral air combat training exercise – Pitch Black 2020 – scheduled from July 27 to August 14 has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation, defence sources said.

This was conveyed by Air Marshal Meg Hupfeld, Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), in a letter to Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria, in mid-April.

"The RAAF Chief informed of his decision to cancel the exercise this year



R.K.S. Bhadauria

that while the IAF was not participating with aircraft, Ex Pitch Black 2020 would have provided an opportunity for engagement between our personnel, the source said.

### Next edition in 2022

The exercise is also an opportunity to interact with forces from across the globe, a second defence source said. The next edition of Pitch Black is scheduled for 2022.

In the last edition of Pitch Black in 2018, the IAF for the first time deployed fighter

aircraft which it had said would "provide a unique opportunity for exchange of knowledge and experience with these nations in a dynamic warfare environment".

The defence and strategic engagement with Australia has steadily gone up in recent years especially on the bilateral front with naval cooperation at the forefront. The bilateral naval exercise AUSINDEX early last year saw participation of the largest Australian contingent ever to India with over 1,000 personnel.

IGNCA to start online lectures today

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

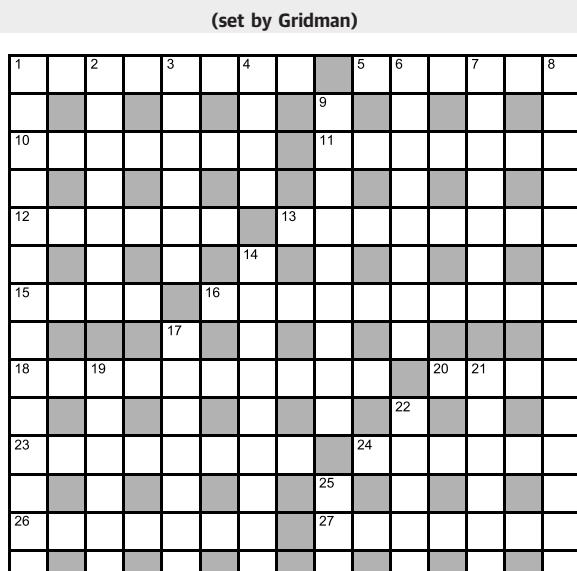
With all its events cancelled due to COVID-19 crisis, the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) has decided to move its lectures online.

IGNCA member secretary Sachidanand Joshi told *The Hindu* that the lectures would be streamed on its Facebook page every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4 p.m.. The first lecture will be on the 'role of art and culture after COVID-19' by IGNCA trust president Ram Bahadur Rai.

## TH CROSSWORD + 12920

(set by Gridman)

There is no lockdown for your brain!  
Try solving a puzzle today!  
@ <https://crossword.thehindu.com>



### ACROSS

- A fine female in big town about to leave relationship (8)
- Quickly leave urn? (3,3)
- Hard task to confine rumble in confused state (7)
- Always in favour of woman, right? (7)
- Entirely missing TN in circulation in a strange manner (6)
- Robin in attempt at UK town to find water container (8)

### DOWN

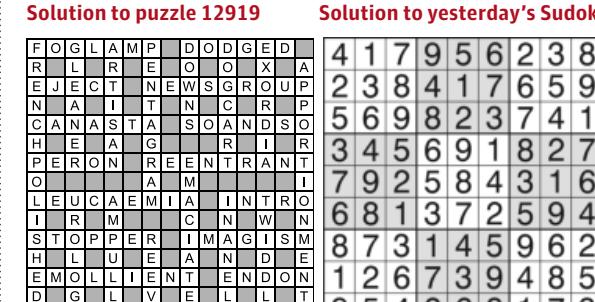
- How people should go to rescue when a bowler falls (2,3,4,2,1,3)
- A number told to manage herald (7)
- Indian valley's up to the French simpleton (6)
- At Indian lake, king gets Tamil leader to chat (4)
- Solve and close up the holes? (8)
- Prevent old boy endlessly avid to have tea spilt (7)
- Befitting hero artfully protects me temporarily (3,3,4,5)
- A fine fellow and kinky diva with sex appeal produce legal document (9)
- Laid up, eastern doctor gets ordered about (9)
- Fracture? Rest for a long time! (8)
- Chunks of text on old broken sunshade (7)
- Get rid of sailor removing cover of man from Warsaw (7)
- To such a person French spa might be the answer (6)
- The old expression of delight? For sure! (4)

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12919 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



## FAITH

### Nathamuni's qualities

In our Acharya we must see God Himself. To understand the Supreme One, we need the help of the Vedas and other difficult texts. But an Acharya is right before us, making it easier for us to worship. If a man had a vessel full of water in his hands, would he not use it? Will he wait for it to rain, collect the rainwater and then use that? When an Acharya is present before us, to show us the right path, is not worshipping him the right thing to do? That is why Alavandar, in his Stotra Ratnam, praises Nathamuni, said Valayapet Ramachariar, in a discourse. A Sri Vaishnava's wealth lies in jnana, bhakti and vairagya, and Alavandar praises these three qualities of Nathamuni. We are drawn to an Acharya because of his qualities. In the Kishkindha Kanda, when Lakshmana speaks about Rama to Hanuman, he extols Rama's virtues and says that he became Rama's slave because of these qualities of Rama. Nathamuni was the sort of Acharya, who would attract people by his possession of desirable traits.

Alavandar uses adjectives adbhuta, achintya and aklishta, when talking of Nathamuni's qualities. His qualities cannot be comprehended by us. They are astounding. His jnana is not something that came to him after tapas. It was the Supreme One's gift to him. His jnana is aklishta jnana. Vishnu Puranam says that only jnana that pertains to Vedanta is jnana. All other knowledge is inferior. Only an Acharya with Vedantic knowledge can help us attain moksha. If an Acharya lacks jnana, can he guide us? Can a leaky boat help us cross a river? Nathamuni's jnana is about the Lord's roopa, His svaroopa, His kalyana gunas etc. His bhakti is like a deep, unfathomable ocean. Vairagya is the quality of not attaching importance to anything that is worldly, and is a characteristic of Acharyas like Nathamuni.

KRITHVI SHYAM

Youngsters facing relationship issues and losing patience with their partners. Employees worried about when (if at all) their next paycheck will come in. Students with hazy academic futures. People living alone who just want someone to talk to. These are some of the phone calls that Amatullah Lokhandwala fields every day. A clinical psychologist, she volunteers with Wellbeing Volunteers United (WVU), an initiative started by Prakriti Poddar, Managing Trustee of the Poddar Foundation. With over 500 volunteers from all walks of life, WVU is a free distress line created during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, offering support in English and multiple regional languages. Its helpline number is 000-121-0980.

"This is a time for action", says Amatullah, when asked why she volunteered. "During and after a pandemic, one should not lose sight of mental health. We are in unprecedented times, and it is natural to need help in coping with our situation."

**Survival tips**

Experts in the field share some coping mechanisms that might make the experience easier for you and those around you.

**Don't lose sight of a routine:** Stick to healthy eating and sleeping habits.

Dr Alka Subramanyam, Associate Professor of the Department of Psychiatry at TNMC and BYL Nair Ch. Hospital in Mumbai, recommends that families plan their schedules together, so that everyone knows what the other is doing, and individual preferences can be accommodated. Seemingly harmless changes to a schedule

# Coping with lockdown anxiety

Maintaining one's mental wellbeing during a pandemic is as important as containing the virus. Here are a few tips to make sure you stay clear in your head

can cause discomfort to others – for instance, if the family decides to eat a meal an hour later than the older adults are used to, it could impinge upon the latter's medication routine or have physiological consequences like reflux.

**Be mindful of each other:** Living through a lockdown is a new experience for everyone.

For youngsters used to going out, staying in can feel like a sti-

fling loss of independence; for those whose work has come to a halt, it can feel like a loss of purpose; even for those older adults who have been home-bound, staying indoors isn't an issue – but if they live with family, having people around all the time can be quite an adjustment. Be mindful of this and find ways to listen to or accommodate each other's concerns.

Being in confined, shared spaces is also bound to cause friction between family members. Anshuma Kshetrapal, a psychotherapist and drama and movement therapist, says, "We are responsible for setting our own personal boundaries." She suggests picking the right time and having a conversation about it with loved ones – it could be something as simple as asking those around you to knock

before entering your room. To make the conversation go smoother, using the "I" language might help (for example, "This is something I would like, and I am checking if it is okay with you; it's not about causing offense or discomfort to you.")

**Minimise "corona time":** If you wish, spend 30-60 minutes in the morning or evening absorbing news and updates about the

**E-LEARNING**

## The buzzword is AI

Atal Innovation Mission's #Tinkerfromhome learning modules are an opportunity to explore AI and its applications

RAMA VAIDYANATHAN

Wake up and rush to a tuition centre at 6 a.m., get back for a hurried breakfast, off to school to cover portions, tests and exams, back home for a quick snack and off to another tuition class. Manage to squeeze in some screen and game time with your friends in between. Does this routine sound familiar? But surely, come coronavirus lockdown, life has changed. In many cases, students have online tutoring sessions for their curricular learning.

A Dell Technologies report claims that 85% of jobs in 2030 have not been invented yet. We did not know that we would be under such a strict lockdown, two months back. As life around us is changing, it is important for students to use this time to focus on computational thinking methods, work on better ways to explore their innate creativity and articulate their ideas better.

**Learning modules**

Can you imagine a situation where you can spend time playing games on the computer and convince your parents you are actually learning artificial intelligence (AI), neural networks and writing algorithms? You are in luck. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), a flagship initiative of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), Government of India, has released #Tinkerfromhome learning modules on AI and gaming.

AI is a new buzzword in the higher education sector. It is not just for the software engineers but is a must-have skill for all. We can see AI applications in agriculture, medicine and automotive sector. The #TinkerfromHome module, suitable for students from class VI to XII, teaches concepts of AI in byte-sized units. These are good primers to learn AI, dabbling in programming and create gaming modules. The modules have been prepared in collaboration with NASSCOM and are available on the AIM website under the Atal Tin-



kering Lab curriculum. Besides, video tutorials and live YouTube sessions are available on the AIM's YouTube channel.

The do-and-learn approach using tutorials and activities are captivating. The weblinks that give an opportunity to experience AI in action are fun. Simple explanations of complicated terms like neural networks, binary programming and algebra are the winning features of the module.

The self-paced modules can be done by students on their own. Students can start their baby steps in programming with Scratch and Python. Scratch is a visual programming software that helps students to create their own animations and visual stories. Assignments are an opportunity to demonstrate creativity. Practise sessions are often games you can play online with friends. The module gives the students just enough background in algebra, probability and statistics to understand machine learning. It is also wrapped up with a note on the ethics of using AI with a few real-life scenarios.

The modules were released to NITI Aayog's Atal Tinkering Lab students initially but are available to all students and schools from the AIM website. Schools like Kaligri Ranganathan Montford Matriculation School, Chennai, have introduced these modules through their class WhatsApp groups. Sai Praseedha, a class VIII student, has completed the module in record time. Her assignment in which she has imagined an AI pen was featured on the ATL Facebook page.

The COVID lockdown, though has been tough on the economy and life in general, has ensured more focus on online education. A focus on recognising creativity and new ideas will for sure develop new age students that we are all looking for.

The writer is a Mentor of Change with Atal Innovation Mission.

**ADMISSIONS**

### Undergraduate and postgraduate courses

#### INSTITUTION: KIIT Group of Colleges

#### COURSES: B.Tech. (CSE ECE, EEE, Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering), M.Tech (ECE & CSE), MBA, BBA and BCA.

#### QUALIFICATION: Candidates must have appeared/passed the 10+2 exam in order to apply for a bachelor's degree, and appeared/passed graduation for master's degree programmes.

**SELECTION:** On the basis of an entrance exam, group discussion and personal interview.

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Will be given to meritorious students and to those from under reserved categories, as notified by the Haryana State Technical Education Society.

**DEADLINE:** June 30

#### Ph.D programmes

#### INSTITUTION: IIIT Naya Raipur

**COURSES:** All disciplines of Engineering (CSE, ECE), Science (Physics, Math), Humanities and Management for the Autumn 2020 session.

**ELIGIBILITY:** The minimum educational qualification for admission is a master's degree with a consistently good academic record in the relevant discipline. Those seeking admission under Institute Scholar category must possess requisite marks/grades in the qualifying exams given below:

Ph.D. (Engineering)-GATE/UGC-NET/CSIR-NET

Ph.D. (Science, Management)-GATE/UGC-NET/CSIR-NET/NBHM

Ph.D. (HSS)-UGC-NET/CSIR-NET

<https://www.iiitnr.ac.in/>

pandemic. "The rest of the time, dedicate to self and to relationships," says Dr. Subramanyam.

For those who live away from their elderly parents or relatives, she advises against causing panic, and instead promotes "cautious concern". Though one might have good intentions, repeatedly calling one's parents to issue instructions could not only increase stress but also ruffle feathers; after all, those at the receiving end might bristle at the idea of their life suddenly being managed by their children, when they have run it themselves all this while.

**Social connectedness:** Make phone and video calls on a daily basis to others. Staying in touch has never been easier.

**Express yourself:** The arts are a representation of the conscious and unconscious thoughts and feelings that we carry around. Giving these an outlet, especially at this time, is important. "Anyone is capable of creating art, irrespective of their range of expression," says Anshuma. She encourages people to spend less time consuming content and more time in creating it. She also advocates spending more time on movement, even if it is just to perform mundane tasks. She warns against taking too much of a "capitalist outlook" towards these activities – it doesn't matter how "good" you are at the arts, or how many calories you burned in a day.

Seek help when you need it: If you begin to feel stress, anxiety or depression and need someone to talk to, do not hesitate to seek help. A list of contacts is provided at the end of this article.

**What's next?**

This pandemic will eventually pass, and life will move on. The return to normality can be an

overwhelming experience, and we need to pace ourselves. Anshuma emphasises on "graduality" being key. If you haven't immediately achieved all you set out to, "Be gentle – Don't punish or criticise yourself," she advises.

The same can be said of organisations too. Prakriti Poddar points out that for many people, the home ecosystem has slowly become the new normal. So returning to work at an office could require a major adjustment. Their thoughts and worries may still be tied to the goings-on at home. It is important for employers to recognise this and demonstrate empathy by giving their employees time to adapt.

Prakriti urges mental health practitioners to use this as an opportunity to collaborate with each other. "We need to work together," she reaffirms. Doing so will not only widen their reach and enable more Indians to get help, but will also introduce standardisations in the way teleservices for mental health are delivered.

The writer is a psychologist and management consultant.  
krithvis@gmail.com

**VALUE ADD**

## Time to take notes

Note-taking aids retention — one glance at them effectively refreshes one's memory

VINEY KIRPAL

mentally consolidating the inputs.

**Process**

The goal of note-taking should be to record on just one sheet, the concepts one by one with their sub-points along with relevant examples/figures/statistics, and so on. One glance at the notes which have knitted all the concepts together into a relationship, refreshes one's memory. Visual representations or graphic organisation of concepts aid better recall. Given below are some possible frameworks taken from the Internet, for exemplification.

The first is a **Fish bone** which helps record factors/features/causes and effects, and so on, of a topic.

The second is the **Web concept**, also called the Spider web concept because it looks like one, names the main concept of a topic at the centre of the web, and has web threads going outwards from the middle in different directions to name all subconcepts.

The third is **Mind mapping**, a popular technique which can capture one or several chapters on one page.

Besides, we can use tree diagrams, tables or flow charts depending on the requirement. You might be familiar with these.

**Benefits**

The advantage of note-taking is that we can record all important concepts of a topic on just one sheet. For revision, we need to study merely 12 pages of notes representing 12 topics. Human beings think in images; so, visual/diagrammatic notes are easily recalled. It is a skill worth mastering. Constant practise in the early stages ensures mastery. The more you take notes while reading/listening, the more will you understand and remember them.

**Mistakes**  
Most students either record every word uttered by the professor, or just a few words, which do not make sense later. They buy cyclostyled notes from the previous year's notes and read these to clear their exams. Obviously, they get lacklustre marks.

Taking notes actively during class helps students focus and understand the topic well. Note-taking aids retention. The skill should be developed as early as possible because, as we move higher in our studies, we are expected to read, grasp and remember more complex, more numerous textbooks/reference books. Note-taking helps in

**ETCETERA**

### Free online student counselling services

In the wake of the COVID-19 led lockdown, Mumbai edtech startup Yocket has announced that they will be providing free access to students across the world. Yocket will be opening up a helpline where students can schedule calls with their advisors on any kind of issues. The company has also decided to provide free webinar services to international universities, so that they can directly interact with candidates and solve their queries. For details, visit, <https://yocket.in/>

### Jindal School of Environment and Sustainability launched

O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU), recently launched its ninth school – The Jindal School of Environment and Sustainability (JSES). It will offer B.A (Hons.) in Environmental and Sustainability Studies. In the near future, JSES will integrate Study Abroad; Postgraduate (Master of Environmental and Sustainable Development, Master of Environmental Legal Studies, Master of Environmental management/Sciences and policy); Doctoral programme (Doctor of Philosophy in Environment and Sustainability).

### BYJU steps up

BYJU'S is providing free access to its complete app to school students till the end of April – students across classes I to XII can download and access BYJU'S learning programmes for free. Students in classes I to III can access math and English lessons, while students in classes IV to XII can learn math and science concepts on the app.

Students can download BYJU'S-The Learning App and Disney BYJU'S Early Learn for free from the Play Store. Students with the pre-installed app (free version) will need to update it in order to access the complete learning content for free. For details, visit, <https://byjus.com/>

### Career guidance and mentoring

iDreamCareer (iDC), multilingual and full-stack career solution and guidance platform, has launched "Industry connect hub", a platform to offer career guidance and mentoring. Students between classes VIII and XII will benefit from this. The hub connects students on a real-time basis with mentors who can help them better understand a career, help with test preparation, college admission process besides scholarship and financing options.

### e-Learning scholarship

Internshala has announced free access to Internshala Trainings, its e-learning platform, for academically bright students from the economically weaker sections. Those currently enrolled in a school or college (including distance education), with a history of good academic performance – a score of 75% and above in class X and XII and college, and whose annual family income is less than ₹2.4 lacs – will be eligible for the scholarship. They can learn varied skills including programming, data science, business, design, creative writing on Internshala Trainings through its short duration online training programs. The last date for the scholarship is May 15. [bit.ly/Internshala-Scholarship](http://bit.ly/Internshala-Scholarship)

### Digital platform for entrepreneurs

Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, recently announced the launch of an online platform 'LiveBuzz - Startup Digital Diaries' for innovators and entrepreneurs to creatively share their innovations and engage with other interested stakeholders.

The platform invites blog posts from innovators and start-up founders that are first-hand accounts of their innovations and experiences. Each blogpost would be enhanced by Webtiles – an embedded, interactive 'nano website' that provides an image slide-show or a short demo video as readers click the highlighted startup name in the article. Webtile feature is developed by an emerging startup Kozhikode startup Gettrix Techservices LLP, which also gets launched today through this platform. [blog.iimklive.org](http://blog.iimklive.org)

The writer is former Professor of English from IIT Bombay. vineykirpal@gmail.com

# The rhythm DIVINE

Don't lose sleep over the pandemic. Here's how to adjust your body's circadian clock to be more well-rested

SWETA AKUNDI

It's 3.45 p.m. here in Chennai, so I am surprised to receive a panic-filled text from a friend in Atlanta, USA. It's 6.15 a.m. there and it is unlike her to wake up so early. "I had such a bad dream," the text read. "In my dream, there was a lockdown due to COVID-19 and nobody could step out of their homes. I slept on the terrace, and I was warned, but eventually shot in the head," she writes from her bed, trying her best to stay calm.

## What lies beneath

Anxiety spurred on by the pandemic, sleeping into dreams, and messing up sleep patterns is a common occurrence, according to pulmonologist and sleep expert Dr. M.S. Kanwar, who is also the Director of Advanced Sleep Disorder Institute, New Delhi.

Dr. Kanwar has just wrapped up a tele-consultation session. "Ever since the lockdown, we have been getting a lot of phone calls about irregular sleep. Not just from people who already have sleep disorders, but also from those who have other lung-related issues." Anxiety, he says is the main cause.

"There is a common association between anxiety and sleep disturbances," he says. Uncertainty about the future is a recurring theme he is seeing right now. "People are worried about their job security, their savings, their loved ones in different cities..." And then there are people who

are 'hooked' to COVID-19 news alerts – the constant stream of statistics.

The stress from thinking about all this reflects in our quality of sleep. You could either have a problem with sleep onset – no amount of counting sheep is enough – or you could have a problem with sleep maintenance, the frequent fracturing of sleep.

"When you have an anxiety overlay, the kind of sleep that gets most disturbed is N3 sleep," he says, referring to the third phase of Non-Rapid Eye Movement sleep.

## Tech specs

Your sleep period is divided into three stages preceding REM sleep, which you cycle through every 90 minutes or so. Stage N1 is when you transition from wakefulness to sleep, to



## Maintain a worry diary

Write down all the things that keep you awake at night, and next to it, list the possible solutions of the concerns. Spending half-an-hour during the day on this will reduce chances of these thoughts coming back to your mind at night. It takes a couple of weeks before it shows results.

Stage N2, when your breathing and heart rate begin to slow down. Stage N3 is when your body regenerates itself.

"It is the deepest, most refreshing stage of sleep. When you are anxious, N1 and N2 sleep, which are the lighter phases increase, at the cost of N3 sleep," he says. Post N3, you move into the REM phase, where you have dreams that you can remember post waking up.

Having vivid dreams by itself is not an indicator of poor sleep, clarifies Dr. N. Ramakrishnan, founder of Nithra Institute of Sleep Sciences, Chennai. "But if the dreams have a pattern of making you worried or anxious while waking up, that needs to be addressed," he says.

At the other end of the

irregular sleep spectrum are those of us who are oversleeping.

"One reason could be sheer boredom. For people working from home, it is best to mimic your earlier routine by establishing defined work hours and work space," he says. "The other reason could be depression, in which case, you would need to consult a professional."

**Sweat more, sleep better**  
Anxiety is just one side of the coin. The lockdown has changed our very bodily rhythms, right down to our dietary patterns. As we juggle between work and domestic chores, for example, breakfast could become brunch and lunch an afternoon snack. This too affects our sleep.

"If you are eating late at night, we advise a minimum of two hours break before you go to bed, during which you should not be lying down. It may cause digestive disorders like gastroesophageal reflux disease, which aggravates insomnia," says Dr. Kanwar.

Couple this with not enough physical exertion to tire you out, and you will have a case of delayed sleep. Dr. Ramakrishnan advises deep stretch exercises and yoga. Strength training too aids a deeper sleep.

However, the timing of these exercises is also important. Traditionally, experts have recommended AM workouts, but a new-

**Terrace workout** Getting enough sunlight in the day helps one sleep better at night

■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

er study from 2018, published in *Sports Medicine*, claimed that you can exercise in the evening as long as you avoid vigorous activity for at least one hour before bedtime.

Despite this, in the current scenario, it is best we stick to traditional advice for a reason simple enough: sunlight.

## Night and day

"Normally, we have an internal clock, a circadian rhythm that the body follows. The stimulus for maintaining that rhythm is light and darkness," says Dr. Ramakrishnan.

"At night, our body starts generating the hormone melatonin. When we are exposed to sunlight the melatonin level falls. Therefore, having darkness at night and being exposed to sunlight in the daytime is essential for maintaining this cycle."

As we are cooped up in our homes, the level of sunlight we receive has gone down, affecting not only Vitamin D levels, but also our ability to generate melatonin at the right time. "That is the reason we specifically ask people to work out in the morning. Many do work out, but they end up doing so indoors, in the late evenings or nights," he says.

Similarly, at night, refrain from any kind of exposure to light as it will "stimulate the rods and cones in your retina, impacting sleep." So scrolling through bottomless pits of social media until it lulls you to sleep is not the best idea. With no downtime, your mind will constantly be awake, and this behaviour exists under normal circumstances as well.

"If you are going to look at your screen even if it is in your bedroom, sit away from the bed on a chair," he says, asking us to be careful of the associations we form with the bed. "Daytime or night-time, do not use your phone, or laptops or even read books in the bed. Remember that the bed is for sleep and sex only."

## Q&A



I'm a student preparing for an entrance examination. Over the past two weeks, I have been feeling exhausted, with body pain in the legs, shoulder and neck. What foods can I eat to help me?

■ The stress of studying, along with long hours of sitting, can result in body pain and loss of energy. This can get worse if you live in a city with high humidity or during rainy weather. To combat this, focus on magnesium-rich foods that can reduce muscle fatigue and even serve as natural muscle relaxants, such as pumpkin seeds (1 tbsp), rajma, chana, peanuts and coconut water.

Biotin: Best-known vitamins for hair growth can be easily found in almonds, cauliflower, mushrooms, eggs and wheat bran. Iron: An iron deficiency can accelerate hair loss. Get it in roasted chana, amaranth chikki or laddoo, lemon, bell peppers, guava or strawberries. Zinc: It plays an important role in hair tissue growth and repair. Load up on dals, dalia and pumpkin seeds to get adequate amounts.

Protein: No matter how many vitamins and minerals you are able to get, unless you're eating enough protein you cannot combat hairfall. Hair is made of protein, and to get enough raw material you must choose at least three different proteins to include in your daily diet: yoghurt, milk, egg, lentils, chicken, fish, or paneer.

■ Various factors can trigger hairfall, which include a nutrient-deficient diet, stress, and water quality. Here's a list of nutrients with their sources that can help in reversing excessive hairfall:

Vitamin A: It helps in hair

Nothing in this column is intended to be, and is not, a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Please seek independent advice from a licensed practitioner if you have any questions regarding a medical condition. Email us your questions at mp\_health@thehindu.co.in

cell growth. Include pumpkin, carrots, sweet potato, spinach, milk or yoghurt.

Vitamin C: It helps in making collagen – an important part of hair structure, and helps in iron absorption, a mineral necessary for good hair. Get your daily dose from amla, lemon, bell peppers, guava or strawberries.

Biotin: Best-known vitamins for hair growth can be easily found in almonds, cauliflower, mushrooms, eggs and wheat bran.

Iron: An iron deficiency can accelerate hair loss. Get it in roasted chana, amaranth chikki or laddoo, lemon, bell peppers, guava or strawberries.

Zinc: It plays an important role in hair tissue growth and repair. Load up on dals, dalia and pumpkin seeds to get adequate amounts.

Protein: No matter how many vitamins and minerals you are able to get, unless you're eating enough protein you cannot combat hairfall. Hair is made of protein, and to get enough raw material you must choose at least three different proteins to include in your daily diet: yoghurt, milk, egg, lentils, chicken, fish, or paneer.

■ Lovneet Batra is a nutritionist, a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, USA; lecturer at IIM Pusa; a consultant to the Sports Authority of India, having counselled the Indian boxing, gymnastics, cycling and archery teams; and a consultant at Fortis La Femme Hospital, Delhi

try to remain positive by saying my prayers, pushing away negative thoughts and doing some basic stretching and bending exercises. I also extensively read all novel coronavirus-related research and news.

I am not sure how I contracted the disease – it could have been from a patient or while buying groceries. I made a list of all the people I had met during the week preceding my sickness and cautioned each of them to take necessary measures in case of any symptoms. Thankfully, nobody has reported sick.

Faeces in the COVID-19 ward. I conversed with him daily, asking him to be extra cautious and safe, rest in between duty hours, and also eat well.

Every morning, I ate oats and fruits, and the other two meals were soft diets – rasam-rice or dal-rice with some vegetables. My wife would place the hot, freshly prepared food outside my room. I also force-fed myself water to keep my body well hydrated.

Even on Day 16, none of my symptoms had subsided and my morale hit rock-bottom when I saw my family stressed out. On Day 18 (April 5), it was almost magical – I felt a little energetic for the first time in so many days. I chose to keep myself in isolation for another 10 days. I asked for a repeat swab test and registered myself as a plasma donor. I feel blessed to have recovered. With my experience, I can understand and help all those infected in a better way. Mostly though, I can now empathise.

(As told to Soma Basu)

Dr. Mehboob Ali is a graduate of Madurai Medical College and is currently working as Consultant Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon in Russells Hall Hospital, U.K. After a month's battle with COVID-19, he returned to work on April 15

# A patient doctor

An Indian doctor based in the U.K. catches the COVID-19. This is his account of emotionally harrowing days in isolation

Over the March 14 weekend, I did a 70 kilometre cycle ride near my home in Birmingham in preparation for an upcoming (now cancelled) 400 kilometre cycling holiday from Copenhagen to Berlin. There was no difficulty during the practice session, but the next day I felt unusually tired and rested the whole of Sunday. The next three days at work were problem-free. On Wednesday evening, while I was leaving the hospital, I began to feel feverish with abdominal pain. Being a doctor, I worked on my instincts. I called my wife and asked her to organise the room at the back of our house with all the stuff I may require for two to three weeks.

I knew our hospitals were struggling with the COVID-19 patient load. So, as per advice by the U.K. government, I chose to quarantine myself at home. By the next morning, I had developed a cough and low-grade fever (100 to 101 degree F). The first seven days I felt extremely fatigued and slept a lot. As my symptoms continued, I got a swab test done on March 25. Three days later, the report revealed I was corona positive. That is when it hit me hard.

**The pain of isolation**  
When you are sick, you like to be taken care of, but the novel coronavirus mercilessly throws you into forced solitude that grips you in a fear of the unknown. My mind refused to rest wondering whether I will die alone at a hos-

## 1. 30 minutes - 2 hours: lying fully prone (bed flat)

## 2. 30 minutes - 2 hours: lying on your right side (bed flat)

## 3. 30 minutes - 2 hours: sitting up (30-60 degrees) by adjusting head of the bed

## 4. 30 minutes - 2 hours: lying on your left side (bed flat)

## 5. Then back to Position 1: Lying fully prone (bed flat)

## WHEN TESTED POSITIVE

Use salt and warm water to gargle and soothe the throat; forcible coughing to push out the phlegm and clearing of throat and chest by sneezing and forcible expulsion at least twice a day.

Perform deep and slow breathing exercises with prolonged exhalation to improve the oxygenation. Combine it with a cough to open the lung tubes and air sacs.

Drink plenty of warm water to protect the kidneys from damage.

Close the lid of the toilet seat while flushing, to avoid the plume with the virus spreading. Virus is shed via cough, saliva, faeces for up to 3-4 weeks.

Discard all infected items safely in double bin liners or plastic bags.

## Armed with experience

(Right) Dr. Mehboob Ali (above)  
Advised sleeping position during bed rest ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT, GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



## Immunocompromised

SUSAN JOE PHILIP

Human bodies are equipped with an immune system that fights infection. "It produces chemicals and releases cells called macrophages that swallow these foreign organisms, thereby protecting us," says Dr. Rajeeva Moger, Senior Consultant Physician, Apollo Hospitals, Bengaluru. But not everyone has a strong immune system and such people are the immunocompromised. "Their body may not produce enough chemicals and macrophages to fight the infection and so they are more likely to get an infection," he explains.

Many factors can make one immunocompromised. It can be diseases, treatments or age. "People having diabetes, kidney failure, HIV and cancer are immunocompromised. So are those undergoing treatment after organ transplant or cancer and those who take steroid medication. Babies and the elderly also have a weak immune system. But immunity can bounce back for a person who has HIV under control or if he is cured of cancer and no longer under

treatment," explains Dr. Moger. Now, in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the immunocompromised are at a higher risk. He warns that people with lung issues like asthma or bronchitis have a higher chance of complication if they contract the disease.

"COVID-19 affects the lungs and theirs are hypersensitive with a low oxygen diffusion capacity. Therefore, they should be extra careful. They should maintain distancing norms and wash their hands with soap and water regularly."

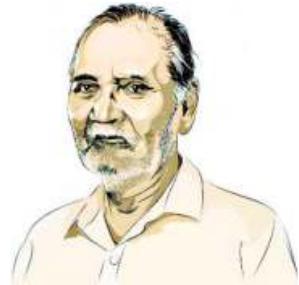
Though there is nothing much that can be done to drastically improve the immunity within a short time, there are lifestyle changes that we can make. "Have a balanced diet rich in micronutrients (fruits and veggies). Sleep for six to seven hours a day, do regular exercise. Also, drink at least two litres of water every day. It is also important to maintain personal hygiene and to keep one's surroundings clean," he says.

In this column, we demystify the buzzwords in wellness

DOWN MEMORY LANE

# Ankle bells and ghazals

Several Eurasians took Indian names and learnt music and dance



R. V. SMITH

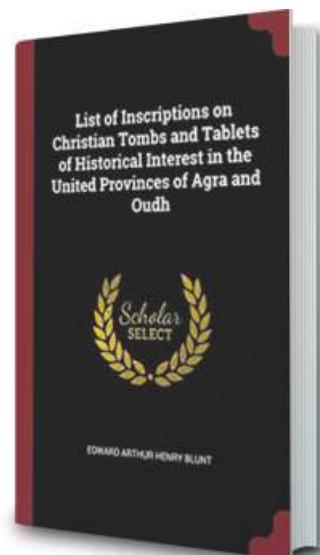
The elite – the Mughals, Pathans, Rajputs, Europeans – sat fascinated as the dance slowly reached its climax. A pause, and Jamiat smiled graciously. This was the time for the instrumentalists to get into action. Time for music, and time for Jamiat's ghazal: My beloved is vexed with me and I am worried. It is my ill-luck that my beloved is angry.

Such stories where the order of the day in the mid-19th century. Jamiat was charming, beautiful, and talented. She knew Persian, Hindi, Urdu and English; above all, she was a poetess.

She composed ghazals, dadras, tappas, thumris and songs in Brij Bhasha and occasionally delighted her admirers with a dance recital. Her real name was Janet and she was an Anglo-Indian, married to Major L. B. Arnston of the 31st British Regiment.

Jamiat was nicknamed Hoori (fairy of paradise) because of her charms. She had drunk deep of Indian culture and tradition and in her own way contributed greatly to the East-West culture affinity.

There were others too, like Malika, whose work is still preserved in the British Museum. Gohar Jan was the *beauté du diable*, the best known dancer of her day. They



were all Armenian by decent and belonged to Bengal.

Jamiat died at Agra on January 5, 1885, aged 67, and Major Armston built a beautiful monument on her grave in the small secluded cemetery of Agra Fort. The cemetery was originally used for the burial of the British who died during their refuge in the fort in 1857-58. The monument is now a heap of rubble.

The tomb in the cemetery suffered at the hands of vandals more because they were in an out-of-the-way place. That may also be one reason why they do not figure in E.A. Blunt's book *List of Inscriptions on Christian Tombs and Tablets of Historical Interest in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, which he compiled in 1911.

Another Tomb which escaped Blunt's notice was that of Sitara Begum. It is still intact and is among several seemingly Muslim graves in a corner of Delhi Gate of Agra Fort.

Sitara Begum who was a "belle aime" of Lieutenant Shariph, died

on December 30, 1804. On one side of her red sandstone monument is an inscription in English on a white marble tablet, on the opposite side was another in Persian, which has been pilfered.

It is likely that Blunt mistook these tombs and others nearby for Muslim monuments because of the names of those whom they commemorate with Persian or Urdu inscriptions. On this basis some writers asserted that Jamiat and Sitara were Muslims.

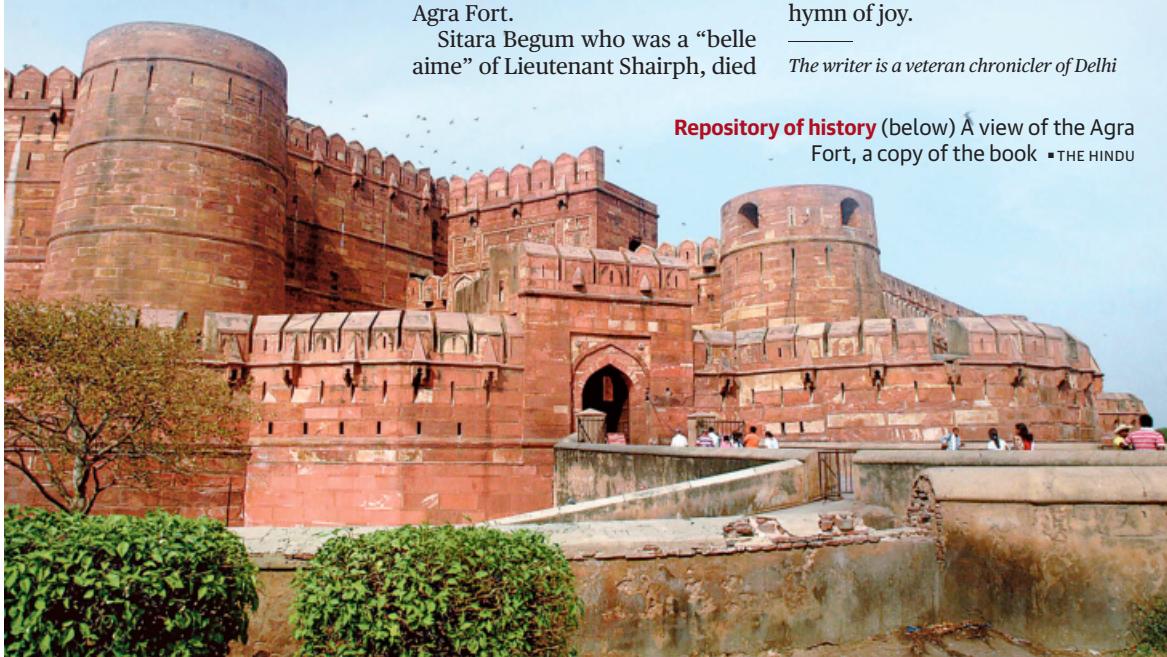
Apart from what is recorded about them, the fact remains that Eurasians often adopted Indian names like Malika Jan, Ghor Jan, Raqqia Begum (whose brother was Mirza Suleiman Shikoh Gardner).

There are other examples, like Benjamin Montrose, an Urdu poet who wrote under the pen-name of "Muztar"; and Nawab Zafar Yar Khan, son of the redoubtable General Walter Reinhardt Somroo, whose real name was Aloisius Louis Reinhardt.

The inscription on the graves of Jamiat and Begum, which I traced with some difficulty some years ago, prove that they were Christians. For example, the last couplet of the Urdu inscription on Janet Armston's tomb reads: "Jamiat has risen from the world: Succour her on Judgment Day (Go) through your Mother (the Virgin Mother)."

These grand Eurasians are dead and gone. But when the sarangi whines and the wine flows easy, some aged scion of the few remaining families of yore does hark back to the past and Jamiat the Hoori dance again in a cloud of happiness which disappears ere long. Only her name remains on the lips of the supplicant of the hymn of joy.

*The writer is a veteran chronicler of Delhi*



Repository of history (below) A view of the Agra Fort, a copy of the book • THE HINDU

POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



# Ghazal for a cause

Minu Bakshi, on how the Urdu poet in her is reacting to coronavirus with couplet after couplet

MADHUR TANKHA

Her mother tongue is Punjabi, but Minu Bakshi is at her best when it comes to penning and singing Urdu couplets. Her latest verses, on how the coronavirus has created havoc worldwide, contain strong sentiments that call upon us to do a bit of introspection. Prof. Bakshi feels that it is human beings' conflict with nature that has made life miserable for everyone on the planet.

The JNU professor of Spanish released a *ghazal* before the lockdown was implemented in Delhi. The first *naazam* was released on Instagram and YouTube on March 22. As the situation deteriorated, it pained her to see the suffering on a global scale. She translated her pain into poetry. The next Urdu couplets were uploaded on 30th March, followed by four more instalments. Prof. Bakshi plans to publish them and also to translate them into Spanish.

Excerpts from a conversation.

What drove you to pen lyrics related to the coronavirus?

Poets are sensitive beings. They feel strongly – more than most normal people. When you feel concern about certain issues, be it love,

happiness, sadness, anything that has an effect on your being, the poet's pen flows. That's what happened during this time. This pandemic and what it brought with it made me really think hard about life, the fragility of life, the helplessness of mankind in a situation like this. How ruthless we have been with

nature. In fact we are responsible for this. Cutting trees, shrinking forests, destroying mountains, thinking we are gods. All this and more came out in the poems.

man thought he was invincible; today we see otherwise. So my poetry is all about undoing what we've done to nature, ask forgiveness, and pray to almighty.

When did you start writing in Urdu?

Even though I never formally studied Urdu, all my poetry flows only in this language. I've read so many Urdu poets and so deeply love the language that my natural voice of poetry is Urdu. It's the language that best captures my sentiments in the least number of words. It is the language of love and romance and that has been the bulk of my poetry before this.

Which is your favourite poem from your collections?

*Abhi to waqt hai bande, Abhi to jaan hai baqi ... Sanwaren ge bigarha jo, abhi insaan hai baqi.* This translates into, 'There is still time people, we are still alive. We'll fix the wrongs we've done, we still have faith.'

Is there anything you're doing in terms of reaching out to the less privileged?

We are doing our bit as a family and providing food to a large settlement of underprivileged families in Gurugram, on a daily basis.

In myriad moods Minu Bakshi

\*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



*CRACK*  
HIGH FLY ILL WHO'S OUT THERE?  
THERE'S SOME COMMOTION ON THE HORIZON. ALIENS! SPIT GRABS HIS ASTLEY!

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



NO WONDER IT'S SO NICE IN HERE.  
NO BAD NEWS IN THE HAPPY BOX.

# 6 weeks on, Spain lets children step out

Hard-hit European countries relax restrictions as cases plateau; total COVID-19 toll crosses 2,00,000

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MADRID Spanish children were allowed outside on Sunday for the first time in six weeks as countries eased lockdown measures and reopened economies gutted by the COVID-19 pandemic that has infected nearly three million people worldwide.

Governments from France to Italy and the United States are gearing up for a partial easing of severe restrictions that have kept more than half of humanity indoors for weeks on end.

Coronavirus cases around the world rose to 2.9 million and deaths have doubled since April 10 – hitting nearly 2,03,000 people on Sunday – with well over half of them in Europe, according to an AFP tally.

## COVID-19

The daily toll in Western countries appeared to be levelling off and even falling, but fears abound in many places of a second surge after restrictions on movement are lifted.

### New rules

Spanish families embraced new rules allowing children outside for the first time since March 14, with kids hopping on bicycles and scooters on the streets of Madrid – some wearing small masks and gloves.

Under the revised rules, children are allowed out once per day between 9.00 a.m. and 9.00 p.m., but cannot venture more than one kilometre from their homes. The new rules were rolled out as the death toll in the hard-hit country dropped to 288 people on Sunday, the lowest since March 30.

With more than 23,000 fa-



New-found freedom: A woman and children walking in Seville, Spain, on Sunday. ■ AFP

talities, Spain has the third highest death toll in the world after Italy's 26,000 and more than 53,000 in the United States. Other hard-hit countries across Europe are also starting to look toward a slow crawl back to normality.

Italy on Sunday said schools would reopen in September, while many business could resume work next week, and France was expected to unveil details of its de-confinement plan on Tuesday. Belgium said schools and businesses will reopen from mid-May, while Germany started to reopen some shops last week.

U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly said he wants to resume business in the world's biggest economy, even as medical advisers have cautioned against easing lockdown too soon or too fast. Mr. Trump faced criticism after suggesting that coronavirus could be treated

by shining ultraviolet light inside patients' bodies, or with injections of household disinfectant.

### Trump's daily briefings

He lashed out at the media on Twitter, accusing journalists of posing hostile questions, and suggested his daily coronavirus briefings were not worth his time. "They get record ratings, & the American people get nothing but Fake News. Not worth the time & effort!" he wrote.

The novel coronavirus is believed to have originated in a wet market in Wuhan. While new reported cases appear to have plateaued at about 80,000 a day, the world remains in wait as companies and governments race to develop treatments and, eventually, a vaccine.

Meanwhile in Beijing, a new set of regulations were introduced to combat the pandemic, banning "uncivilised" behaviour such as not covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

## No remaining cases in Wuhan hospitals

REUTERS

SHANGHAI The Chinese city of Wuhan, where the global COVID-19 pandemic began, now has no remaining cases in its hospitals, a health official told reporters on Sunday.

The novel coronavirus is believed to have originated in a wet market in Wuhan.

"The latest news is that by April 26, the number of new coronavirus patients in Wuhan was at zero, thanks to the joint efforts of Wuhan and medical staff from around the country," National Health Commission spokesman Mi Feng said at a briefing.

The city had reported 46,452 cases, 56% of the national total. It saw 3,869

fatalities, or 84% of China's total. Wuhan and the province of Hubei were put in lockdown near the end of January, with roads sealed, trains and planes cancelled and residents unable to move freely for more than two months. The city is still testing residents regularly despite relaxing the restrictions. The focus has since shifted to the northeast border province of Heilongjiang, which has seen large numbers of imported cases entering from Russia.

China's health authority had earlier reported 11 new cases on the mainland on April 25, down from 12 the previous day, with no fatalities.

## Pandemic is China's biggest crisis since Tiananmen, says academic

There was certainly a cover-up at some levels, says McGregor

ANANTH KRISHNAN



Richard McGregor

China's response to COVID-19 has shown both the weaknesses and strengths of its system, says Richard McGregor, Senior Fellow at the Lowy Institute and author of *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*, adding that the Communist Party is fighting battles on many fronts both at home and abroad.

Is the pandemic the Party's biggest challenge since Tiananmen and 1989?

■ Every challenge looks like the biggest crisis, but I would say the answer is yes. The global financial crisis in 2008 was a big challenge. They got through that through a massive stimulus programme. This time is a little bit different. We've not only got what is going to be an extended economic downturn, plus a global political fight over the origins of the virus, and responsibility and accountability for it. They are fighting on a number of fronts.

China's recovery has been portrayed at home as a vindication of its political system. Has this narrative been successful?

■ Can you imagine even a month ago that China would be heralding its handling of this crisis as a vindication for their system? We should say, of course, that in some respects, that sort of propaganda is as much directed internally as it is externally. But I think this really shows the deep weaknesses and also some of the strengths of their system.

There was certainly a cov-

er-up at some levels. There was a bureaucratic mess, fighting between the localities and the centre. In other words, a lack of openness, lack of transparency, endemic bureaucratic problems, and a fear of offending and reporting to the centre. Once China started to take it seriously, we did see a quite remarkable demonstration of the power of the party-state, when you think what they managed to do in a short period of time. I don't believe every Chinese figure to the tee, but there's no doubt that we've got rapidly declining infections and large parts of the country getting back to normal. We saw the good side and the bad side of the system.

Will China emerge from this stronger or in a worse-off position globally?

■ It's really hard to say. In many Western countries, China is going to be in a worse off position. The U.S.-China relationship continues to break down at a rapid pace. China's relations with a lot of European countries – France, Germany, Britain – has been strained by this. It's also going to depend on what happens in the U.S. with Trump in the [presidential] election, and whether the U.S. economy and political system can

■ I think it's more long-lasting... The boom in outward Chinese FDI, which we saw in 2015-16 – that's over for the moment. It might not matter as much to China as it did a few years ago because China itself is advanced far along up the industrial chain. But yes, I think this is now a permanent feature of the landscape.

## Herat struggles to implement lockdown

People in Afghan town violating social distancing norms

REUTERS

KABUL

Afghan authorities are struggling to implement lockdowns to prevent the spread of the coronavirus in a province bordering Iran where the outbreak is widening due to an influx of Afghan returnees and men refusing to adhere to social distancing. Herat, the country's third largest city and a bustling province in eastern Afghanistan, has reported a high number of cases.

The country is grappling with acute shortages of testing facilities at a time when violent clashes between government forces and the Taliban insurgents show no signs of decline.

The medical and security crisis has worsened in the province as thousands of men continue to ignore social distancing rules and attended a mass religious gathering at the start of the holy month of Ramzan. "We request people to follow the rules but they just don't lis-



Breaking fast: Residents distributing food in Kandahar. ■ AFP

ten, the religious preachers are not obeying too," said Jai-lani Farhad, a spokesman for Herat's provincial Governor.

Verified photographs and videos shared on social media of the event organised last week on a vacant plot of land highlighted the challenges faced by officials to prevent gatherings organised by powerful religious preachers. As of April 26, Afghanistan reported 1,531 cases of COVID-19 and 50 deaths, but international ob-

servers and medics on the ground believe the real number of infections could be much higher.

At least 390 infected people are from Herat province, which recorded eight deaths, with the majority of positive cases found among Afghan returnees from Iran, said Health Ministry officials in capital city, Kabul.

Up to 2,000 Afghans cross the border from Iran, a global coronavirus hot-spot, every day into Herat, where there are just 10 ventilators.

## Kim Jong-un's train' spotted at Wonsan town

Site publishes satellite images from N. Korea's east, indicating leader's presence

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SEOUL

A train likely belonging to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has been spotted at a resort town in the country's east, satellite photos reviewed by a U.S.-based think tank showed, as speculation persists over his health.

The train was parked at a station reserved for the Kim family in Wonsan on April 21 and April 23, the respected 38 North website said in a report published on Saturday.

38 North cautioned that the train's presence "does not prove the whereabouts of the North Korean leader or indicate anything about his health".

"But it does lend weight to reports that Kim is staying at an elite area on the country's eastern coast," it said.

### Rumours on health

There has been growing conjecture about Mr. Kim's health since his conspicuous absence from the April 15 celebrations for the birthday of



Kim Jong-un in Hanoi, Vietnam, last year. ■ AP

outlet run mostly by North Korean defectors, has reported Mr. Kim underwent a cardiovascular procedure earlier this month and was recovering at a villa in North Pyongan province.

touch with him. "We have a good relationship with North Korea, as good as you can have," he said. Mr. Trump has met Mr. Kim three times in historic summits and has voiced admiration for him, although hopes have dimmed for reaching a comprehensive agreement.

Reporting from inside the isolated North is notoriously difficult, especially on anything to do with its leadership, which is among its most closely guarded secrets.

On Thursday, citing an unidentified government official, South Korean broadcaster SBS reported that Mr. Kim appeared to have been in Wonsan for at least the past four days and would soon return to the public eye.

The report added that the military was monitoring Mr. Kim's train, which had been seen in Wonsan, while his personal jet – frequently used by Mr. Kim on his trips to Wonsan – remained in Pyongyang.

## Yemen separatists declare self-rule in south

STC to take control of Aden port

REUTERS

ADEN

Yemen's main southern separatist group announced early on Sunday that it would establish self-rule in areas under its control, which the Saudi-backed government warned would have "catastrophic consequences". The move threatens to renew conflict between the UAE-backed separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) and the Saudi-backed government, allies in Yemen's war.

The STC is one of the main groups fighting against the Houthis as part of a coalition led by Saudi Arabia. But the separatists have clashed with government forces in the past.



The separatist flag of Southern Transitional Council, in Aden. ■ AFP

## Tech-challenged Japanese struggle to work from home

Due to lack of up-to-date IT systems, offices in the country have not been able to nurture flexible work practices

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO

When the Japanese government declared an emergency to curb the spread of the coronavirus earlier this month and asked people to work from home, crowds rushed to electronics stores.

So much for social distancing.

Many Japanese lack the basic tools needed to work from home. Contrary to the ultramodern image of Japan Inc. with its robots, design finesse and gadgetry galore, in many respects the country is technologically challenged. But the bigger obstacle is Japanese corporate culture, experts say. Offices still often rely on fax machines instead of email. Many homes lack high-speed Internet connections, and documents often

must be stamped in-person with carved seals called "hanko," which serve as signatures. So many Japanese rarely cannot work remotely, at least not all the time.

A survey by YouGov, a British market researcher, found only 18% of those recently surveyed were able to avoid commuting to school or work, even though a relatively high 80% of people in Japan are afraid of catching the virus.

### No clearly defined job

One factor, says Yuri Tazawa, a pioneer in Japan of "teleworking," or working from home, is that Japanese workers often do not have clearly defined jobs like Americans do, so companies expect their staff to be in constant communication with each

other, working as teams. Ms. Tazawa is offering an online crash course on how to immediately start working from home, using just mobile phones, if a personal computer is not available. She calls the approach a "hypothetical cloud office." Unlike regular Zoom meetings, in which workers check in and out for discussions, she

is proposing using Zoom for just voice connections, keeping it on throughout the work day so that employees can feel as if they're in the same room.

Some of Japan's biggest companies, like Toyota Motor Corp. and Sony Corp., already have announced work-from-home policies. The main problem is with the

small and medium-sized businesses which make up about 70% of the economy.

Nicholas Benes, a corporate governance expert who has been offering a free webinar on teleworking, said interest was surprisingly low.

A lack of up-to-date IT systems means Japan lags in nurturing flexible work practices, office rules, management methods and even attitudes toward remote work. It's one factor contributing to relatively low labour productivity. "Telework requires that managers trust and delegate much more decision-making to employees because it takes too much time in email or Skype to check with the boss," said Mr. Benes. Japanese companies still rely on nuances of face-to-face interaction, or

being able to "smell the air," or "read the air," Mr. Benes said.

### Fax is sacred

And then, there's the fax machine.

A third of Japanese households have faxes, according to a government study. Many respectable institutions shun emails and insist on receiving documentation by fax only.

Futoshi Takami, a "salaryman," as Japanese workers are called, says he had to work from the office until mid-April, when he was finally told he could work from home. But so far, he's gotten few directions about what he's supposed to be doing. He might soon be assigned to take some online classes, he said.



Work travel: Commuters in a train in Tokyo in March. ■ AP

## ASK US

N. SREEKANTH

**Q.** My parents are senior citizens. My father has subscribed to a group health insurance policy covering self and spouse (my mother) through a nationalised bank where he has a savings account. The annual premium for this policy is paid through a cheque drawn on this account. If I make a deposit into this account towards the premium, can I claim deduction under section 80D?

T.S. MAHADEVAN

**A.** Under section 80D, an assessee can claim deduction for the health insurance premium paid by you for yourself, your dependants (spouse and children) and your dependent parents based on the limits prescribed. In your case, if you are going to pay the premium on behalf of your parents, then you can claim the benefit of the deduction up to ₹50,000 as they are senior citizens. Further, the insurance policy should be in the name of the person claiming the deduction.

**Q.** My daughter had taken a health insurance policy for her mother a few years back. Now, she has left for higher studies. She has not claimed any deduction u/s 80D till date. Now, I want to know whether the premium paid by her can be claimed by her mother u/s 80D?

A.P. JAYARAJAN

**A.** Under section 80D, an assessee can claim deduction for the health insurance premium paid by him for self, dependants (spouse and children) and dependent parents based on the limits prescribed. In your case, only your daughter can claim the benefit based on the limits prescribed in the section. You may change the proposer's name from that of your daughter to your wife's for claiming the benefit in future and the payment done by your wife.

**Q.** I am a central government servant. I have invested ₹1 lakh in PPF and ₹50,000 in SBI Insurance. My NPS tier 1 deduction is ₹68,000. Will I be able to claim extra ₹50,000 benefit apart from the ₹1.5 lakh?

AMIT MISHRA

**A.** Under 80CCD(1B) of the Income Tax Act, any individual making a voluntary contribution to the prescribed pension fund/scheme shall be allowed a deduction of up to ₹50,000; this is over and above the limit of ₹1,50,000 under 80C that can be availed of.

**Q.** Is the education loan to fund studies abroad eligible for deduction under 80E? What is the document required for claiming the deduction?

CHARAN KUMAR P. R.

**A.** Deduction under section 80E can be claimed for the interest paid on education loan for higher studies, including foreign studies, taken from any bank or approved financial institution or approved charitable institution, up to 7 assessment years from the year of repayment, making it eight assessment years.

Although there is no mention about any document, in the act or the rules, to be maintained, it is advisable to obtain a loan certificate from the financial institution clearly mentioning the interest and principal portion as a record to be preserved.

**Q.** My friend, a senior citizen, has medical insurance for ₹1 lakh. Recently, he had undergone a heart surgery, which cost him about ₹3 lakh. The insurance company paid him about ₹50,000. Could you please explain the procedure for claiming income tax deduction for medical expenditure under sections 80D, 80DD, 80DBB?

M.P. KANNAN

**A.** Under 80D, in case of senior citizen, a deduction of up to ₹50,000 can be availed of for the medical insurance premium paid for self and dependents.

No other expenses incurred for surgery and medicines can be availed of as you are insured under Mediclaim policy. It is also to be noted that the benefit under sections 80DD and 80DBB cannot be availed of as they pertain to specific disabilities for dependents and self, respectively, such as autism, cerebral palsy, among others, and does not cover heart surgery.

(The author is partner, GSS Associates, Chartered Accountants, Chennai)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

## MIND YOUR MONEY

# Why insurance doesn't tango with investment

Combining two financial products can never be a good idea as one of them can become redundant at any time

GAURAV MASHRUWALA

Many investors take decisions to invest funds in equity markets based upon the IIP which the Government of India releases.

IIP is the Index of Industrial Production. It is a barometer of performance of certain manufacturing sectors in the country. IIP would have direct impact on the movement of equity markets.

**My IIP**

Many a time, the same investors' own 'IIP' is in a mess. Here the interpretation of 'My IIP' is 'My Insurance or Investment Plan.' They either don't have an insurance cover or it is combined in the form of life insurance policies that also have investment components.

**Why take life insurance**

Life insurance policies in India are taken either to save tax or

help some relative, friend, associate who is an insurance agent to achieve his or her insurance premium collection target or number of policies target.

A friend of mine from Ahmedabad always says jokingly, most Indians die in the months of February or March. This is because many of us purchase life insurance policies in the month of February or March to save income tax.

Whenever a life insurance policy is purchased along with an investment component, I find it weird. Why purchase a policy which gives benefit if the insured does not die? If the individual is so certain that he is not going to die, then, why purchase the insurance cover?

In that case, opt for a pure investment product. This will ensure that the entire amount, equivalent to the premium, will be invested instead of a portion of it being used for obtaining

life insurance cover.

Also, as a cardinal principle, never combine two financial products. For some reason one does not perform or its functionality is no more needed in an overall financial plan, it cannot become redundant.

"At the time of taking a home loan, we had also taken a life cover to ensure that in the case of any eventuality to me, Smita and children can repay the outstanding home loan from the proceeds of the life insurance cover," said Venkatesh, an IT professional from Bengaluru.

"Because of prudent financial planning, we have paid back the home loan about five years earlier than originally planned, however, we have to continue paying life insurance premium as there is an investment component. If we surrender or stop the policy now, we will lose substantially," he added.

Somewhat similar is the story of Harsh Jha. Immediately after his marriage, he purchased a life insurance cover along with an investment component. Over the years, he and his wife Swati have earned and created substantial wealth.

Once wealth crosses a particular level, there is no need for a life cover. This is because, in the case of death, there will be sufficient wealth to meet the financial responsibilities of the family.

**Death of family member**

Let me explain this briefly. In the case of the death of a family member, there will be an emotional loss. If that family member is also generating income, surviving members will suffer a financial loss as income earned by him or her will stop.

Therefore, life insurance is

needed for all the members of his or her family. In case of the Jha family, if they were to discontinue the policy as they have accumulated substantial wealth and death of an individual will not cause any financial loss to their surviving family members, their life cover would also come to an end.

+

In both the above instances, if there were separate life insurance covers and investment plans based on the financial planning strategy, appropriate manoeuvring could have been done.

The example of Jash and Bijal was also interesting. They had purchased a life insurance policy along with an investment plan, popularly known as ULIP. Once wealth crosses a particular level, there is no need for a life cover. This is because, in the case of death, there will be sufficient wealth to meet the financial responsibilities of the family.

However, never combine insurance and investment instruments. Before tracking IIP numbers, focus on 'My IIP – My Insurance or Investment Plan.'

(The writer is a financial planner and author of 'Yogic Wealth')

## COVER NOTE: RIGHTS &amp; RESPONSIBILITIES

## It's just more than taking a policy

The insured has some obligations and common sense procedures to follow, too

K. NITYA KALYANI

We saw some basic insurance principles that govern the contract in the last instalment of Cover Note.

Let us see some more principles that spell out rights and responsibilities, and some obligations and common sense procedures you should follow.

You have entered into an insurance contract with a valid insurable interest (financial ownership in the event of a loss) in what is insured and are conducting yourself with utmost good faith by disclosing all material facts.

When a loss takes place, at which point you will be entitled to prefer a claim, you have to observe the principle of loss minimisation (act as a prudent uninsured) and you will be indemnified (compensated) for your loss as per policy terms.

After this comes the principle of subrogation.

This means the insurer, after paying you the claim as per the terms of the policy now comes into all your rights against the party or parties that caused your loss.

If your property was damaged by somebody's vehicle, in the normal course you would try to get him to pay



**No room for error:** The insured must see to it that accurate information is given in the proposal form. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

for the repairs. Since you are insured, the insurance company steps in and compensates you. Once that is done, your right to compensation is transferred to the insurance company which can proceed against them to recover their expenses. (If they recover anything in excess of that, you are entitled to it!)

There are sixth and seventh principles of insurance that are not a part of your responsibilities but form the bases for determining the liability and its extent under an insurance contract.

They are the principle of proximate cause and principle of contribution, and apply under certain circumstances.

Apart from the legal foundations of insurance, which gives you these responsibilities, you have other responsibilities when you buy a policy. Ensure correct information in your proposal form. This includes personal and contact information that should be updated as and when required.

**Aadhaar link**  
These days Aadhaar is linked with insurance policies, a process that protects your interests. So, please ensure the proposal form and the policy spell your name and give your address as it appears in your Aadhaar.

PAN number is also a necessity in insurance proposal

forms and later, in case of claims. If an error occurs, immediately pursue it with the insurance company and get it corrected.

Always pay for your policy via cheque or Internet banking or any recorded method of payment such as credit cards. This establishes your premium payment because, according to Indian law, risk commences only after premium is received by the insurance company.

If you issue a cheque, do verify that the debit appears in your bank account and maintain a copy and a record of all the documentation you share with your insurance company such as cheque number, bank statement, copy of your proposal form (which the insurance company has to supply to you as per regulations when they issue the policy), any correspondence with the insurance company and, of course, the contact information of your insurance company branch and the agent who sells the policy.

Create a method to track the renewal dates of various insurance policies.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

## BLACKBOARD: DEBT FUND CLOSURE

## Why Franklin closed 6 funds

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR

What has Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund done?

Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund has decided to wind up six debt funds with combined assets under management of almost ₹26,000 crore. It said this had been done on account of illiquid, low-rated instruments in their portfolio.

The schemes that have been shut are Franklin India Low Duration Fund, Franklin India Dynamic Accrual Fund, Franklin India Credit Risk Fund, Franklin India Short Term Income Plan, Franklin India Ultra Short Bond Fund and Franklin India Income Opportunities Fund.

Will this hit other fund houses or schemes?

Franklin Templeton said that it had decided to wind up the schemes to preserve the value, at least, at the current levels, for the value was getting eroded due to a combination of redemption pressures and mark-to-market losses following the lack of liquidity on account of the COVID-19 impact on markets. Franklin also said that some of the schemes that were closed had direct exposure to high-yielding securities across the rating spectrum but the instruments rated below 'AAA' were the most impacted.

What does it mean for investors?

Investors will not be able to redeem their investments for the time being as the fund house has barred both purchases and redemptions. Franklin said it would endeavour to

return the 'maximum value possible' to the investors. Further, while the net asset value of the schemes would continue to be published, investors will not be charged any investment management fee, going forward. Franklin said it would proceed with the liquidation of the assets and the funds with the shortest duration would be liquidated at the earliest. It has, however, added that selling all the securities in the market immediately would hit the valuation hard and hence, it would evaluate the opportunities once the COVID-19 situation improved and liquidity returned to the market.

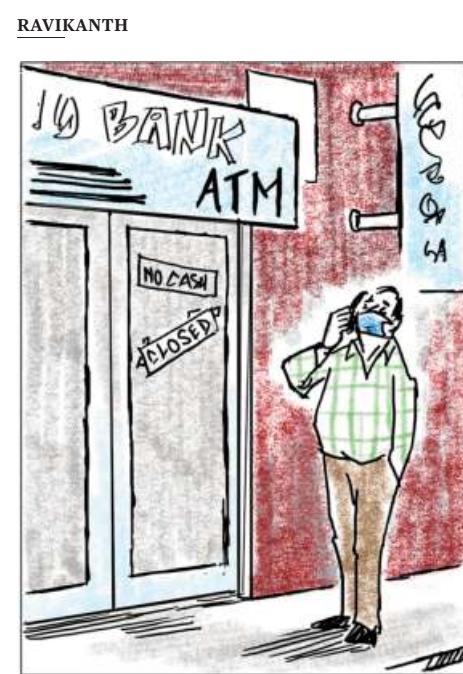
Will this hit other fund houses or schemes?

While this would definitely impact investor sentiment and debt schemes could see a spurt in redemptions, the mutual fund industry has been quick to point out that the Franklin Templeton issue was a one-off instance and not an industry-wide phenomenon. The Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI), the industry body of fund houses, has said that credit risk funds – the worst affected of the lot – constituted a mere 5% of the overall debt schemes.

Also, a bulk of the assets were rated at least AAA or above. AMFI also said while regulations allowed mutual funds schemes to borrow up to 20% of their assets to meet liquidity needs for redemption/dividend payout, only four funds, out of a total of 42, had borrowings aggregating to ₹4,427.68 crore.

## LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"I am looking for one with a cash withdrawal facility. I think you offer safe deposit box services here..."

## Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure	Interest Rates (%)
<b>SMALL FINANCE BANKS</b>					
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	9.00	8.00	8.25	9.00	
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	9.00	8.20	8.00	8.35	
Fincares Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.50	8.50	8.00	
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.00	7.75	8.00	
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.10	8.00	7.50	7.00	
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.00	8.00	7.30	7.30	
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.75	7.55	6.75	
North East Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.50	7.25	6.50	
AU Small Finance Bank	7.53	6.75	7.53	7.25	
Capital Small Finance Bank	7.00	6.60	6.60	6.50	
<b>PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS</b>					
DCB Bank	7.60	6.75	7.60	7.50	
IDFC First Bank	7.50	7.25	7.25	7.25	
Lakshmi Vilas Bank	7.25	6.75	6.50	6.50	
RBL Bank	7.25	7.20	7.00	7.15	
IndusInd Bank	7.00	7.00	6.75	6.75	
Nainital Bank	7.00	6.00	6.10	6.10	
Bandhan Bank	6.75	6.75	6.60	6.50	
Karur Vysya Bank	6.50	6.25	6.30	6.30	
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	6.40	6.30	6.25	6.25	
Dhanlamki Bank	6.				

**Kapil live!**  
Catch the 1983 World Cup-winning captain and Indian cricketing legend Kapil Dev in a live chat on *Sportstar's* Instagram handle (@sportstarweb) on April 27 (Monday) at 5 p.m. IST.

**IN BRIEF****Gayle to block 'annoying' Chahal on social media**

**NEW DELHI**  
Chris Gayle says India spinner Yuzvendra Chahal is "very annoying" on social media and he is going to block him. "I am going to tell TikTok to block you as well, seriously. You are very annoying on social media, man. You need to get off social media right now. We are tired of Chahal. I don't wanna see you in my life again. I am gonna block you," Gayle said during a live session on Instagram. PTI

**Chess event raises ₹8.8 lakh for waste pickers**

**NEW DELHI**  
Former World champion Viswanathan Anand and India cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal among others took part in an online 'Chess for Charity' event on Saturday and raised ₹8.8 lakh for the waste pickers' community fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. PTI

**Nakamura registers third victory**

**NEW DELHI**  
Hikaru Nakamura beat top Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi 2.5-1.5 for his third victory in four rounds in the ₹250,000 Magnus Carlsen Invitational online chess tournament. **The results (fourth round):** Hikaru Nakamura (USA) bt Ian Nepomniachtchi (Rus) 2.5-1.5; Ding Liren (Chn) bt Anish Giri (Ned) 3-2.

**Ravi Mittal is the new Sports Secretary**

**NEW DELHI**  
Ravi Mittal was appointed Sports Secretary, replacing Radhesham Jhulanay, in the round of transfers announced on Sunday. Currently the secretary in the I&B Ministry, the 1986-batch officer is expected to take charge as soon as he is relieved of his duties in I&B.

# Fans are the heartbeat of Indian cricket'

Stars, past and present, feel playing in front of empty stands will rob the game of charm and excitement

**RAYAN ROZARIO**  
COIMBATORE

After Sachin Tendulkar and R. Ashwin expressed their reservations over playing in empty stadiums, quite a few former and current cricketers too echoed their sentiments.

The likes of Sunil Gavaskar, Sachin Tendulkar, Cheteshwar Pujara and others told *The Hindu* how playing without spectators will rob the game of charm and excitement.

"Fans are imperative for a performer – be it in sport, theatre, cinema, music, entertainment or anything else," said Gavaskar.

**Share the happiness**

In fact, Tendulkar had a few more thoughts to share on the subject. "They (spectators) are extremely important. Without them, God knows where I would be.

L. Balaji.  
■ FILE PHOTO: G. KARTHIKEYAN**Catalyst:** Sachin Tendulkar and Sunil Gavaskar feel that spectators inspire the performers. ■ FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAKHemang Badani.  
■ FILE PHOTO: M. SRINATH

## Jeremy not worried about Olympic qualification

He is seeking inspiration from his past

**Y.B. SARANGI**  
KOLKATA



Jeremy. ■ TWITTER

Youth Olympics weightlifting champion Jeremy Lalrinnunga, who is confined to his room at the NIS Patiala campus, is watching true story-based war films to keep his morale up in the time of lockdown.

As he cannot undergo regular training due to the restrictions and is keeping fit by doing bare minimum exercises, the 17-year-old from Mizoram is watching movies like Fury, Hacksaw Ridge and Midway to stay away from frustration.

"I watch true story-based war movies and action movies. Such movies teach you to keep fighting till the end without giving up," Jeremy told *The Hindu*.

Jeremy also relies on the Bible to lift his mood. "Whenever I feel low, I read the Bible, pray to God and call up my parents."

Jeremy is not unduly worried about his Olympic qualification. "I don't think much about it. Whatever happens, happens for the best. In case I don't qualify, I will have no regrets. I and my coach (Vijay Sharma) tried for the Tokyo Olym-

pics. I competed in several events and gained experience. There is 99% chance of qualifying. Rest is in the hands of God."

The teenager, who won his maiden National crown in 67kg in February, seeks inspiration from his past.

"In November 2015, I suffered a cut in my upper abdomen while playing with my friend. It happened accidentally as he had a blade in his hand. I had eight stitches and I spent about a month in recovery. But I got back my form and broke two records – 90kg in snatch and 198kg total – in 50kg category in my first sub-junior National championships (February 2016). There is no reason why I cannot do it again," said Jeremy.

## Solid foundation the key to Nirupama's success

**KAMESH SRINIVASAN**  
NEW DELHI

A pioneer often has a path of thorns to negotiate. The trail they blaze makes it easier for those that follow.

In a two-hour online chat with tennis coach M. Balachandran, Nirupama Sanjeev recalled the solid foundation that her late father K.S. Vaidyanathan laid for her tennis career that saw her rise to World No. 134 in 1997. She counts beating Mirjana Lucic, who later rose to No. 20, and winning the 1998 Asian Games mixed doubles bronze with Mahesh Bhupathi among her notable achievements.

Trying to bring up her daughter Sahana on the principles instilled in her by her cricketer father, Nirupama said: "I was clear in my mind

to have them around," said Tendulkar.

Cheteshwar Pujara was of the view it is best to stay flexible given the tough current situation. "If the situation de-

mands that spectators will not be allowed, then we will have to be prepared for that as well. After all, it is for the sake of safety of both players and fans."

Former India fast bowler L. Balaji stated, "Fans are the heartbeat of Indian cricket. They have a huge influence. For me, they are almost like the 12th man. They can be

Nirupama Sanjeev.  
■ FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

With husband Sanjeev Balakrishnan also hailing from a naturally gifted athletic family – his brother Rajeev was one of India's best sprinters and competed in the 4x100m relay at the Sydney Olympics – Nirupama was clear about providing the fundamentals for her daughter, apart from the sporting genes.

**Small things**

"My dad always told me, love the sport. Take pleasure in the small things. During rough times, if you don't love the sport, you can't sustain for long," she said.

"If you are looking only for laurels, you are in trouble. For a long time, we didn't see much money," Nirupama said.

Impressed by Ramanathan Krishnan, who made the

compared to football crowds in European leagues. They bring so much energy to the game and to players."

"There can be a lot of heat and pressure with the fans around, but I enjoyed them. They have motivated me, and thanks to them, I was able to raise the bar," said fellow international Hemang Badani.

**Revenue generators**

"Our lives depend on them. If they are not around, then sports is nothing. They are also revenue generators. The television rights, the sponsorships and the advertisements depend on the amount of fan-following a sport has," added Badani.

All said, it will be a completely new experience for the players. "It is something that I have not experienced. It will be a big challenge," summed up Tendulkar.

"When I started running, I ran barefoot. But in my first Nationals, my father brought running shoes with spikes on them. It was just a normal pair of running shoes. I wrote 'adidas' on the shoes with my hand. You never know what fate can do, adidas is now making shoes with my name," she said in an Instagram chat with cricketer Suresh Raina.

After Hima won the 400m gold in the 2018 World U-20 Championships in Finland, the top German brand roped her as its brand ambassador and later made custom-made shoes for her that has her name on one side and 'create history' on the other.

She said "people started following athletics more than ever after the 2018 Asian Games" in Indonesia where she won a silver in the 400m and gold in women's 400m and mixed 400m relay races.

Hima reveals how she got custom-made spikes



Hima Das. ■ FILE PHOTO

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI

Sportswear giant adidas now manufactures custom-made shoes for Hima Das with her name printed on them but the country's top quarter-miler on Sunday revealed that there was a time when she had to write the famous brand name manually on her sub-standard spikes.

"When I started running, I ran barefoot. But in my first Nationals, my father brought running shoes with spikes on them. It was just a normal pair of running shoes. I wrote 'adidas' on the shoes with my hand. You never know what fate can do, adidas is now making shoes with my name," she said in an Instagram chat with cricketer Suresh Raina.

After Hima won the 400m gold in the 2018 World U-20 Championships in Finland, the top German brand roped her as its brand ambassador and later made custom-made shoes for her that has her name on one side and 'create history' on the other.

She said "people started following athletics more than ever after the 2018 Asian Games" in Indonesia where she won a silver in the 400m and gold in women's 400m and mixed 400m relay races.

## Zarina: A fiercely independent artist

She made an indelible mark with her powerful yet restrained works

**NADA RAZA**

Zarina, as she was known, made an indelible mark in the international art world as one of South Asia's leading artists. Widely recognised in her lifetime, she will be remembered as a fiercely independent woman artist who achieved artistic recognition on her own terms, through powerful yet restrained works that drew on her linguistic and cultural heritage and experiences of estrangement, dislocation and loss.

**Aligarh's milieu**

Zarina was raised within the cultural and intellectual milieu of the Aligarh Muslim University, a world that informed her aesthetic sensibility, encompassing her father's history books and the strong feminine bonds of the *zenana*. She took up printmaking while married to an officer in the Indian Foreign Service, first wood-block carving in Bangkok, then learning experimental ink and intaglio techniques at the Atelier 17, the cosmopolitan Paris studio run by Bill Hayter (the subject of a focused exhibition in 2016 at the Metropolitan Museum, *Workshop and Legacy: Stanley William Hayter, Krishna Reddy, Zarina Hashmi*). Zarina is best known for her series of etchings and wood-block prints that express the estrangement of migration, geographical dislocation and



1937-2020

with the Cuban artist Ana Mendieta at the A.I.R. Gallery titled *Dialectics of Isolation: An exhibition of Third World women artists in the United States* in 1980. The exhibition *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* at MOCA in 2007 led to critical attention, and her first major museum exhibition. The retrospective exhibition *Paper Like Skin* travelled from the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles (2012) to the Guggenheim, New York and the Art Institute of Chicago (2013).

Zarina's works on paper, in print and collage, and her sculptures, made from paper pulp or metal, found homes in prominent museum collections such as the Tate Modern in London, the Metropolitan Museum, MoMA, Whitney and Guggenheim in New York. Her work is in many private collections and recent exhibitions have been held at the Kiran Nadar Museum in New Delhi (2020) and the Ishara Art Foundation in Dubai (2019).

**Of exile**  
It was in the poetics and yearnings of exile that she grounded her work, after the Partition and its upheaval fractured their lives in Aligarh, a world relentlessly yearned for; 'Language ties my work together. Urdu is home', and this included its capaciousness for metaphor and multiple meanings. 'Ghar' was always the floor-plan of her father's academic bungalow in Aligarh, described poignantly in *Letters from Home* 2004.

In recent years, claiming that time was running out and that she wanted to use up all the scraps left in her studio, she had worked mostly with paper collage, referencing Faiz, Ghalib and Iqbal in the titles of ink-stamped paper, lines such as 'Akhi shab ke humsafar' or 'Sitaron se age jahan aur bhi hain'.

Zarina departed on Saturday for the world beyond the stars, cared for and survived by her sister's children in London. Zarina apa, as I called her, was a role model for how to live an independent life without compromise, navigating the world with the dignity, etiquette and razor-sharp wit of Aligarh.

**The fun way to learn English is a hop, skip and jump away.**

Presenting

# STEP LIVE Junior

A fun-filled English learning course for students from classes 4 to 7

New Batch Begins: 27<sup>th</sup> April, Monday Time: 11:00 AM to 12:00 NOON

During these holidays, train your children to communicate in fluent English through interactive exercises, tests, polls, quizzes and a lot more facilitated by English experts.

During these school holidays, teach your kids through:

- Lessons on grammar & vocabulary
- Fun-filled 1 hour class per day
- Student-friendly content
- Syllabus that is never taught in school
- Entertaining exercises and tests

To know more, visit [BIT.LY/SLive](http://BIT.LY/SLive)

Scan the QR code

**For Download any newspaper in PDF at morning  
Go to [DailyEpaper.in](http://DailyEpaper.in) OR Search on Google**

**DailyEpaper.in**

**ENGLISH**

The Hindu  
The Indian Exp  
Business Standard  
Hindustan Times  
The Telegraph  
Deccan Chronicle  
Business Line  
The Pioneer  
The Financial Exp  
The Times Of India  
The Economic Times  
Mint

**HINDI**

Dainik Jagran  
Dainik Bhaskar  
Jansatta  
Amar Ujala  
Pioneer  
Hindustan  
Prabhat Khabar  
Rajasthan Patrika  
Business Standard

**TELEGU**

Eenadu  
Sakshi  
Nava Telangana

**MARATHI**

Loksatta  
Sakal  
Lokmat

**Weekly News**

Employment News  
Karmasangsthan  
Karmakshetra

**GUJRATI**

Sandesh

**Daily Update All Indian Newspaper in PDF**

रोजाना सुबह कोई भी न्यूज़ पेपर पीडीएफ़ में डाउनलोड  
करने के लिए [www.DailyEpaper.in](http://www.DailyEpaper.in) को विजिट करें

**OR**

IF You Are Preparing For IAS, PCS, SSC Exam Then Just Download  
UPSC IAS All in One App From PlayStore. You will get here UPSC  
Complete Solution Free (All Study Material, Video Lecture, Magazines,  
Newspaper & The Hindu Analysis Video



UPSC IAS All in One - Mission 2020

Web360 Education

★★★★★ 98

3+

⚠ You don't have any devices.

Add to Wishlist

