

## RAJIV GANDHI KISAN NYAY YOJNA

5700 crore for the benefit of 19 lakh farmers



Paddy, Maize and Sugarcane farmers to receive the funds directly into their accounts in four installments

Scheme to commence from 21st May, to commemorate Rajiv Gandhi's Martyrdom



S-254064

With Farmers in their Every Step, Every Journey

### NEARBY



#### Murder of SP leader, son caught on video

LUCKNOW  
A Samajwadi Party leader and his son were shot dead at Fatehpur Shamsoi village in Sambhal district in Uttar Pradesh after an argument over road construction, the police said on Tuesday. The murder was caught on video and it went viral.

NEWS ► PAGE 8

#### Nine migrants die after truck overturns in Bihar

PATNA  
Nine migrant workers were killed on Tuesday when the truck carrying them overturned while trying to avoid hitting a bus at Naughachia near Bhagalpur. The workers were said to be working in Kolkata. They had left six days ago.

NEWS ► PAGE 9

#### NC, PDP say domicile law will change demography

SRINAGAR  
The National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party on Tuesday rejected the J&K Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Order, 2020, and the J&K Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure) Rules 2020, saying "it was aimed at changing the demography of the erstwhile State of J&K".

NEWS ► PAGE 8

## Health Ministry issues new guidelines for workplaces

5,680 fresh cases recorded; no decision yet on dropping HCQ as a prophylactic

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN

NEW DELHI  
The Union Health Ministry announced fresh workplace guidelines on Tuesday.

With the easing of the lockdown measures and with more offices/workplaces starting operations, the Ministry directed that anyone diagnosed as a suspected/confirmed case of COVID-19 should immediately inform the office authorities and isolate themselves.

While there was no need to close the entire office

### COVID-19

building/halt work if one or two cases were detected, a large outbreak would require that the building be shut down for 48 hours and disinfected, it stated.

The guidelines make it mandatory to maintain a physical distance of at least one metre to be followed at all times along with use of face covers/masks.

**ICMR to relook**  
The Ministry also said that no decision has been taken as yet to replace hydroxychloroquine (HCQ), introduced as a game-changer to arrest the spread of COVID-19, as a prophylactic,

### Daily peaks

With more than 5,600 infections and 158 deaths recorded across the States in India, May 19 marked a new daily high. Cases have been steadily rising in the last five days



with HIV combination drugs, after reports of experts demanding that it be dropped from the safety guideline list of drugs prescribed for high-risk persons, including healthcare workers.

With experts questioning the effectiveness of HCQ, a senior health official said the drug was under review "but no decision has been taken to drop it just yet".

Since the COVID-19 situation was a dynamic one and now with the lockdown being relaxed, a relook was being done by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

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MORE REPORTS ON ► PAGES 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 & 14

## State nod not necessary for Shramik trains

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

As lakhs of migrant workers continue to walk homes amid the lockdown, the Centre on Tuesday issued new guidelines stating that the schedule, destination and stoppage of Shramik Special trains will be decided by the Ministry of Railways based on requests from States.

It said the movement of these trains shall be permitted by the Ministry in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

A Railway spokesperson said a State should register passengers and send a request, after which the train would be run and the consent of the State government where the train would terminate was not necessary. The decision is bound to create confusion as States have to arrange facilities such as quarantine centres and transportation of the incoming passengers.

"The country is registering a recovery rate of 38.73%," noted a Ministry release. A record number of 1,08,233 samples were tested on Monday, taking the total so far to 24,25,742, it said.

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MORE REPORTS ON ► PAGES 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 & 14

## 3 lakh evacuated as Amphan hurtles towards Bengal coast

Cyclone weakens slightly; landfall likely this afternoon

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Super cyclone Amphan, which has weakened slightly, is expected to make landfall between Digha in West Bengal and Hatiya Islands in Bangladesh on Wednesday afternoon, the India Meteorological Department (MD) said on Tuesday evening.

About 3,35,000 people in West Bengal and Odisha have been evacuated.

On Tuesday evening, the cyclone lay about 360 km south of Paradip in Odisha and 510 km south-southwest of Digha. According to the IMD's current estimate, Amphan would temper down to a 'very severe cyclonic storm' when it makes landfall. However, it would continue to generate strong winds at 155-165 kmph and inflict severe damage on the Odisha and West Bengal coasts.

Telephone towers, powerlines, thatched huts and buildings with weak foundations are likely to be damaged and hoardings could become "flying like projectiles," Director-General IMD M Mohapatra warned at a press conference.

Very high wind speeds ranging up to 155-165 kmph gusting to 185 kmph are expected, accompanied by heavy rainfall and storm surges of 4-5 metres in the



Ready for action: Odisha Fire and Disaster Response Academy personnel checking their equipment in Bhubaneswar. ■ PTI

coastal districts of the West Bengal. Districts of East Medinipur, South & North 24 Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly, and Kolkata are expected to be impacted, he added.

**35 NDRF teams**  
The State government has evacuated about 3,00,000 people from the coastal districts.

"Do not venture out till the storm moves away. Many times it is the tail of the cyclone that causes maximum destruction," Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee told residents.

Odisha said 35,000 people were moved to cyclone shelters while field level staff were shifting people to identified shelters.

36 teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed

in both States. Rescue and relief teams of the Army and Navy along with ships and aircraft of the Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard have been put on standby. Officials from agencies of the Department of Telecommunications and Ministry of Power have also been deployed to ensure maintenance of essential services, said a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Odisha government has deployed 16 units of the NDRF and 15 units of the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force. Four districts – Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur – were likely to be severely affected.

(With inputs from Kolkata and Bhubaneswar)

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MORE REPORT ON ► PAGE 11

## Separatist leader's son among 2 militants killed in encounter

Four security personnel were injured in the operation in Srinagar's old city

PEERZADA ASHIQ

Srinagar  
Tehreek-e-Hurriyat (TeH) chairman and separatist leader Muhammad Ashraf Sehrai's son was among the two Hizbul Mujahideen militants killed on Tuesday in an 11-hour-long operation in a congested locality of Srinagar's old city.

Four security personnel were injured, and over 10 houses were damaged.

"Two militants were killed in the operation that was launched late on Monday night in the Nawa Kadal area. Sehrai's son Junaid Khan, a 'divisional commander,' was assigned the task of heading the Central Kashmir areas. The second militant Tariq Ahmed Sheikh was from south Kashmir's Pulwama," said J&K Director General of Police Dilbag Singh.

Two rifles were recovered

from the encounter site. Mr. Singh said Junaid had come to the old city "to lure youth into militancy and encourage grenade throwing".

**Clean operation'**  
After establishing contact with the militants around 3 a.m., the security forces decided to hold fire till the morning. They engaged the militants in a gunfight around 9 a.m.

The operation was a clean one. Only one house caught fire and it was controlled immediately. In the process of evacuating civilians, a policeman and a CRPF jawan were injured. Two more CRPF jawans were injured in the final assault as the remaining militant hurled a grenade. All the injured are stable," said Mr. Singh.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 8



People trying to douse the flames after a house caught fire during the encounter in Srinagar on Tuesday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

## Application window open for JEE-Main

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The application window for the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Main will be reopened from May 19 to 24, according to a notice from the National Testing Agency on Tuesday. Students who had previously applied but now wish to change their centres can also do so between May 25 and 31.

The examination was scheduled to begin on April 3. It was postponed due to the lockdown and will be held from July 18-23.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 8

## Extended hospitality for wedding party

Lockdown forces Karnataka family to stay back at bride's place in Odisha town



Sheikh Tipu Sultan and wife with relatives at their home. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

However, the back-to-back national lockdowns to contain the COVID-19 pandemic have now forced Mr. Sultan and his family to accept the extended hospitality of the bride's

Sheikh Abdul Okil and Mr. Okil's relatives on a rotation basis since the wedding.

"It has been more than two months since we are stranded in my wife's house," said Mr. Sultan by telephone. "Though society does not approve staying such a long period in a father-in-law's house, we do not have any option. Our financial condition also doesn't allow hiring a vehicle to Bengaluru. We hope for resumption of normal train services so that we can return," he added.

"We are not an affluent

family to afford hosting nine persons on daily basis," Mr. Okil explained. "Some of my relatives came forward to share the burden and continue to provide food to our new relatives."

Still, there have been several awkward moments. "We have only three rooms, enough for our six-member family," said S.K. Zafar, a relative of Mr. Okil. "As our guests have to be accommodated, we are crammed into a single room leaving nine persons to one room and the newly weds to the other," he added.

## Delhi sees biggest spike in a day with 500 cases

Six more deaths push the toll to 166

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Five hundred new COVID-19 cases were reported in the Capital in the past 24 hours, taking the total number to 10,554, said a government health bulletin.

This is the biggest single-day jump in the number of cases in the city so far. Also, six more deaths were reported, pushing the toll to 166. Of the total cases, 4,750 people have recovered and 5,638 are undergoing treatment.

Secretary of Health and Family Welfare Department

Padmima Singla said in an order that 300-400 new cases

were reported every day, but equivalent number of containment zones were not being declared by the District Magistrates. She directed the DMs to create containment zones as per the guidelines.

There are 70 containment zones in all in the city as of now.

The Delhi government on Tuesday stopped mentioning the daily increase in the number of cases, deaths in the bulletin and only mentioned cumulative figures.

## U.P. govt., Cong. lock horns over buses

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

The confrontation between the Congress and the Uttar Pradesh government over supplying 1,000 buses to transport migrant workers escalated on Tuesday after an FIR was lodged against Sandeep Singh, personal secretary of Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and the party State president, Ajay Kumar Lalru, for allegedly providing false information about the vehicles.

DETAILS ON ► PAGE 8

A ND-NDE

**Timings**

DELHI		
WEDNESDAY, MAY. 20		
RISE 05:28	SET 19:08	
RISE 04:07	SET 17:02	
THURSDAY, MAY. 21		
RISE 05:28	SET 19:09	
RISE 04:38	SET 17:56	
FRIDAY, MAY. 22		
RISE 05:27	SET 19:10	
RISE 05:13	SET 18:51	

**Delhi Weather**

max min

Delhi City 41 22

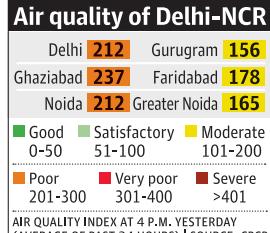
Safdarjung 41 22

Palam 43 23

Dust and windy day. The weather will be hot with mainly clear sky. Night will be comfortable.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
**44°C** The heat wave like conditions along with dry and warm moderate winds to prevail.© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019  
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**IN BRIEF****3 more test positive in Gautam Buddha Nagar**Noida  
A man in Noida and a husband-wife duo in Greater Noida tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday, taking the total number of COVID-19 cases in Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar to 289, officials said.**BJP questions CM on his assessment of situation**NEW DELHI  
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal should tell the people of Delhi how many times he came out of his house during the 54-day national lockdown, the BJP Opposition asked on Tuesday. Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari questioned whether the Chief Minister went anywhere to assess the situation and why was he missing on the ground.**Civic bodies send details on COVID-related burials**NEW DELHI  
Municipal corporations here sent details on the number of COVID-19 burials or cremations that have taken place at its graveyards and crematoriums to the Delhi government on Tuesday following a request from the Health Secretary. A senior SDMC official confirmed the development. The move comes following controversy over reported mismatch between the number of such burials or cremations and the total number of COVID-19 deaths in Delhi.**Students of LSR report Internet access problems**NEW DELHI  
In light of Delhi University's decision to hold online examinations, a survey undertaken among 250 students of LSR college revealed that nearly 58% did not have access to proper Internet connection. Nearly 55% responded that they did not have access to laptops or computers and 68% said that they wouldn't be able to attend online exams.**Garbage-free cities: NDMC gets 3-star rating**NEW DELHI  
The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) was certified on Tuesday as a three-star rated city under the garbage-free cities category by the Central government. Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced the result of smart rating of garbage-free cities, in which NDMC was certified three-star rating for 2019-2020, according to the NDMC.

# Shop owners dust off shelves but future remains unclear

Some left without employees, others say odd-even plan for markets not feasible

**SHINJINI GHOSH**

NEW DELHI

With markets finally getting the nod to reopen after nearly two months of lockdown, shopkeepers spent most of Tuesday cleaning, sanitising and trying to rid their shops of the stench from dead rodents, even as customers largely stayed away.

While markets like Nehru Place buzzed with activity as workers returned, Connaught Place, South Extension, Sarojini Nagar and Janpath markets saw low footfall with businessmen worrying that they might not see crowds any time soon.

Sanjiv Bhasin, a shop owner at Janpath Market, said: "With no business in the last two months, I have suffered losses to the extent that the business has been setback by almost five years. Even though we have reopened, there is hardly any hope of recovering any time soon as customers will also take time to feel comfortable to step out and shop."

The State government has specified that shops will



Khan Market in New Delhi on Tuesday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

have to follow odd-even rule. Most shop owners said they were willing to follow the scheme in the hopes of reviving some business.

**Paying rent**

Dimesh Gupta, an owner of a shop selling cloth materials in Nehru Place, said: "We will open every alternate day as per the rules. Our shop number is an odd number so we reopened on Tuesday. However, we spent the day cleaning the shop and we have not opened for customers yet. How long can we keep the shops shut? We need to pay salaries to our staff as well."

However, some shop owners said the odd-even rule was not feasible.

Gaurav Gupta, owner of a laptop repair shop, said: "We pay a rent of ₹3 lakh per month and will be required to pay the same even if we open for 15 days a month. This is not feasible for us as we have other expenses like electricity and salaries. So, we have decided to just clean the shop and then shut it again till everything normalises and we are permitted to operate daily."

For Nikhil Kumar, a shop owner at Sarojini Nagar Market, the lockdown also meant that he was unable to

clear the winter-wear stock. "The lockdown was announced towards the end of the season change and we still had a lot of the winter wear, which we were hoping to sell off. Now we have simply packed them and kept it aside. We are worried about the procurement of new stock as the wholesalers might inflate the prices as well," said Mr. Kumar.

Shopkeepers also spent the day marking the ground to ensure social distancing and putting up posters stating that customers must be wearing a mask. Some shop owners also distributed face shields among the staff that deal with customers.

Some sellers faced a staff crunch. Rajiv Kumar, who owns a food stall at the South Extension Market, said half his employees had gone back home.

"Earlier, I had 5-6 people, but half of them have gone back to Bihar and U.P. Even though I am cleaning the place and getting ready, I am yet to figure out how to go forward," Mr. Kumar added.

# With curbs lifted, CM appeals for discipline

Over 2,000 DTC buses hit the streets

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday appealed to citizens to exhibit discipline as lockdown restrictions were eased across the city.

Delhi government sources said an estimated 2,000 State-run buses were on the roads on Tuesday. Sources in the public transporter, however, said the footfall was lower than usual.

"Some economic activities are starting from today. It is our responsibility to be fully disciplined and keep the Coronavirus under control. Masks, social distancing and hand sanitizers are important. I pray for you and your family to be healthy. If we live with discipline, God will protect us [sic]," Mr. Kejriwal tweeted.

**Thermal screening**

As part of eased restrictions, Mr. Kejriwal had announced partial resumption of public transport services except for the Delhi Metro. Buses operated by the Delhi Transport Corporation were allowed to ply.

According to the guide-



Traffic jam at Vikas Marg, ITO, on Tuesday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

lines, the buses are allowed to carry only 20 passengers at one time. All the passengers have to undergo thermal screening before being allowed to board buses.

"At some terminals and bus stands, we have started thermal screening of passengers before boarding the bus. We will try to implement this at all busy bus stands," Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot tweeted.

"There were lesser passengers; there were also lesser buses than usual because a majority of our drivers and conductors stay in trains except for the Delhi Metro.

Buses operated by the Delhi Transport Corporation were not able to travel to the Capital and report to work," a source claimed.

# AAP says BJP not concerned about migrant labourers

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday attacked the BJP and said that the latter has left migrant workers to die on the roads. They also alleged that the BJP-ruled States were "torturing" migrant workers.

AAP MP Sanjay Singh said that the Centre brought back people from other countries via flights, but is not concerned about migrants who are walking back home. "We are witnessing that these people are walking barefoot for thousands of miles every day, they are losing their lives in accidents and women are giving birth on the streets. Does the BJP want these people to die on the streets?" he asked.

He said that in Delhi, nearly four lakh migrant labourers have registered to return home and 350 trains are needed to send them back. "But the BJP government is running only 100 trains across the country, which shows their apathy towards solving this issue. The BJP sent luxury flights for people who are in other countries but they do not care for the poor who are walking barefoot. This shows that the BJP is an anti-poor political party," he said.

The MP said, "The Delhi government has decided to open public transport and markets. The lockdown cannot continue indefinitely. If economic activities do not begin, more people will die of hunger than COVID-19."

# Over 1 lakh notices for traffic violations

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Traffic Police has issued 1,00,436 notices through SMS and another 80 notices through speed-post for traffic violations captured on camera, starting from the first day of the lockdown on March 25 till the last day of lockdown 3.0 on May 17. Police said that 7,998 notices were sent for improper parking.

They said that the priority is to decongest roads and make space for safe driving space, besides striving to protect the health of its personnel and to ensure public safety for which they have opted for electronic enforcement over physical enforcement. They are now focusing on contactless traffic enforcement drive with maximum use of camera-based violation detections, done through "Violation on Camera App".

# Builder arrested for beating up workers

He did not pay wages, alleges victim

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

A construction worker and her husband were allegedly beaten up by the builder of the site on Tuesday, the police said. Police

The victim has been identified as Meera Devi (40) from Bihar. "I was sleeping when the builder, Lata Batra, came and kicked me on my back. He then started to abuse me and beat me, asking all of us to leave. He also threw a brick at us," said Ms. Meera who lived at the site with her husband, three children and another family of four.

The woman said they told the builder that they were unable to find a train to their district on Tuesday and had no other place to stay but he continued to abuse them. He

# 'Govt. looting migrants in collusion with transport mafia'

in Uttar Pradesh. The normal fares it said on such routes were between ₹350 and ₹500.

**Offered to help'** Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee president Ch. Anil Kumar, after interacting with migrant workers, said that the party had sent a list

of migrant workers, who wished to go back to their hometowns, to the Delhi government.

The party had also offered to arrange transport and bear the travel cost if the Kejriwal government was not willing to shoulder the responsibility, he said.

"With schools shut, the

government could have easily requisitioned services of school buses to transport the migrants either for free or by charging nominal fares, but the Kejriwal government delayed the matter to such an extent that the desperate workers started journey on foot in depressing conditions," Mr. Kumar said.

A jail staff who was found positive has been home quarantined, the DG (Prisons) informed the HPC formed pursuant to an order of the Supreme Court to look into ways to decongest jails here

Dean Vinay Gupta said the exams were "not an online mode" and minimal Internet was needed "only for downloading and uploading purposes... any latest phone will serve the purpose".

Departments have been asked to set papers with six question out of which students can answer any four. They have to upload the paper by June 3. Meanwhile, the DU V-C appealed to staff to set aside a percentage of their salaries every month for the PM Cares Fund.

The staff have been asked to sign an authorisation if they choose to contribute.

The decision was taken at a videoconference meet-

ing attended by the Minister in which officials of different departments were present.

"It was stated by the Minister to furnish the name and contact number of nodal officers within two days... The nodal officer will disseminate the information regarding the relief of ₹5,000 during COVID-19, registration of construction labourers and various types of welfare schemes and benefits so that lack of trust and fear among the construction workers can be removed," an official statement said.



The inmates were asymptomatic. ■ FILE PHOTO

in view of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The DG (Prisons) said that all the 15 inmates had shared

# Appoint officers for aid distribution: Rai

Labour Minister Gopal Rai on Tuesday directed to appoint nodal officers within two days to aid the distribution of ₹5,000 to construction workers.

The nodal officer will disseminate the information regarding the relief of ₹5,000 during COVID-19, registration of construction labourers and various types of welfare schemes and benefits so that lack of trust and fear among the construction workers can be removed," an official statement said.

**HELPLINE NUMBERS**

COMMON HELPLINE +91-11-23978046

DELHI - 011-22307145

GHAZIABAD - 010-4186453

NOIDA - 8076623612/6396776904

GURUGRAM - 108/0124-2322412/9911519296/7015523417/9654231756

9911519296/7015523417/9654231756

9911519296/7015523417/9654231756

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# JANANAYAKA CHAKRAPANI

## Ac-152 Byatarayanapura assembly constituency, Bangalore North - Karnataka

# Saviour of Poor & Needy During Corona Crisis

A very popular leader from Byatarayanapura constituency one who cares for the poor, Mr. K.N Chakrapani and his C.P foundation has shown their mettle by reaching out to the poor people of his constituency during the lockdown imposed to stop spread of corona virus. He has proved his worth as a leader of the masses through the good work he has undertaken. Thus endearing himself to being a popular Jananayaka. The people of Byatarayanapura have hailed Chakrapani as a true champion of their cause.



**Mr. K.N Chakrapani, Sr.BJP Leader  
and President - CP Foundation**

In these testing times created by Corona virus, farmers are the worst hit due to enforcement of nationwide lockdown. Though farming activities and farm produce sales were permitted by the government during lockdown, many farmers were forced to abandon their crop due to fall in demand.

A true leader will always emerge during crisis and lockdown is one such crisis affecting poor farmers. Accordingly Mr. K.N Chakrapani, BJP leader from Byatarayanapura in Bengaluru, through his foundation has been in the forefront to help farmers tide over the crisis.

Mr. K.N Chakrapani along with his team of dedicated enthusiasts and local BJP workers are reaching out to the farmers as well as the poor families residing in Byatarayanapura.

The team has so far brought around 3500 tonnes of vegetable directly from the farmers and distributed it among the poorer sections in the area.

Mr. K.N Chakrapani and his team are sourcing vegetables from the



growers in Bengaluru Rural, Kolar, Chikkballapur. The farmers are paid suitably. The vegetables that are being brought from farmers mainly are Carrot, Tomato, Onion, Ash gourd, Capsicum, Beans, Brinjal, Pumpkin, Lady's finger, Chilly and fruits. These vegetable are well packed and then distributed among the poorer sections in the constituency.

Byatarayanapura assembly con-

stituency consists of Jakkur, Thanisandra, Byatarayanapura, Kodigehalli, Doddabommasandra, Vidyaranyapura and Kuvempunagar wards along with Jala hobli. Large spaces are made available for distribution in each ward. Each family is provided with 10-15- kg of vegetable.

Needless to say, people are appreciating the noble deeds of Mr. K. N. Chakrapani.



**Jagat Prakash Nadda**  
National President,  
Bharatiya Janta Party



Really happy to see K.N Chakrapani and his foundation venturing out to serve the poor and needy during this testing period for humanity.

**V. Gopala Gowda**

-Former Judge Supreme court of India

### I am following PM Modi's

India is successful in its fight against corona virus due to the farsighted actions of Prime Minister Modi. Every one are following his instructions and that is how we are able to keep the spread of virus under check.



**K.N Chakrapani, Sr. BJP Leader**

K.N Chakrapani always thinks of the poor people and reaches out to them with his good deeds. By buying vegetables directly from the farmers, he is also helping them mitigate their loses.



**Sridhar Ji, - RSS Leader,  
Bengaluru mahanagar karyavaha**



**Chakrapani is doing a great Job:  
Justice V. Gopala Gowda**  
Former Judge Supreme court of India

Justice Gowda hails Chakrapani's good work in Byatarayanapura. Corona epidemic has brought immense hardship upon the poor and vulnerable classes of India. Farmers and workers who are worst hit are looking for help. Chakrapani has endeared himself to the task of mitigating their woes. He has arranged for free distribution of vegetables among the poor families of his constituency which is a very welcome step said Justice (Retd) Gopal Gowda. He was speaking in a function organised for free distribution of vegetables to the people of Byatarayanapura and Kodigehalli.

Justice Gowda lamented that the elected representative was absent in the constituency during these times of crisis. Instead It is Chakrapani, not an MLA, who is helping you all, he said. There are more number of poor people in Byatarayanapura and it was the duty of the elected representative to be here with them, Justice Gowda said without naming anyone.

Both the farmers and poor are suffering. Farmers in Kolar, Chikkballapura, Ramanagara and Tumkur are facing problems in selling their produce.

On the other hand people in cities are not getting vegetables due to various reasons. In this situation what Chakrapani is doing needs to be lauded, said Justice Gowda. By helping out both the distressed farmers and poor families, Mr. Chakrapani is doing what an elected representative failed to do. I wish him all the success, Justice Gowda said.



K.N Chakrapani is a very active leader of the party. His concern for the poor is well known. He does not let go of any opportunity to serve vulnerable people.

**Sadananda Gowda**  
Union Minister for  
Chemicals & Fertilisers



K.N Chakrapani is a disciplined soldier of the party. For him politics is about helping the poor. He has once again demonstrated his commitment to help the needy.

**Nalin Kumar Katreel**  
MP & President,  
BJP Karnataka



K.N Chakrapani is doing a good job. He is helping both farmers and poor people with his initiative. Hope he will continue serving people for a long time.

**Shobha Karandlaje**  
Member Of Parliament



I am very happy to see that Chakrapani has come forward to distribute free vegetables to the poor people. I thank him for coming forward to serve the needy in this hour of crisis.

**Byrathi Basavaraj**  
Urban Development Minister,  
Karnataka

### Chakrapani is like your son, elect him as MLA: Sudhakar

My friendship with Chakrapani is nearly 20 years old. He should have been the MLA long time back said Medical Education minister Dr. K. Sudhakar.

The time has come to elect him as your representative in the next elections, he said. Sudhakar also urged the local BJP activists to spread the word about electing Chakrapani as an MLA in the next hustings.

Since delimitation of the constituency in 2008, Chakrapani has looked after the people with lot of affection. But his dreams were hijacked by others, said Sudhakar.

Byatarayanapura will be better off if it is represented by Chakrapani, said the minister. He also called upon the party men to ensure this happens.

He promised that he will personally come and campaign for Chakrapani when elections are held.

I urge all to stand by Chakrapani to make him your elected representative. Make sure he becomes an MLA in 2023 elections.

**Dr. K. Sudhakar**  
Medical Education Minister,  
Karnataka

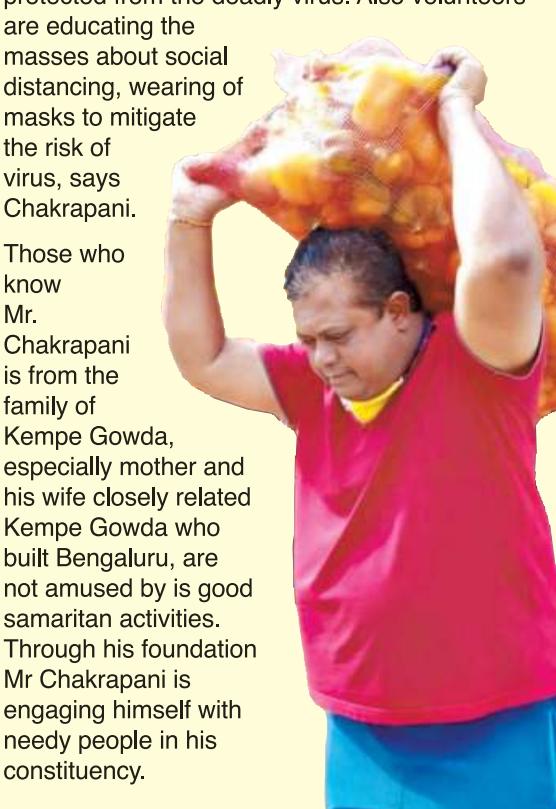
### Feeding 1.50 lakhs poor

K.N Chakrapani young and dynamic leader from North Bangalore going his by master strategy and he says PM Modi Ji is the inspiration for all his work. Apart from giving away vegetables and food grains Mr. Chakrapani also ensures that nearly 10 thousand poor people are served food on a daily basis. This has been going on for the last 15 days.

### 1 lakh masks handed out

K.N Chakrapani foundation has also given out some 1 lakh masks to the people of the constituency. This is to ensure that the people are protected from the deadly virus. Also volunteers are educating the masses about social distancing, wearing of masks to mitigate the risk of virus, says Chakrapani.

Those who know Mr. Chakrapani is from the family of Kempe Gowda, especially mother and his wife closely related Kempe Gowda who built Bengaluru, are not amused by his good samaritan activities. Through his foundation Mr Chakrapani is engaging himself with needy people in his constituency.



OBITUARY &  
REMEMBRANCE

## DEATH

G.CHELLAPPAN, AGED 78, LIC OF INDIA (Retd), residing in RA Puram, Chennai, attained Acharyan Thiruvadi on 15-05-2020. Deeply mourned by family & friends.

Attained Acharyan Thiruvadi  
on May 19, 2020  
at the age of 86



Smt Radha Raghavan  
(1934 - 2020)

Deeply mourned by:

S V S Raghavan  
Ragini & Rajan Raghavan  
Lakshmi & D P Devnath

Sharanya Devnath & Vinay Agarwal  
Shreya Devnath & Praveen Kumar  
Indu Ancha & Ravi Raghavan  
Srinidhi Raghavan

## DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Smt. S. GURUVAMMAL B.Sc., B.Ed.  
Manager Canara Bank  
03.08.1956 - 20.05.2010

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## Migrants continue to pour into Ghaziabad from Delhi

District administration sends over 10,000 workers from Delhi, Punjab, Haryana home on trains and buses

ANU KUMAR  
GAZIABAD

the Delhi-Ghaziabad border near Seemapuri went viral on Tuesday. Rakesh Mishra, Circle Officer, Sahibabad, said thousands of migrant workers from Delhi were trying to enter Ghaziabad through the border on Tuesday morning.

## 'Rules of lockdown'

"The administration's order is to maintain rules of lockdown at this border. Only those who have registered on Jansunwai portal are allowed to be taken to the railway station. The police tried to organise the migrant workers by using mild force," said Mr. Mishra. "Despite limited resources, we are sending 75%



Sanjar Alam showing the pen he crafted. • ANU KUMAR

workers from Delhi, Haryana and Punjab through trains and buses," said.

The Hindu caught up with some workers at Krishna Banquet Hall near Mohan Nagar, one of the centres where workers from the border are

brought before being sent to their home States. Social distancing hardly mattered here but after hours of walking, they had a place to rest, drink water and get food.

Sanjar Alam, who hails from Kishanganj, was desperate to go home. Describing himself as a handicraft artist, he said he lived in Sangam Vihar and was working in a factory manufacturing pens. "The contractor and the owner kept promising that they would pay us our dues and give ₹1,000 for food but it never came. We are 12 workers from the same village, six of us eventually decided to walk home. We were picked up by the Delhi

police and dropped at a no man's land. U.P. police then threatened to send us back. Somehow, we reached here by taking lanes and bylanes."

In Delhi since he turned 18, Mr. Alam was finding it hard to come to terms with the prospect of a long stay at home. "I am an artist. Farming is not for me," he showed his soft hands. Id-ul-Fitr is round the corner, but Mr. Alam hoped by Id-ul-Zuhra god would bring a smile to his face. For now, he was busy showing the OTP in his mobile phone to every person that he felt could be of help. "Bhaiyya, next bus kab ayega?" (Brother, when is the next bus coming?)

## Ex-SSB man kills 3 of family, gunned down by police

He went into hiding after the murders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Assam police on Monday night gunned down a former Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) jawan hours after he had killed his wife, 21-year-old son and a maternal uncle with a .32 pistol.

Sanjay Das had gone into hiding after killing the trio at his residence in eastern Assam's Dibrugarh district on Monday.

The police traced him to an abandoned building of the Fisheries Department close to midnight. He allegedly opened fire on the police personnel when they

asked him to surrender, leading to a gunfight.

Dibrugarh's Superintendent of Police Sreejith T. said, "After the killings, a police team traced him, cordoned off the place and started negotiating. But he was not done with his killing spree and lobbed a few stun grenades."

Das opened fire at the police team. He was killed in retaliatory fire, the police said. While other members of the man's extended family said he was alcoholic and mentally unstable, police said he had a history of criminal behaviour.

## CLASSIFIEDS MART

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

## ORISSA HIGH COURT DISMISSED THE WRIT PETITION CHALLENGING THE ONLINE ELECTION CONDUCTED BY THE ELECTION OFFICER, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SBI SC/ST EMPLOYEES AND VACATED THE INTERIM ORDER DATED 17-4-2020

The honorable Orissa High Court has dismissed the writ petition vide its order dated 15-05-2020 (W.P. ("C") No.11146 of 2020) filed against conduct of online election of National Federation of SBI SC/ST Employees which is the apex body of all 17(Seventeen) Circles of State Bank of India and largest Federation of SC/ST Employees in the Financial Sector in the Country.

Looking at the status of the Parties, the honorable High Court also has vacated its interim order dated 17-04-2020 which has stayed the notice dated 11-04-2020 in Annexure -6 of the Election Officer for conduct of online election since the Court has no jurisdiction over the matter.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic situation and lockdown, the delegates of the National Federation of State Bank of India SC/ST Employees of the entire country have elected Shri K.L. Chavan, from Bangalore circle as their all India Secretary General and Shri R.P. Singh from Lucknow circle as their National President through this online Election.

PUBLIC NOTICE  
My clients Mrs. Savitri Dole (Grandmother), Mr. Parveen Kumar (Father) and Mrs. Saroj Chikhar (Mother) R/T 3-9, Indira Colony, Narela, Delhi - 110040, have dissolved and disintegrated their grandson/son Manvinder Chikhar from all their movable & immovable properties located in Narela, Delhi. They have been in conformity with exquisite culture maintained by the family for past so many years. If anybody deals with him in any manner he/she will solely be responsible for the same and shall do it at their own risk. My clients are not to be held responsible for the same in any manner. Ramesh Chander Aranji(Aдвокат), Ch-8, Western Wing, Tia Hazari

## SITUATION VACANT

## GENERAL

WANTED ADMIN Manager, Incharge, M / F Food & Shelter 16/6 Manga lam Clny Ch-40. 995272511, 9080230317

## SEARCH FOR MISSING



Rahul Chauhan  
General public is hereby informed that a boy namely **Rahul Chauhan, S/o: Ram Lal Chauhan, R/o: H. No. C-1/54, Gali No. 19, Khajuri Khas, Delhi** has been reported missing since **27.03.2020** from his house. In this regard DD No. 43 A, dated **28.03.2020** has been registered at P.S. Khajuri Khas, Delhi. The description of missing boy is as under:

Name: **Rahul Chauhan**, Age: **about 34 Years**, Height: **5'5"**, Face: **Round**, Complexion: **Fair**, Built: **Strong**, Wearing: **Green Colour T-shirt, Blue colour Jeans and Grey-Orange colour shoes in feet**.

If anyone have any information about this missing boy please inform P.S. Khajuri Khas, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

SHO  
Police Station, Khajuri Khas, Delhi  
DP/120/NE/2020 Ph: 011-22962735, 8750870727

Sealed tenders are invited from Resourceful Bonafied Contractors by The Assistant Engineer (PWD), Jadavpur Sub-Division for N.I.T. No. -01/AF/PWD/JSD of 2020- 2021. Last date and time of submission of tender (offline) - 29.05.2020 up to 2.00 P.M. Details may be seen from the website [www.pwdwb.in/home/tender](http://www.pwdwb.in/home/tender)

Sd/-  
Assistant Engineer, PWD  
Jadavpur Sub-Division

ICA-T1900(3)/2020

प्रपत्र संख्या-१  
Government of Jharkhand  
Office of Executive Engineer  
Drinking Water & Sanitation Division, Ranchi East, Ranchi.

## E-Procurement

## Short tender notice (II Call)

Tender Reference No-31 (Rukka rural water supply scheme / Ranchi East)-, Dated- 18.5.2020

First Call PR-226395

Sl.	Name of the Work
1.	Estimated cost (In Lakh) 1.439124 Lakhs only.
2.	Earnest Money (in Rs.) 2.86982 Lakhs only
3.	Cost of BOQ (in Rs.) 10,000.00
4.	Time of Completion 12 months (including One month trial and run)
5.	Date of Tender uploading on website 27.05.2020/3.00PM
6.	Date of Pre Bid Meeting 28.5.2020(Time-12.30AM) in the Office of Regional Chief Engineer, Drinking Water & Sanitation Department Jharkhand, Ranchi.
7.	Document down load / Sale start date 27.5.2020/3.00PM
8.	Bid Submission start date 28.05.2020/3.00PM
9.	Document down load / Sale End date 05.06.2020/5.00PM
10.	Bid Submission End date 05.06.2020/5.00PM
11.	Last date of Submission of cost of BOQ and EMD (in hard Copy) 06.06.2020/5.00PM in the office of Executive Engineer, D.W.&S. Division, Ranchi East, Ranchi.
12.	Date of Opening of Tender 08.06.2020/1.00PM
13.	Name & address of office inviting Tender Executive Engineer, Drinking Water and Sanitation Division, Ranchi East, Ranchi.
14.	Name & address of Opening Officer Executive Engineer, Drinking Water and Sanitation Division, Ranchi East, Ranchi.
15.	Contact No. of Procurement Office 0651-2480155
16.	Helping No. of e-procurement cell 0651-2480345

आवश्यक शर्त के लिए देखें [www.jharkhandtender.gov.in](http://www.jharkhandtender.gov.in)

Email ID- [eedswd.ranchieast@gmail.com](mailto:eedswd.ranchieast@gmail.com)

PR 228499 (Drinking Water and Sanitation)20-21#D

Executive Engineer

D.W.&S.Division, Ranchi East, Ranchi.

For further details please log on to [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in)

Superintending Engineer

Research Circle

Irrigation Research Institute Roorkee-247667

E-mail:

[uttarkhardw@gmail.com](mailto:uttarkhardw@gmail.com), Website: [www.iriroorkee.res.in](http://www.iriroorkee.res.in)

e-Tender Notice No.: 02/SE (R)/NHP/ e-Tender/ 2020-21 Dated 16.05.2020

Superintending Engineer, Research Circle, Irrigation Research Institute, Roorkee on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites item wise rates for the "Drilling and installation of 66 nos. groundwater monitoring wells and construction of 66 nos. Protection works for DWRL telemetry system to monitor groundwater level and quality under National Hydrology Project (NHP) in Uttarakhand State" through e-tenders in "Two Bid System" as given below.

S. No. Name of work Earnest Money (Rs.) Cost of tender form (Rs.) Validity of Tender Period of Completion

1 Drilling and installation of 66 nos. groundwater monitoring wells and construction of 66 nos. Protection works for DWRL telemetry system to monitor groundwater level and quality under National Hydrology Project (NHP) 4.025 Lac 5,000.00 + GST @ 18% 120 Days 09 months

1. Tender form can be downloaded from government website [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) at free of cost, but at the time of submission of bid, bidder has to deposit the tender fee in the form of Demand Draft in favour of Executive Engineer, Design Division, IDO, Roorkee. The tender fee and GST amount will be paid in separate bank drafts.

2. Earnest money shall be in the form of FDR/CDR of any Nationalised Bank/Scheduled Bank/Indian Post Office Passbook or National Saving Certificate pledged in favour Executive Engineer, Design Division, IDO, Roorkee (to be valid for 120 days).

3. Certifying the validity of the tendered rates and acceptance of conditions of the tender shall be given by the tenderer on revenue stamp paper of Rs. 100.00 signed on Rs. 1.00 revenue ticket.

4. The department reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereafter.

5. The bidder has to submit the bid on Govt. website [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) upto 24.06.2020 (3:00 PM) along with a valid ID on the e-procurement portal with all required documents and also submit technical bid in hard copy at the office of undersigned as per time and date given below:

## Key Dates

1 Date of calling	16.05.2020	-
2 Date of online publication	20.05.2020	03.30 PM
3 Documents download start date	21.05.2020	03.00 PM
4 Pre-bid meeting date (Online)	01.06.2020	02.45 PM
5 Bid submission start date	10.06.2020	03.30 PM
6 Bid submission end date	24.06.2020	03.00 PM
7 Physical Submission of bid security and cost of bidding document	24.06.2020	03.00 PM
8 Date of opening of Technical bid	24.06.2020	03.30 PM
9 Date of opening of financial bid	To be declared later	

For further details please log on to [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in)



Getting ready: Fire force personnel disinfecting KSRTC buses in Ernakulam on Tuesday. ■ H. VIBHU

## Community role vital now, says Kerala CM

Urges involvement of local bodies

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Tuesday flagged community transmission as the emergent threat to the State's COVID-19 containment strategy.

The increase in the number of arrivals from abroad and other regions of the country, including epidemic hotspots, had caused an upsurge in SARS-CoV-2 positive cases. The situation required the active involvement of the community to prevent the spread of the disease.

Elected panchayat and municipal members should form committees at the ward level. They should tour neighbourhoods and ensure the safety and welfare of persons in quarantine.

The committee members should fan out across neighbourhoods and persuade citizens to wear masks, observe social distance, wash their hands, and disinfect commercial premises. The committees have to ensure that aged persons and children under the age of ten are kept away from persons quarantined at home.

The Health and Police Departments should prepare a repository of the details of persons under quarantine in their respective jurisdictions. Police had detected

2,036 cases of persons venturing out without masks. Fourteen persons were found to have jumped home quarantine. Police would soon start levying fines on such violators.

He said village and municipal watch system would spearhead the State's pandemic prevention strategy. Their role and responsibilities would increase as the fourth phase of the COVID-19 lockdown progressed. The police and health authorities would assist them.

Mr. Vijayan said wayside eateries could not serve food to customers. He did not say anything about tea stalls that had resumed business across the State.

However, he reiterated that restaurants and eateries could only serve food as takeaways.

The Chief Minister said private teaching centres should desist from offering on-premise tuition. They could teach students online. Hospitals should curb the rush of patients.

He said textile shops, including multi-storeyed ones, could open. But parents should leave children at home when they go shopping. Wholesale cloth showrooms and studios could open for business. The government could not allow people to travel crammed into private vehicles.

### IN BRIEF



Ayyappa temple closed after monthly rituals

PATHANAMTHITTA  
After the conclusion of the monthly rituals, the Travancore Devaswom Board closed the Ayyappa temple in Sabarimala on Tuesday. The Sannidhanam wore a deserted look as devotees were not allowed for darshan as per the lockdown norms.

### Andhra Pradesh schools to reopen on August 3

VIJAYAWADA  
Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said the fresh academic year for schools in the State will start from August 3. Addressing a review meeting, Mr. Reddy directed officials of the Education Department to ensure completion of development works taken up in the first phase of Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu in 15,715 schools by the end of July.

120 migrants from Bihar are on their way back home

### S. HARPAL SINGH

PIPPARWADE  
Migrants from Bihar, who were working in garment units at Tirupur in Tamil Nadu and were on their way back home on Tuesday, alleged that they had been locked up by their employers during the COVID-19 lockdown and were not provided basic necessities.

The garment workers, belonging to Bihar and bordering villages in Nepal, were travelling on four buses till Patna.

"We were ignored even when we went without food for days at a stretch during

## Lockdown stalled new AWS deployment: IMD

Some of the sites do not meet standards, says its Director General

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
Responding to the Kerala government's decision to source weather inputs from private agencies during the southwest monsoon, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) says it is unable to deploy new automated weather stations (AWS) before June due to the COVID-19 lockdown and because some of the sites do not meet its standards.

IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, in a letter to V. Venu, Principal Secretary, Revenue and Disaster Management, says the IMD has been providing Kerala State Disaster Management Authority with "very high-resolution numerical weather prediction model forecasts" since 2017.

The letter comes in response to a May 15 order that terms IMD inputs inadequate and the decision to allow the State Emergency Op-



High tide: A file photo of waves breaking on the Valiyathura Pier in Thiruvananthapuram during the monsoon.

erations Centre to also access weather inputs from Skymet Weather Services, Windy, the IBM Weather Company, and Earth Networks. Mr. Mohapatra says following the government's request after the 2018 floods, the IMD had decided to establish 100 AWS across Kerala. The first 15 were to be ready

before the 2020 southwest monsoon and the remaining 85 by the end of 2020. The IMD issued a supply order for the first 15 AWS to M/s Hachi DHR India Pvt Ltd. They were ready for installation by the middle of March 2020. "However, the work could not be completed due to delay in the finalisation of

sites [out of 15, only 13 sites could be finalised by March 17], as some of the sites initially proposed did not satisfy the standard exposure conditions." This was conveyed to the KSDMA.

The IMD asked the supplier to complete the installation of the 15 AWS within a month of the lockdown's lifting. The remaining 85 would be installed by the end of the year as planned, Mr. Mohapatra says.

### More radars planned

He refutes the charge that IMD failed to deploy more doppler weather radars (DWR) in Kerala. The existing DWRs, in Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi, met the requirements of central and south Kerala. The IMD is giving top priority to installing an x-band radar at the Kannur airport. Two more radars would be installed at Mangalore and Kavaratti, during the next two years.

to leave for their States.

"We want to go back to our home States. Food is being served only once a day and we have no money. There is no work here," the workers said. The police made a bid to assuage their concerns. They were later forcibly taken in buses by the police to their camps.

the money sent by their families back home.

The buses started from Tirupur around 10 p.m. on May 16 and stopped at the Pipparwada toll plaza, about 15 km from Adilabad district headquarters town and just 3 km away from the Telanga-

na-Maharashtra border on Tuesday when the workers narrated their woeful tale to *The Hindu*.

They said hundreds of other garment workers are waiting for an opportunity to leave Tirupur in the coming days.

## Locked-up garment workers 'escape' from Tirupur

### Tension in Kannur station

### STAFF REPORTER

KANNUR

Several hundred migrant workers, on receiving fake messages that trains to Uttar Pradesh would stop at the Kannur railway station, had assembled there early on Tuesday.

The workers complained

that they did not get passes

to leave for their States.

"We want to go back to our home States. Food is being served only once a day and we have no money. There is no work here," the workers said. The police made a bid to assuage their concerns. They were later forcibly taken in buses by the police to their camps.

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"We want to go back to our home States. Food is being served only once a day and we have no money. There is no work here," the workers said. The police made a bid to assuage their concerns. They were later forcibly taken in buses by the police to their camps.



Tough times: Bihari migrants working in Tirupur at the Pipparwada toll plaza in Telangana on Tuesday. ■ S. HARPAL SINGH

that we did not escape," added Mukesh Kumar Raut, also from the same district.

Mr. Mandal and Mr. Raut were among the 120 workers who had paid around ₹7,200 towards the hire charges (total hire charge coming to over ₹2 lakh for one bus) from

the lockdown and curfew period," recalled Sushil Kumar Mandal of Sitamarhi district, who worked in one of the hundreds of garment manufacturing units in Tirupur.

"In fact, we were locked up in our living quarters during those difficult days so

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Mr. Mandal and Mr. Raut were among the 120 workers who had paid around ₹7,2



# Flawed stimulus is justice denied

India is standing at a crossroads as a result of the Central government's delayed and wrong decisions



YASHWANT SINHA & ATUL K. THAKUR

The COVID-19 pandemic and the prolonged national lockdown have brought the Indian economy to a standstill. In tackling the crisis, the Centre has not done much to enable States to benefit from the much-touted benefits of "cooperative federalism". States are struggling to cope with the unprecedented existential challenges they face. The Centre has relentlessly undermined the immediate necessity for making appropriate financial provisions to enable States to meet the challenge. Most States have already shared their concerns on the inadequate fiscal support from the Centre. Where has India's money gone? What will happen with the unspent money in the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund?

## Too modest a package

At the end of March, the Centre had announced a stimulus package of ₹1.7-lakh crore, out of which about ₹1.2-lakh crore was the existing entitlement. It was too modest considering the severity of the COVID-19 crisis. After about a month and a half, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his address to the nation on May 12, announced a package of ₹20-lakh crore without mentioning anything specific for stranded migrant workers and for re-structuring micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Industry has been demanding a package to the tune of 7% to 8% of India's GDP of over \$2.8 trillion, nothing unusual given that similar packages have been announced by other countries to mitigate the damage done to their economies. However, keeping the government's silence in mind, India Inc. revised its demand for a package to as low as 3% of the GDP. So, a package of the size of almost 10% of the GDP was offered like a masterstroke but without coming clear on the source of funding and oversight provision. The buck was passed to the Finance Minister and, surprisingly, no call was taken on the lockdown.



"India faces the loss of lives and livelihoods against the backdrop of the ruling dispensation's apathy towards the poor and the disadvantaged." Migrant workers in Ghaziabad walk to Bihar on May 13. ■REUTERS

The presentation by the Finance Minister, which was more a five-episode package for television, has proved to be a damp squib. There was only word play with nothing for migrant workers, farmers, daily wage earners and the poor facing destitution. On MSMEs, the announcements offer no major concessions; soft loan, PF and tax provisions are shrewd. The redefinition of MSMEs has been long-pending and cannot be called a reform. There is nothing for the States to look forward to that can serve the immediate purpose.

Since MSMEs have been the hardest hit, being the main employers of industrial workers, their plight is grim. It is small businesses that give traction to entrepreneurial activities in the unorganised sector where migrants from rural India mostly work. Sadly, the process of economic revival has not even commenced and industry is in dire straits. The package that has been announced is too late and too flawed. Ideally, after the first round of an insufficient package, the government should have begun consultations with parliamentarians, Opposition parties and industry representatives to prepare a well-thought-out relief package to re-start the economy. Alas, this did not happen. States which have been at the forefront of the war against COVID-19 have not been given the required funds to help them cope with the public health emergency and support the high influx of returning migrant labourers from industrial locations.

India's great middle class, which is also suffering, has found no solace either; nor is it likely that they will get anything substantial from this package. A large number of workers in the organised sector are facing heavy pay cuts, job losses, a sharp fall in income, and uncertainty. Farmers are finding it difficult to get the minimum support price for their produce; a majority of them are in debt and face many obstacles.

## Plight of the migrant workers

The first national lockdown was announced in the most dramatic manner by the Prime Minister late in the evening and without adequate notice. This created panic among migrants who were suddenly left without any income security. A vast majority of them lost their livelihoods and were threatened more by the prospect of death by starvation than by the virus. And they have walked thousands of kilometres to go back home to States such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh – because, for them, a home-coming was the last resort to stay alive. Instead of action by the government, the helping hands seem to be from the Opposition, charitable individuals and social organisations. Such painful displacement could have been avoided by offering industry a timely financial package. Now India faces the loss of lives and livelihoods against the backdrop of the ruling dispensation's apathy towards the poor and the disadvantaged.

On May 1, some Shramik Express trains were flagged off from certain destinations to take back migrant workers to their home States, but

there was another shock – the charges levied by the Indian Railways. How can this be justified in a situation such as this? What is the meaning of being a citizen of this country? On May 4, the president of the Indian National Congress made an assurance that the Congress would bear the cost of travel for poor migrants. Sensing the imminent political loss on this issue, the ruling BJP issued a statement that the Railways would cover 85% of the cost with the State concerned covering the remainder. It is the BJP that is answering queries, when it should be the Government of India that should take up a leadership role in a crisis situation.

It was expected that the government would accord priority to cutting out wasteful expenditure on projects such as the Central Vista project and the bullet train project and, instead, manage the available resources of the Reserve Bank of India, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation and the PM CARES Fund to help the poor. This was not to be. The central bank should have been busy with restoring the health of the financial sector and also concerned itself with considering the suggestions of former RBI Governors Raghuram Rajan and C. Rangarajan on adopting an altruistic approach in place of the one driven merely by fiscal and inflationary concerns.

Stimulus that is delayed and flawed is tantamount to justice denied. Whatever the false compliments India may receive for tackling the pandemic, the fact remains that the country is at a crossroads as a result of late and wrong decisions. The government should follow a single policy, namely people first. The matters of lives and livelihoods should not be pitted against each other. Both issues have to be taken care of simultaneously. The nation is passing through a grave crisis in which a state of denial can be counterproductive. India's economy is no longer capable of absorbing the shocks from monumental blunders already committed. The country must be rescued from this terrible mess. Mere rhetoric will not help.

*Yashwant Sinha is India's former Minister of Finance (1998-2002) and Minister of External Affairs (2002-2004). Atul K. Thakur is a Delhi-based policy professional and columnist*

# We need social physicians

A deficient social emphasis still remains a stark feature of India's medical curriculum



SOHAM D. BHADURI

While medicine remains central to public health, medical academia has never been a torch-bearer for the public health cause. Apart from the inherently individualistic character of medicine, part of the reason can also be located in Indian medical education originally "carrying the cultural accretions of the West", as D. Banerjee puts it. Multiple policy deliberations have upheld the idea of training a socially oriented physician responsive to community and public health needs. However, a deficient social emphasis is still a stark feature of India's medical curriculum.

This orthodox edifice of medicine has come under attack thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is both a medical and a social calamity. The pandemic has served to water down the elitist and individualistic barriers of medicine that have hitherto kept apart the private and the public, the rich and the poor, and the individual patient and the community. COVID-19 has delivered one strong message: when it comes to a nation's health, private care is of public concern, and public health is of medicine's concern.

## Creating ripples at the societal level

Early this year, there were debates on why elite professional institutions such as top medical colleges rarely become the centre of political ruckus and remain free of strong ideological leanings, unlike many of their humanities counterparts. The perception about medical academia is that it is too preoccupied with cultivating scientific and professional excellence to cast an eye upon politics. One reason given to explain leftist dominance in humanities academia is the keen social orientation that humanities education inculcates. By the very virtue of their education, humanities students feel strongly about inequity, stratification, and deprivation. This element remains missing in technically oriented, competition-driven professional fields such as engineering and medicine. But while engineering is irredeemable in this respect, the same cannot be said for medicine. Both the number and profundity of emotional experiences that medical college-hospitals see on a regular basis can scarcely be fathomed in any other category of educational institution. The Competency-based Undergraduate Curriculum applicable since 2019 emphasises on inculcating communication skills and empathy

in medical students to improve clinical practice. However, that such empathy can create stronger positive ripples at the societal level has been given little attention.

This is not to suggest that medical colleges must be modelled after the highly politicised humanities institutions. The idea is to emulate purely the 'social orientation' element. The same empathy shown at the singular-patient level, and which improves clinical practice, can manifest at the societal level to confront the inequalities and deficiencies of public health. It is common knowledge that public health has perennially been one of our highly neglected items. It is also a concern that cuts across party lines and stands little chance of being viciously contended and politicised. Besides, a deficient social orientation among physicians has significantly contributed to their maldistribution.

## Remodelling the foundation

For this, the foundation of India's medical education would need to be remodelled along bio-social lines. There is need for radically enhancing community exposure during both undergraduate and postgraduate years. For this, medical training will need to shift a considerable part of its base away from medical colleges in cities to lower-level health facilities and the community, along with seamless integration of medical colleges with the health services system. Also, there is need to pep up the community medicine curriculum and teach health policy to medical students emphasising particularly the sociological and political-economic aspects. All of this should confer the ability to critically analyse how health and medicine function in the bigger picture – creating a socially oriented physician capable of relating with macro-level challenges in public health apart from practising social medicine.

Some might say that the biggest stumbling block to realising socially oriented physicians is the commercialisation of the medical profession. But commercialisation is something that has largely arisen from within the profession. Given this, corrective measures will also need to be effected from within. The aforementioned measures can actually help us combat commercialisation among multiple others, given an environment conducive for the same. In the wake of the pandemic, we have started entertaining ideas such as private hospital nationalisation and mainstreaming of alternative medicine. A push for any reform cannot do without acknowledging the imperative of social physicians for better public health.

*Dr. Soham D. Bhaduri is a Mumbai-based doctor, healthcare commentator, and editor of 'The Indian Practitioner'*

# A callous response

Migrant workers, the backbone of India's economy, have been left in the lurch since the lockdown began

MADHURIKA SANKAR

In India, the informal sector accounts for over 80% of non-agricultural employment. This is a staggering number that has had unprecedented significance in the past few weeks, given the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most vulnerable people in this sector are the migrant workers: the construction workers, painters, delivery boys, cooks, cleaners and factory workers, among others, who have travelled far to eke out a meagre livelihood, almost always without social protection, healthcare benefits and a minimum, decent standard of living.

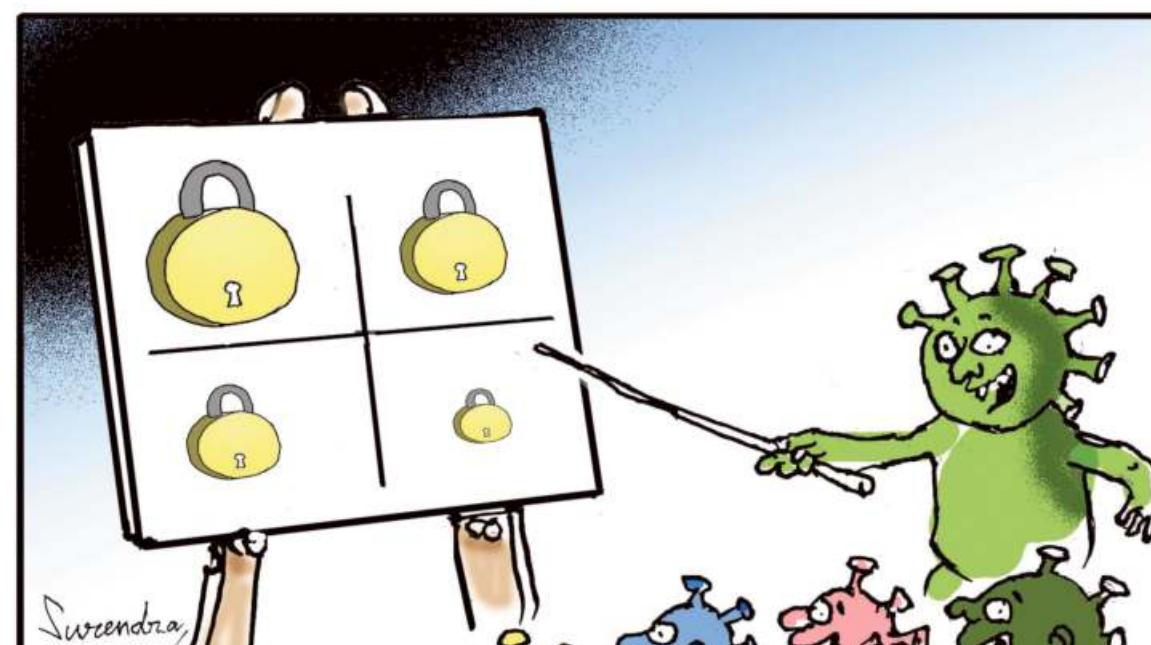
As the pandemic tests the world in unknown ways, it has finally revealed the fault-lines in India's ability – or lack of it – to cope with the exigent needs of this migrant population. It has exposed the callousness of policymakers in sidestepping the burning question of financial and logistical support to the hundreds of thousands of internally dislocated persons over the last few weeks.

## No protections

There are laws that are supposed to protect the rights of these workers. But laws such as the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Services) Act, 1979 and the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 have proved to be an eyewash, offering little protection to this dislocated workforce on the ground.

How much are migrant workers supposed to endure, stoically? Yet, they have faced and are still facing unimaginable insults and adversities with a resilience and fortitude that is unimaginable to many of us. The world is watching India as millions of migrant workers are on their long march home. They say they will not return unless their governments learn to treat them better. That is likely only if there is a broader realisation that these workers comprise the backbone of our economy. By some estimates, migrant workers contribute about 10% of the India's GDP. But at the present juncture that backbone runs the risk of herniating, and we have only ourselves to blame.

All this is a slap in the face of the migrant workers. That's the only way to describe how we have collectively treated the migrant workers who have built the very homes we live in, deliver our food, cook our meals and clean our laundry, so we may sit in air-conditioned comfort. It was a slap when the Centre and States passed the buck to each other on train fares for migrant workers for their journey home, where they understandably



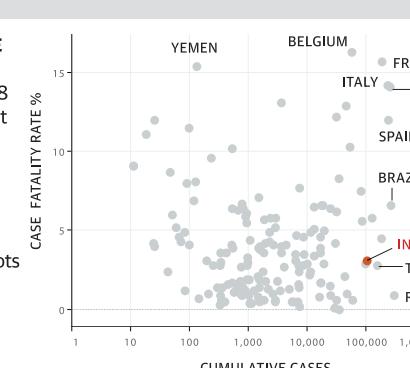
## DATA POINT

### Death count

India's COVID-19 case fatality rate (CFR, deaths/cases) has always remained low. But data from some European and Asian countries show that since the 10th week of 2020, "excess deaths" have surged. In countries with relatively poorer income levels such as Indonesia, a very small % of those excess deaths have been attributed to COVID-19. With historically poor registration of deaths, is India too undercounting its dead?

#### FATALITY RATE

India's CFR of 3.1% (in red) as of May 18 is among the lowest in countries with more than 1 lakh cases and much below the world average of 6.6%. The chart plots cumulative cases against the CFR as of May 18.



#### COVID-19 DEATHS AMONG EXCESS

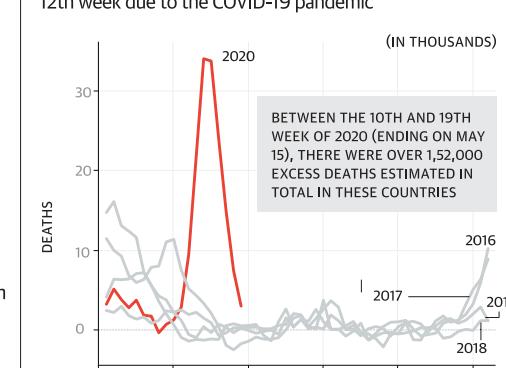
The graph plots the % share of COVID-19-related deaths among the excess deaths for nations which had such data. In high-income countries, the share of COVID-19 deaths are higher.

Nation	% of COVID-19 Deaths
Sweden	~85%
Belgium	~80%
Germany	~75%
U.S.	~70%
France	~65%
Spain	~60%
U.K.	~55%
Italy	~45%
Ecuador	~10%
Indonesia	~5%
Turkey	~5%
Russia	~5%
Austria	~5%
Indonesia	~5%
Ecuador	~5%

AMONG THE POORER COUNTRIES (INDONESIA, ECUADOR) THE SHARE IS NOT SO HIGH. THIS SUGGESTS THAT THE POORER COUNTRIES MAY NOT BE DEAD FOR COVID-19

#### EXCESS DEATHS

The chart shows the weekly excess deaths (deviation from mortality from the expected level) in 24 countries in Europe from January 1, 2016 to May 15, 2020. In 2020, deaths increased exponentially from the 12th week due to the COVID-19 pandemic



On April 30, West Bengal announced that 105 COVID-19 positive patients had died, but did not count 72 of them as they died due to comorbidities. On May 18, the Delhi government asked its hospitals not to take samples of dead people to test for COVID-19. Also, while the Delhi government's official COVID-19 death toll was 68 until May 8, the number of such deaths in just two hospitals in the city that The Hindu accessed was 107. These COVID-19-specific stories along with the fact that India medically certifies only 22% of deaths (as of 2017) suggest that India may be undercounting its dead

SOURCE: THE ECONOMIST, EUROMOMO

**The Hindu.**

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 20, 1970

No mood to emulate the U.K. example

The well-calculated risk the British Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson, has taken in gambling for the jackpot through a snap general election has uplifted the spirits of the starry-eyed optimists in Mrs. Gandhi's camp who believe that she, too, could cash on her good luck while the going is good, before her image gets worn out through prolonged over-exposure. Basing his calculations on the latest run of public opinion polls in Britain, which in the western context were not very different from the astrological forecasts in the east, Mr. Wilson felt encouraged to take the plunge while the tide of his popularity was running high against the background of the sagging Tory morale. Though there has been no comparable new surge of public enthusiasm in favour of Mrs. Gandhi in India, the political strategists around her see dangers ahead if she continued to rely too much on the advice of her older colleagues who were temperamentally inclined to play safe to the point of total inaction. And drawing heavily on the Wilson parallel, the stalwarts of a midterm election – at a politically opportune moment preferably before the turn of the year – were cautioning against her holding on till 1972.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 20, 1920

Public libraries  
(From second editorial)

The Hon'ble Mr. K. Venkattappaya's resolution in the local Legislative Council on the 6th February last suggesting the provision of a sum of Rs.20,000 in the Budget for 1920-21 for the purpose of encouraging public libraries was accepted by the Government. In the Press Communiqué dated Ootacamund, May 4, 1920, the Government considered that the best method of utilising this provision is to aid local bodies to establish or maintain public libraries under their direct or indirect control. It is also stated that the local bodies proposing to establish public libraries under their control should frame definite schemes and submit them to Government with a statement of the charges involved and the amount they are prepared to meet from their own funds. The library movement is making good progress in this province and the Library Conference held recently in Madras disclosed the public enthusiasm for the movement, accepted its great educative value and welcomed the idea of establishing public libraries in all parts of the presidency.

## FROM PAGE ONE

**Health Ministry issues new guidelines**

"Practise frequent hand-washing [for at least 40-60 seconds] even when hands are not visibly dirty and use of alcohol based hand sanitisers [for at least 20 seconds] and respiratory etiquettes are to be strictly followed," it said.

The respiratory etiquettes involve the strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed

elbow and disposing of used tissues properly," the Ministry said.

Any staff requesting home quarantine based on the containment zone activities in their residential areas should be permitted to work from home.

Also, any staff reportedly suffering from flu-like illness should not attend office and seek medical advice from the local health authorities, it said.

**State nod not necessary for Shramik trains**

The May 1 standard operating procedure (SOP) had said these special trains would be run from point-to-point on the request of both the State governments concerned as per the standard protocols. This provision has been dropped in Tuesday's SOP.

The fresh SOP says, "The train schedule including stoppages and destination shall be finalised by MoR based on the requirements of the States/UTs and shall

be communicated by the MoR to the States/UTs for making suitable arrangements for sending and receiving such stranded workers."

It said that train schedules and booking of tickets shall be publicised by the Railways. The States would have to ensure proper screening of passengers at railway stations and only asymptomatic ones would be allowed to board the trains.

**Amphan hurtles towards Bengal coast**

As many as 75 teams of Odisha Forest Development Corporation are in place to remove fallen and damaged trees while 340 gangs will carry out repairs of damaged power lines. For drinking water, more than 800 vehicles loaded with tanks have been kept ready.

Of those evacuated in

West Bengal, 200,000 are from South 24 Paraganas particularly from the Sunderbans. Teams of NDRF, State Disaster Response Force and BSF have been deployed. The Regional Meteorological Centre at Alipore in Kolkata told people not to leave home when the cyclone makes landfall.

**Separatist leader's son among 2 militants killed**

He said 73 militants have been killed so far this year and not more than 240 militants are still active in Kashmir.

Police sources said the operation was launched after a technical input was "generated and worked upon" by senior CRPF officials. It was the second time in the past two weeks that Junaid was spotted in central Kashmir, based on the inputs generated online.

With an MBA degree from Kashmir University, Junaid, alias Amaar Bhai, 29, joined the militant ranks on March 24, 2018, just days after his father was elected TeH's chairman. Sehrai's father is a close confidant of Hurriyat chairman Syed Ali Geelani and is expected to succeed him in the conglomerate. Ju-

naid's "handler and commander" Riyaz Naikoo was killed in Pulwama on May 7. According to family sources, police refused to hand over the bodies for burial in ancestral graveyards. They were instead buried in north Kashmir's Barumulla as per the latest standard operating procedure, a police official said.

The Srinagar encounter was the first major operation in the capital in the last two years. Internet and calling services on mobile phones, except BSNL, were snapped as a precautionary measure in Srinagar.

Meanwhile, clashes broke out in parts of Srinagar. Several people converged on the encounter site after the operation.

**SC declines to interfere on NGT order on gas leak**

The NGT, on May 8, had appointed a committee to "specifically report on the sequence of events, causes of failure and persons and authorities responsible, extent of damage to life, human and non-human, public health and environment – including water, soil and air, steps to be taken for compensation of victims

and restitution of the damaged property and environment and the cost involved".

The NGT had also on May 8 issued formal notices to the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board, the Central Pollution Control Board and the Union Environment Ministry, seeking their responses.

**Application window open for JEE-Main**

The online form is available on [jeemain.nta.nic.in](http://jeemain.nta.nic.in) and can be submitted until 5 p.m. on May 24, while the fee can be paid online until 11.50 p.m.

The decision to reopen the application window is meant to cater to students whose alternate plans were disrupted by COVID-19 and want one last chance to apply, especially those whose international travel plans have been put on hold by the pandemic.

While the announcement on Twitter by HRD Minister Rmeh Pokhriyal was widely welcomed by students, a number of them pleaded for a similar option for NEET, the medical entrance examination. The decision to allow change in centres will especially benefit students who had originally selected venues in cities like Kota, where they had been studying at coaching centres, but have now been forced to return home.

**U.P. govt. locks horns with Congress over buses**

FIR lodged against Priyanka's personal secretary and party State chief for allegedly providing false information

**OMAR RASHID**  
LUCKNOW

The confrontation between the Congress and the Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) government over supplying 1,000 buses to transport migrant workers escalated on Tuesday after an FIR was lodged against Sandeep Singh, personal secretary of Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and the party State president, Ajay Kumar Lallu, for allegedly providing false information about the vehicles.

**Cheating case**

Mr. Singh and Mr. Lallu were booked for cheating and forgery by the Lucknow police while the latter was also detained on the Uttar Pradesh-Rajasthan border near Agra when party workers were staging a sit-in demanding that the buses be allowed into Uttar Pradesh.

The FIR was lodged under



**Tough times:** Ramdin Srivas, 40, carrying his physically challenged wife, Uma, to a bus headed to Uttar Pradesh, in Noida on Tuesday. ■ REUTERS

Sections 182, 420, 467 and 468 of the IPC on the complaint of Regional Transport Officer, Lucknow, R.P. Dwivedi.

Over 500 buses arranged by the Congress continued to be parked at the Uncha Nagla point as the party alleged

that the Agra administration was not providing them permission to move to Noida and Ghaziabad despite a written nod by Awanish Awasthi, Additional Chief Secretary, Home.

The FIR came soon after the Lucknow RTO released a

report saying that out of the 1,049 buses submitted by the Congress, only 879 were found to be valid, while 31 turned out to be three-wheelers and the remaining 69 included an ambulance, 59 school buses, a pick-up van and a truck.

Data were not available for 70 vehicles, while fitness certificates of 59 vehicles were not valid and insurance of 29 others had expired.

The controversy escalated after the two sides exchanged a series of allegations over Ms. Vadra's proposal to provide 1,000 buses to the migrant workers home.

After the Congress submitted a list of 1,000 buses to the State on Monday, the Uttar Pradesh government accused it of providing false details and including details of three-wheelers, ambulances and goods carriers in the list of buses.

**Playing politics**

Uttar Pradesh government spokesperson Sidharth Nath Singh accused the Congress of trying to "politicise the situation" of the migrant workers for photo-ops.

"They have no sensitivity or sense of service towards

the migrant workers," he said. When the Agra administration did not allow the Congress buses to enter Uttar Pradesh, Ms. Vadra accused the State government of crossing "all limits" and even offered the BJP to stick its banners and posters on the buses as a bargain to allowing the buses to run.

Ms. Vadra then requested the Uttar Pradesh government to allow the 879 buses found valid by it to run for the time being, and promised to deliver 200 more buses by Wednesday.

"People are in a lot of agony. We cannot delay any further," she said.

The State government had earlier accepted the Congress's request and asked it to deliver 500 buses to Ghaziabad and Noida by noon.

However, the Congress sought time till 5 p.m., but the buses have been stranded on the border since.

**IN BRIEF**

**MP plea over Governor's lockdown 'violation'**

GUWAHATI

An Assam MP on Tuesday shot off a letter to Union

Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla asking him if Governor Jagdish Mukhi had not violated the COVID-19

protocol of the MHA by visiting Kokrajhar. Biswajit Daimary, the Rajya Sabha member of the Bodoland People's Front, pointed out that protocol requires people above 65 years of age to stay at home except for meeting essential requirements.

**CPI holds protests against stimulus plan**

NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (CPI) held a nationwide protest against "the

indifference of the Modi government to the plight of migrant workers" and "hollowness of the ₹20 lakh crore economic package"

announced by Prime minister Narendra Modi. All party units held stand-in protests, carrying placards with slogans at their party offices.

The protest was an attempt to reach out to the general public who are living in

despair, said party General Secretary D. Raja.

**ED attaches assets in bank fraud case**

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached assets worth ₹18.50 crore, including 42 immovable properties in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, in connection with a bank

fraud. The properties belong to one Vikram Seth and his family members. The probe is

based on an FIR registered by the CBI against Mr. Seth and others for cheating the Bank of Baroda, in connivance with

some bank officials. The

accused got sanctioned 19

loans amounting to ₹21.31

crore, which were routed through various accounts of associated firms and siphoned off, it is alleged.

**NC, PDP say domicile law will change demography**

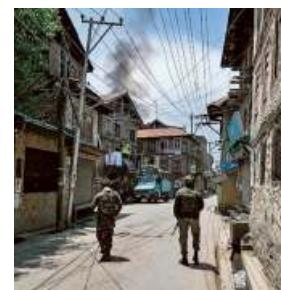
Unacceptable as it will widen gap and induce alienation'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
SRINAGAR

The National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Tuesday rejected the J&K Reorganisation (Adaptation of State Laws) Order, 2020, and the J&K Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure) Rules 2020, saying "it was aimed at changing the demography of the erstwhile State of J&K".

An NC spokesman said the amended domicile law was made in exercise of power under the J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, "which stands challenged in number of petitions before the Supreme Court".

"With the constitutional validity of the Act impugned and the petitions under the



The order allows non-locals to apply for domicile certificates in the region.

consideration of the court, the Government of India, in tune with the universally accepted principle of 'constitutional proprietary', is under an obligation to desist from exercising powers under the impugned Act, including the power to promulgate domicile law and rules in ques-

tion," the NC spokesman said. The party said the order was "unacceptable" and fraught "with widening the gap and inducing alienation".

The PDP said: "Even a pandemic is no deterrent for the Government of India to continue with its disempowerment project for J&K. Orders like the one on domicile certificates don't settle anything, neither do they cover up the August 5 fraud.

The demographic change and disenfranchisement will further complicate the J&K issue which has claimed thousands of lives so far..."

The J&K administration notified the domicile procedure on Monday, allowing eligible non-locals to apply for domicile certificates.

**CBI alerts authorities to malware threat**

It uses an update related to COVID-19

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has sent alerts to all the States, Union Territories and the Central agencies on a malicious software threat that uses an update related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The alert related to banking Trojan and Cerberus has been sent on the basis of inputs received from the Interpol. It is primarily used to steal financial data, such as credit card numbers.

"This malicious software takes advantage of COVID-19 pandemic to impersonate and send SMS using the lure

of COVID-19-related content to download the embedded malicious link. It deploys its malicious application usually spread via phishing campaigns to trick users into installing it on their smartphones," said the agency. The Trojan can also use overlay attacks to trick victims into providing personal information and can capture two-factor authentication details.

Earlier this month, the Interpol launched an awareness campaign on cyber-threats during the COVID-19 outbreak, in coordination with the law enforcement agencies across the world.

**COVID-19 unlikely to affect illicit drug supply**

Restrictions may lead to drop in seizures, but no real change in supply: UN agency

**DEVESHE K. PANDEY**  
NEW DELHI

Movement restrictions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to an initial statistical reduction in drug seizures, but without a real change in terms of supply or demand.

"Organised crime groups active in the region have shown a high degree of flexibility to respond to shortages of supplies, raising risk levels on certain trafficking routes. The flexibility of the illicit economy, which does not have to wait for new rules and regulations to enter into force, should also not be underestimated," it said.

The UNODC said a large proportion of methamphetamine, the main synthetic drug of concern in the re-

strictions may lead to a drop in seizures, but no real change in supply: UN agency



ders which are porous and difficult to control ... While containerised trafficking exists, it is just one of many methods used..." said the report.

Where movements were significantly affected, for instance couriers and body-packing through airports, methods would change quickly, leading to an initial statistical reduction in seizures, but without a real change in terms of supply.

Additional efforts would be required at the national, regional and international level to carefully analyse methods and trends to understand changes to drug markets in the wake of the pandemic, it added.

# 9 migrants die in Bihar accident

Truck carrying workers overturns while trying to avoid a bus near Bhagalpur

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Nine migrant workers were killed on Tuesday when the truck carrying them overturned while trying to avoid hitting a bus at Naugachhia near Bhagalpur.

The workers, who had boarded the truck carrying their bicycles, were said to be working in Kolkata. They left six days ago.

The truck driver and the cleaner fled after the accident. The truck had entered Katihar district in Bihar from West Bengal and was crossing Bhagalpur to reach East and West Champaran districts, from where the workers hailed.

## Identities ascertained

A police official said their identities had been ascertained.

"The migrant workers had boarded the truck that was



**A ray of hope:** Social workers in Patna giving food packets to migrant workers aboard a truck on the way to their native States on Monday. ■ RANJEET KUMAR

loaded with iron rods... Police recovered a few bicycles that were on the truck." A few others were injured in the accident, he added.

In another incident, a mi-

grant worker was run over by a freight train early on Tuesday morning in Gopalganj district.

On Monday, six migrant workers were killed in road

accidents in Bihar.

The State has reported 1,442 COVID-19 positive cases and nine deaths so far. As many as 475 have recovered from the virus.

## 25 deaths, 395 fresh cases in Gujarat

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

AHMEDABAD

Gujarat on Tuesday recorded 395 new COVID-19 infections and 25 deaths, bringing its total to 12,141 cases and 719 fatalities. The State is the second largest in COVID-19 casualties after Maharashtra.

In Ahmedabad, 262 new cases and 21 deaths were seen on Tuesday. The city's cumulative tally have increased to 8,945 cases and 576 deaths. There are now 5,346 active cases in the city. Ahmedabad's death rate is almost 6.5%, which is nearly double the national average mortality rate.

With many migrant workers returning from other States testing positive for COVID-19, Odisha's total number of cases increased to 978 with the detection of 102 new cases on Tuesday.

## Railways to run 200 trains with timetable from June 1

New services are in addition to Shramik Special trains

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Railways on Tuesday announced that it would run 200 new trains with a timetable from June 1. The new trains would be in addition to the Shramik Special trains, whose numbers too would be increased.

"Indian Railways is going to start 200 new timetabled trains from June 1, 2020. The routes and schedule of these trains will be intimated soon," the national transporter said in a statement. These would be non-AC

# 2,400 Indians to be evacuated from Sri Lanka

Air India flight will bring some of them home on May 29

### ADITYA ANAND

MUMBAI

Two months after being stranded in Sri Lanka, 2,400-odd Indians finally have some ray of hope as the first repatriation flight from the island nation will fly to Mumbai on May 29.

This delayed announcement has, however, only added to the confusion for Indians from various States who have been allowed to travel on this flight. The Air India flight on May 29 will fly from Colombo to Mumbai and then onward to Bhubaneswar and Kolkata, benefiting those from Maharashtra, Goa, Odisha and West Bengal.

Among Indians wanting to return immediately are not just those who were on short holidays to the island



The first flight from the island nation will fly to Mumbai on May 29 ■ PTI

nation, and have now spent two months with an unplanned budget, but also those who are employed there.

Noida-resident Vineeta Singh is among those desperate to leave. An IT professional, Ms. Singh had gone to the island nation to spend time with her husband, a

merchant navy officer.

"It has been over two months now. My husband's ship sailed long ago and is en route to Russia. He is having sleepless nights and is sometimes unable to contact me due to a bad Internet connection. My father-in-law has been constantly trying to draw the government's attention in India [to our plight]," she said.

Ramakrishnan Srinivasan, who hails from Chennai, has been in contact with the Indian High Commission.

"We have contacted the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka. They are trying their level best to send us back. But so far there has been no favourable reply.

Unless they get government orders from India, what can they do," he asked.

## Special flights to bring back more Indians

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Twelve more destinations have been added to the list of countries from where India will bring back its citizens aboard special Air India flights.

The additions include Finland, South Korea, Belgium, New Zealand, Netherlands, Kenya, Mauritius, Spain, Myanmar, Maldives, Egypt and Sri Lanka, according to an update shared by Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Twitter on Monday evening.

This takes the total number of countries being connected under the second phase of the Vande Bharat Mission to 52.

The mission, which kicked off on May 17, will be extended by 10 days and will conclude on June 13 instead of June 3.

## Frontline workers tested for COVID-19 in Ganjam

District has highest case tally in Odisha

### STAFF REPORTER

BERHAMPUR

Over 363 frontline workers from temporary medical centres (TMCs) in Odisha's Ganjam district have tested negative for COVID-19 on Tuesday. The testing was done as a fillip in the fight against COVID-19 in Ganjam.

The district has the highest number of COVID-19 positive cases in Odisha. Till Tuesday afternoon, the district had recorded 307 positive cases. Most of the positive cases in Ganjam had emerged from the TMCs that house migrant workers who have returned from other States.

Over 50,000 migrant workers have returned to Ganjam and have been placed under institutional quarantine in over 3,000 TMCs in the district.

To avoid the possibility of

community transmission of the virus from the TMCs that house the workers, security has been heightened around them. Police are keeping a strict watch on the TMCs using mobile patrolling units.

Despite the efforts taken, certain elements have been attempting to break quarantine rules at the TMCs.

On Monday, a person throwing polythene pouches of illicit liquor into a TMC at Bandhaguda village was caught by the personnel of the Badagada police station. Forty litres of illicit liquor was seized from possession of the arrested person.

With many migrant workers returning from other States testing positive for COVID-19, Odisha's total number of cases increased to 978 with the detection of 102 new cases on Tuesday.

## 4 violate lockdown, test positive for virus in M.P.

Family had left Indore sans permission

### STAFF REPORTER

BHOJPUR

remained inside the house so quietly that even the neighbours didn't notice they were back," said Anand Singh Rajawat, Sub Divisional Magistrate, Mandalswar.

### Case registered

But the police came to know of it and registered a case against them. Samples of 10 family members have been collected, said Mr. Rajawat.

The administration had conducted a door-to-door survey in the area on May 3 for influenza-like illnesses. "We will have to conduct a survey again," he said.

**KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED-E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Office of the Chief Engineer, Civil Construction South – Thiruvananthapuram E-Tender ID: 2020\_KSEB\_355738\_1 "Supply, Erection/Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 1 No. 150 MT & 75 MT Mechanical Power Presses with Pneumatic clutch, 1 No. 150 MT & 75 MT Mechanical Power Press with Mechanical clutch, 1 No. 10HP Air Compressor and 1 No. 12kW Electric muffle furnace 1200 degree celcius with connected civil works at Central Mechanical Facility, Pallom \*PAC: Rs. 86,37,400/- Last Date: 10-06-2020.

Office of the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division – Pathanamthitta E-Tender ID: 2020\_KSEB\_351885\_1 "Laying 10.4 Km 11 KV UG Cable of size 3x300Sqmm XLPE UG Cable from Palathadiyur to Elavumkaval for providing uninterrupted power supply for pumping stations of KWA located between Palathadiyur and Plapally \*PAC: Rs. 98,58,145/- Last Date: 25-05-2020, 11 AM. Visit [www.tenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.tenders.kerala.gov.in) and [www.kseb.ln](http://www.kseb.ln) - Ref: PR/MC1/D17/E-Tender/2020

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### NOTICE INVITING BIDS

For Design, Engineering, Manufacture, Supply and Erection of Live Deck Wood Log Feeding System for Chipper House

Bidders may request the tender document at the above address by post/mail. Detailed NIB may be viewed in websites: [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) / [www.tnpl.com](http://www.tnpl.com)

Date of issue of Bid Document : 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.

Date for submission : 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2020.

DIPR/1846/Tender/2020

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### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender No. Material Description Due date

202113 Imported Burnt Lime for PCC 08.06.2020

202133 Imported Limestone - Cement Plant 04.06.2020

202113 Cationic Starch (In Jumbo Bags) 04.06.2020

000470 04.06.2020

202113 Maize Based Native Starch (In Jumbo Bags) For TNPL Unit-1 & Unit-2 02.06.2020

202113 00455 Liquid Chlorine 06.06.2020

202113 000525 Hydrogen Peroxide 50% 10.06.2020

202113 000528 Sodium Hydrosulphite 12.06.2020

202133 000038 Gypsum 03.06.2020

Detailed requirements, period, terms & condition, Quantity,Tender Fee, Enlistment Fee/ EMD, etc. are available in tender document at our websites: [www.tnpl.com](http://www.tnpl.com) / [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)

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### TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD

INVITATION OF BIDS – TWO COVER – ITEMWAR TENDER SYSTEM (SIXTH CALL)

IFB No. FJ/Kuzhithurai WSIS /SDO II/CW/2020/ID19.05.2020

Fund JUDM 2018-19

Eligibility Registered Class I Bidders (Civil)

Tender Invitee The Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, No.1/1,Sambukalam, Mattuthavani, Madurai - 625007.

Date of Bid & Place of Sale 20.05.2020 to 02.06.2020 up to 17.45 hours at O/o the Executive Engineer, TWAD Board, Project Division, Nagercoil, TamirNadu by cash or by Demand Draft, Rs.1000 + GST in favour of Executive Engineer, TWAD Board, Project Division, Nagercoil payable at Nagercoil.

Downloading website (Free of cost) at [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) and [www.twadbard.mtn.gov.in](http://www.twadbard.mtn.gov.in).

Pre bid meeting 26.05.2020 at 11.00 hours at the office of the Tender Invitee

Bid Submission 04.06.2020 before 15.00 hours at the office of the Tender Invitee in person or through post. This office will not be held responsible for postal delay, if any.

Bid opening 04.06.2020 at 15.30 hours at the office of the Tender Invitee

SL No. Name of work Approximate value of work (RsIn Crore including GST) (RsIn lakhs)

1 Providing WSIS to Kuzhithurai Municipality in Kanyakumari District including maintenance for a period of 12 months (Period of completion - 12 months) 22.00 16.50

DIPR/1839 / TENDER / 2020

Chief Engineer, (i/c), TWAD Board, Madurai

SAVE WATER, CONSERVE WATER, EVERY DROP COUNTS

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT PENNAYAR BASIN CIRCLE, TIRUVANNAMALAI-606 603.**

TENDER INVITATION EXTENSION NOTICE

The notice of Tender document and record of Tender document for the work of Improvements to the Malaiar Channel from Tirukolur Anicut Offtake point 0 m to 2400 m in Tirukolur and Ukkundupet Taluks of Villupuram District invited in this office Tender Invitation No.01/IBC/TVA/Jaf/2020-2021/FAT/01/Dated:01/05/2020 is extended due to the Administrative reasons are as follows: i) Last Date for issue of Tender document fixed on 19.05.2020 till 05.45 P.M. is extended upto 02.06.2020 till 05.45 P.M. ii) Last date for receipt of Tender document fixed on 20.05.2020 till 03.00 P.M. is extended upto 03.06.2020 till 03.00 P.M. iii) Date of opening of Tender document on 20.05.2020 at

Flights to resume if States agree'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Domestic flights to different cities will resume once the State governments express their willingness to open airports, Minister for Civil Aviation Hardeep Puri said on Tuesday.

"It is not upto @MoCA\_GoI or centre alone to decide on resuming domestic flights. In the spirit of cooperative federalism, the govt of states where these flights will take off & land should be ready to allow civil aviation operations," said the Minister in a message posted on Twitter on Tuesday.

While the standard operating procedure for domestic flights was yet to be framed, the comment gives airlines a hint of what to expect in the days to come.

## Guidelines issued for dentists

Union Health Ministry says clinics will remain closed in containment zones

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN  
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Tuesday issued unified guidelines for dental professionals, warning that some patients making visits may be asymptomatic carriers of COVID-19. It emphasised that all those visiting a dental office must be treated with due precautions.

### Viral load

"Most dental procedures require close contact with the patient's oral cavity, saliva, blood, and respiratory tract secretions, and saliva is rich in COVID-19 viral load. Hence all urgent procedures should be undertaken only after consultation, triage, consent, and through pre-fixed appointments only", the Ministry noted.

It said dental clinics would



**Exercising caution:** Patients have been asked to seek ambulance services to go to COVID-19 dental facilities. • AFP

remain closed in the containment zones. However, they could continue to provide tele-triage.

Patients in this zone could

seek ambulance services to travel to the nearest COVID-19 dental facility.

"In the red zone, emergency dental procedures can

be performed, while the dental clinics in orange/green zones will function to provide consults. Dental operations should be restricted to emergency and urgent treatment procedures only," stated the Ministry.

### Risk of cross-infection

In the current pandemic, dentists, auxiliaries as well as patients undergoing dental procedures were at high risk of cross-infection. All routine and elective dental procedures should be deferred for a later review until new policy/guidelines were issued.

Due to the high risk associated with the examination of the oral cavity, oral cancer screening under National Cancer Screening programme should also be deferred.

## 'India, U.S. to collaborate on vaccine trials'

Focus is on safe, cost-effective vaccines against a range of infectious diseases: U.S. health officials

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

India and the U.S. plan to work together on vaccine research and testing for COVID-19, U.S. health officials said here on Tuesday, listing a number of other ways in which the two countries are working together.

"U.S. and Indian scientists have been collaborating on key research questions fostering the development and testing of safe, cost-effective vaccines against a range of infectious diseases that could save innumerable lives in India, the United States, and around the world," U.S. Embassy Health and Human Services (HHS) attaché Preetha Rajaraman told reporters at a briefing in New Delhi.



**Long haul:** The Vaccine Action Programme is a bilateral research project between the U.S. and India. • AP

"In the context of the current pandemic, partners under the Vaccine Action Programme (VAP) are planning to collaborate on the development and testing of vaccine candidates and diagnostics for COVID-19," she added.

The VAP, or the Indo-U.S.

Vaccine Action Program (VAP), is a 33-year collaboration between the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the Indian Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) along with other partners.

Meanwhile, 50 ventilators

from the United States are expected in India shortly, the embassy said, as part of the donation of 200 ventilators announced by President Donald Trump last week.

### Part of funding'

The ventilators, which will be paid for by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), are part of \$5.9 million in funding announced to date for India, said USAID Acting Director Ramona El Hamzaoui, briefing journalists about the work of the agency, adding that the amount was a part of a worldwide commitment of \$900 million made available for combating the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The United States government is providing ac-

cess to high-quality, American-made ventilators to designated countries as soon as the domestic supply chain and vendors are able to produce and deliver orders," Ms. Hamzaoui said.

She added that USAID would facilitate a discussion between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the manufacturer "to ensure that the local context and needs are considered before placing the final purchase order."

The U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said it would separately fund the Government of India \$3.6 million to support "prevention, preparedness, and response activities in India, in collaboration with and concurrence from the GoI."

Dr. Sawant took to social media to express dismay at the Kerala Minister's televised remarks, which he said contained factual inaccuracies.

"The said patient to our knowledge and as confirmed

tarian response to COVID-19. "We [Sri Lanka], for instance, have a good public health system. So does Kerala. We can work together on that," he had said.

### Effective strategy

News reports in the international media of Kerala's effective strategy, particularly Ms. Shailaja's leadership, in effectively containing COVID-19 have been widely shared by Sri Lankans in the past few weeks. *The Guardian's* profile of the "rock star Health Minister" was shared across social media.

Sri Lanka's public health officials and the military are leading the country's efforts in combating the pandemic. After about two months in lockdown, it is gradually opening up, with new regulations for public movement by allocating specific days to citizens, based on their national ID card numbers.



Ranil Wickremesinghe

booths and effective identification of potential patients, resulted in having only four deaths out of a 35-million population, so far, the best in the region," the leader of the United National Party observed. "Your leadership and efforts deserve appreciation in a context where most of the countries in the world are still struggling to contain the deadly virus".

In an interview to *The Hindu* in April, Mr. Wickremesinghe said, "The extensive testing, including setting up of testing

## Ranil lauds Kerala Minister's efforts to combat COVID-19

Disease control possible despite limited resources: former PM

MEERA SRINIVASAN  
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has lauded Kerala Health Minister K.K. Shailaja's leadership in "responding proactively and boldly" to tackle COVID-19.

In a letter dated May 18,

2020, he said, "As the Minister of Health of Kerala, you have demonstrated that effective disease control is possible even though the resources are limited."

The 'Kerala model' in handling contagious diseases had succeeded, offering the rest of the world "many best practices", including Kerala's priority for conducting tests on highly vulnerable groups such as health workers, police and volunteers, he noted.

Mr. Wickremesinghe said, "The extensive testing, including setting up of testing

## Goa CM 'appalled' by Shailaja's remarks

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Tuesday took strong exception to Kerala Health Minister K.K. Shailaja's interview to BBC World News where she said the State only had three deaths 'on record', and that one of the COVID-19 fatalities in her State was of a man from Goa, who had travelled to Kerala



Pramod Sawant

to get treatment because of poor health infrastructure in the "Union Territory".

Dr. Sawant took to social media to express dismay at the Kerala Minister's televised remarks, which he said contained factual inaccuracies.

"The said patient to our knowledge and as confirmed

by Kerala IDSP [Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme] team is not from Goa and has not travelled from here for lack of health facilities," Dr. Sawant said in a post on Twitter.

Ms. Shailaja, later on Tuesday, clarified that the fourth COVID-19 fatality in the State was of a person who had come for treatment from Mahe, which is a part of the Union Territory of Puducherry, and not from Goa as she had said while speaking to the BBC. She also called Dr. Sawant and apologised for the 'inadvertent' error. The Goa CM had responded positively, she told *The Hindu*.

## ENTERPRISE CONNECT

SJVN Employees to contribute One Day Salary to CM Relief Fund/H.P.Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund

CODIV-19, a highly contagious disease has engulfed the entire world in its grip. In India, the pandemic is posing severe health and economic challenges with exponential rise in number of cases.

Sh. Nand Lal Sharma, Chairman and Managing Director of SJVN informed that as a responsible Corporate citizen and understanding the seriousness of fight against the COVID-19, the employees of SJVN are voluntarily donating their one-day salary to CM Relief Fund/H.P.Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund amounting to Rupees 44,50,000/- (Forty-Four Lakhs Five Thousand). Sh. Nand Lal Sharma informed that in series of steps to support the government in battle against COVID-19, SJVN has contributed Rs. 25,00,00,000/- (Twenty-Five Crore) towards PM CARES fund. He also informed that SJVN has also provided a financial support of around Rs. 2,00,00,000 (Two Crore) to the Government of Himachal Pradesh for procuring ventilators, Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs), food, masks, sanitizers and gloves in various hospitals.

SJVN employees have also already contributed one day salary to the PM CARES fund to combat the Corona challenge.

**HSIIDC to resolve all issues on the spot from 1st June 2020 onwards**

Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) started 'Efficient Service Camps' in its 41 nos. Industrial Estates effective from 2nd March 2020 onwards to facilitate the industrialists in its with 'Your partner in progress'. This initiative a brain child of Sh. Anurag Agarwal IAS, Managing Director of the Corporation, received tremendous response and was widely appreciated by the industrialists. The camp had to be suspended due to Covid-19 lockdown.

To again initiate discussions with industrialists and to resolve all their grievances on the spot, HSIIDC shall re-commence holding of 'Efficient Service Camps' in all Estates on weekly basis from 1st June 2020 onwards through online mechanism (Video Conferencing) using any suitable platform in consultation with the respective Industrial Associations.

Sh. Anurag Agarwal, IAS, Managing Director of the Corporation informed that before the first announcement of lockdown of the entire nation in an effort to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, HSIIDC was performing this exercise of holding 'Efficient Service Camps' in all its

contributions from 12% to 10% of basic wages and dearness allowances is intended to benefit both 4.3 crore employees/members and employers of 6.5 lakh establishments to tide over the immediate liquidity crisis to some extent," the EPFO said.

**Higher take home pay'**

"As a result of reduction in statutory rate of contributions from 12% to 10%, the employee shall have a higher take home pay due to reduction in deduction from his pay on account of EPF contributions and employer shall also have his liability reduced by 2% of wages of his employees," it added.

The reduction would not be applicable to govt. establishments • FILE PHOTO

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**Higher take home pay'**



**KAKINADA**  
**Roller coaster:** Motorists negotiating a road that was damaged following heavy winds in Upada near Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh; fishing boats anchored at the harbour of Paradip in Odisha; and high waves lashing the Visakhapatnam coast as cyclonic storm Amphan draws closer on Tuesday. ■ S. RAMBABU, BISWARANJAN ROUT AND K.R. DEEPAK



Teams to keep an eye on tiger movement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KOLKATA

With Cyclone 'Amphan' set to lash the coastal areas of West Bengal on Wednesday, the State Forest department on Tuesday formed rapid response teams to ensure that tigers from Sundarbans in South 24 Parganas district do not stray into nearby human settlements after the landfall.

Chief Wildlife Warden Ravi Kant Sinha said a control room had been set up at Gosaba in the district to monitor the situation in the mangrove jungles 24x7.

The department's central control room in the Salt Lake area will be in constant touch with the Gosaba unit and keep a close watch on wildlife movement in the forest.

The teams have been deployed with tranquilliser guns, net and speed boats.

## Lockdown to help in cyclone relief work

Eye of Amphan will pass through eastern parts of Kolkata today; heavy winds expected to lash city

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

The Regional Meteorological Centre at Alipore in Kolkata on Tuesday asked people in the city not to venture out and keep shops and other institutions closed when the super cyclone Amphan makes landfall on the West Bengal coast on Wednesday.

From Wednesday morning, wind speed in Kolkata will be from 75 kmph to 85 kmph. When the cyclone makes landfall, the wind speed will increase from 110 kmph to 120 kmph. We are issuing an advisory that there should be no movement of people in the city," said Sanjib Bandyopadhyay, Deputy Director-General of Meteorology, Regional Meteorological Centre, Alipore.

Mr. Bandyopadhyay also said the damage due to the super cyclone could be "minimised as there are no fishermen in the sea due to



**Bracing for the storm:** Barges are being moored in the Hooghly near the Vidyasagar Setu in Kolkata on Tuesday. ■ RAJEEV BHATT

spread of COVID-19 infection". The beach resorts at Digha, Madarmani and Bakkali have no tourists because of the lockdown.

The COVID-19 outbreak is expected to be "an advantage" in disguise, a south

Kolkata resident said, "as people are mostly locked at home".

Met officials have predicted that the wind speed will be 165 kmph to 175 kmph when the cyclone makes landfall between Digha in

pass through east and south-east of Kolkata. The city along with adjoining districts will experience high-speed winds along with heavy rainfall.

Representatives of Kolkata Municipal Corporation started evacuating people from old dilapidated houses in the city. Nearly one lakh people have been evacuated from the three coastal districts of South and North 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur.

### Storm surge

Other than heavy rainfall accompanied by strong winds, the super cyclone is likely to cause a storm surge of four to five metres in the low-lying areas of South and North 24 Parganas. In Purba Medinipur, the surge is going to be three to four metres. Officials of the Regional Meteorological Department said the storm surge is likely to cause heavy flooding.

## 41 NDRF teams deployed in West Bengal, Odisha

We are prepared, says Director-General

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Forty-one teams of the National Disaster Response Force, including seven reserves, have been deployed in West Bengal and Odisha in view of the impending cyclonic storm 'Amphan', its chief S.N. Pradhan said on Tuesday.



NDRF personnel making public announcements at Namkhana in West Bengal.

storm and its hit potential remained strong. "Hence, we have prepared according to that," he said.

Due to social distancing protocols in the wake of coronavirus, the cyclone rescue centres having a capacity to hold about 1,000 people would have only 400-500 locals, Mr. Pradhan said.

The NDRF Director-General said Amphan would be extremely severe cyclonic

## Amphan rains on distancing norms

Many families rush to cyclone shelters, where maintaining physical space is tough



**Taking refuge:** Families that gathered at a cyclone shelter in Paradip, Odisha. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

SATYASUNDAR BARIK

BHUBANESWAR

Battling wild cyclonic winds, Ajit Das and his family members scurried towards a cyclone shelter in the port town of Paradip in Odisha's Jagatsinghpur district on Tuesday afternoon.

They had to struggle for space in a 3,000 sq.ft. area already occupied by 500 others.

On a day when his home district Jagatsinghpur registered a big spike by reporting 23 COVID-19 cases, adhering to social distancing precautions should have been uppermost in his mind.

### Memories of 1999

But, for someone, who had witnessed the 1999 super cyclone and its trail of devastation, the COVID-19 pandemic did not evoke much fear.

"Many lives could have been saved had people taken some precautions by shifting themselves to safer places in

there are storms. Ujjal Mandal, who reached the Bagagahana cyclone shelter in Kendrapara early on Tuesday, found people keeping some physical distance. "But, the shelter will be jam-packed when the cyclone picks momentum," said Mr. Mandal.

### Red zones

Cyclonic storm Amphan will have the maximum impact on districts such as Balasore and Bhadrak, both falling in the red category of COVID-19 zones.

Initially, 567 cyclone shelters and 7,000 concrete buildings were identified to accommodate about 11 lakh people to be evacuated in 12 districts. By 4 p.m. on Tuesday, 35,000 people were shifted to cyclone shelters. As the cyclone moved away from the Odisha coast, the government breathed easy and focused only on six districts.

1999. We don't want to take chances this time. There is still room for uncertainty that you may or may not contract the coronavirus. But, you will surely invite trouble if you stay outside during the cyclone," said Mr. Das.

A similar sentiment was echoed by 70-year-old Sarat Chandra Tripathy at Pentha village in Kendrapara district, which is categorised as

an orange zone with 38 active COVID-19 cases. "Fear of the coronavirus was not on anyone's mind when we all rushed to the shelter. Saving life during the cyclone is the priority," said Mr. Tripathy.

The population of Pentha is about 600. About 300 people, who live in thatched houses and old concrete structures, spend hours in cyclone shelters whenever

## Hotter oceans spawn super cyclones

Record temperatures in the Bay of Bengal have set the stage for storm systems

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

Higher than normal temperatures in the Bay of Bengal (BoB) may be whetting 'super cyclones' and the lockdown, indirectly, may have played a role, meteorologists and atmospheric science experts told *The Hindu*.

Super cyclone Amphan that is barreling towards West Bengal is the strongest storm to have formed in the BoB since the Super Cyclone of 1999 that ravaged Paradip in Odisha, said Director-General, India Meteorological Department M. Mohapatra.

### Warmer waters

Cyclones gain their energy from the heat and moisture generated from warm ocean surfaces. This year, the BoB has posted record summer temperatures a fall-out, as researchers have warned, of global warming from fossil fuel emissions that has been heating up oceans.



Buoys are used to measure ocean temperatures.

"The BoB has been particularly warm. Some of the buoys have registered maximum surface temperatures of 32-34°C consecutively, for the first two weeks of May. These are record temperatures driven by climate change – we have never seen such high values until now," said Roxy Mathew Koll, a scientist with the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune, who has also co-authored IPCC reports on oceans and the cryosphere.

Cyclone Amphan intensi-

fied from a category-1 cyclone to category-5 in 18 hours, an unusually quick evolution. Last year Fani, a category 4 cyclone, which swept through the Odisha coast, was again fuelled by high temperatures in the BoB.

While tropical cyclones in these seas are a typical feature of the summer months and play a role in aiding the arrival of the monsoon, Dr. Koll said warming around India is not longer restricted to just the BoB but also the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. This makes storm prediction less reliable as well as disrupting monsoon patterns.

### Lockdown impact

Another researcher said the elevated ocean temperatures this year could, in part, be explained by the lockdown. Reduced particulate matter emissions during the lockdown meant fewer aerosols, such as black carbon, that are known to reflect sunlight and heat away from the surface.

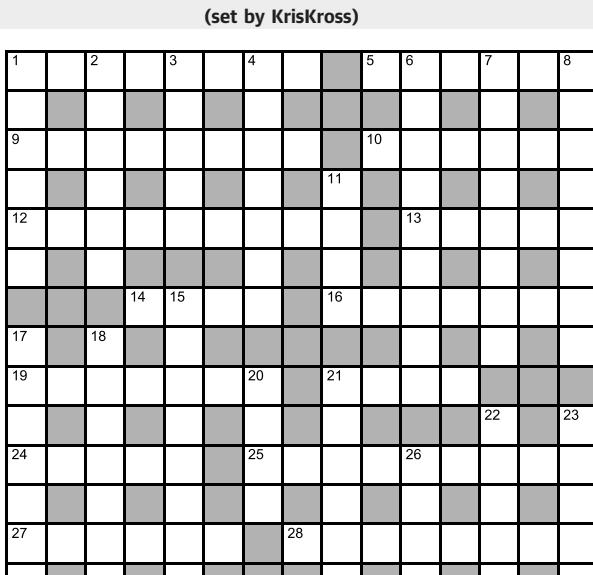
Every year, increased particulate pollution from the Indo-Gangetic plains is transported towards the BoB and this also influences the formation of clouds over the ocean, said V. Vinoj, Assistant Professor, School of Earth, Ocean and Climate Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology in Bhubaneswar.

Fewer clouds and more heat in the Bay of Bengal may have amplified the strength of the cyclone," he told *The Hindu*. "We've observed that during the lockdown from March-April, BoB temperatures have been 1-3°C higher than normal. But the exact contribution from aerosols to this still to be determined." He and his colleagues are working on a research paper on these lines.

## TH CROSSWORD + 12940

(set by KrisKross)

Are you good with numbers or better with words? Pick from Sudokus and crosswords.  
@ <https://crossword.thehindu.com>



### ■ ACROSS

- 1 Ghosts crept around, a bit eerily, in ship (8)
- 5 Cheats prison guards (6)
- 9 Sports fans around the boundary making demonstrations (8)
- 10 University student's leave rejected last month (6)
- 12 It could be cold or hot saline compound (9)
- 13 Blackbird or swallow (5)

- 14 Just playing "Empty" song (4)
- 16 Speech describing victory, after killing resistance, gets applause (7)
- 19 Great leader escapes... breaking away free, he seeks asylum (7)
- 21 Worker runs to drink... (4)
- 24 ...sounding very calm (5)
- 25 Greek character attains stature after decimating a crowd (9)
- 27 Plants rice, as ordered (6)
- 28 Unknown person made a phone call, disturbing rest rudely (8)
- 29 Flipping drunk, Edward leaned to one side (6)
- 30 How to make Erin get complete liberty (4,4)
- DOWN
- 1 Approaches this poetess with care perhaps (6)
- 2 Wonderful, sensuous kiss for Romeo (6)
- 3 Support partners for a period of seven years (5)
- 4 State of disorder in Bombay port, newly built-up (7)
- 6 Graduate student engaged in analysis of bacteria (9)
- 7 Marriage vows recalled in Ramayana, perhaps? That's irregular (8)
- 8 One hanging around for the present? (8)
- 11 Zimbabwe's opener and leading player, scoring his first duck (4)
- 15 Terrible thing to spoil sleep, essentially (9)
- 17 Common worry over ruler lacking guts (8)
- 18 Executive of rank, nearly stabbed by spies (8)
- 20 Regularly sell X-mas trees (4)
- 21 More confident daughter leaves to get good man's support (7)
- 22 Doctor can fix leg (6)
- 23 News about foreign capital – it makes you nervous? (6)
- 26 Setter's mature idea (5)

## SUDOKU

2	1		7					
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2	4			8	3			
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12939

D	E	N	V	E	R	M	O	S	C	O	W
R	A	P	S	B	O	A					
L	O	U	I	N	T	P	L	A			
P	C	T	E	I	L	T					
B	O	G	O	A	T	A					
S	T	O	C	H	O	L	M	O	S	L	O
N	U	T	S	E	C	Y	S	T	E	M	O
E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	E	T	O
C	I	N	CH	O	N	A	L	I	S	B	O
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B	S	N	R	N	H	I					
I	C	E	M	A	N	M	A	N	I	L	A

Audi has pulled out all the stops with the A8 L, offering a no-compromise package that is sure to make an impact



GAVIN D'SOUZA

Audi's fourth-gen A8 arrives in India nearly two-and-a-half years after it was introduced in global markets. The new flagship sedan is larger than its predecessor, based on a new platform and is loaded with tech. So, has it been worth the wait?

The new A8 L wears its limousine heart on its sleeve. If the 10ft (3,128mm) wheelbase wasn't enough, the rear overhang extends far out, making it look like a proper stretched sedan. What also helps is the window line, which stretches far back beyond the actual seating area of the cabin, giving it a curved, coupé-like shape. This test car sits on a set of rather racy five-spoke, 19-inch wheels, but that's the only sporty touch you'll see here.

As with previous A8s, there's been no attempt at making this car look sporty or overly curvaceous. It is all business, though straight lines and creases, and bold details at the front and rear do liven things up. There is plenty of chrome all around too; it does deliver that all-important road presence for a luxury car.

The back seat is, of course, where you gravitate to in a car like this, and Audi has really gone to town here. First, there is no more bench seat and the split rear cabin is standard – a tall centre console runs between the two chairs, and houses the central AC vents, seat controls, the optional rear wireless phone charger, an optional mini-fridge located in the boot, and a small command centre that centres around a removable touchscreen tablet. This operates every single function of the rear seat – powered sunshades, sunroof, lights, climate control, media and the seats themselves.

The rear seats are what really set this 'limousine' class of luxury sedans apart from everything else on the market. Sure, the long-wheelbase E-class also gets reclining seats and



added legroom, but the A8 and its competitors are in a whole different league.

Heating, cooling and massaging seats are the norm here, as are the entertainment screens, panoramic sunroof, and powered sunshades for the entire rear cabin. Though the sheer plushness of the cushioning might still fall a little shy of those in an S-class, it's near impossible to fault the rear-seat comfort. Aside from the huge amount of adjustments you can make (including folding the front passenger seat forward) there is the optional foot-massage system, which is unique to the Audi. Built into the back of the front-passenger seat, this heated pad kneads your soles into relaxation.

Then there is the rear en-



Premium update The new flagship sedan is larger, based on a new platform and loaded with tech ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## A limousine with its heart on its sleeve



ment system. The screens are actually detachable Android-powered tablets replete with front-facing cameras, internet connectivity and full functionality. This means that not only can you access in-car infotainment functions, but you can also stream your favourite movies and even hold video conferences.

The front half of the cabin has a lot of the wow factor too, with air-con vents that glide gently open

when you slide your finger across the touch-sensitive control strips. The dual-touchscreen MMI system is present, of course, and as we've documented in the past, it is feature-packed and looks amazing, but can be tricky to use on the move.

Things aren't all that rosy from the driver's seat though. The huge transmission tunnel means the driver footwell is very narrow and there is an audible squeak that emanates from somewhere behind the centre console on a bumpy road. Also, at certain times of the day, the huge plank of glossy black trim on the dashboard throws up big reflections.

Coming to the engine, the A8 is available in 55 TFSI guise in India, and that means a 340hp/500Nm turbocharged petrol V6 engine with a 48V mild-hybrid system. An 8-speed automatic gearbox is standard as is the Quattro all-wheel drive.

Now, while this is the same engine as the Q8, the A8 is 160kg lighter than the SUV, and as a result it feels noticeably

### AUDI A8 L 55 TFSI SPECIFICATIONS

**ENGINE** 2995cc, V6, turbo-petrol

**MAX POWER** 340hp at 5000-6400rpm

**MAX TORQUE** 500Nm at 1370-4500rpm

**GEARBOX** 8-speed automatic

**WEIGHT (KG)** 1955kg

**TYRES (F/R)** 255/45 R19

**LENGTH (MM)** 5302mm

**WIDTH (MM)** 1945mm

**HEIGHT (MM)** 1485mm

**WHEELBASE (MM)** 3128mm



sprightlier. Audi claims it will do 0-100kph 0.2sec quicker than the Q8 too, taking just 5.7sec, and though that is pretty quick for a limo, this is not a sporty engine by nature. Yes, a hard launch will yield the requisite results, but in most driving situations, power delivery

is gentle, smooth and even more refined. And while you'd want a bit of sport in the Q8, in this A8, you do not.

Similarly, the driving dynamics – you simply don't want to put this car in Dynamic mode. Even when I wanted to go quicker, I found myself dialling just the powertrain into 'Dynamic' and leaving the steering and suspension at their soothing, mushy best. We have brought the A8 L onto some rather unsavoury rural roads, and, frankly, that extra degree of absorption you get from 'Comfort' allows it to ride flat over a patchy road. Credit must also go to the fitment of 19-inch alloy wheels that take some of the hit.

The agility of the A8 L comes as a big surprise, and that's mostly because of the optional rear-wheel steering. Pair that with a light and effortless feel at the wheel and you get a 5.3m sedan that tucks into traffic gaps like a hatchback. Also, when you're changing lanes at high speed, stability isn't compromised, as the rear wheels turn in the same direction as the front ones, rather than the opposite.

In summation, if you're looking to buy your next limousine, you have got a very compelling option in the A8. Imported as a CBU with a starting price of ₹1.56 crore (ex-showroom, pan-India), the A8 L 55 TFSI is a bit more expensive than six-cylinder-petrol-powered versions of its locally assembled rivals, the S-class and 7 Series. The differentiator, like with the Q8, is the intense level of customisation. Customers have access to the full Audi Exclusive catalogue of paints, upholstery, trims and wheels, which should make sure that each car stands out. Moreover, though there are equipment options to choose from, the standard specification is very generous; so even if you don't want to spend a rupee more than the starting spec, you will still get a comprehensive luxury experience.

Audi knows it has lost precious ground to Mercedes and BMW in this top tier of brand-defining flagship luxury sedans; and to make up for it, it has pulled out all the stops with the A8 L, offering a no-compromise package that's sure to make an impact as large as the grille on its nose.

## Most fuel-efficient BS-VI diesel cars in India

Those who still offer a diesel engine option have upgraded their existing motors, adversely affecting fuel economy figures

RIVAN RS

With the shift to BS-VI emission norms, multiple manufacturers have moved away from diesel engines entirely. Those who still do offer a diesel engine option have introduced new units entirely or have upgraded their existing motors to meet the new norms – this has adversely affected the fuel economy figures of many cars.

We take a look at the most fuel-efficient BS-VI diesel cars that are available in the Indian market. Keep in mind the figures quoted here are from ARAI. Real-life efficiency figures will vary.



### 4. Hyundai Verna 25kpl

Until the next-gen Honda City goes on sale, the Hyundai Verna will be the only diesel mid-size sedan available. Recently updated with a new 115hp, 1.5-litre diesel engine that is shared with the Creta, the Verna sure has appeal for buyers with lots of driving on their hands. The Verna diesel-manual delivers 25kpl, while the smooth auto is good for 21.3kpl.



### 6. Ford Figo and Aspire 24.4kpl

In the Figo hatchback and Aspire compact sedan, Ford's excellent 1.5-litre diesel goes even further on a litre of diesel. Despite the approximate 15kg difference in kerb weights, both models have an identical ARAI rating of 24.4kpl, which could be due to the different gearing on the 5-speed manual. The Ford Figo diesel is an arch-rival to the Hyundai Grand i10 Nios, while the Ford Aspire diesel directly takes on the Hyundai Aura and Honda Amaze.



### 2. Tata Altroz 25.11kpl

Tata's all-new premium hatchback is the most efficient diesel hatchback currently available in India, with an ARAI-rated economy of 25.11kpl. Available in a single engine-gearbox version, the Altroz diesel uses a 90hp version of Tata Motor's 1.5-litre Revotorq engine mated to a 5-speed manual gearbox. Until the BS-VI Honda Jazz diesel arrives, the Tata Altroz is the only diesel-powered premium hatchback in the market.



### 5. Honda Amaze 24.7kpl

Honda's compact sedan is powered by a 100hp/200Nm, 1.5-litre diesel engine that is mated to either a 5-speed manual or a CVT-automatic gearbox. The diesel-manual version is rated at 24.7kpl, giving the compact sedan a spot on the top 5. The Amaze diesel-CVT has an ARAI rating of 21kpl, and output figures that are 20hp/40Nm lower too. The Honda Amaze diesel is the second most efficient compact sedan by a margin of 0.3kpl.

### Q AND A WITH HORMAZD



#### Steer clear

**Sidik Grover, Malout:** I have my eye on a 2011 Chevrolet Cruze. Should I buy it?

■ We would not advise you to buy the Cruze for several reasons. Firstly, being nearly 10 years old, the Cruze, which is essentially a Daewoo, isn't particularly well-put-together and is likely to start giving trouble. Also, with GM having exited India, and the fact that the Cruze has long been discontinued, spare parts availability will be an issue. You could end up buying a white elephant; so it is best to stay away from it.

#### A perfect fit

**Shriram Patki, Pune:** For my 2013 Mahindra Xylo, can I shift from the standard (alloy) rim of 215/75-R15 100T to 215/55-R17 100V?

■ The 215/55-R17s are primarily passenger vehicle tyres that would wear out much faster on the Xylo. You could fit the 215/70-R16s as a safe upgrade option. You need to select the rims with the same PCD (Pitch, Circle, Diameter) as the original wheels of the Xylo.

#### For big boys

**Aashik Coimbatore:** I am 19 years old and I am planning to buy a Harley-Davidson Fat Boy 2020, but I don't know how to ride a bike. I really love the Fat Boy, do you think I should start with a basic model such as the Street 750?

■ We suggest once things get safer regarding the pandemic, you learn how to ride a smaller-capacity geared bike. The Fat Boy is a very large, 300kg-plus bike and is definitely not suited for new riders. Even the Street 750 is a large and powerful machine that we wouldn't recommend for beginners.

With motorcycles, gradually stepping up is the best course of action, and this way you will get to experience and appreciate many different machines. Once you are confident on a smaller capacity bike, you could step up to something like the Street 750. After some time and experience with the 750, you should be ready to confidently ride a motorcycle like the Fat Boy.

Hormazd Sorabjee is the editor of Autocar India. Mail your feedback and queries to [roadshow@thehindu.co.in](mailto:roadshow@thehindu.co.in)

A ND-NDE



**Historic writing** (Clockwise from left) Calligraphy done at *The Musalman* Urdu daily in Chennai; a fine specimen; window of Hyderabad's Purani Haveli reflected on a calligraphed mirror • S R RAGHUNATHAN, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND ARUNANGSU ROY CHOWDHURY

## The last katibs

Delhi's minuscule community of Urdu and Arabic calligraphers is fighting to stay relevant and keep the art alive

NAHLA NAINAR

Mohamed Ghalib is reading the *Koran* when we get through to him on the phone. This is the month of Ramzan, and it seems significant that the calligrapher is reading the Islamic holy book that was once transcribed by artists like him.

Today, 58-year-old Ghalib, is reportedly the last *katib* or calligrapher, working in Old Delhi's Urdu Bazaar. Once the stars of the vernacular Urdu press, which relied on *katibs* to transcribe material for newspapers and magazines, these calligraphers are among the last practitioners of an art that goes back to the golden era of Arabic writing, which underpins the Urdu script.

Arabic calligraphy (*khat*) is held in high regard by Muslims because of its association with the *Koran*. Most *katibs* learn both Arabic and Urdu calligraphy as the scripts are similar, though the latter often deals with non-religious subjects.

Ghalib trained in the art for four years at an Islamic seminary (*madrasa*) in Deoband, Uttar Pradesh, near his village of Saharanpur. However, the computerisation of print media in the 1980s and 1990s rendered many of these skilled craftsmen jobless. "There used to be 15-20 *katibs* employed per shift in the Urdu press. Now, there are hardly five in the whole of Delhi," says Ghalib.

**An art with discipline**  
Urdu is a language with elements of Arabic, Persian and Turkic blended into the Khari Boli dialect of Delhi, and was promoted as a lingua franca by the Mughals among its soldiers ('Urdu' means camp or army in Turkish). With its adaptation of the Arabic script for writing, Urdu is noted for its highly poetic yet forceful style of expression.

"Calligraphy needs discipline from the artist," says Ghalib, who writes while seated on the floor. "You have to sit in a certain way,

and hold your breath to keep your hand steady as the *qalam* (reed pens, the best of which once were imported from Iran by Indian stationers) moves over the paper. Naturally, it gets harder as you age. But I can remember the days when I would be up all night, completing orders for magazine covers and wedding invitations," he adds.

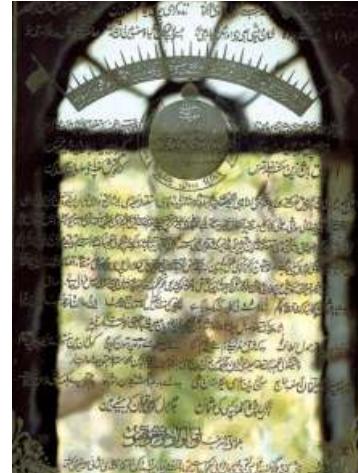
Ameen-ur-Rehman, another veteran calligrapher, with over 40 years of experience, recalls the late 1970s and early 1980s, when writing assignments would flow into the scribes' stalls at Urdu Bazaar from other parts of the city and from states.

"My lack of a formal degree has affected my job prospects now; but in those days, it was enough to have a passion for calligraphy. I was doing quite well in commercial design until the computers came," he says.

Things have been better for Anis Siddiqui, a qualified calligrapher with diplomas from Deoband, who won a National Award for his craft in 1984, and is a guest lecturer at leading Indian institutions such as Jamia Millia Islamia University and Ghali Institute in Delhi.

Besides having a long stint in the Urdu press, he has also been a patron of the art, and founded a calligraphy institute in Kota, Rajasthan in 2006. "Calligraphy is a kind of reminder of the divine in our lives," he says.

Siddiqui eventually found his forte in calligraphy in Urdu, Hindi,



Hebrew, Tibetan, Persian, Pashto, English and different Indian languages from 1984, after training under Indian expert Khaleeqe Tonki and Syrian master calligrapher Mohamed al-Qazi, among others. He has travelled widely with his art. "Calligraphers must have a strong grasp of grammar in order to be successful," he says.

The recent documentary *Tears of Dancing Letters* shows him explaining calligraphy in great detail.

**A helping hand**  
Eager to revive the fading art, in 2018, students of the Netaji Subhash University of Technology (NSUT) in Delhi launched 'Project Kitabat' in collaboration with the US-based non-profit organisation, Enactus. "We contacted the five calligraphers who are still practising their art in Delhi, and facilitated live demonstration workshops at corporate venues; we also have channelised their talent into creating products like key-chains, T-shirts and accessories for a new customer base," says project head Kunal Bhardwaj, a second-year Electronics and Communication Engineering student at NSUT, who like his team, got interested in reprising the art that once used to have many practitioners in Delhi alone.

Project Kitabat has merged other similar forms like Mandala art, *Tughra* calligraphy (monograms) and acrylic painting to make the handicrafts appealing across communities.

Besides enabling the artists to start selling their products online through platforms like Etsy, ArtPal and Skobe, Project Kitabat recently hosted a well-received stall at the 'Humara Haat' (an empowerment programme under the aegis of the Ministry of Minority Affairs) in February in collaboration with Afreen Khan, a young artist who does calligraphy on feathers.

The group is working closely with National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) and



**GEOMETRIC ART**  
From the 16th Century, it became a practice to assemble albums of Arabic calligraphy, and India is among the countries that have museums with sizeable collections of these rare documents.

"Calligraphy is a form of geometric art. There's no end to geometry, because it depends totally on your imagination," says Sanam Ali Khan, senior conservator at the Raza Library in the erstwhile princely state of Rampur in Uttar Pradesh.

With 5,488 Arabic documents in its catalogue, the library has in its possession, rare specimens of calligraphy by masters from India and Iran. A 7th Century *Koran* written on parchment in early Kufic script attributed to Hazrat Ali, the nephew and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad, and the fourth Caliph of Islam, is among its prized exhibits. Calligraphy is still highly visible in Mughal-era monuments, besides all contemporary Islamic places of worship. "Whether it is the Jama Masjid in Old Delhi or even a small mosque or tomb elsewhere, you will have calligraphy on it. I have been tweeting often about some historic examples," says Delhi-based historian and writer Rana Safvi. "It was an art practised by Mughal rulers. Bahadur Shah Zafar, for instance, was an ace calligrapher," she says.

Among the most well-known examples is the Taj Mahal. "The calligraphy in Taj Mahal was done by someone who was given the title Ustad Amanat Khan Shirazi by Shahjahan. The value that Shahjahan put on Amanat Khan's calligraphy was so high that he was the only one allowed to sign his work inside the main cenotaph chamber. That for me, speaks volumes about the artist's skill," says Rana.

looking to expand the project to cities like Hyderabad, which also has a rich legacy in the art. "We also want new people to learn and appreciate this art form," says Kunal.

For calligraphers like Ghalib, such initiatives are a way to earn some self-respect back. "I often get queries for teaching assignments, but nothing is possible until the lockdown is lifted. Even a gravestone requires a calligrapher's services. We are still sought out by lawyers to help them decipher the Urdu script of old legal documents. Calligraphy is a skill that sustains many other skills," he says.

## Hearts that beat for everyone

Flute Theatre's Heartbeat Hellos on Instagram is a beacon of hope for those in the autistic spectrum



**Creating magic** The games are helpful for those with CP as well • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Samaddar, Flute Theatre's point of contact in India, who also participates.

The main benefit of the live, Hunter says, "is that the kids who have been with us for years and love to play with us and be with us don't miss out on the sessions with us." She adds: "The IG Live helps to bring about a sense of regularity to the followers with ASD and we try to reach as many people as humanly possible with our Charity Flute Theatre."

"We have some friends in the US, Spain, Romania, Japan and of course India who tune in from time to time and make our venture even more successful than it is just in the UK," she says. "What does create magic is when some of the kids request to join and spend the whole time loving the attention and playing with Holly and Hepzi our dedicated singers for the (Instagram) live," says Hunter.

Hunter's team managed to do a 24-hour live stream of heartbeats with hosts from all around the world during World Autism week. Samaddar explains, "One member of the large and growing community of Flute Theatre took over each hour."

But the live stream is not only for people from the autistic spectrum, "The games are attractive to whoever tunes in. Yes, they are specifically designed with and for kids and young adults on the spectrum but people with anxiety will have a strong sensation of calm. The games and the heartbeats are helpful for those with CP as well," says Kelly.

RAJASHREE DAS

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought with it significant shifts in routines all over the world. With more people finding themselves adapting to a lifestyle they are less used to, the latent emotional distress it causes is unavoidable.

Kelly Hunter MBE, artistic director of Flute Theatre, is all too familiar with the consequences of the upending of normalcy of routine. Hunter is the creator of The Hunter Heartbeat Method, a series of sensory drama games for young people with autism and their families. "It is a system I devised after I had taken some time off mainstream theatre and decided I really wanted to do something with my craft and for the community," says Hunter.

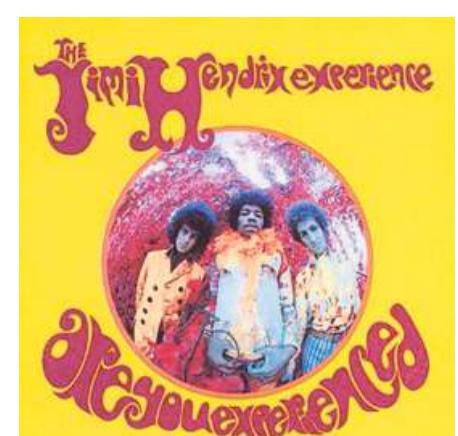
She says, "In the technical world, the heartbeat is the first sound a child hears when it is born and the method tries to create a womb-like structure for the children and young adults. We replicate the heartbeat and use the works of Shakes-

peare who understood before all of us the key element for all humans. Thus, I have combined the iambic Pentameter and the heartbeats to create numerous games with Shakespeare fantastical texts to help all on the autistic spectrum deal with day-to-day activities easier."

Hunter and her team are now using Flute Theatre's Instagram page @FluteTheatre to reach out to people from the autistic spectrum in these unsettling times. Hunter's team comes live on Instagram to play one of the games, Heartbeat Hellos, devised by Hunter. A member of Flute Theatre repeatedly sings the word hello following the iambic Pentameter while also interacting with autistic children watching the live by calling out their names.

"The children feel a sense of ease when we use this and accompanying the heartbeat action with our hand with a 'Hello' helps us introduce ourselves to them without a comprehensive monologue about ourselves," says Ninad.

## A colouring book of iconic album covers



Finished artwork can be uploaded to the colouringsessions.com, or on social media with #thecolouringsessions.

### POOCH CAFE



### HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



### TIGER



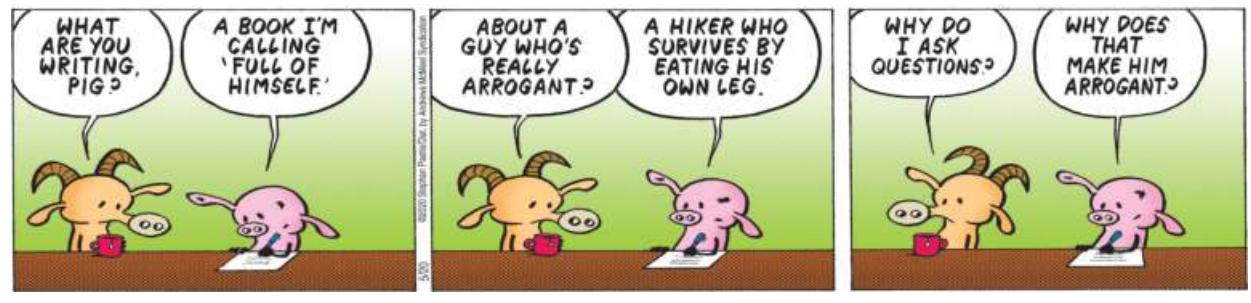
### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBES



### PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



# Reform or face fund cuts, Trump tells WHO

U.S. President threatens to leave organisation if it fails to demonstrate independence from China

**SRIRAM LAKSHMAN**

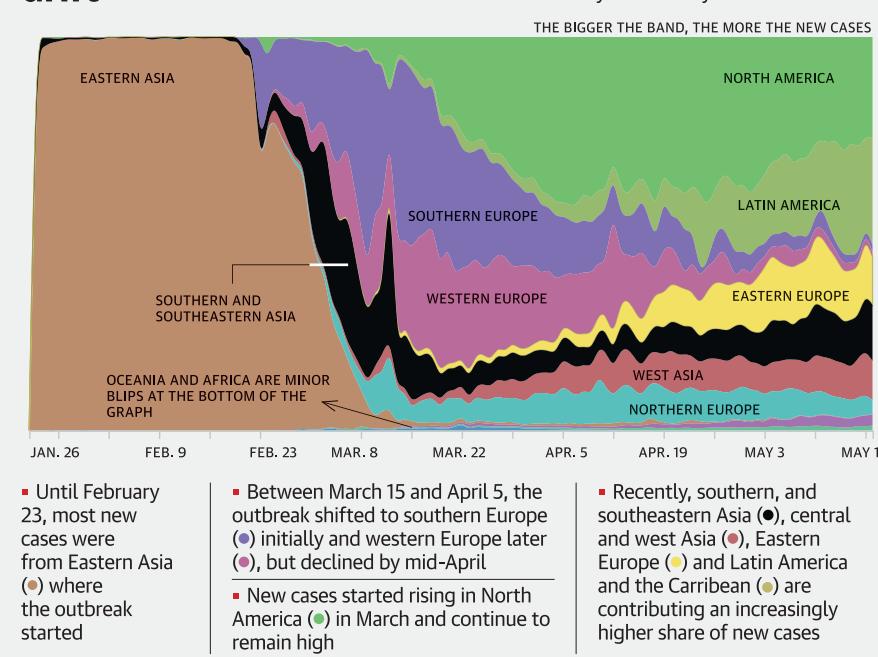
As the World Health Assembly met virtually to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. President Donald Trump told the World Health Organization (WHO) that the U.S. will make permanent its funding cuts to the organisation and consider leaving it, if it did not commit to "major substantial reform" within the next 30 days.

## COVID-19

"...If the World Health Organization does not commit to major substantive improvements within the next 30 days, I will make my temporary freeze of U.S. funding to the WHO permanent and reconsider our membership to the organization," Mr. Trump wrote in a four-page letter to WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Mr. Trump had temporarily stopped the funding last month and begun a review of the WHO's handling of the pandemic, which the President and others in his administration have repeatedly criticised, particularly the

### Continental drift



global health body's relationship to China.

Critics have argued that while the WHO could have acted more decisively and quickly, Mr. Trump's allegations against the organisation were often his way of de-

flecting the criticism of his own handling of the pandemic. Mr. Trump's letter largely consisted of a list of criticism of the WHO's handling of the pandemic. It also compared Mr. Ghebreyesus's handling of the situation

with former WHO chief Gro Harlem Brundtland's handling of SARS in 2003.

"Many lives could have been saved had you followed Dr. Brundtland's example," Mr. Trump wrote. "It is clear the repeated missteps by you

## Trump says he is taking hydroxychloroquine

**SRIRAM LAKSHMAN**

U.S. President Donald Trump has said he has been taking hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) for "a couple of weeks" to help ward off COVID-19 infection.

The drug, traditionally used in the treatment of malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, has not been proven to be effective in COVID-19 prevention or treatment.

"Hydroxychloroquine?"

"When?" "Now?" reporters asked, to which Mr. Trump responded in the affirmative. "A couple of weeks ago, I

started taking it. Because I think it's good," he said.

"I'm not going to get hurt by it. It has been around for 40 years for malaria, for lupus, for other things. I take it," he said, adding that he hoped to soon not to be taking it because other solutions would be available.

Mr. Trump also said he did not own a company that produced HCQ and wanted Americans to feel good and that the drug has an impact, especially early on. He also confirmed that he was also

taking a zinc supplement and had taken a single dose initially of azithromycin, an antibiotic. "All I can tell you is, so far I seem to be okay."

### FDA warning

The Federal Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S.'s drug regulator, issued a warning about HCQ last month saying it should not be taken outside a hospital setting or clinical trial due to heart rhythm problems (the advisory did not pertain to FDA-approved use of the drug for the treat-

ment of malaria, lupus and rheumatoid arthritis).

The White House released a memorandum from Sean P. Conley, the President's osteopathic physician, that Mr. Trump had tested negative for several COVID-19 tests he had taken in recent days and that the President was "in very good health."

India, a major producer of HCQ, had sent shipments of the drug to the U.S., days after Mr. Trump had asked India to lift a ban on the drug's export.

"It shortens recovery time and offers short-term immunity"

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

BEIJING

A Chinese laboratory has been developing a drug it believes has the power to bring the coronavirus pandemic to a halt.

The outbreak first emerged in China late last year before spreading across the world, prompting an international race to find treatments and vaccines.

A drug being tested by scientists at China's prestigious Peking University could not only shorten the recovery time for those infected, but even offer short-term immunity from the virus, researchers said.

Sunney Xie, director of the university's Beijing Ad-



Researchers at Peking University conducting tests in their lab in Beijing. ■ AFP

vanced Innovation Center for Genomics, told AFP that the drug has been successful at the animal testing stage.

"When we injected neutralising antibodies into infected mice, after five days the viral load was reduced by a factor of 2,500," said Mr. Xie. "That means this

potential drug has (a) therapeutic effect."

The drug uses neutralising antibodies – produced by the human immune system to prevent the virus infecting cells – which Mr. Xie's team isolated from the blood of 60 recovered patients.

A study on their research, published in the journal *Cell*, suggests that using the antibodies provides a potential "cure" for the disease and shortens recovery time. "Our expertise is single-cell genomics rather than immunology or virology. When we realised that the single-cell genomic approach can effectively find the neutralising antibody we were thrilled."

We will pull out of international bodies that level baseless allegations: Gotabaya

**MEERA SRINIVASAN**

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Tuesday said the country will not hesitate to exit international bodies that continuously "targeted" its soldiers.

"If any international body or organisation continuously target our country and our war heroes, using baseless allegations, I will also not hesitate to withdraw Sri Lanka from such bodies or organisations," he said, speaking at the 11th anniversary of the end of the civil war, marked as "Ranaviru [War Heroes] Day" in the island's south.

**Human rights violations**

Several Sri Lankan soldiers, especially top officers, have

been accused of human rights violations during and soon after the war. The UN and international human rights watchdogs have repeatedly flagged serious allegations of rights abuse, pushing the Sri Lankan government on war-time accountability.

In Sri Lanka's Sinhala-majority south, however, military personnel are hailed as "saviours against terrorism", and enjoy state patronage.

In March, President Rajapaksa pardoned a soldier convicted for the murder of eight Tamil civilians, including children, in 2000. In August 2019, then President Maithripala Sirisena named a General accused of war crimes as the Army commander. Major General Shaven-

nearly three decade-war. In its final phase alone, in May 2009, an estimated 40,000 persons died.

President Rajapaksa said that while leaders of powerful countries had emphatically stated they would not allow any action against their war heroes, he too would not allow anyone to exert undue pressure on "war heroes" of a small country. "Pain of the war is not strange to me," said the leader, who served in the Army before being appointed Defence Secretary under his brother and current Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who was President for a decade until 2015.

In a statement released on Monday, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa lashed out at political opponents for creating an "artificial social dichotomy" between "military" and "civilian". "If a retired member of the armed

forces is appointed to some position in the government, that is being portrayed by the opposition as militarisation," he said, referring to criticism of his government's recent appointments of serving and retired military men to top bureaucratic posts.

Militarisation has been a lingering concern in post-war Sri Lanka, with the Army's visible involvement in many areas, including agriculture and education.

Mahinda Rajapaksa said the 'Ranaviru [war heroes]' constituency was now an integral part of the clergy, doctors, teachers, farmers and workers. "So whenever we happen to be in power, there will always be former members of the armed forces and police holding various positions in the government," he said, commanding the military's efforts in combating COVID-19 in Sri Lanka.

## Behind new incidents, a changed dynamic along India-China border

India has upgraded its infrastructure, letting troops beef up patrol in areas where China has established a more frequent presence

**ANANTH KRISHNAN**

A greater capability by India to patrol up to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) coupled with an increasingly assertive Chinese posture is fueling new tensions along the border, according to former senior Indian officials.

Indian and Chinese troops have been involved in as many as four incidents in recent weeks along the undefined LAC. On Monday, Chinese state media said the People's Liberation Army was "tightening control" in one of the flashpoints in Galwan Valley in the western sector, after it accused India of "unilaterally" changing the status quo by "illegal construction". A build-up has also been reported in Demchok in Ladakh.

Separately, troops from both sides were involved in fisticuffs that led to injuries



On vigil: A file photo of an Army patrol in sub-sector North along the Line of Actual Control with China. ■ DINAKAR PERI

from any provocative actions".

The 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement said patrols "shall not follow or tail patrols of the other side in areas where there is no common understanding" of the LAC. It called for both sides to "exercise maximum self-restraint, refrain from any provocative actions, not use force or threaten to use

force against the other side" in face-offs.

"With more intensified patrolling on both sides, the open space available has shrunk, so face-to-face situations will occur; what is different is the aggressive manner in which Chinese troops behaved and prevented Indian troops from patrolling," said Ashok Kantha, Ambassador to China from 2014 to 2016.

By December 2022, all 61 strategic roads along the border, spread across Arunachal

Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, will be completed, adding up to 3,417 km in length.

### On-the-ground dynamic

These incidents were more likely fuelled by the on-the-ground dynamic than other geopolitical factors or tensions, such as India's tightening of FDI from China or the COVID-19 pandemic, said Gautam Bambawale, adjunct fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies.

"India is seeking to restore a balance, to the extent that it is possible given enduring advantages of terrain and logistics on the Chinese side, by creating road and air connectivity to the LAC," he said. "The PLA is rattled by this. With both sides now engaged in forward policies and convinced of their right to do so, it makes for an explosive mix."

### NEWS ANALYSIS

the India China border."

India has been upgrading its infrastructure along the border, thereby allowing troops to patrol with greater depth and frequency into areas where the Chinese had, by virtue of favourable terrain and better infrastructure, established a more frequent presence. That is now being challenged.

Clarifying perceptions of

## We are not a proxy of any country, says Taliban

'We don't want to interfere in the affairs of other nations'

**KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE**

NEW DELHI

The Taliban is not a proxy of any country and it does not want to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations, the group's political spokesman said on Tuesday.

"Calling the current Afghan Islamic national liberation movement terrorists or a proxy is an untrue and provocative statement," Suhail Shaheen, the spokesman of the Taliban's Doha-based Political Office, told *The Hindu*.



Suhail Shaheen

non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries."

He also addressed the issues raised by National Security Advisory Board member Amar Sinha, who in an interview with *The Hindu* in Qatar, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai, was reported to have accused India of playing a "negative role" inside Afghanistan. Part of India's concern over the Taliban's opinions, especially on Kashmir, stems from the fact that South Block still considers it a terror group and has refused to engage it in a dialogue.

The U.S. had blamed the ISIS-KP for the recent attack on a hospital in Kabul and the Taliban had blamed "malicious elements" for the killings.

In response to the Indian official's doubts, Mr. Shaheen said the Taliban is an independent entity and will not join hands with others to fight ISIS. "Based on Doha Accord with the U.S., we will not allow any one to use the soil of Afghanistan against any one. It is our commitment. We don't join

hands with any one. We are independent people," he said, adding that those Indian policymakers who oppose exchanges with the Taliban are not realistic.

"Why should India give legitimacy to this kind of force in its own neighbourhood?" Mr. Sinha had asked in the interview where he had criticised the group for not declaring a ceasefire in the month of Ramzan. Mr. Sinha's remarks had followed the Delhi visit of U.S. special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who had urged India to engage the Taliban. Sources familiar with the exchanges with the envoy had said India was yet to decide on whether to engage the Taliban.

Mr. Shaheen maintained that the Indian officials who oppose engagement with the Taliban are "following a failed policy".

"As such they are not

speaking for the interests of the people of India while they should, and are in fact, speaking for the interests of a few at the saddle of power in Kabul. Consequently, India could not find a proper place among the masses of Afghanistan despite spending a lot in the country," said Mr. Shaheen.

## Taliban attack on Kunduz repelled

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

KUNDUZ

Afghan security forces on Tuesday repelled a fierce Taliban attack on Kunduz, a strategic city in northern Afghanistan that had briefly fallen to the militants in the past, officials said.

Taliban fighters attacked several government posts on the outskirts of the city at around 1:00 a.m., a Defence Ministry statement said, triggering fierce fighting.

"With the support of air force their attack was repelled," it said, adding the fighting lasted for several hours.

Both sides have clashed repeatedly in rural areas in recent months, but an attempt to enter a city as large

as Kunduz is seen as a serious escalation.

The latest violence follows a declaration by President Ashraf Ghani last week to resume offensive strikes against the insurgents, after a string of brutal attacks.

The Taliban responded by vowing to increase assaults against Afghan security forces.

dra Silva is currently leading a task force to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 'Remembrance Day'

The annual celebratory event to acknowledge the military's role in ending the separatist war comes a day after northern Tamils observe 'Remembrance Day', to pay tributes to several thousands of their relatives, including civilians, killed as the state armed forces took on the rebel LTTE during the

1983-90 civil war.

President Rajapaksa said that while leaders of powerful countries had emphatically stated they would not

allow any action against their war heroes, he too would not allow anyone to exert undue pressure on "war heroes" of a small country. "Pain of the war is not strange to me," said the leader, who served in the Army before being appointed Defence Secretary under his brother and current Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who was President for a decade until 2015.

In a statement released on Monday, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa lashed out at political opponents for creating an "artificial social dichotomy" between "military" and "civilian". "If a retired member of the armed

forces is appointed to some position in the government, that is being portrayed by the opposition as militarisation," he said, referring to criticism of his government's recent appointments of serving and retired military men to top bureaucratic posts.

Militarisation has been a lingering concern in post-war Sri Lanka, with the Army's visible involvement in many areas, including agriculture and education.

Mahinda Rajapaksa said the 'Ranaviru [war heroes]' constituency was now an integral part of the

## MARKET WATCH

	19-05-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	30,196	0.56
US Dollar	75.66	0.33
Brent oil	34.86	-0.66

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	319.20	+2.50
Asian Paints	1503.95	+2.85
Axis Bank	354.50	-4.30
Bajaj Auto	2509.30	+31.85
Bajaj Finserv	4535.45	+70.00
Bajaj Finance	1964.95	+26.35
Bharti Airtel	598.80	+60.75
BPCL	293.30	-0.75
Britannia Ind	3104.00	+5.55
Cipla	594.95	+5.50
Coal India	123.60	+1.90
Dr Reddys Lab	3699.60	+20.45
Eicher Motors	12966.20	+22.00
GAIL (India)	81.85	+0.85
Grasim Ind	511.85	+16.05
HCL Tech	518.25	+7.50
HDPC	1539.85	+27.80
HDFC Bank	830.65	+6.00
Hero MotoCorp	2073.50	+2.95
Hindalco	117.30	+1.95
Hind Unilever	1975.55	+29.70
ICICI Bank	300.30	+1.80
IndusInd Bank	367.80	+8.95
Bharti Infratech	218.75	+11.65
Infosys	668.60	+4.70
Indian Oil Corp	72.05	+0.50
ITC	170.75	+6.00
JSW Steel	169.30	+6.05
Kotak Bank	1130.45	+16.80
L&T	796.35	+17.00
M&M	382.90	+5.70
Maruti Suzuki	4805.30	+84.35
Nestle India Ltd.	16150.30	+90.05
NTPC	91.05	+2.15
ONGC	77.15	+4.25
PowerGrid Corp	158.05	+3.55
Reliance Ind	1408.90	+31.85
State Bank	152.80	+2.50
Shree Cement	18340.75	+188.05
Sun Pharma	441.70	+1.00
Tata Motors	81.80	+1.15
Tata Steel	272.00	+5.40
TCS	1948.65	+3.05
Tech Mahindra	512.60	+8.55
Titan	826.80	+9.50
UltraTech Cement	3438.15	+130.35
UPL	339.65	+36.15
Vedanta	90.00	+2.50
Wipro	184.40	+2.20
Zee Entertainment	150.25	+0.75

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	75.44	75.76
Euro	82.78	83.13
British Pound	92.43	92.83
Japanese Yen (100)	70.11	70.41
Chinese Yuan	10.62	10.67
Swiss Franc	77.72	78.06
Singapore Dollar	53.27	53.51
Canadian Dollar	54.18	54.43
Malaysian Ringgit	17.35	17.44
Australian Dollar	49.44	49.65

Source: Indian Bank

## Criteria for 'medium' units to be revised

Companies with up to ₹50-crore investment, ₹200-crore turnover will come under this classification

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI  
Days after changing the definition of MSMEs, the government has decided to further revise the criteria for medium-sized units by enhancing the investment and turnover limits to up to ₹50 crore and ₹200 crore respectively, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Tuesday.

Unveiling the contours of the ₹20-lakh-crore stimulus package, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had last week announced a change in the definition of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

As per the revised definition, any firm with an investment of up to ₹1 crore and turnover under ₹5 crore will be classified as 'micro.'

A company with an investment of up to ₹10 crore and a



**Big plans:** The Centre plans to raise MSMEs' contribution to exports to 60% from 48%, says Nitin Gadkari. ■ KAMAL NARANG

turnover of up to ₹50 crore will be classified as 'small' and a firm with an investment of up to ₹20 crore and a turnover under ₹100 crore will be classified as 'medium.'

The previous criteria for

₹50 crore and turnover (limit) to up to ₹200 crore. So, we will issue an order for that," Mr. Gadkari said.

The Minister for MSMEs and Road Transport and Highways said he felt the criteria should be based on investment 'or' turnover instead of investment 'and' turnover as announced, adding that the government 'will rectify the same.'

## Raising limit to ₹250 cr.

The Minister said he was also open to considering suggestions regarding enhancing the turnover limit to up to ₹250 crore for medium enterprises, and will take up the matter with the MSME Secretary.

Mr. Gadkari said the government planned to raise MSMEs' contribution to India's exports to 60% from

the 48% at present and also boost the sector's contribution to the country's GDP from 29% currently to 50%.

"We are planning to create five crore new jobs. Until now, we have created 11 crore jobs," said the Minister, adding that he was keen on developing Indian MSMEs of international standards.

## China factor

Interacting with representatives from an exporters' body, he urged them to take advantage of the 'blessing in disguise' posed by the global 'hatred' against China through cost reduction and encouraging import substitution.

Besides, Mr. Gadkari said the government wanted to make bus ports and was also planning to build logistics parks.

## Telecom tariffs still unsustainable: Airtel

Telco hopeful that ARPU will rise

## YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

Even though the telecom industry has witnessed some 'repairs', more needs to be done on tariffs which are still 'unsustainably low', Gopal Vittal, MD and CEO, India & South Asia, Bharti Airtel said on Tuesday.

The company, which on Monday had posted a loss of ₹5,237 crore for the January-March 2020 quarter due to an exceptional charge on account of reassessment of statutory dues, is hopeful of achieving an average revenue per user (ARPU) of ₹200 in the short-term, as against ₹54 in the reported quarter.

Mr. Vittal added that the company's overall capex for this year was expected to "be more moderated" than that of last year. Bharti Airtel on Monday had said during FY20, its capex investment stood at ₹25,359 crore to ensure superior customer experience besides front ending some investment to ensure seamless services during the ongoing pandemic. Of this ₹1,339 crore capex was for the January-March 2020 quarter.

Mr. Vittal added that the company saw strong traction for home broadband services.

"We've seen a rapid surge in the need for home broadband... in Q4, we had about 63,000 net additions, which is one of the higher numbers that we've seen in many quarters, and even during the lockdown there has been a lot of demand for actually getting home broadband going," he said.

Airtel's ARPU from home broadband service also increased to ₹803 from ₹787 in the previous quarter. However, on y-o-y, the ARPU was lower from ₹815 in January-March 2019 quarter.

## Lendingkart raises ₹319 cr. in 'D' round

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Financial tech firm Lendingkart Technologies has raised over ₹319 crore in equity in its Series D round (comprising ₹233 crore as part of D1 and ₹86.24 crore as part of D2). The round has been led by existing investors, including Fullerion Financial Holdings Pte. Ltd. and Bertelsmann India Investments, Sistema Asia Fund and IndiaQuotient.

Lendingkart has, till now, raised more than ₹1,050 crore of equity capital from investors.

This round off funding will be deployed to expand the company's lending base and further reach out to small and under-served micro and small enterprises.

"They will be able to pay salaries to staff; a positive virtuous cycle will come out of that," he said.

## ALL chief bats for policy intervention in CV sector

'Cut in GST, scrappage policy expected'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

The Centre should come out with a structured policy intervention for the commercial vehicles (CV) sector, which has been worst-hit due to a prolonged slowdown and COVID-19 pandemic, said Vipin Sondhi, MD & CEO, Ashok Leyland.

There was expectation of a direct stimulus package in the form of reduction in GST, an incentive-based vehicle scrappage policy and a thrust on purchase of buses for public transportation.

"This is the need of the hour and the government may please consider a structured policy intervention.

"These will augur well for the future of our economy," he added.

## M&amp;M aims to spur demand with deferred payment offer

Under 'buy now, pay in 2021', customers to pay 25% upfront

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. (M&M) has announced several finance schemes to boost demand for its range of SUVs and other vehicles.

The finance schemes include 'own now, pay in 2021', 90 days' moratorium, special schemes for women, 100% on-road financing and an 8-year loan tenure.

## Eight EMI holidays

Under the 'buy now and pay in 2021' scheme, the buyer needs to make an initial payment of 25% of the ex-showroom price of the vehicle to get eight EMI holidays.

The rest of the payment, along with interest, is payable in 52 EMIs. It has come out with special schemes for doctors, police personnel and essential service providers

VEEJAY NAKRA M&M

The bedrock of each one of our schemes is to provide financial flexibility and peace of mind to our customers, especially for our COVID-19 warriors who are providing unparalleled support at this point in time," he said.

"Together with the various digital interventions which Mahindra has recently announced in sales and service, these offerings will provide our customers with a holistic buying and owning experience for a Mahindra vehicle," he added.

Some of OYO's hotels running at 80% occupancy: Kapoor

## YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

Softbank-backed OYO expects to see some revival in business starting next quarter, the company's CEO for India and South Asia, Rohit Kapoor, said on Tuesday, adding that the hospitality firm's only appeal to the government is to allow graded opening of hotels.

"My sense is that we are looking at a recovery starting in the next quarter and coming back to the pre-COVID levels, if you ask people, the range is anywhere between six and 24 months, I am more towards the six month side than the 24 month side... I don't have any data or information which is more scientific," Mr. Kapoor said.

Bookings can be done online on the My Renault App or at a Renault-authorised dealership.

Pointing out that currently hotel opening is only for

specific purposes, for example, for hospital staff or for a quarantine, Mr. Kapoor said some of OYO's hotels are running at 80% occupancy currently. "Are we seeing demand coming back, in terms of people enquiring more about 'when are you opening up?', 'can I get a room here?'... that has gone up by 40-50% since May 3. But the guidelines change, we

won't be able to cater to demand," he said.

Mr. Kapoor was speaking during a conference to announce measures relating to post-lockdown preparedness, including checks for sanitisation, hygiene, and protective equipment and minimal-touch SOP for check-in and check-out, housekeeping and room service.

"Whatever money the government has for the sector should go to smaller players first, whether it is a small hotel owner or a travel operator... there's a lot of distress there, especially [for] people who are leveraged. If that happens, it would ensure that happens don't close."

"They will be able to pay salaries to staff; a positive virtuous cycle will come out of that," he said.

## Millions of retail jobs in transition: TeamLease

Demand for 'new kind of talent' arises

## MINI TEJASWI

BENGALURU

India's retail industry is now in the process of training and transitioning millions of its people for the newly-emerged, COVID-19-created sales, logistics and customer support functions, says staffing firm TeamLease.

As per the Retailers Association of India, the sector at present employs 40 to 50 million people. TeamLease says at least 35% of these people require comprehensive 'role-transition training and orientation' while retail chains are gearing up for 'post-pandemic play' with multi-pronged offline and online sales and customer reach strategies.

To start with, TeamLease will hire and train over

Iniyans marathon effort



P. Iniyans

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

Seventeen-year-old GM P. Iniyans played out a 72-hour-marathon online chess, raising funds for the COVID-19 cause towards Chief Minister's & PM CARES fund.

The fund-raiser, in view of various time zones across the globe, began at 2.30 p.m. IST on Friday May 15 and concluded by May 18 afternoon.

This event not only gave an opportunity for chess enthusiasts to play against a Grandmaster by just staying at their home, but also helped them contribute to a cause.

Iniyans raised Rs 1,21,199. Apart from this amount, Iniyans is separately contributing ₹20,000," a press release.

## Premier League: Six test positive for COVID-19

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

LONDON Six positive cases for coronavirus have been detected at three Premier League clubs after players and staff were tested ahead of a return to training, England's top flight said Tuesday.

"The Premier League can today confirm that, on Sunday 17 May and Monday 18 May, 748 players and club staff were tested for COVID-19," the league said in a statement.

"Of these, six have tested positive from three clubs."

## Leverkusen routs Bremen

**REUTERS**

Bayer Leverkusen stayed in the hunt for a top-four finish in the Bundesliga after two goals by striker Kai Havertz as well as one each by Mitchell Weiser and Kerem Demirbay helped it to a 4-1 win at struggling Werder Bremen on Monday.

The result left Leverkusen fifth on 50 points from 26 games, one behind fourth-placed Leipzig and eight adrift of leader Bayern Munich.

**The result:** Werder Bremen 1 (Gebre Selassie 30) lost to Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Havertz 28, 33, Weiser 61, Demirbay 78).

## A good year for Olive Ridley turtles

Lack of human presence kept nests along the Odisha coast undisturbed

**STAFF REPORTER**

BERHAMPUR

Mass hatching of the Olive Ridley turtle eggs has ended at the Rushikulya rookery on the Odisha coast.

Lakhs of Olive Ridley hatchlings entered the sea at the beach in Ganjam district. The eggs, buried in nests along the sandy beach, began on May 7. The number of hatchlings had reached its peak within a week. At present, hatchlings continue to take place at a few stray nests along the coast.

On an average, 80 to 100 hatchlings come out from each nest.

This year, 3,23,063 Olive Ridley turtles had nested at the Rushikulya rookery. Despite the destruction of some nests and eggs by the high tide, a large number of

## 'Training sessions may not be same'

No need to rush things as BWF's calendar not fixed yet, says Srikanth

### BADMINTON

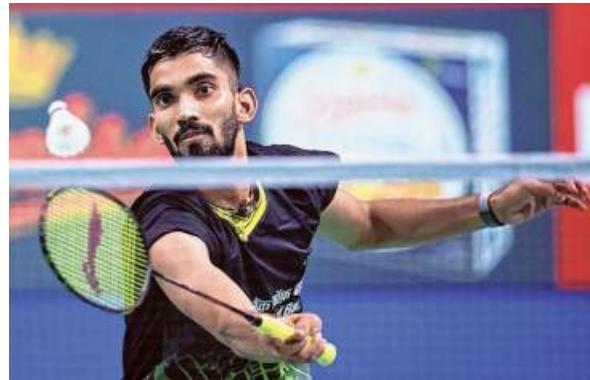
**V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM**

**HYDERABAD**

K. Srikanth, a former World No. 1 star shuttler, feels that training sessions may not be the same for the first few months once they resume, given the COVID-19 safety guidelines.

The 27-year-old Srikanth, stuck in his hometown Guntur for the last two months, believes that training should start from June 1 with some restrictions in place and it will be a different kind of challenge for players and coaches.

"Normally if two of us are training, we will be assisted by four to five players plus the coach. I wonder if that will be possible now," said Srikanth in a chat with *The Hindu*.



**Worrying:** If safety measures are followed, players might not reach the desired intensity level quickly, fears K. Srikanth. ■ AFP

"Each training session, under normal circumstances, will feature about 30 players and coaches.

"It will be interesting to see how the changed scenario is when we start training," he said. "If social distancing and other safety measures are followed, we might not

reach the desired intensity level that quickly," said Srikanth, who happens to be the only Indian men's shuttler to win four Super Series (2017).

"In other SAI centres at Bengaluru and Patiala, athletes stay in the centres. In Hyderabad, many of us travel to the SAI-Gopi Chand Acad-

emy. This means there is a lot of risk involved and merits extra precautions," he said.

"I strongly feel there is no need to rush things since the BWF calendar is not going to start for at least three months from now.

"We can afford to start the training sessions slowly, and peak as and when the BWF calendar is finalised," said Srikanth.

"Personally, I am happy with my fitness level and there are no injury scares. Obviously, I am more than keen to regain the kind of form that made me the No. 1 player in the world.

"Ideally, I would love to have five to six weeks of full-fledged training before a major tournament. Now this three-month break in BWF calendar should help me a lot," he added.

## Golf action all set to tee off tomorrow

Albeit with precautionary measures, it will end long sports drought

**ASHWIN ACHAL**

**BENGALURU**

Golf is set to be the first sport to resume in the city, with the State government having granted approval here on Tuesday.

Prestige Golfshire is expected to lead the way, with tees off slated for Thursday. KGA and Eagleton will likely restart activities over the weekend.

Golf action, albeit tempered with several precautionary measures in place, will end the long sports drought caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The measures mandated by the government includes maintaining six-feet distance, having only one person in the buggy at a time and so on. Persons below the age of 10 and above 65 are not allowed to use the course.

Prestige Golfshire will con-



**Back again:** It will be a moment to cheer for golf enthusiasts with activities starting on Thursday. ■ FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

duct a test run at their course on Wednesday, with select members invited to participate.

Chetan Meda, Director, Eagleton Golf Resort, stated that golfers can expect a "touch free" experience. "Sanitising and cashless transactions are some of the measures we will take. Since caddies are not allowed as per the guidelines, we will use them as ball-spotters.

"We also plan to use ultraviolet disinfectant to clean all surfaces at the course, which we believe is more effective than regular germicides," Meda said.

### Keen for permission

Meda is keen to obtain permission from the District Collector before opening the course.

KGA, meanwhile, needs a few days to work out logistic matters. "We are currently operating at minimal staff, so

we will take a few days to get things organised. The members have been informed of all the government rules," Prithvi Raj Urs, KGA Hon. Secretary, said.

Khalin Joshi, 2018 PanAsian Open champion, is excited about his imminent return to KGA.

"The driver in your hand and the sun in your eyes – I've missed it a lot. Playing golf with your friends will be great; we took it for granted earlier," Khalin said.

Khalin, however, stated that the bigger picture still poses concern. "While practice is great, for all professional golfers, playing tournaments is what matters the most.

"Tournaments are our livelihood. And it looks like they will not resume until September at least," he said.

Closer to our times, the melancholy prognosis has fol-

quie uninterrupted fresh air. Bopanna dismissed the suggestion of having two different colour balls for matches, instead of different numbered ones as advised by the International Tennis Federation (ITF), saying that yellow was being used for better visibility.

He also was sceptical about the idea of using a hot air blower to disinfect the balls during play, saying that it may change the pressure of the balls.

Bopanna said that his academy had an "Asics tennis hour", during which parents get to play and enjoy the game.

"If a player needs to practice serve, then he will have a separate set of balls."

**Fresh air needed**  
Bopanna said that it would be harmful for kids to wear masks and play as they re-



Rohan Bopanna. ■ FILE PHOTO

"The parents would drop the children and wait in the car," said Bopanna.

"If a player needs to practice serve, then he will have a separate set of balls."

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The lockdown also re-

duced the inflow of tourists and local movement. Except for Forest officials and a few volunteers, no one was allowed to enter the area. There was also a reduction of waste along the beach, allowing for easier movement of the hatchlings to the sea.

hatchlings entered the sea from here.

According to wildlife experts, approximately one in every 1,000 hatchlings entering the sea survive to reach adulthood.

The eggs, laid in nests dug along the beach, incubate on their own with the help of the heat from the sand. Depending on the temperature

of the sand, the eggs hatch in about 45 to 60 days.

Amlan Nayak, Berhampur Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), said the lockdown in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic reduced human presence during the mass nesting period, the incubation and the mass hatching along the Rushikulya rookery coast.

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On an average, 80 to 100 hatchlings come out from each nest.

This year, 3,23,063 Olive Ridley turtles had nested at the Rushikulya rookery. Despite the destruction of some nests and eggs by the high tide, a large number of

## Breaking the saliva rule is far more serious than bowling a no-ball



### BETWEEN WICKETS

**SURESH MENON**

The elegiac air over cricket has been ever present. "Cricket will never be the same again" is a theme that has been articulated since over-arm bowling was finally legalised in 1864. This might have had something to do with the evolution of the pre-modern game during the time of the romantic poets.

"Personally, I am happy with my fitness level and there are no injury scares. Obviously, I am more than keen to regain the kind of form that made me the No. 1 player in the world.

"Ideally, I would love to have five to six weeks of full-fledged training before a major tournament. Now this three-month break in BWF calendar should help me a lot," he added.

"The elegiac form, said Coleridge is "most natural to the reflective mind." The tone came naturally to the poets of the period, and seems to have attached itself to cricket in a manner we take for granted now.

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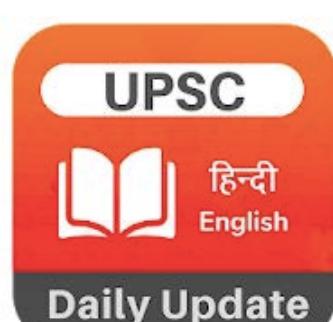
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