

Timings

DELHI

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27
RISE 05:26 SET 19:12
RISE 09:13 SET 23:27
THURSDAY, MAY 28
RISE 05:25 SET 19:13
RISE 10:14 SET 00:00
FRIDAY, MAY 29
RISE 05:25 SET 19:14
RISE 11:17 SET 00:12

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 46 28
Safdarjung 46 28
Palam 48 29

Delhi Palam Today 46°C A dry and very hot weather with strong warm and dusty winds along with heat wave to prevail during the day.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 47°C The heat wave with strong winds and uneasy weather to prevail. Chances of dust storm over parts of the city.

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Air quality of Delhi-NCR		
Delhi 154	Gurugram 147	
Ghaziabad 175	Faridabad 153	
Noida 145	Greater Noida 183	
Good 0-50	Satisfactory 51-100	Moderate 101-200
Poor 201-300	Very poor 301-400	Severe >401
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) [SOURCE: CPCB]		

Three held for killing guard during robbery bid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Two men were arrested and one juvenile was apprehended on Tuesday for allegedly killing a security guard during a robbery bid in South-East Delhi's Pul Prahladpur area, the police said. The victim, Dinesh Sharma, was on the way to his office in Malviya Nagar from Badarpur when Mujammel Hoque, 22, Insan Ali, 20, and their juvenile accomplice attacked him, the police said.

Sharma was injured and taken to AIIMS, where he died.

A case was registered against the accused.

Man kills wife, lodges false missing report

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 37-year-old salesman was arrested from central Delhi's Anand Parbat area for allegedly killing his wife, the police said on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Sanjay Bhatia said the accused has been identified as Sudhir, an Anand Parbat resident, who had lodged a false missing report of his wife and then came to the police station to gain sympathy and misguide the investigation.

"During investigation, police got suspicious after analysing the call detail records of the complainant and his wife. During the interrogation, he confessed his crime. He said that he strangled his wife to death and dumped her body in Narela IFC jungle area," said Mr. Bhatia. The woman's body was recovered from Narela in a decomposed state.

During interrogation, he allegedly told the police that the relationship with his wife was strained and they often fought over petty issues. Deeply frustrated, he planned to eliminate her, police said. "He took her to Narela on the pretext of purchasing goods and strangled her. He dumped the body in a drain and fled from the area," the DCP said.

THE HINDU
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Nizamuddin event: police chargesheet 82 foreigners

They violated visa conditions, indulged in missionary activities during outbreak'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

After two months of investigation, the police on Tuesday filed chargesheets against 82 foreigners for attending a religious congregation at a Nizamuddin centre in violation of visa conditions, and indulging in missionary activities amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

The police have filed 20 chargesheets against the foreigners, belonging to 20 different countries.

A large congregation organised in March by the Tablighi Jamaat in Nizamuddin had emerged as a major hotspot of infections.

The incident came to light after some participants, who later tested positive for the virus, travelled back to their home States.

"They not only violated government guidelines issued in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak and regulations regarding the Epidemic Diseases Act, but also flouted the



Members of the Tablighi Jamaat at a quarantine centre set up inside a school in New Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO

Disaster Management Act and subsequently the prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure," the police said.

An FIR was lodged against Tablighi Jamaat leader Maulana Saad Kandhalvi and six others on March 31 under sections of the Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act, 2005; Foreigners Act, and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal

Code.

Mr. Kandhalvi was later booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder after some of the attendees of the religious congregation died due to COVID-19, said the police.

The Crime Branch is investigating the case, which pertains to the religious gathering at a Tablighi Jamaat centre on March 13 and beyond. The police said that the foreign nationals entered

India on tourist visas and participated in the gathering "illegally" because as per visa rules they have to inform local police about such congregations.

Besides violating visa norms, the gathering led to the spread of the virus, said the police.

More chargesheets soon

The police added that over 900 foreign nationals who are accused in the case belong to 34 different countries and chargesheets are being prepared country-wise under sections of the Foreigners Act, Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act, and Sections 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 269 (Negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life), 270 (Malicious act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and 271 (Disobedience to quarantine rule) of the Indian Penal Code.



ducted on a daily basis.

During the hearing, advocates appearing for the petitioners, urged that all foreign nationals who have tested negative for the virus be released from institutional quarantine to alternative accommodations.

The submission was made in a petition seeking release of 916 foreign nationals who participated in the event and are being held in institutional quarantine since March 30 despite having tested negative for COVID-19.

The plea was filed by 20 of the 916 foreigners who said the continued detention violates their liberty.

The police added that the investigation is being con-

ducted on a daily basis.

"They deliberately, willfully, negligently and malignantly disobeyed lawful directions. Written notices were issued to Mr. Saad and the management officials did not inform any government agency about the gathering inside the centre," read the status report.

"The meeting was held by an SHO on March 24 and was attended by members of the Tablighi Jamaat centre management. However, Mr. Saad and the management officials did not inform any government agency about the gathering inside the centre," read the status report.

The report said that around 1,300 devotees from various States and countries were residing at the centre; social distancing norms were being violated and no one was wearing masks or using hand sanitisers.

Most Delhi University students not in favour of open-book exams at home

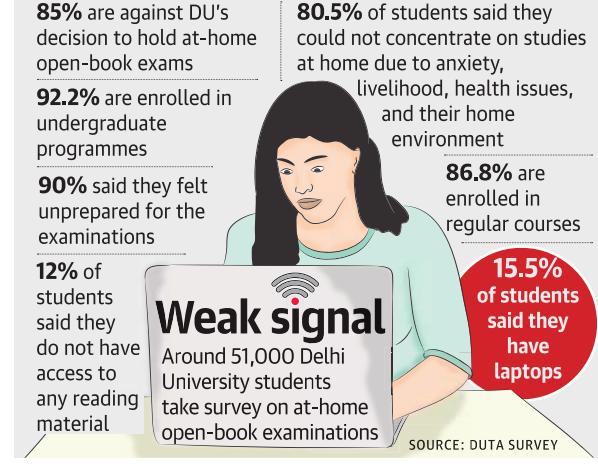
Many are finding it difficult to concentrate at home: survey

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

In a 'referendum' of about 51,000 students of Delhi University, 85% voted against the university's recent decision to hold open book examinations at home for the terminal semester students, the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) said on Tuesday.

The survey, undertaken over 48 hours using a google form, was the largest such survey on the issue so far, DUTA claimed. An overwhelming majority of respondents said they belonged to regular courses (86.8%) as opposed to the School of Open learning, and 92.2% said they were enrolled in the undergraduate programme.

12% of students said they do not have access to any reading material



C The responses of the students confirm what the DUTA has been saying, based on the experiences of teachers' engagement with students during this period

DELHI UNIVERSITY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

pared for the examinations. Among reasons for their difficulties, about 50% said they could not concentrate on studies at home due to various reasons such as anxiety, livelihood and health issues, besides their home environment. The rest were in PG courses.

Unprepared for exams
An overwhelming 80.5% said they could not concentrate on studies at home due to various reasons such as anxiety, livelihood and health issues, besides their home environment. The rest were in PG courses.

Considering that a large

chunk of students has only smartphones and basic internet facilities, it is not surprising that only a small percentage have been able to access online teaching resources made available during the lockdown period, it added. The union demanded that the university explore alternatives which "do not disfavour a large section of students or promote dishonesty," it said.

Ms. Renna and others questioned why BJP leaders such as Kapil Mishra and Union Minister Anurag Thakur, who many have accused of inciting violence by vitiating the environment during and after the Delhi elections and the protests at Jatbad, have not been arrested.

There was an attempt to create a new narrative by whitewashing responsibility, she said.

Mr. Balaji and others accused that the police was

es while the rest had either computers or tablets.

"The responses of the students confirm what the DUTA has been saying, based on the experiences of teachers' engagement with students during this period," the union said.

Considering that a large chunk of students has only smartphones and basic internet facilities, it is not surprising that only a small percentage have been able to access online teaching resources made available during the lockdown period, it added. The union demanded that the university explore alternatives which "do not disfavour a large section of students or promote dishonesty," it said.

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Have not arrested anyone in Tablighi case, police tell HC

Over 900 foreign Tablighis in quarantine since March 30

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The police on Tuesday told the Delhi High Court that it has neither arrested nor detained any foreign national in the case lodged in connection with the religious congregation at Nizamuddin during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Besides violating visa norms, the gathering led to the spread of the virus, said the police.

"No one has been arrested in the case so far. No one has been detained by the police in this case. More than 900 foreign Tablighi Jamaat attendees, including the petitioners, have joined investigation in the case," the police said in its status report.

"The submission was made in a petition seeking release of 916 foreign nationals who participated in the event and are being held in institutional quarantine since March 30 despite having tested negative for COVID-19.

The plea was filed by 20 of the 916 foreigners who said the continued detention violates their liberty.

The police added that the investigation is being con-

ducted on a daily basis.

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The report said that around 1,300 devotees from various States and countries were residing at the centre; social distancing norms were being violated and no one was wearing masks or using hand sanitisers.

Restrictions eased, police expect spike in protests

DCPs directed to beef up surveillance

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Anticipating a rise in the number of protests post lockdown relaxations – as per an intelligence unit tip-off – Delhi Police has ordered all district DCPs to ensure proper arrangement in their respective areas.

As of now, no permission has been granted to organise protests. However, after May 31, in the next phase of the lockdown, there might be more relaxations and protests may resume. So the staff have to have gear up for any situation and so they were briefed, explained the officer. "We have to ensure that safety guidelines issued during COVID-19 should be followed in case any protest happens in the city," he added.



A woman shielding herself from the blazing sun in the Capital on Tuesday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

Capital records hottest May day in 18 years

'Heatwave to recede from May 28'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With the maximum temperature in the Capital settling six degrees Celsius above the normal at 46, influenced by the severe heatwave lashing most of North India, Tuesday was the hottest day in May in 18 years.

The Meteorological department said that the weather station at Palam reported a maximum temperature at 47.6 degrees Celsius, which was the highest temperature recorded at the station in the last 10 years in May. The highest recorded temperature ever in May was 47.2 recorded on May 29 in 1944. The corresponding figure at the Palam weather station is 48.4 degrees Celsius on May 26, 1998.

The forecast for May 27 reads: "mainly clear sky with strong surface winds. Heatwave conditions are expected in a few places. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle between 45 and 28 degrees Celsius respectively. This winter also recorded the coldest day temperature in the Capital at 9.4 degrees Celsius on December 30, 2019. The heatwave has been caused by the dry north-westerly winds that started blowing on May 21 causing a gradual rise in temperature.

More in store

The Met department has forecast that the severe heat wave is likely to continue in the city till May 27 and will start receding from May 28 with a major respite from



A video grab of the incident which happened in Shastri Park.

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and started shouting and telling us that we can't put the roof," Munni said.

IN BRIEF



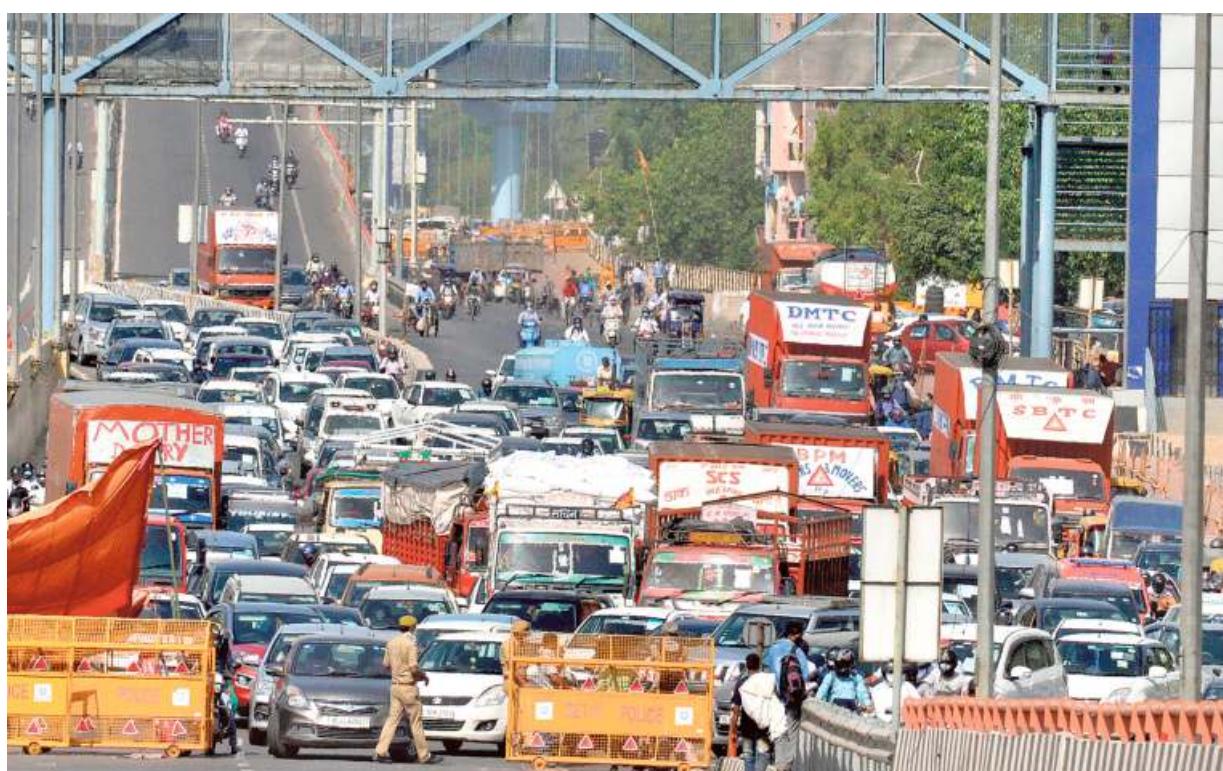
Fire breaks out at shoe factory in Keshavpuram

NEW DELHI
A fire broke out in a shoe factory in north-west Delhi's Keshavpuram on Tuesday, an official of the Delhi Fire Services said. No casualty was reported, the official said, adding that the cause behind the blaze is yet to be ascertained. In another incident, around 250 huts were gutted in a blaze in south-east Delhi's Tughlakabad village on Monday night. No one was hurt in the incident.

Three fresh COVID-19 cases in G.B. Nagar

NOIDA
Three more people, including a government hospital staff, tested positive for COVID-19 in Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar on Tuesday, pushing the number of cases in the district to 362. Also, nine people were discharged from hospitals and the number of active cases now stands at 113, said officials.

Movement restricted



Traffic jam at the Delhi-U.P. border near Ghaziabad on Tuesday after the Ghaziabad administration ordered sealing of the border citing rise in COVID-19 cases. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

One staffer, 10 inmates in Rohini jail recover

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

One staffer and 10 inmates of Rohini jail recovered from COVID-19, said prison officials on Tuesday.

Earlier, 16 inmates and four staff members of the same prison had tested COVID-19 positive, they said.

According to Raj Niwas, Secretary (Health) presented the Situational Analysis of COVID-19 in Delhi where it was informed that up to May 25 there were a total of 14,053 confirmed cases in Delhi out of which 6,771 persons have recovered, discharged or migrated.

It was further informed that the Case Fatality Rate in Delhi is 1.96% in compari-

412 new cases, 12 deaths

One more mess worker at AIIMS tests positive for COVID-19

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Capital registered 412 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 14,465, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Tuesday. Also, 12 more deaths have been reported, taking the total to 288. But all the deaths did not happen in the past 24 hours.

Of the 14,465 cases, 6,954 people have recovered and there are 7,223 active cases.

A total of 1,78,579 COVID-19 tests have been done till now in the city.

Containment zones

After the Health and Family Welfare Department of the Delhi government on May 18 raised the issue of decreasing number of containment zones in the city even though the number of COVID-19 cases was increasing, the number of such zones has surged from 73 on May 18 to 91 on Monday. Parts of north and south-east Delhi



Volunteers distribute food to people on a hot Tuesday afternoon in Delhi. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

lowed to enter or leave the zone.

Meanwhile, one more mess worker at AIIMS has tested positive for COVID-19, according to the Resident Doctors' Association. "A mess worker who was COVID-19 positive had died a few days back and during the contact tracing, a total of two persons have tested positive," an AIIMS official said on Tuesday.

The mess is for resident doctors and students, the official added.

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The

Dal Khalsa plans march on June 5

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Sikh radical outfit Dal Khalsa has decided to hold a remembrance march on June 5 in Punjab's Amritsar to mark the 36th anniversary of Operation Bluestar.

Party spokesperson Kanwar Pal Singh said on Tuesday the decision was taken at a party meeting. "We are aware that COVID-19 cases are rising. Taking precautionary measures and adhering to WHO and government guidelines, the strength in the march would be minimised and physical distancing norm would be strictly maintained."

He said Dal Khalsa has also been giving a call for 'Amritsar shutdown' on June 6.

However, he said, this year the final decision would be taken on June 1, after taking the lockdown guidelines, if any, into account.

Rajasthan revises lockdown rules to allow taxis in red zones

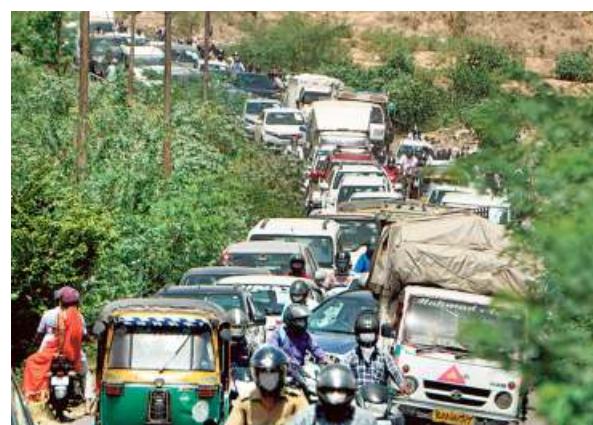
Ban on sale of paan and tobacco products lifted, but spitting will attract fine

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

The Rajasthan government has revised the guidelines for COVID-19 lockdown 4.0 to allow taxis and auto rickshaws to operate in the red zones and opened public parks for walking and exercising with some conditions.

The ban on the sale of paan, gutka and tobacco products was also lifted, though spitting at public places will be punishable with fine.

Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajeev Swarup said the plying of taxis, including cab aggregators, and auto rickshaws would be allowed from home to airports, railway stations and hospitals. Taxis can carry two passengers, while only one passenger will travel in auto rickshaws. The drivers will be required to sanitise touch



Traffic jam at Amanishah Nala in Ambabari area during the lockdown in Jaipur on Tuesday. • PTI

points after every ride.

Park timings

Mr. Swarup said the public parks in red zones would be open from 7 a.m. to 6.45 p.m. Social distancing will be maintained in the parks and no gathering of five or more

persons will be allowed at a particular point. These activities were earlier permitted in the orange and green zones.

Mr. Swarup said though the sale of paan, gutka and tobacco products had been allowed, it would only be for

take-away. The consumption of tobacco products at public places will remain in force as before.

Working hours

The State government has also restored working time in factories and industrial units to eight hours a day. The working time was earlier increased to 12 hours to reduce the requirement of workers in the factories in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minister of State for Labour Tika Ram Jolly said since almost all factories in the State had restarted operations, the workers were going there without the requirement of pass, while public transport had started in orange and green zones.

Mr. Jolly said the factory employees were working as per the guidelines on safety and social distancing.

Landslip buries 3 in Arunachal, Assam flood scene turns grim

Man missing in Meghalaya where rainstorm caused havoc

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Landslip killed three persons in Arunachal Pradesh, while a man was feared drowned in Meghalaya, as large swathes of northeastern India experienced heavy rain. Assam is the worst affected State, with 1.95 lakh people displaced in seven districts.

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Tuesday grieved the death of three persons of a family in Dibang Valley district. Incisive rain since May 23 triggered the landslip that buried a 27-year-old woman and her two minor children alive. The government announced ₹4 lakh relief to the family.

In the Minal area of Meghalaya's North Garo Hills district, a man was swept away as he tried to cross River Didram on Sunday. Officials said search operations were hampered by torrential



Villagers in Kamrup district of Assam on Tuesday trying to cross a road which was washed away by floodwaters. • PTI

rain. Rainstorms since Sunday night have caused widespread damage in three other districts of Meghalaya. The worst affected was Mawkyrhat block in South West Khasi Hills district where landslips destroyed 22 houses.

In Assam, the number of flood-affected people increased by 1.64 lakh in less than 24 hours. Nalbari and Tinsukia were added to the list of five districts inundated on Monday. The bulk of the

No home quarantine in Assam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam Cabinet has decided not to allow home quarantine for returnees in view of the increase in COVID-19 cases, which more than doubled in five days to reach 597 on Tuesday evening.

For want of adequate quarantine centres, Mizoram has allowed home quarantine for returnees who clear a rapid antibody test.

Assam had earlier decided to allow returnees, especially flyers, to be in home quarantine after they tested negative during seven nights in institutional quarantine.

About 70,000 people have returned to the State.

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH	OLD REFERENCE/NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	DHBVN, PALWAL	06/SE/OP/PWL/2019-20	Date extended up to 10.06.2020 at 13.00 Hrs.	www.dhbvn.org.in	01275-242536 sepalwal@dhbvn.org.in
2	DHBVN, PALWAL	07/SE/OP/PWL/2019-20	Date extended up to 10.06.2020 at 13.00 Hrs.	www.dhbvn.org.in	01275-242536 sepalwal@dhbvn.org.in
3	DHBVN, HISAR	NIT NO. 3/SE/RA/HSR/2020-21 DATED: 17.04.2020(HBC_126386_1)	extended upto 04.06.2020 at 13.00 Hrs.	www.dhbvn.org.in	01662-223196 sera@dhbvn.org.in
4	DHBVN, HISAR	NIT NO. 653/DH/MM DATED: 15.04.2020 AGAINST QD-834/ 2020_HBC_126311_1	Date extended upto 8.6.2020	www.dhbvn.org.in	8059886860 semni@dhbvn.org.in
5	HPGCL,PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/POM-100048) (TENDER ID 2020_HBC_111880_1)	Start date 31.01.2020 at 18:00 Hrs. & Last date 27.05.2020 at 13:00 Hrs	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xemmtcpk1@gmail.com
6	HPGCL,PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/POM-111880) (TENDER ID 2020_HBC_124325_1)	Start date 18.03.2020 at 18:00 Hrs. & Last date 27.05.2020 at 13:00 Hrs	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xemmtcpk1@gmail.com
7	HPGCL,PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/POM-100028) (TENDER ID 2019_HBC_117504_1)	Start date 07.02.2020 at 17:00 Hrs. & Last date 03.06.2020 at 13:00 Hrs	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xemmtcpk1@gmail.com
8	HPGCL,PANIPAT	(NIT NO.PTP/NO-111882) (TENDER ID 2020_HBC_117493_1)	Start date 07.02.2020 at 17:00 Hrs. & Last date 03.06.2020 at 13:00 Hrs	www.hpgcl.org.in	0180-2566015 xemmtcpk1@gmail.com
9	HVPNL, PANCHKULA	NIT NO. 36/TSAMB/2020-21 DATED: 27.04.2020 NOW EXTENDED NO.(2020_HBC_126705_1) DT.21.04.20	No change in the tender, only date of opening is extended upto 27.05.2020 due to non turning up of minimum bidders i.e. minimum 3 bidders	www.hvpn.org.in	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in
10	HVPNL, HISAR	NIT NO. 10/CWFG-25/VOL-IV/2020-21 DATED:01.05.2020	Corrigendum No. I Online tender is invited for Construction of additional ODSG Foundations, ODCT for 2 nos. line bays C-5 & C-6 as revision R-8 at 66 KV S/Sub. Nuh. (Online Tender ID :- 2020_HBC_127401_1) Estimate Cost/Earnest Money (in lacs):- Rs. 7.7 lacs / Rs. 0.154 lacs Last date of online bid submission:- 03.06.2020 (11:00 A.M)	www.hvpn.org.in	0172-2583789 pro@hvpn.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

ENTERPRISE CONNECT

Haryana announces allotment of Industrial plots on lease hold basis

In a bid to attract the global investment and to strengthen State Economy post COVID-19 Pandemic, Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (HSIIDC) in line with the announcement made by Haryana Chief Minister Mr. Manohar Lal is all set to bring in a new innovative Policy for allotment of Industrial plots on a leasehold basis in Industrial Estates of HSIIDC on 'First come first basis'. Under this policy, any company having at least one manufacturing unit aboard and been in commercial production as on January,1,2020 for at least a period of one year shall be eligible to apply.

A decision in this regard was taken in the 362nd Board meeting of Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (HSIIDC) under the Chairmanship of Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Sh. Rajesh Khular IAS, here today. Among those present in the meeting included Principal Secretary, Industries, Sh. A.K Singh, IAS and Managing Director HSIIDC, Sh. Anurag Aggarwal, IAS.

The board also approved allotment of land measuring 1.8 acres at IMT Faridabad for a Mega project for manufacture of auto components with a proposed investment of Rs.109.46 crore and employment to 617 persons for which e-auction was conducted on 30.04.2020.

Oil India Limited operations will have no impact on the Dibrugarh-Saikhowa National Park Area.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has accorded environmental clearance for extension drilling & testing of Hydrocarbons at 7 (seven) locations under Dibrugarh-Saikhowa National Park Area, north West of Bagjan PML in District Tinsukia in the state of Assam to Oil India Limited. This information as per statutory requirement was published as a Newspaper advertisement for information of all concerned stakeholders.

It was observed that post publication of the advertisement certain section of the stakeholders have expressed their concern assuming that OIL will be operating inside the national park.

In this regard, OIL management shared information for the benefit of all stakeholders so that they can be reassured that OIL's operations will have no impact on the Dibrugarh-Saikhowa National Park Area.

If commercial viability of hydrocarbon production is established, then production of oil & gas will help in meeting energy needs of the country and will also lead to socioeconomic development of the area and its vicinity. The commercial production from this area shall enable OIL to meet the vision of our Hon'ble Prime Minister towards 10% reduction in imports and also fulfilling North East Vision 2030.

NDMC certified as 3 star rating for garbage free cities by MoHUA.

New Delhi Municipal Council has been certified as 3 star rating city under the garbage free cities category by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs , Govt of India. In an event held in New Delhi , Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State for Housing and Urban affairs , Govt. of India announced the result of smart rating of garbage free cities , in which NDMC certified as 3 star rating for the assessment year 2019- 2020. The Star Rating Protocol was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in January 2018 to institutionalise a

mechanism for cities to achieve Garbage Free status, and to motivate cities to achieve higher degrees of cleanliness.

Shri Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary PDD GoJK appreciated management of Chenab Valley Power Projects (P) Limited

Shri Rohit Kansal, IAS Principal Secretary PDD GoJK has visited Chenab Valley Power Projects (P) Limited Corporate Office, Jammu on 22nd May 2020. On his arrival he was received by Shri M S Babu Managing Director CVPPPL along with senior officers of the company

Sh Kansal has appreciated the management for the progress achieved and advised for early completion of the projects. He has assured all support from the Govt required for construction of the projects and also promised that efforts shall be made for early start of Kwar HE Project.

SCOPE holds Webinar on Arbitration and Future of Virtual Hearings

Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE), the apex body of Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) organised Webinar on 'Issues in Arbitration and Future of Virtual Hearings.' The webinar was addressed by distinguished experts including Justice Vibhu Bakshu, Judge, Delhi High Court, Mr. Gaurav Pachchana, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court and Mr. Shourav Lahiri, Barrister-at-law, London. Mr. Atul Sobti, Director General, SCOPE gave the opening remarks and Mr. Anuj Aggarwal, Member (HR), Airport Authority of India gave the closing remarks . The webinar, 7th in the series, deliberated upon critical issues of arbitration arising in Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) and how the disruptions due to COVID 19 are being converted as opportunities to explore technological and digital means to conduct hearings. The interactive session received an overwhelming response as over 500 participants including board members, Legal heads and other senior members of PSEs attended. Participants were also apprised about the role of SCOPE Forum of Conciliation and Arbitration (SFCA) in institutional arbitration.

Himachal Pradesh Government approves 11 projects worth Rs. 332.50 crore

12th meeting of the State Level Single Window Clearance and Monitoring Authority (SSWCMA) held here today under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur approved 11 project proposals for setting up new industrial enterprises and expansion of existing units involving a total proposed investment of approximately Rs. 332.50 crore and employment potential of about 1000 persons which shows that the State continues to attract investment despite of overall slowdown in the economy.

Director Industries Hansraj Sharma conducted the proceedings of the meeting. Industries Minister Bikram Singh Thakur, Chief Secretary Anil Khachi, Additional Chief Secretary Industries Manoj Kumar, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Sanjay Kundu, Labour Commissioner S. S. Guleria and other senior officers also attended the meeting.

ONGC and NTPC sign MOU to set up Joint Venture for Renewable Energy Business

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and NTPC Ltd are planning to set up a Joint Venture Company for Renewable Energy business. The two Maharatnas entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 21 May 2020 in Delhi to formalize this arrangement. The MoU will enable both companies to achieve their targets in Renewable Energy business. The MoU was signed by ONGC Director (Finance) and In-charge Business Development and Joint Ventures Mr. Subhash Kumar and Director (Commercial) NTPC, Mr. A.K Gupta. ONGC CMD Mr. Shashi Shanker and NTPC CMD Mr. Gurdeep Singh (on Virtual conferencing) along with the Directors of two public enterprises witnessed the occasion.

As per the MoU, NTPC and ONGC will explore and set up Renewable Power assets including offshore wind, in India and overseas, and explore opportunities in the fields of sustainability, storage, E-mobility and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) compliant projects.

NHPC observes Anti-Terrorism Day

NHPC, India's premier hydropower company, observed Anti-Terrorism Day at its Corporate Office and across all its Regional offices, Power Stations and Projects on 21st May, 2020. Shri A.K. Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, NHPC administered the oath of Anti-Terrorism Day to staff of the CMD Secretariat. Shri Ratish Kumar, Director (Projects), Shri N.K. Jain, Director (Personnel), Shri M.K. Mittal, Director (Finance) and Shri Y.K. Chauhan, Director (Technical) administered the oath to the staff of their respective offices. The oath was also administered through PA system wherein all other employees took the pledge from their respective workstations/ offices as per directions issued by Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India.

Shri Ravi Dadhich takes over as Director (HR) - Delhi Transco Ltd

An alumnus of Maharaja College Jaipur – University of Rajasthan, Shri Dadhich has done his post graduation in Sociology. During his illustrious career spanning over twenty five years, Shri Dadhich has held many challenging postings in Delhi as well as in Lakshadweep. His first posting was as SDM – Preet Vihar Delhi. Among the other few important postings Shri Dadhich has held in Government of NCT of Delhi include as Officer on Special Duty to Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, Additional Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Member (Administration) – Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, Secretary to Minister (Transport) and Additional Commissioner (Food and Civil Supplies). In Lakshadweep, he has been Additional District Magistrate, Director (Tourism) and CEO, District Panchayat.

Director Industries Hansraj Sharma conducted the proceedings of the meeting. Industries Minister Bikram Singh Thakur, Chief Secretary Anil Khachi, Additional Chief Secretary Industries Manoj Kumar, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Sanjay Kundu, Labour Commissioner S. S. Guleria and other senior officers also attended the meeting.

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG

"NOTICE INVITING TENDER"

Online bids on item rate basis are invited by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division No-I Kasumti Shimla -9 (HP) on behalf of Governor Himachal Pradesh in electronic system in two covers for the under motioned

MVA rubbishes rumours on govt. stability

Fadnavis says BJP in no hurry to return to power, internal conflicts will bring down current government

ALOK DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

A day after Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar held consecutive meetings with Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, all three allies of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) on Tuesday dismissed speculation about the State government's stability.

The Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said it is in no hurry to come to power, and the government will fall due to conflicts between the NCP, Shiv Sena and Congress. Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis claimed it was the ruling alliance that was spreading rumours to divert people's attention from its failure to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Strong, united'
Sena MP Sanjay Raut said a meeting between two leaders running the government should not cause any fear. "A



Together: MVA allies said they were united in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. ■ FILE PHOTO

cure for COVID-19 and a method to bring down the Maharashtra government, are both yet to be found by anyone. Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray held a meeting for over one-and-a-

half hours on Tuesday. The government is strong and will continue to function. Nobody needs to worry."

State Congress president and Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat said all three

parties are united in fighting the pandemic. "We are in contact with each other. Some forces are deliberately spreading lies about the stability of the government. We are together and will continue

to work like this for many more years," he said.

Minority Affairs Minister and NCP chief spokesperson Nawab Malik, accused the BJP of spreading lies about imposing President's Rule in Maharashtra. "Our government is stable and strong. We are busy fighting the coronavirus," he said.

'Not playing politics'

Mr. Fadnavis, addressing a digital press conference on Tuesday, said, "We are not interested in playing politics. We are in no hurry to come back to power. This government will fall because of internal conflicts. The Centre is busy fighting COVID-19 as are we." He alleged that the three ruling parties are exhibiting no coordination.

When asked about BJP leader Narayan Rane's demand to impose President's Rule in Maharashtra, Mr. Fadnavis said that was the Rajya Sabha member's personal opinion.

Gujarat worse in handling COVID-19 crisis: Raut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Tuesday hit back at BJP MP Narayan Rane's demand to impose President's Rule in Maharashtra, saying Gujarat's performance in handling the COVID-19 pandemic has been worse, and it deserves to be put under Central rule first.

Without specifying any party or leader, Mr. Raut said the Opposition should get "quarantined", and that their efforts to destabilise the State government could boomerang.

Senior BJP leader and former minister Sudhir Mungantiwar, meanwhile, said though the COVID-19 situation in Maharashtra is grim, it does not qualify for President's Rule.

Mr. Rane, a Rajya Sabha member, on Monday met Governor B.S. Koshyari and demanded imposition of President's Rule due to the Shiv Sena-led State government's "failure" in tackling the pandemic.

Mr. Raut told reporters, "If you go by the Gujarat High Court's strictures on tackling the COVID-19 crisis, the State's performance is worse compared to Maharashtra. If President's Rule has to be imposed, the Centre should start with Gujarat."

Mr. Mungantiwar said the BJP does not think President's Rule should be imposed in the State. "The situation in Maharashtra is grim, but it does not qualify for Presidents Rule. We feel the current State government is not serious enough to tackle the situation," the BJP leader told a news channel.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar, Jharkhand, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan and Muzaffarabad. Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Manipur, south interior Karnataka and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	34.2	27.7	Kozhikode	—	35.8	28.0
Ahmedabad	—	43.7	27.5	Kurnool	—	42.1	30.7
Aizawl	—	27.2	19.1	Lucknow	—	43.8	27.3
Allahabad	—	47.6	29.0	Madurai	—	40.4	28.0
Bengaluru	—	32.9	21.9	Mangaluru	—	36.0	27.2
Bhopal	—	44.0	26.9	Mumbai	—	34.1	29.0
Bhubaneswar	—	34.3	28.5	Mysuru	—	33.4	22.2
Chandigarh	—	44.0	26.2	New Delhi	—	46.0	28.2
Chennai	—	37.5	29.4	Patna	—	40.3	27.2
Coimbatore	—	37.3	26.0	Port Blair	0.1	32.0	26.5
Dehradoon	—	39.8	21.2	Puducherry	—	36.1	29.1
Gangtok	23.3	20.6	15.3	Pune	—	39.1	25.3
Goa	—	35.4	21.2	Raipur	—	46.0	31.0
Guwahati	33.2	23.7	21.2	Ranchi	—	40.2	27.8
Hubballi	—	36.0	24.0	Shillong	36.9	25.1	—
Hyderabad	—	42.3	29.6	Shimla	—	32.2	22.3
Imphal	—	30.1	21.2	Srinagar	—	31.7	13.2
Jaipur	—	45.0	33.2	Thiruvananthapuram	2.8	33.6	25.8
Kochi	18.2	32.8	25.5	Tiruchi	—	41.4	28.2
Kohima	8.4	25.0	15.8	Vijayawada	—	40.0	28.6
Kolkata	—	34.1	28.6	Visakhapatnam	—	34.2	29.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	—	23	20	...43	...91	■■■■■
Bengaluru	.2	14	32	...38	...67	■■■■■
Chennai	.3	20	72	105	—	■■■■■
Delhi	25	28	11	159	219	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.7	37	22	...57	...90	■■■■■
Kolkata	.3	8	13	29	51	■■■■■
Lucknow	.5	21	55	211	—	■■■■■
Mumbai	.3	10	11	20	84	■■■■■
Pune	.35	13	57	...44	...42	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	11	23	6	19	66	■■■■■

(Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI))
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

Yesterday

crotic structure for no reason and invoking President's Rule is not a constructive opposition's work," he said.

Congress allies like the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), meanwhile, said there was nothing wrong in Mr. Gandhi's statement.

"He is right when he said

Maharashtra does not have a Congress government. He said so because Maharashtra has a Maha Vikas Aghadi government. Those trying to distort the statement must stop. The three parties are happy together and serving the people of Maharashtra," said NCP chief spokesperson and Minority Affairs Minister Nawab Malik.

Referring to reports of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) attempting to invoke President's Rule in the State, Mr. Gandhi said he understands the BJP has a duty as an Opposition to register protest or ask constructive questions of the government. "But uprooting the demo-

HC tells magistrates to speed up interim bail hearings

State told to submit report of COVID-19 testing in prisons



Several inmates at Arthur Road jail have contracted COVID-19. ■ FILE PHOTO

This would mean that 16,000 prisoners would have to be released and that a prison could accommodate only 8,000. On May 25, Maharashtra's prisons still had 29,737 inmates.

The court has directed the State to file a reply stating whether tests were carried out on prisoners in Arthur Road jail, who may have come into contact with 158 of those who have tested positive for the virus.

PUCL, represented by senior counsel Mihir Desai, sought permission for inmates to make video calls, and prosecutor Deepak Thakare said arrangements for videoconferencing were being made, and till then, inmates would be allowed to speak to their family or advocate over the phone once a week.

Mr. Desai also informed the court that the system of transmitting money to the inmates through money orders has been discontinued and separate bank accounts have to be opened.

Mr. Thakare told the court that an April 8 circular had said the jailer can open an account and provide the details to inmates. The court told prisons to implement the instruction immediately.

The reply filed by the Prisoners' Department has brought out inadequacies within the prison system. It said the State's prisons had a capacity of 24,000, but housed 34,000 prisoners till May 10. The prison manual recommends 40 sq. ft. to each prisoner, and to ensure physical distancing, it had reduced the number of inmates by two-thirds.

The police were also refusing to issue passes for these ambulances and pet taxis, the PIL said.

'Not practical'

In its reply, the State, through an affidavit filed by joint secretary (Animal Husbandry), said with increasing number of coronavirus cases, granting permission for

Send list of testing labs: HC to State

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday directed the State government to inform it about the number of testing labs and mobile checking centres in all districts.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice K.K. Tated was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by Khalil Wasta, a fisherman from Ratnagiri district, through advocate Rakesh Bhatkar.

The PIL said till the first week of April, swab samples were being sent to labs in Pune. Later, the Health Department directed samples to be sent to Miraj Hospital in Sangli district, 178 km from Ratnagiri. The PIL said suspected patients in Dapoli are facing delays in sending samples and receiving results.

Mr. Bhatkar told the court about 26 medical colleges and hospitals that meet Indian Council of Medical Research's guidelines and can conduct COVID-19 tests. However, the government pleader said they do not meet the requirements.

The court expanded the PIL's scope and sought to know the testing status in all districts. The matter will be heard on May 29.

Can pets be taken for a walk, State seeks to know

AWBI must clarify norms, HC told

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

The State government recently told the Bombay High Court that the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) must clarify whether or not pets can be taken for a walk during lockdown.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice S.S. Shinde was hearing a public interest litigation

(PIL) filed by animal welfare activist Vineeta Tandon through advocate Harshvardhan Bhende. The PIL states that as a result of the lockdown, police stations have been arbitrarily stopping citizens taking their pets for walks.

The PIL said police stations have issued arbitrary directions to housing societies to stop residents from taking their dogs for walks. It also mentioned that ambulances or pet taxis operated by NGOs and others to ferry

animals from their shelters, or pet owners to veterinary clinics are being arbitrarily stopped and digitally obstructed by the police.

The police were also refusing to issue passes for these ambulances and pet taxis, the PIL said.

'Not practical'

In its reply, the State, through an affidavit filed by joint secretary (Animal Husbandry), said with increasing number of coronavirus cases, granting permission for

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



Oil price pickle

The increased duty on fuel can fund welfare, but arbitrary methods will have implications

Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's recent remark that the Centre is taking a 'cautious and conscious approach' of ensuring a balance in fuel prices and aims to use the resultant savings for welfare is on the face of it unexceptionable. With global oil prices still about 45% lower than 2019 closing levels despite coordinated supply cuts by major producers, India had an opportunity to pass on the benefit to consumers and provide a fillip to becalmed consumption. That the 'deregulated' oil marketing companies chose not to reduce pump prices, even when crude tumbled last month, could be attributed to their caution amid a sharp slump in demand in the wake of the nationwide lockdown. It is the government's decision, earlier in May, to raise Excise Duty on petrol and diesel for a second time in less than two months that raises several concerns. For one, subsequent to the latest increase the Centre's tax revenue on a litre of petrol sold by IOC in Delhi as on May 16 was 1.8 times the fuel's freight inclusive base price of ₹18.28 and represented 46% of the final retail price of ₹71.26. With economic activity brought to a near standstill by the lockdown the Centre's overall revenue prospects have come under severe strain, and from that perspective the government's move to maximise its takings from transport fuels is understandable. Still, the fact that the government has consistently tinkered with the duty structure through recent years of largely benign oil prices, undermines the benefits from pricing deregulation that ought to have accrued to oil companies and consumers.

Back in 2018, ahead of key Assembly elections, the Centre had cut the excise duty at a time when global crude prices were on the ascent in order to minimise any electoral fallout from unchecked fuel costs. The government's goal of maximising revenue from fuel products to fund welfare measures can only bear fruit if demand for petrol and diesel remains unaffected by the continuing high costs. With curbs on inter-State road transport still in place, contracting automobile sales unlikely to recover any time soon, job losses and pay cuts sure to shrink household budgets, it is hard to see transport fuel demand rebounding to pre-lockdown levels for at least one or two quarters. Add to that the fact that the Centre's ambitious disinvestment target of ₹2.1-lakh crore for this fiscal had included a stake sale in BPCL, and the petroleum products' pricing approach gets even more complicated. With potential investors unlikely to be impressed by the lack of autonomy in the sector, it is in the government's interest not to risk the health of the goose that lays the golden eggs.

The common factor

China is now a dominant subject in U.S. politics as the election draws closer

President Donald Trump is entering deeper into a political quagmire on three related fronts: America's death toll from COVID-19 is perilously close to the psychologically important mark of 100,000; the economy looks to be on the verge of slipping into a deep recession, if not outright depression, in the wake of the pandemic impact across sectors; and his management of both the crises is facing acerbic criticism from Democrats even as the 2020 U.S. presidential election draws closer. There is one factor that links all three political hazards he is facing – China. On the pandemic front, Mr. Trump has regularly tweeted to the effect that the novel coronavirus ought to be called the "China virus" and his top officials including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have made unsubstantiated suggestions that the virus may have leaked out of a Wuhan laboratory. While Mr. Trump appeared relatively more mollified after a call with Chinese President Xi Jinping in late March, he reverted to name-calling a few weeks thereafter. Beijing meanwhile has concertedly pushed a campaign around the message that the virus – contrary to any publicly verified evidence – originated outside China. On the economic front, the savage trade war that roiled global markets through most of 2019 appeared to be near a resolution when Washington and Beijing inked the 'phase one' pact for lower tariffs and trade concessions this January. The pandemic appears to have set that process back considerably: neither side will be in the mood to make concessions given that tens of millions of jobs have been lost in the U.S. and China is far from an economic recovery.

It is however the third factor, the presidential poll in November, that could most significantly alter the landscape of conflict-ridden bilateral ties. Presumptive Democratic nominee and former Vice President Joe Biden has for several months launched scathing attacks on Mr. Trump's bungling in the early phases of viral transmission, including repeated messaging that the President was slow to respond to warning signs from Wuhan and reluctant to lock down the U.S. to enforce physical distancing. Pro-Trump campaign organisations have in turn taken to labelling Mr. Biden, "Beijing Biden," which gives Democrats the tough choice of either attacking or defending China. If Mr. Biden does either, he will open himself up to political attacks. There is, however, a third way. If he steps back from the brink of what some analysts are describing as the potential "New Cold War," based on the understanding that neither side would stand to gain from the cumulative tally of economic and geopolitical conflict, he may not only avert a torrid clash between the two nations, but in the process he might win over economically insecure, independent and undecided voters across the U.S., who are decisively important to secure an election victory. Not only the U.S. and China, but the world at large, might stand to gain if he did that.

The heavy burden of social suffering

The misery the pandemic has caused to the poor points to the horrendous ways in which societies are organised



RAJEEV BHARGAVA

It is a truism that suffering is part of life. No one, literally no one, is exempt from it.

A deep philosophical interpretation of this claim is provided by the great Buddha: the mere fact of human existence entails suffering because everything in the world is ephemeral, transient. Its imminent disappearance is experienced as a loss, causing grief. This elemental imperfection in the world keeps us all in a near-permanent state of 'dukkha' or radical discontentment.

Inescapable truth

There is a second, extremely important sense in which all human beings are subject to suffering. We all undergo a deeply negative, unwanted experience when daily routine is disrupted by disease, sickness, ageing, death, natural catastrophe or when a misfortune unexpectedly crashes into our life. Part of their life cycle, all humans are equally vulnerable to it. Buddha talked with great wisdom about it as do the Indian epics. Indeed, most religions in the world attempt to address and make sense of this ubiquitous, inescapable human suffering that is both physical and mental (feelings of profound meaninglessness, anguish and despair). Paradoxically, our very capacity to reflect, to remember our past and imagine a future intensifies this suffering.

Buddha spoke not only about the deeply felt suffering caused by major, disruptive episodes in life but also minor, persistent, daily suffering – dissatisfaction caused within an individual by an effort going waste, an unfulfilled aspira-

tion or a missed opportunity, by the persistent irritations within social interactions. Indirectly, he differentiated suffering by its duration – short term, episodic or long term, continuous. The great Asoka introduced another dimension, implicitly distinguishing suffering by its source, by what causes it, as arising within human agency or outside it. Owning up responsibility, he expressed remorse at the immense and continuing agony he caused to the people of Kalinga. He acknowledged how the anguish caused by a war he waged began a chain reaction, creating an ever-widening circle of co-sufferers.

The dark and tragic Mahabharata also speaks of war, a relatively short 18-day episode in which immense human suffering was inflicted by one group on another. Thus, we may distinguish forms of human suffering by their (a) source, (b) intensity and gravity and (c) duration. With these, we can home in on a third form of 'dukkha' – in which grave disruptions caused by humans become an enduring feature of daily life, as when humanity was continuously ravaged by the two world wars.

Traumatic images

Such colossal misery inflicted by one group of persons on another or by the rulers on the ruled might be called socio-political suffering. This reprehensible experience, a consequence of various acts of commission or omission by powerful people in society who go to war, impose harsh economic measures, deliberately sow social divisions or work for the benefit of a few with no regard for the welfare of the larger, powerless population, is entirely avoidable. Until recently in human history, this systemic violence and institutionalised oppression was barely recognised for what it really is: something not given to but made by humans.

It is this man-made suffering



that has recently invaded our lives. It is induced neither solely by COVID-19 nor by the decision to lockdown but largely by how the lockdown has been handled, reminding us of Arthur Schopenhauer's comment that "the world is Hell, and men are on the one hand the tormented souls and on the other the devil in it". Lakhs of penniless, barefoot workers trudging hundreds of kilometres under the scorching sun. A pregnant woman carrying a load on her head, or lying in a cart pushed by her husband; a mother delivering a baby on the pavement and moments later standing up to renew her journey or pulling a broken suitcase on wheels with a four-year-old clinging to it; a 10-year-old collapsing on the roadside, exhausted by the heat; rickshaw puller from Delhi cycling all the way to Bihar with all his family and worldly goods; scores hiding in the entrails of a dumper to avoid the punitive gaze of the police, thousands spending endless nights on the platform waiting for the promised train to arrive and take them home, hundreds killed on the railway track or the road by speeding vehicles or trains, their food, blood and chappals strewn everywhere.

These images that have flashed past us are shattering, first because they display the sheer corporeality of suffering – pain and injury, unimaginable fatigue and exhaustion, exposure to excessive heat, stomachs aching with hunger, parched throats, nausea and

dizziness; and second, because they exhibit unbearable mental distress – suppressed rage, anguish at the plight of old parents or little children, homesickness, fear, loss of dignity, humiliation, social rejection, betrayal, the incessant realisation that you live with others who treat you as disposable waste, as garbage. They all combine to generate a comprehensive attack on one's personhood accompanied by a feeling of overwhelming despair that one exists at all. We have been witnessing here a concentrated form of what millions of people undergo daily in some or another part of the world, starkly bringing into relief that large-scale disruptions such as the current pandemic compound structural suffering of millions and point to the horrendous ways in which many societies are currently organised.

Moral indifference

There is something wrong with this world, and gravely, astonishingly wrong with our moral indifference to this daily denial of humanity to others. How is it that we, corporeal beings, equally vulnerable to pain and anguish, allow others to experience states that we will not accept for a minute? How

can we accept a process of self-formation that simply fails to make us moral? How can a nation be built without *saharidhyata* (shared feelings, empathy)? How can a social structure exist that renders superfluous those very people who put their life and blood in maintaining it? Are we engaged in an archaic ritual of violence which we know to be incomplete without the sacrifice of the most precious, the most indispensable amongst us?

Alas, this moral coarseness – the ability to shut off from discomfiting conditions, to not see or feel for them, hear or think about them – is not just a defensive psychological strategy to keep sane but an ingrained habit, con-

stituting what we are, part of our training since childhood, a trait in our character. Perhaps, it is integral to our chosen, self-indulgent lifestyle – one sustained by social and economic processes that originate in the carefully hidden oppression of others. Surely, some of these practices have an old lineage – for instance, the hierarchical caste system founded on mistreatment of indispensable others; others are very much a product of modern technology and organisation. Doesn't a common amoral thread run through the remote control bombing of civilian populations, the organised machinery of genocidal violence, the calamitous destruction of the environment and the structural poverty of millions?

We are all culpable in this grave wrongdoing. Yet, this shared responsibility is graded. Those with more power and wealth, those who run the state and the big corporations must bear greater responsibility for collective suffering.

There may have been a time when most people oriented themselves to a world that was little more than what Schopenhauer called 'a penal colony', where life itself was viewed as punishment, in which nothing untoward or irregular was found in the torments of life. Natural calamities and man-made oppression were viewed as part of the order of things. This seems to have changed everywhere and in India too, particularly by the experience of the anti-colonial struggle and the vibrancy of contemporary political democracy. Today more and more people hold some others responsible for part of their suffering and expect governments that are run in their name to do something about it. Indeed, when appropriate, they directly, publicly blame governments, beware!

Rajeev Bhargava is Professor, CSDS, Delhi

Continue India's tryst with Nehruvian ideology

It remains essential even today to fight against the dark forces of communalism and to kindle the light of harmony



A. RAJA

Fifty-six years after Jawaharlal Nehru left the world stage – his anniversary is today, May 27 – demagogic attempts are still being made to dub Nehruvian ideology as myopic. In the discussion on the dilution of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution in both Houses of Parliament, Nehru was not only criticised by the ruling party, but even lampooned.

The debate began with the opinion that Nehru had mishandled the Kashmir issue, and that had it been entrusted to Sardar Patel, as in the case of the other princely States, the end result would have been impeccable. Pertinently, one needs to understand the historical context and the point in time of Kashmir's integration with India.

A dedication to integration
Mehr Chand Mahajan who served as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947-48, and later as Chief Justice of India, has recorded in his autobiography the entente between Nehru and Patel in the matter of Kashmir's integration with India. On October 24, 1947, Mahajan received a late-night call from Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel asking him to come over to Delhi from Amritsar, in the same plane in which Lady Mountbatten was to go to Srinagar to meet the recently-freed Sheikh Abdullah with a message from Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. It is also important to note that Nehru was in the U.S. at this time and Patel was at the helm in India. Yet, the correspondence between Nehru and Patel during this period clearly captures a sense of camaraderie and sincere dedication to the

goal of Kashmir's integration with India. Even the letter drafted by Nehru addressed to Sheikh Abdullah was sent to Patel for his perusal through N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar. This then led to the initiation of administrative proceedings in the Constitutional Assembly. Even minor changes in the draft Article 370 were being apprised (with relevant clarifications) to Nehru by Patel, as seen in his letter dated November 3, 1949.

Article 370 was deemed temporary by both Nehru and Patel, but given Kashmir's geography and its implications for India's national security, that Constitutional provision was an urgent necessity. In its absence, Kashmir would have virtually atrophied.

Approaches of Nehru, Patel

Nehru's sincere commitment to secularism, evinced in his espousal of the principles of religious equality, is being criticised either as "pseudo-secularism" that is biased in favour of the minorities or as an impractical exercise in futility given how the majority's religion is compared to the minorities. The criticism is touted as if Patel and Nehru had divergent opinions on the meaning of secularism even though there is no such evidence. Granville Austin's observation is relevant here: "Nehru and Patel were the focus of power in the Constituent Assembly, when they were divided on an issue, as in the case of property clause, factions could line up behind them and the debate would be lengthy. But when they settled their differences, the factions among the rank and file would do little else but shake hands and make the decision unanimous." Patel's view on secularism is moderate and as chairman of the advisory committee on fundamental rights, he had to review the report of the sub-committee on minorities in the Constituent Assembly. His tenor there was very much that India



THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

should follow the principle of secularism.

Nevertheless, Patel is often identified as a Hindu traditionalist. It is a historical fact that Hindu traditionalist leaders like Madan Mohan Malviya and Lala Lajpat Rai favoured the idea of an Indian nation built around the majority (Hindu) community to which Nehru was strongly opposed. When K.M. Munshi (then a Union Minister) tabled in Parliament the matter of reconstruction of Gujarat's Somnath Temple which had been damaged by the army of Mahmud of Ghazni in the 11th century, Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel announced in November 1947, that the government would provide funds for rebuilding the temple. However, at the insistence of Nehru, Gandhiji suggested that the project should be financed by public subscription. Nehru was strongly committed to keeping the government distanced from religion – an attitude that defined the character of new-born India.

Nehru used every available opportunity to not only propound the benefits of a 'socialistic democracy' as opposed to the 'Hindu Nation' prescribed by the Hindu Mahasabha, but also to reassure India's Muslim minority of their future in India. On the other hand, on June 6, 1948, Sardar Patel urged the Hindu Mahasabha to amalgamate with the Congress. He made similar pleas to the RSS.

In Sankar's *Sardar Patel: Select Correspondence (1945-50)*, we find that in May 1948, after Gandhi's assassination, Nehru was anxious about the 'recrudescence of the RSS'. Consequently, the RSS was

banned. Golwalkar pleaded first with Nehru and then with Sardar Patel to lift the ban on RSS. At which point, Patel demanded that Golwalkar should put together a written constitution for the RSS. In the end of January 1949, the RSS's official constitution came into being. However, Sardar Patel's expectations were not met in this constitution and it became an exercise in futility. Golwalkar intended to launch an agitation from his place of detention. Finally, in June 1949, Patel agreed to accept an amended constitution and the ban on the RSS was lifted on July 11. Patel's favourable inclination towards the RSS reached its peak when a resolution was passed in the Congress Working Committee (CWC) on October 10, 1949, authorising Swayamsevaks to become members of the party – all during the absence of Nehru who was then travelling abroad.

The internal democracy within the Congress was also put to the test in 1950, when Purushottam Das Tandon was elected as party president by defeating Kripalani, with the support of Patel in recognition of his Hindu nationalist loyalties. Tandon emphasised two points at the Nashik Congress session: one was Hindu nationalism and the other was adoption of Hindi as an official language. Nehru as Prime Minister threw his weight against this emergent tense and prickly situation. He said, "... If you want me as Prime Minister, you have to follow my lead unequivocally. If you don't want to me to remain, you tell me so and I shall go. I will not hesitate. I will go out and fight independently for the ideas of the Congress as I have done all these years."

Need for science and logic

The approaches of Nehru and Patel in dealing with Hindu nationalist ideology may be divergent but they are clearly two sides of the same coin – that coin being secularism. History recounts that Patel's approach was based on his faith and trust, not on logical inferences. Nehru felt that India needed to favour science and logic instead of orthodox religiosity. He believed that 'education is meant to free the shackles of the human mind and not to imprison it in pre-set ideas and beliefs'. His motto, namely cultivating scientific temper and nurturing the spirit of tolerance are the foundations of his concept of secularism.

Consider Nehru's commitment to the adoption of the Hindu Code Bill introduced by the then Law Minister B.R. Ambedkar. According to Ambedkar, "The Hindu Code Bill was the greatest social reform measure ever undertaken by the legislature in the country...." The Bill was vehemently resisted by every Hindu nationalist in the Congress. President Rajendra Prasad even expressed apprehension that it may cause disruption in every Hindu family. Nehru's inability to pass the Bill initially, forced Ambedkar to resign from the cabinet. However, Nehru's continuous struggle to get the Bill passed (even if with some amendments) is credible testimony to his commitment to uphold secularism.

Nehru had dreamt for a modern India to have an exalted position on the world stage, rising above sectarian politics and divisive forces. In January 1948 he said, "As far as India is concerned, I can speak with some certainty. We shall proceed on secular lines... in keeping with the powerful trends towards internationalism."

An effective democracy and the nurturing of unity and solidarity are the need of the day for our nation. Nehruvian ideology continues to remain essential even today to fight against the dark forces of communalism and to kindle the light of social harmony.

A. Raja, a Member of Parliament, is a former Union Minister

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

A virus and the mask

Before March, one would have never visualised images of Indians wearing masks at all times (OpEd, "Battling a virus with masks", May 26). In these difficult times, not only is the usage of masks essential but their maintenance too. The subject of mask hygiene has also started

trending. The other day, I was amused to see a girl explaining how to remove and re-use a face mask using a plastic container without touching the front of the mask. With the government suggesting that citizens learn to live with the virus for sometime, we should also learn and observe mask hygiene and

etiquette at all times.

M. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN,
Chennai

Now and then

The Editorials, "Batting for free speech" (May 26, 2020) and 'From the Archives - A Hundred Years Ago, May 26, 1920, "Silently gagging the media. (From an editorial), suggest that

nothing much has changed

over the last century. The urge to control the media,

then and now, remains,

only the *modus operandi* has changed.

R. HARIPANTH,
Chennai

Balbir Singh Sr.

Unlike several of his contemporaries, Balbir

How India can become self-reliant

There needs to be significant government reinvestment in public sector undertakings and R&D



D. RAGHUNANDAN

Addressing the nation on the COVID-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised the necessity of a self-reliant India. He said the need was brought home by the absence of domestic production of personal protective equipment (PPE) when COVID-19 struck, but India initiated and quickly ramped up PPE production. Mr. Modi said there needs to be improvement in quality and domestic supply chains going forward. If this is to happen though, India will have to make major course changes in development strategies.

Much has changed since the self-reliance model of the Nehruvian era, so a perspective for Indian self-reliance in science and technology (S&T) and industry in a globalised world is long overdue.

Not globally competitive

Self-reliance in state-run heavy industries and strategic sectors in the decades following independence had placed India ahead of most developing countries. In the 1970s and 80s, however, India did not modernise these industries to climb higher up the technological ladder. The private sector, which had backed the state-run core sector approach in its Bombay Plan, stayed content with near-monopoly conditions in non-core sectors in a protected market. Little effort was made to modernise light industries or develop contemporary consumer products. India's industrial ecosystem was thus characterised by low productivity, poor quality and low technology, and was globally uncompetitive.

India completely missed out on the 'third industrial revolution' comprising electronic goods, micro-processors, personal computers, mobile phones and decentralised manufacturing and global value chains during the so-called lost decade(s). Today, India is the world's second largest smartphone market. However, it does not make any of these phones itself, and manufactures only a small fraction of solar photovoltaic cells and modules currently used, with



N. RAMAKRISHNAN

ambitious future targets.

At the turn of the millennium, when India embarked on liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, the very concept of self-reliance was rubbed, in the belief that it was tantamount to reinventing the wheel when advanced technologies could simply be bought from anywhere at lower costs. Two related ideas have prevailed since then, and neither delivered the desired results. The first was that public sector undertakings (PSUs) are, by definition, inefficient and sluggish for the competitive globalised scenario. No effort was made to engender either real autonomy or a transition to new technological directions. Instead, PSUs with capability and scale for the task were undermined or abandoned, along with many nascent research and development (R&D) efforts (for instance, in photovoltaics, semiconductors and advanced materials).

On the other hand, the private sector displayed little interest in these heavy industries and showed no appetite for technology upgrading. With entry of foreign corporations, most Indian private companies retreated into technology imports or collaborations. Even today, most R&D in India is conducted by PSUs, and also in indigenously developed technologies. Taiwan developed technologies and manufacturing capacities in robotics and micro-processors, while Singapore and Hong Kong adapted advanced technologies in niche areas. These self-reliant capabilities were enabled, among other factors, by planned state investments in R&D including basic research (3-5% of GDP), technology and policy support to private corporations, infrastructure and, importantly, education and skill development (4-6% of GDP).

The second idea was that inviting foreign direct investment and manufacturing by foreign majors would bring new technologies into India's industrial ecosystem, obviating the need for indigenous efforts towards

self-reliance. However, mere setting up of manufacturing facilities in India is no guarantee of absorption of technologies (the ability to independently take them to higher levels). There is no evidence from any sector that this has taken place or has even been attempted. The fact is, foreign majors jealously guard commercially significant or strategic technologies in off-shore manufacturing bases.

The key problem of self-reliance is therefore neither external finance nor domestic off-shore manufacturing, but resolute indigenous endeavour including R&D.

Experience and achievements in other countries in Asia attest to this, and also contradict the notion that self-reliance is a hangover from Nehruvian 'socialism'. Learning from Japan's post-war success, countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong took huge technological and industrial strides in the 1970s and 80s. South Korea, in particular, climbed determinedly up the technology ladder and value chains in electronic goods, consumer durables, automobiles, micro-processors, personal computers and heavy machinery. It emerged as a global powerhouse in manufacturing, but also in indigenously developed technologies.

Taiwan developed technologies and manufacturing capacities in robotics and micro-processors, while Singapore and Hong Kong adapted advanced technologies in niche areas. These self-reliant capabilities were enabled, among other factors, by planned state investments in R&D including basic research (3-5% of GDP), technology and policy support to private corporations, infrastructure and, importantly, education and skill development (4-6% of GDP).

Countries like Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam have focused

on off-shore manufacturing lower down the value chain and without the thrust on self-reliance. This is useful for job creation but is an unsuitable model for a country of India's size and aspirations.

China is, of course, unique in scale and in its determination to become a superpower not just geopolitically but also in self-reliant S&T and industrial capability. China advanced purposefully from low-end mass manufacturing to a dominant role in global supply chains. It has now decided on shifting to advanced manufacturing and has set itself a target of becoming a world leader by 2035 in 5G, supercomputing, Internet of Things, artificial intelligence (AI), autonomous vehicles, biotech/pharma and other technologies of the 'fourth industrial revolution'.

The way forward for India

Unfortunately, India may well have missed the bus in many of these technologies in which the U.S., Europe and China have established perhaps insurmountable leads. Yet self-reliant capabilities in electric and fuel cell vehicles, electricity storage systems, solar cells and modules, aircraft including UAVs, AI, robotics and automation, biotech/pharma and others are well within reach.

Large-scale concerted endeavours would, however, be required, since self-reliance will not happen by itself. State-funded R&D, including in basic research, by PSUs and research institutions and universities needs to be scaled-up significantly, well above the dismal 1% of GDP currently. Upgraded and reoriented PSUs would also be crucial given their distinctive place in the ecosystem. Private sector delivery-oriented R&D could also be supported, linked to meaningful participation in manufacturing at appropriate levels of the supply chain.

Finally, India's meagre public expenditure on education needs to be substantially ramped up (as against current trends of privatisation which would only shrink access), including in skill development. No country has achieved self-reliance without mass quality public education. And no country has developed without a much stronger public health system than what we have in India.

D. Raghunandan is with the Delhi Science Forum, affiliated to the All India People's Science Network

A time for reform in courts

The Supreme Court can move away from an oral hearing-based system to one based on written submission



V.V. SIVAKUMAR & CHITRANSHUL SINHA

Court. The Supreme Court was never intended to be a court of appeal, barring such appeals which specific statutes provide for. The High Courts are usually meant to be the final courts of appeal. Instead, SLPs are now being treated as the last round of appeal.

Reports show that SLPs comprise about 60-70% of the Supreme Court's docket. Out of this, 80-90% of SLPs are dismissed, which means only 10-20% of such cases raise important questions of law. This takes up a lot of time of the Court. A simple solution would be to do away with immediate oral hearing of SLPs. The Supreme Court Rules could be amended to provide for a structure of pre-hearing of SLPs. Every SLP must be accompanied by an application for oral hearing which must be decided first by the Court, and that too in chambers. To assist the Court for that, a cadre of judicial research assistants made up of qualified lawyers should be created. The research assistants can go through each SLP and cut out the important questions of law as envisioned in Article 136. Thereafter, the Court may or may not allow applications for oral hearings based on whether such questions of law merit its attention. Only such SLPs in which oral hearing is permitted should be listed for hearing. SLPs in which no questions of law are raised, or frivolous ones are raised, should be dismissed without oral hearing and upon imposition of costs. This will ensure that only meritorious SLPs get judicial attention and will deter people from filing frivolous SLPs. It will also reduce pendency exponentially as the system will free up the Court's time to hear statutory appeals and matters pertaining to interpretation of the Constitution or constitutional validity of laws or executive actions.

No filing reply to appeals

Even in cases of statutory appeals, and appeals where leave is granted in SLPs, the Court should do away with the system of filing reply to the appeals and rejoinders to such replies. Every case can be decided based on records of the subordinate courts. As no new arguments on facts can be raised before the Court in appeals, the system of filing additional pleadings should be rendered redundant as the pleadings are simple regurgitation of the records of the subordinate courts.

Most such appeals can be dwelt upon by judges and their research assistants in chamber, and only such appeals should be granted detailed hearings where the judges require clarifications. The above mechanisms will ensure that the Supreme Court moves away from an oral hearing-based system to a written submission-based one.

V.V. Sivakumar and Chitranshu Sinha are partners at Dua Associates, Advocates and Solicitors

RESPONSE

An effective lockdown

India's containment strategy has been successful

G. KISHAN REDDY

A former Finance Minister who had served under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee recently wrote an op-ed in this newspaper titled "Flawed stimulus is justice denied" (May 20). His lack of objectivity is clearly visible when he conflates the selfless contributions of NGOs with some Opposition parties that were propagating a class divide during the pandemic. In such circumstances, it becomes necessary to counter such egregious falsehoods.

Lives versus livelihoods

India's lockdown and its enforcement has been one of the most structured exercises globally. The lockdown saved lives and its gradual easing aims to protect livelihoods. India's lockdown, with minimum prior notice, can be contrasted with the chaos that ensued in northern Italy when the news of an imminent lockdown was leaked by the media. Thousands tried to flee northern Italy and carried the infection to other regions. In contrast, the aim of the Prime Minister's announcement was to ensure that the virus doesn't spread to the villages. This strategy has been successful.

During the lockdown, the government's goal was to alleviate the hardships of the poor and vulnerable by providing free foodgrain through the PDS and by providing cash assistance through Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT). As of May 17, about 41 crore people have received financial assistance of ₹52,608 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package. The invocation of the Disaster Management Act permits State governments to use the funds available in State Disaster Response Funds for all expenses including those incurred in repatriating migrant labour. Thus any attempts to blame the Ministry of Railways in accounting for operational expenses while plying Shramik trains is grossly ill-informed.

The lockdown saw the Union government and State governments come together in charting a unified course. The Prime Minister held five meetings with the Chief Ministers of various States since the announce-

ment of the lockdown. This calibrated approach saw the timely easing of the lockdown and a coordinated attempt at restarting economic activity.

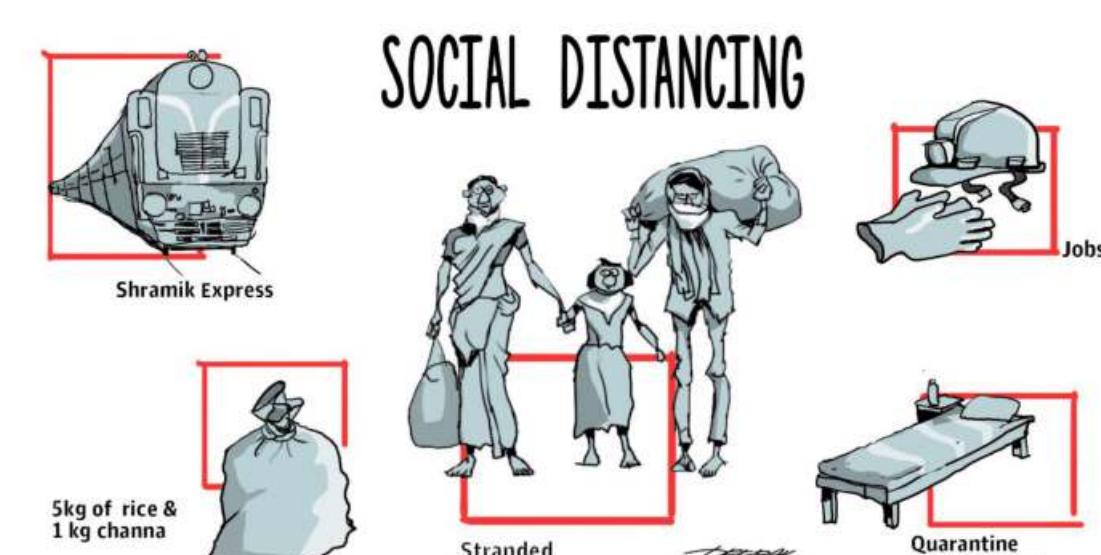
The twin goals of self-reliance The Prime Minister's vision for a self-reliant India is based on two complementary goals: self-reliance of our citizens to control their outcomes and self-reliance of the nation to control its destiny. For our aspirational classes, the economic package provides adequate support to achieve the outcomes they set for themselves. Opportunities are being provided in terms of loans to start and sustain livelihoods. The package also aims to reskill our workers.

As a country, self-reliance is a concerted effort at building institutional capacities. The past term has seen us make significant strides in addressing open defecation, sanitation and empowerment of girls and women. More than 1 crore poor beneficiaries have had access to quality healthcare. Technology-enabled governance initiatives such as DBT have been instrumental for the welfare of the poor. Leadership at the top is the single-most enabling factor for building such self-reliance and resilience.

In a 2014 interview, the former Finance Minister stated that there are two kinds of expenditure – investment and consumption. He said that while the former is regarded as productive expenditure, the latter is not regarded as productive expenditure. True to his "rollback" years, the former Finance Minister has come full circle to portray large-scale government infrastructure and investment spending as "wasteful expenditure". Contrary to his beliefs, the Central Vista project and the bullet train project are investment expenditures that would create jobs, boost the economy and build capital assets.

The government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, embraces criticism. However, it is also duty-bound to set the record straight when falsehoods and intellectual dishonesty are mainstreamed as opinions.

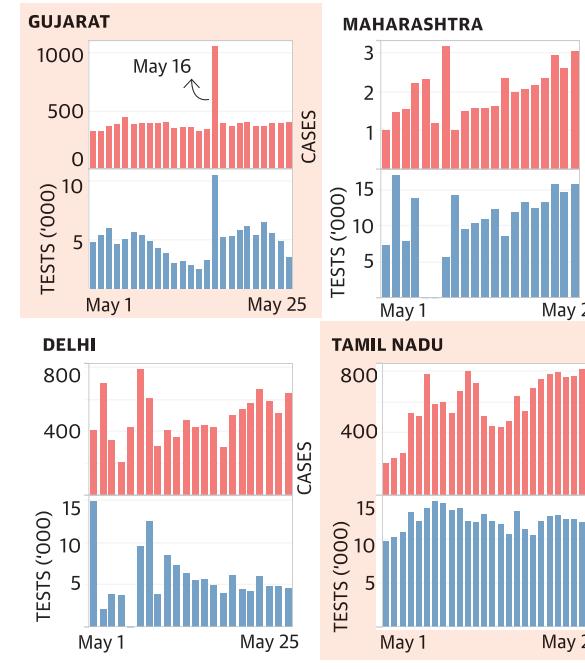
G. Kishan Reddy is the Minister of State for Home Affairs and is a Member of Parliament from Secunderabad constituency



DATA POINT

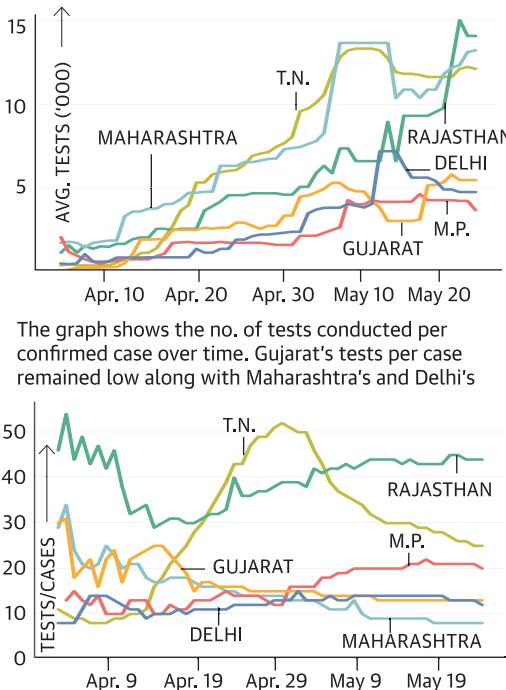
A curious test case

A UNIQUE CURVE The graphs show daily cases (red bars) and daily tests (blue bars) conducted in four States/UTs with the highest infections since May 1. The daily increase in cases has remained nearly constant in Gujarat in the 320-440 range despite variations in testing levels. On May 16, Gujarat announced a backlog of cases related to super spreaders, resulting in a single-day spike



Among the four States/UTs with the highest number of COVID-19 infections, Gujarat has a unique pattern of steady daily case increases through May. Despite its relatively high overall case load, the State's tests per confirmed case remain low. Gujarat needs to increase testing relative to the size of the outbreak. By The Hindu Data Team

LOW ON TESTS The first graph shows the seven-day rolling average of tests conducted in States with a high number of infections. Gujarat was steadily showing higher levels of testing till May 7, but a reduction resulted in lower averages between May 8 and 18. Since then, there was again a steady increase. Along with M.P. and Delhi, Gujarat has conducted a low number of tests among States with a high case load



The graph shows the no. of tests conducted per confirmed case over time. Gujarat's tests per case remained low along with Maharashtra's and Delhi's

The Hindu
FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 27, 1970

Strange bedfellows

Having routed the Hertzogites in the recent general election, Dr. Vorster, South Africa's Prime Minister, has been visiting Malawi, his client State, and Mr. Ian Smith's Rhodesia. While these two countries are anxious to receive material aid from South Africa, the richest and most powerful country in the south of the continent, Mr. Smith also looks up to it for military aid against the nationalist guerrillas who are preparing themselves to fight his illegal regime. While other African States condemn the racist regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa Dr. Hastings Banda, Malawi's leader, has been maintaining friendly relations with both for economic reasons. There are reports that South Africa is setting up a military base at Lilongwe in Malawi which would not only be valuable as part of its forward air defences but could also be utilised for air operations against the African guerrilla camps in Tanzania and Zambia. About 6,000 guerrillas are said to be training in Zanzibar; many more have already completed training elsewhere in Tanzania and Zambia. Though they have occasionally staged some raids in Rhodesia, the guerrillas do not yet pose a threat to the Smith regime.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 27, 1920.

Whitewash.

(From an editorial)

At least the Hunter Committee Report has seen the light of day and an apprehensive public has had its worst anticipations realised. It is whitewash, pure and simple, an apology for crimes that in other circumstances would have provoked floods of indignation from the very persons who now attempt to gloss over the most serious breaches of the laws of humanity and civilisation. One understands better now Mr. Montagu's coyness in refusing to publish the Hunter Report earlier, for its flimsy attempts at condonation, its strange evaluation of evidence and the facility with which it jumps to conclusions unwarranted even by the facts that were presented to its contemplation, would not have borne the test of public scrutiny. His anxiety therefore to take action on the report before its publication arose, it is now clear, from a desire to shield the whitewashers from the glare of public criticism and to face the public, British and Indian, with the accomplished fact in the question of punishment.

FROM PAGE ONE

Modi reviews LAC standoff with NSA, CDS

In contrast, in three separate sets of remarks last week, the Chinese MFA had accused Indian troops of "crossing the line" across Ladakh and Sikkim, of "infringement activities" and of "attempting to unilaterally change the status of border control."

MEA officials have also said "established mechanisms" are in place to resolve the issue, indicating their relative silence on the issue is to enable talks between military commanders and diplomatic channels to proceed.

However, sources on the ground have indicated that the situation on the ground is far more serious, with a faceoff between troops at at least three points in Ladakh and Nakula Pass in Sikkim, increased numbers of Chinese troops at the LAC in areas where India patrols, including the Galwan river valley, and Chinese troops blocking Indian patrols in the finger areas on the Pangong Tso (lake).

Meanwhile, defence sources denied reports of a major buildup by Chinese troops across the LAC in Ut-

tarakhand (also called the middle sector of the LAC), particularly in the Joshi-math-Harsil area, where Indian troops have been moved to more forward positions. The sources said these were routine "local movements".

In Delhi, the Chinese Embassy also denied reports that flights arranged to repatriate citizens were connected to the ongoing tensions at the LAC in any way.

"In consideration of the development of the epidemic situation in India, the Chinese side is planning to dispatch temporary flights to India to bring back students, tourists and business inspectors who are facing difficulties in India," Embas-

sy Spokesperson Ji Rong said.

On Tuesday, the Chinese Communist Party-owned newspaper *Global Times* published an editorial cautioning against misreading the move. "China clearly has no intention of escalating the border disputes with India, so its assistance to its citizens should not be over-interpreted," the editorial said.

'No WHO bar on India testing HCQ as preventive'

On May 4, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) formally published plans for a clinical trial – again an observational trial – that will check if 2,000 doctors, healthcare and sanitation workers who work in five dedicated COVID-19 hospitals across the country were afforded any protection while taking a prescribed course of HCQ.

WHO for RCT testing
Dr. Swaminathan said HCQ, even for testing its potency as a prophylactic, ought to be tested via the RCT method.

"WHO has consistently said that the best way of proving the efficacy of a drug for prevention or treatment is through well-conducted randomised clinical trials. Observational studies are always subject to the risk of bias and can sometimes produce misleading results. In the case of HCQ, there is no clear evidence from RCTs on either safety or efficacy, so that would be the best way to proceed," she said.

It was "very rare," for a drug to fail at treating moderate or severe disease but to be effective in working as a preventive, added Dr. Swaminathan, who was formerly Director-General of the ICMR.

Director-General of ICMR Balram Bhargava said at a press conference on Tuesday that while several studies were ongoing in India, there "was evidence" that the drug worked as prophylactic.

"It is difficult to do a randomised trial for a drug that may be working. We've got some observational data. A more detailed study will be available soon. We've

HCQ use extended

The government late last week extended the use of HCQ for paramilitary and police personnel involved in COVID-19 management, besides direct health care providers for positive patients. It cited three separate studies that claimed benefits but hasn't publicised details of these studies.

Two trials in patients – again, not RCTs and in small groups – in France and South Korea found that the drug reduced viral loads as well as protected hospitalised patients and healthcare workers exposed to the virus and appears to be prime source of optimism about its prophylactic potency.

On the other hand, it has also been linked to retinopathy and cardiac malfunction which is why it evokes deep scepticism among doctors and medical experts on India's faith in the drug.

"We know that HCQ has been used for over four decades for immuno-modulation... Some patients have been on lifelong therapy of one tablet every day. The reason some people are now talking against HCQ is the 'potential serious side effects' of this drug. Of special concern is it's effect on the heart. But the fact of the matter is that this drug is extremely safe and side effects are mild and extremely rare and are being blown out of proportion in today's scenario," said Dr. Yash Gulati, orthopedic surgeon, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi.

It is difficult to do a randomised trial for a drug that may be working. We've got some observational data. A more detailed study will be available soon. We've

Ensure transport, food for migrants, says SC

It asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to assist the court and produce on record by day after tomorrow (May 28) measures taken by the Centre so far to alleviate the migrants' sufferings. It referred to newspaper and media reports on helpless migrants forced to travel thousands of miles on foot or bicycles during the lockdown.

Newspaper reports and other media reports have been continuously showing the unfortunate and miserable conditions of migrant la-

Returnees push up cases across southern States

81 new cases in Karnataka, 60 in Kerala, 49 in Andhra Pradesh were of persons coming back from overseas or other States

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala recorded a major spike in COVID-19 cases on Tuesday with 67 persons testing positive. While 60 cases were detected in expatriates and non-resident Keralees from other parts of the country, seven cases are indigenous infections from unknown sources.

COVID-19

Of the 60 imported cases, 27 were people returning from overseas while the rest were from Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Karnataka, Delhi and Puducherry.

Of the seven cases of "contacts", four are in Kannur, two in Palakkad and one case is in Kottayam.

Of the new cases, 29 are in Palakkad, eight in Kannur, six in Kottayam, five each in Ernakulam and Malappuram, four each in Kollam and Thirissur and three each in Alappuzha and Kasaragod.

The State also recorded

the recovery of 10 persons on Tuesday. The total number of persons currently undergoing COVID-19 treatment in the State is 415.

Koyambedu link in A.P.

Andhra Pradesh reported one more death and 97 fresh cases since Monday. More than half of the fresh cases are returnees from the Gulf countries. While 44 new cases are of persons who returned from Kuwait, three are from Abu Dhabi and two are from Qatar. So far, 111 persons who returned as part of the Vande Bharat Mission have tested positive for COVID-19. The remaining 48 new infections, four have links to the Koyambedu market in Chennai.

The total tally has gone up to 2,983 with 917 active patients. One more death was reported in East Godavari district taking the toll to 57.

125 persons including 55 local cases and 70 migrant cases, have recovered in the past day.

The Indian Council of

Back to business

With the easing of lockdown restrictions, business establishments have slowly started opening their doors to customers across the country



Displaying caution: Mannequins covered with face masks displayed at a shop in Bengaluru's Rajarajeshwari Nagar on Tuesday. ■ SAMPATH KUMAR G.P.

Medical Research (ICMR) has approved the A.P. government's proposal to conduct Convalescent Plasma therapy at the Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences in Tirupati, Special Chief Secretary K.S. Jawahar Reddy said.

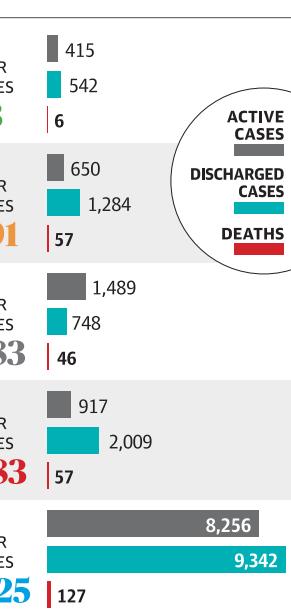
Telangana recorded

another 71 positive cases – the third highest number of cases reported in a day since March 2. The highest of 79 was recorded on May 11. One more fatality was recorded, taking the State's toll to 57.

Significantly, 120 people

were discharged after treat-

ment again the highest num-



ber so far. One more CO-
VID-19 patient died taking
the toll to 57.

T.N. toll at 127

The COVID-19 toll went up to 127 in Tamil Nadu, with nine more fatalities reported on Tuesday. The State recorded

another 646 cases, taking its tally of positive cases to 17,728. For the seventh consecutive day, Chennai reported more than 500 cases with 510 fresh cases, taking its total to 11,640.

Among the nine persons who died was a 45-year-old woman from Chennai and an 80-year-old man from Chengalpattu.

20 cases in Chitradurga

A total of 101 new cases were reported in Karnataka over 24 hours, taking the tally to 2,283. Of these, 81 were persons from other States – a majority from Maharashtra – while four patients have international travel history.

The highest number of cases was reported from Chitradurga district at 20. This was followed by Yadgir with 14 cases. Of the 1,489 active cases in the State currently, 18 are in ICUs. The total number of discharges on Tuesday was 43, taking the total number to 748.

(With inputs from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Chennai)

Testing times



No exam fever: A girl undergoing thermal screening before appearing for the SSLC examination at a higher secondary school in Palakkad, Kerala on Tuesday. ■ K.K. MUSTAFAH

10-year RI for ex-Kerala DSP, three others for murder bid

They are convicted of attempting to murder an officer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A special CBI court convicted a former Deputy SP and three others in Kerala of a murder bid on a police officer on suspicion of him leaking the news of a party organised by liquor barons attended by the police officers.

Apart from then Deputy SP Santhosh Nair, the Special Judge, Thiruvananthapuram, has also sentenced Jinda Ani, Container Santhosh and Penty Edwin (all private persons) to 10 years RI, CBI spokesperson R.K. Gaur said here.

The court also ordered the convicts to pay ₹25,000 each (total ₹1 lakh) to the complainant, head constable Babu Kumar, who was stabbed multiple times in 2010 in Kollam with an intent to kill him.

The accused had suspected him of leaking information about the party which became a massive scandal because of the attendance of the four police officers and film stars in it.

The journalist who published the story in a Malayalam daily was also allegedly attacked. This case is under a separate trial.

The agency took over the case of the head constable on September 12, 2013, on the orders of the Kerala High Court on a writ petition filed

by him. It was alleged that the accused entered into a criminal conspiracy in and around 2010 and in continuation of the same, attempted to murder Babu Kumar, head constable, Kerala police, by causing multiple stab injuries with a knife as revenge, as the victim reported about the alleged activities by police officials and cine stars, in the media," Mr. Gaur said.

He said it was further alleged that one of the accused also manipulated the records and concealed/destroyed the knife, which was recovered through him.

The agency filed a chargesheet on November 21, 2014. The court has acquitted two accused.

He also said the factory premises houses the compa-

SC allows LG Polymers staff access to plant

Access given to ensure safety measures

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed 30 staffers of LG Polymers emergency access to the company's Vishakapatnam factory from where a styrene gas leak killed 12 people and affected another 1,000 in the early hours of May 7.

A Bench led by Justice U.U. Lalit directed LG Polymers to provide the District Collector concerned the names of the 28 technical and two administrative personnel who would be able to access the polymer factory at any point of time to undertake safety measures.

This interim arrangement would continue till the Andhra Pradesh High Court considers the issue.

ny's law and administrative offices. A complete seizure of the acreage would seriously prejudice the company.

The apex court asked the company to approach the High Court with regard to all these issues. Mr. Rohatgi said one of the applications filed by the company is scheduled to come up before the High Court on May 27.

HC questions

Meanwhile, the High Court, in its previous hearing, had already asked the Centre and the Andhra Pradesh government to provide the net worth of LG Polymers Pvt. Ltd. as per the Companies Act.

It had also sought information on how the toxic styrene monomer was allowed to be transported to South Korea despite the registration of a crime in connection with the May 7 leak, the appointment of a probe team and the requirement of a magisterial enquiry.

The High Court had ordered the complete seizure of the factory and its premises. It had also barred the company directors from entering the property.

He also said the factory premises houses the compa-



Interim arrangement will continue till Andhra Pradesh HC considers the issue.

use electronic platforms to produce accused: HC

KOCHI
The Kerala High Court has directed magistrates and special judges to allow production of accused through an electronic video linkage or an appropriate electronic medium in view of the reported instances of many accused produced before courts testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 later. The HC on Tuesday directed State Police Chief Loknath Behera to ask the police personnel to produce the accused through electronic video linkage facilities.

Seer to move HC against sale of TTD properties

Kakinada
Swami Paripoornananda of Sree Peetham on Tuesday said that he will launch a legal battle against the proposal to auction some properties of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, Swami Paripoornananda said he had decided to approach the High Court in this regard. "The Jagan Mohan Reddy government should drop the idea of selling TTD land altogether instead of keeping it in abeyance." He said that no one, including religious elders, has the right to recommend the sale of TTD assets.

Uthra's son handed over to her parents

Husband is accused in murder case

STAFF REPORTER
KOLLAM

Following an order of the Child Welfare Committee, the one-year-old son of Uthra, who died in a snakebite incident at her house at Anchal in the district, was handed over to her parents on Tuesday.

The child was living with his paternal grandparents after the demise of his mother. Though the order was issued on Monday, the family of Sooraj, Uthra's husband and first accused in the murder case, was not willing to hand over the child.

They reportedly shifted the child to a relative's house, forcing the police to

intervene. The child was later brought to Uthra's house at Anchal accompanied by her father-in-law and police officers.

Meanwhile, a post-mortem examination on the snake that bit Uthra was conducted in the presence of officials. "It was mainly for cross-checking certain facts, including whether it was the same snake that bit Uthra and if it was venomous.

At present, everything matches with the investigation report, but we have collected enough samples and preserved the carcass for any further investigation," said Jacob Alexander, senior zoo veterinary surgeon.

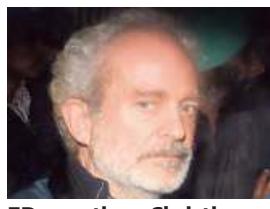
Bev Q gets Google green light

Decks cleared for reopening of liquor outlets in Kerala

STAFF REPORTER
KOCHI

Bringing cheers to thousands of tipplers across Kerala, Google has accorded its approval to the mobile virtual queue management app, Bev Q, clearing the decks for the reopening of liquor outlets in compliance with physical distancing norms.

IN BRIEF



ED questions Christian Michel in Tihar jail

NEW DELHI
The Enforcement Directorate has questioned British national Christian Michel at the Tihar jail in the ₹3,700-crore AgustaWestland VVIP helicopter deal case. The agency had earlier approached a Delhi special court for permission to quiz the accused in the light of fresh evidence. The court said that considering the requirement of investigation and the sensitive nature of the case, it was appropriate to allow probe officials to question the accused on Monday and Tuesday in the jail, where he is lodged in judicial custody.

No immediate SC relief for Sharjeel

NEW DELHI
Anti-Citizenship Amendment Act activist Sharjeel Imam failed to get any immediate relief from the Supreme Court on Tuesday despite arguing that the FIRs registered against him in different States are politically coloured and a ruse to silence his right to dissent. Appearing before a three-judge Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan, senior advocate Siddharth Dave, for Mr. Imam, urged the court to club the cases against his client and transfer them to Delhi. The Bench adjourned the hearing for another two weeks. It sought replies from Delhi, U.P., Assam and Arunachal Pradesh on the appeal.

Milestone in building Chardham tunnel

NEW DELHI
The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has achieved a milestone in the construction of a 440-m tunnel below the densely populated Chamba town on the Rishikesh-Dharasuram National Highway in Uttarakhand. In a statement, it said, "Breakthrough and perfect linkup of construction teams from north and south portals was accomplished amid challenges of COVID-19 and restrictions due to the lockdown." The tunnel is part of the efforts to boost the annual Chardham yatra.

Loan moratorium: SC fiat to Centre, RBI

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Central government and the Reserve Bank of India to file their formal response to a petition challenging the charging of interest rate on loans even during the three-month moratorium declared amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide lockdown. A Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan issued formal notice to the RBI and the Centre. It asked them to file their counter-affidavits in a week.

Panel should probe hospital conditions: HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD
Days after criticising the health authorities for the deplorable conditions at Ahmedabad Civil Hospital where almost 400 COVID-19 patients have died, the Gujarat High Court on Tuesday directed the State to form a committee of independent doctors to probe the conditions at the hospital.

A Division Bench also said the judges would like to pay a surprise visit to the hospital.

The Superintendent of the Civil Hospital and other authorities of the Health Department shall keep themselves ready to find our presence one fine morning on a given day in the civil hospital. This would put an end to all the controversies with regard to the functioning of the civil hospital," Justice J.B. Pardiwala said.

The number of COVID-19 cases in the State jumped to 14,829, with 361 cases reported on Tuesday. The death toll increased to 915 with 27 deaths.

A day after domestic flights resumed, seats go abegging

Some services were cancelled as occupancy rate was as low as 7%

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Weak demand for air travel continued to haunt airlines on the second day of domestic flight operations on Tuesday as most flights saw only 25%-50% seats occupied by passengers, and in some cases this was as low as 7%.

However, flights to Mumbai saw a slight improvement in sales as the State government on Monday relaxed quarantine norms for short-term travel, it is learnt. Passengers travelling to the city for less than seven days have been exempted from isolation, provided they don't travel to Mumbai's hotspots.

600 flights operated
Over 600 flights ferried more than 41,673 passengers on the second day of the reopening of domestic travel, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Hardeep Puri said.

Tuesday also saw flights to the Vijaywada and Vishakapatnam airports in Telangana restart. Both airports saw four flights each.

Some airlines also cancelled their flights in order to reduce frequencies on a given route because of the large number of seats that remained unsold. They accommodated their passengers on flights scheduled later in the day. Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, which



More precautions: Passengers arriving at Terminal 3 of the Delhi airport on Tuesday. ■ PTI

saw 267 arrivals and departures, witnessed 25 cancellations. Smaller airports like Goa, which had a mere five flights scheduled, too saw cancellations.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), a global body of airlines, said on Tuesday that quarantine norms were proving to be an obstacle to airlines restarting operations.

"We think we should avoid (putting in place quarantine measures). We will advocate to states or governments to not put quarantine if they want air travel to restart," Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director General and Chief Executive Officer, said

during a conference call with the global media. He added that IATA did not think that general quarantine was right.

Though the industry is opposed to quarantine protocols, a passenger travelling on an IndiGo flight from Chennai to Coimbatore tested positive for COVID-19 upon arrival on Monday.

Air India's poor customer care service proved to be a nightmare for many passengers, who stormed the airline's timeline on Twitter, demanding refunds for cancelled flights and complaining about a lack of response from the airline's customer care.

Direct booking for Vande Bharat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Indians stranded around the world may soon be able to book Vande Bharat flights directly on Air India's website, according to a senior official of the Ministry of External Affairs.

"We are doing this as a trial, but the airline will continue to be assisted by our foreign missions and the criteria for identifying passengers in distress will also apply," the source explained.

Goyal blames Maharashtra for cancellation of 55 trains

Trinamool says Railway Minister should not play politics

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The political slugfest over running of Shramik Special trains continued with Railway Minister Piyush Goyal taking to Twitter to allege that the Maharashtra government failed to provide passenger details due to which at least 55 such trains could not be run on Tuesday.

Mr. Goyal tweeted that on a request from the Maharashtra government, the Railways had scheduled 145 Shramik Special trains for Tuesday, of which 85 were scheduled to operate till 6 p.m. However, only 27 trains could be run due to lack of passengers.

Meanwhile, with 41 of these 145 trains scheduled to terminate in West Bengal, the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress accused the Railway Ministry of bulldozing the State government's rights, even as the State has expressed inability to receive the trains following Cyclone Amphan.

"We gave them as many trains as the Maharashtra government asked for, but the trains returned from there without passengers because they could not bring passengers. Last evening, the Maharashtra government asked for 145 trains from the Railways, after reviewing the entire night, we planned 145



Tug-of-war: The Centre and non-BJP State governments are locked in a war of words over special trains.

trains to Maharashtra," Mr. Goyal tweeted.

Amid migrant workers struggling to go back to their homes, the Centre and non-BJP State governments have been engaged in constant to and fro over the running of Shramik Special trains.

According to the Railways, of the 145 trains, 68 were planned to depart for Uttar Pradesh, 27 to Bihar, 41 to West Bengal, one each to Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Kerala and two each to Odisha and Tamil Nadu. The 41 trains were scheduled for West Bengal despite the State government conveying its inability to receive any trains since the State is still coming to terms with the destruction.

Maharashtra and West Bengal spoke to each other and the trains have been halted for now.

Taking a dig at Mr. Goyal, Trinamool national spokesperson and Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien said, "PM Narendra Modi and his Ministers are more busy tweeting rather than speaking to the State governments and co-ordinating during this crisis."

He said the State followed a certain protocol with the Shramik Special trains – screening them at the platform, government-monitored home quarantine for asymptomatic patients and institutional quarantine for others, all of which was not possible at present for the State government.

Mr. O'Brien said the West Bengal and Maharashtra governments were in touch with each other and the Railway Minister should not play politics.

Pradhan's fuel pricing explanation conflicting

Be more sensitive to the plight of people: Moily

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister M. Veerappa Moily, reacting to *The Hindu*'s interview with Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday, termed the latter's explanation over fuel pricing as "conflicting".

He said the government should have been more sensitive to the plight of the people in the time of a pandemic and passed on the benefits of a global price cut to the consumer.

"The interview of Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan, stating that the Union government has taken a 'cautious and conscious' decision to use the saving for the welfare of the people, is very conflicting. He himself admits 'the reduction in demand has led to a peculiar situation where the product prices are less than the price of crude,'" Mr. Moily said in a written statement.

He said the UPA-II government had taken a "conscious decision to do away with the administered



M. Veerappa Moily

price regime and to fix the prices of diesel and petroleum in accordance to the market price of crude. The idea was to pass the benefit/liability in accordance with the market trend.

"This is a sound principle of economics and also done in the interest of the consumers and the economy. In the days of crisis in the economy, such as the onset of COVID-19, the government should have been more sensitive to the plight of the people and consumers as they are in great distress," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH, APEWIDC, VIJAYAWADA
Door No.9-76, Sai Fortune Heights, Block-A, Vaddeswaram, Guntur (Dt)-522502.
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
"e-Procurement Notice Inviting Tender"
NIT No : 20 /MD/APEWIDC/VJA/2020-21 dated 26-05-2020

Tenders (5th Call) are invited on e Procurement from Original Equipment / Product manufacturers for Procurement of Water supply & Sanitary items (Toilets & Bath Rooms) to the Government Schools (Educational Institutions) in Andhra Pradesh.

Submission of Tender / Bids through online : From 27-05-2020 to 04-06-2020 up to 15.00 Hrs and Opening on : 04-06-2020 at 16.00 Hrs. For all details, visit e-procurement platform @ www.apewidc.gov.in

Sdi/- Managing Director, APEWIDC, Vijayawada.

BHARAT COKING COAL LIMITED
'A Mini Ratna Company'
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

NOTICE

All the tenders* issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of BCCL www.bcclweb.in, Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public Procurement portal <https://reprocure.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in>.

*This is applicable to all Open (Domestic/Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
BUILDINGS (C&M) CIRCLE, COIMBATORE -1.

TWO COVER SYSTEM LUMPSUM CONTRACT (ITEM RATE TENDER SYSTEM) SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE No.NIT:01/BC/C&M/CBE/2020-21, Dt:26.05.2020

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, Two cover system sealed Tenders viz., Pre-qualification Tender and Price Tender in separate covers both inserted in single cover will be received upto 3.00 pm on 19.06.2020 from the PWD Registered Contractors by the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (Construction & Maintenance) Circle, Coimbatore - 641 001 for Construction of Various Buildings in 1) Package I - Slice 1: GHSS at Kuthalaiyur, Slice 2: Keelavelyur, 2)Package II - Slice 1: GHSS at Thogaimalai Slice 2: GHSS at Sengulam in Karur District, 3) Package III - Slice 1: GHSS at Chithode, Slice 2: GHSS at Unjalur in Erode District, at his office and Prequalification Tender will be opened on the same day at 3.30 PM.

All other details are available in the website www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntender.gov.in. If any changes/corrections etc., to the tender, it will be published on the above website only.

Superintendent Engineer, P.W.D., Buildings (C&M) Circle, Coimbatore.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT MADURAI HIGHWAYS (Construction & Maintenance) CIRCLE TENDER NOTICE T.N.No. 03 / 2020-21 / HDO / Dated : 26.05.2020

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu Percentage tender through online only will be received upto 02.07.2020, 14.00 hours by the Superintending Engineer (H) C&M, Madurai Circle under CRIDP 2020-21, (Package No.20 to Package No.46) pertaining Dindigul and Palani (H) C&M Division.

Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 29.05.2020 onwards in the Government website <https://tnitenders.gov.in>. If any changes / corrections / in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H), C&M, Madurai Circle.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT NABARD & Rural Roads Circle, Chengalpattu TENDER NOTICE
Tender Notice No. 03 / 2020-2021 / SDO / Dt. 26.05.2020

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu Percentage tender through online only will be received upto 29.06.2020, 15.00 hours by the Superintending Engineer (H) NABARD & Rural Roads, Chengalpattu Circle for One Individual work in respect of Chengalpattu (H) NABARD & Rural Roads Division under Upgradation of Panchayat Union Roads and Panchayat Roads to ODR Standards.

Details of Name of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 03.06.2020 onwards in the Government website <https://tnitenders.gov.in>. If any changes / corrections / amendments etc to the tender, it will be published on the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H)
NABARD & Rural Roads Circle, Chengalpattu-1

PALLAVAPURAM MUNICIPALITY
E-Tendering Notice
Roc.No.7872/2018/E-1
Govt. of Tamil Nadu Sanctioned for Construction of Multi Stage Water Treatment Plant (1.50 MLD 2 Nos.)& 2.00 MLD 1 No.) from Moovarampattu and Tirukulam Abandoned Quarry for Pallavapuram Municipality under CGF Fund 2019-20.Under this scheme the Municipal Commissioner, Pallavapuram invites sealed bids from the eligible and qualified contractors for the following work as detailed in the table given below.

Sl. No	Estimate Amount(Rs, in Lakhs)	Tender Document available from	Tender Opening	Period of completion
1	1250.00	26.05.2020 to 25.06.2020 (3.00 PM)	26.06.2020 (3.30 PM)	180 Days

Pre-Bid Conference will be held on 17.06.2020, 03.00 PM in the office of Pallavapuram Municipality. The Bidder document and schedule available in <http://ppr.tn.gov.in> can be downloaded at free of cost from 26.05.2020. The Bidder document will be received by the Commissioner, Pallavapuram by 03.00 PM of the e-submission also for two days. The Bidder document will be submitted in the tender. If E-Tender submission, the EMD should be dropped in the tender box before closing date. It is by 3.00 PM on 26.06.2020. E-evaluation of bid will be done as per Tender Transparency Act 1998 of Government of Tamilnadu and rules thereof. Eligibility criteria and other details can be had from the Bidding document. For the details contact E-Mail Address: commr.pallavapuram@tn.gov.in

Commissioner, Pallavapuram Municipality

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT TIRUNELVELI (H) NABARD AND RURAL ROADS CIRCLE TENDER NOTICE
TENDER NOTICE NO. 02/ 2020-2021/H-1/DATED:26.05.2020

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamilnadu sealed percentage tender two cover system through online only will be received by the Superintending Engineer (H) NABARD and Rural Roads, Tirunelveli circle for the works approved in G.O.No.(Ms)No.57 Highways and Minor Ports (HWI) Department dated 20.03.2020 for Construction / Reconstruction of Four Bridge works under NABARD Loan assistance in RIDF XXV-40 Bridges for the year 2019-2020 in Tirunelveli (H) NABARD and Rural Roads Division.

Details such as Name of works, approximate value of works, EMD, documents to be uploaded, critical dates and all other details related to the works are available from 29.05.2020 onwards in the Government website <https://tnitenders.gov.in>. If any Changes / Corrections / Amendments etc related to this tender arises, it will be published on the above Government website only.

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (H)
NABARD AND RURAL ROADS, TIRUNELVELI

PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT
Uttarakhand Public Financial Management Strengthening Project (UKPFMS)
4th Floor, DPM Tower, Ajaprakurk, KargiChowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

CORRIDUM

The Government of Uttarakhand is expected to receive financing from The World Bank towards the cost of Uttarakhand Public Financial Management Strengthening project. The Applications were invited for the following assignment latest/earlier published in Hindi National Edition and Amar Ujala State Edition Uttarakhand for engagement of services under PMU on 14th May 2020. The following Amendment is made in Qualification. The Details are given at www.uttarakhandandit.ukpfms.gov.in. The engagement of services will be purely on temporary basis for a period of one year. The total experience has to be post qualification. The date of last application remains 3rd June 2020. Applications should be sent in the desired format only. Applications may be sent by post or delivered in person to the above address.

SL. No	Name of Post	No of Post	Qualification/Experience
1	2	3	4
1	Finance Expert	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CA/ MBA/ Finance) with at least ten years' experience in corporate accounting/SOE accounting/Audit •At least ten years' experience of working in Government or Government entities and good understanding of the state PFM systems. •Sound Knowledge of the Financial Rules, Financial Handbooks, Financial Government Orders of GoUK •Sound Knowledge of Internal and External Audit, SOE accounting, and double entry accrual-based accounting and knowledge of Companies Act, 2013 and other commercial laws. •Sound Knowledge of World Bank projects would have an added advantage

PROJECT DIRECTOR



Recovery rate up, says Health Ministry

It, however, says the 'war against COVID-19 is a long-drawn one and we are far from safe'

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

India's COVID recovery rate has improved from 26.59% on May 2 to 41.61% on May 26, according to figures released by the Union Health Ministry on Tuesday.

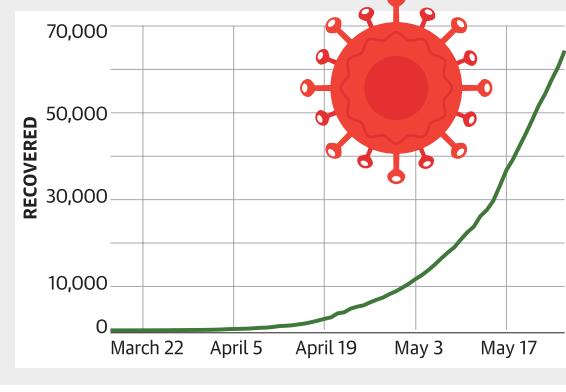
The Ministry, however, maintained that this improved recovery rate should not allow complacency to set in. "The war against COVID-19 is a long-drawn one and we are far from safe," it said.

The case fatality rate was showing a downward trend from 3.30% (as on April 15) to around 2.87% at present, which is among the lowest in the world. The global average is presently around 6.45%.

"An analysis of case mortality per lakh population indicates that India has about 0.3 deaths per lakh population, which is also amongst

Shot in the arm

In the period since May 16, close to 3,000 COVID-19 recoveries have been recorded daily on an average. The chart depicts cumulative recoveries



DATA AS OF 9.45 P.M. ON MAY 26, 2020

the lowest in the world against the statistics of 4.4 deaths per lakh population for the world. The relatively low death figures, both in terms of mortality per lakh population and case fatality rate, represent timely case

identification and clinical management of the cases," Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, said at a press conference.

On Tuesday, the country reported 6,535 new cases and 146 deaths in a span of

24 hours, taking the total number of cases in the country to 1,45,380, including 80,722 active ones; 60,490 recovered/discharged and 4,167 deaths, according to Health Ministry data.

According to data from State health departments, the total number of cases is 1,50,775, including 82,171 active ones; 64,259 recovered and 4,345 deaths. There were 6,017 new cases on Tuesday and 175 deaths.

Mr. Agarwal warned that the improved recovery rate and the low fatality rate should not "make us relaxed". "We can easily slide back on our gains if community support isn't continued. More so now than ever before we need to maintain hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and effective sanitization along with social distancing and use of masks," he said.

Health Secretary Preeti Sudan held a high-level review meeting with senior officials of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, the States which are witnessing a surge in COVID-19 cases in the past three weeks as lockdown rules have been eased and inter-State migration allowed.

"The States were briefed

on mapping individual case

trajectory with respect to

case fatality rate, doubling

time, testing per million and

confirmation percentage. Al-

so, factors that need to be fo-

cused for effective contain-

ment strategy were pointed

out such as perimeter con-

trol, diligent house-to-house

survey through special sur-

veillance teams, testing, ac-

tive contact tracing and ef-

fective clinical manage-

ment," said a release issued by the Ministry.

Centre's lockdown strategy has failed: Rahul Gandhi

'India only nation to relax curbs when infections are rising'

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said that all the four stages of lockdown had "failed", and claimed that India was the only country that was opening up when the coronavirus infection was rising "exponentially".



A dangerous situation will arise if financial support to people and industry is not provided

At an online press conference, he cautioned the government of "devastation and a second wave of infection if it opens up haphazardly", and asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to spell out his government's Plan B.

Mr. Gandhi also distanced his party from Maharashtra's high COVID-19 case load by stating his party is not a decision maker in the State.

He reiterated the party's demand to go in for direct cash injection to help poor families, migrant labourers and small and medium businesses. Not doing so would be "fatal" for the economy, he said.

PM low key

"We are the only country in the world where the virus is rising exponentially and we are removing a lockdown. So, it is pretty clear that the aim and the purpose of the lockdown has failed," he said. The four-stage lockdown failed to produce the result that the Prime Minister had expected. He urged Mr. Modi to once again to come on the front foot instead of being low key."

"We want to ask the government what is their stra-

tegy as far as India's opening up is concerned, and what are the precautions they are going to take to curb the disease now? How are they going to support the migrants, State governments and the small and medium business-"

es," he asked.

Mr. Gandhi said the Congress-ruled States were offering direct cash to farmers and labourers but they were not getting any support from the Centre and the ₹20 lakh crore package was actually merely 1% of India's GDP".

"The Central government must infuse cash into the hands of people and it will be fatal if they do not do it. A dangerous situation will arise if financial support to people and industry is not provided," he said.

Asked if India made a mistake by prioritising health over livelihood issues, he said, "I don't think it is either health or economics. We are smart enough to work a path through that will create

a successful compromise between health and economics."

Asked about the rising number of COVID-19 cases in Maharashtra, where the Congress is a partner in the government, he said a State that had multiple connectivity was likely to see a high growth rate in COVID-19 cases.

"We are supporting the Maharashtra government but we are not a key decision-maker here... Maharashtra is one of the most important assets that India has; it is the centre of business. It needs full support from the Government of India," he said.

On a reported comment by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath that other States would now have to seek his government's permission if they wanted to employ labour from U.P., he said, "These people are not his personal property or the property of U.P. They are Indian citizens and have a right to decide what they want to do."

Responding to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's comment that his interaction with migrant workers was *dramebazi* (theatrics), Mr. Gandhi said, "That's her view... if they allow me, I can walk down to U.P. and help migrants on the way."

On border tensions with China and Nepal, he urged the Centre to be transparent on what was happening in Ladakh and Nepal but refrained from commenting.

Aarogya Setu app is now open source, says govt.

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

Amid concerns over privacy of data being collected by its COVID-19 contact tracing app, the government on Tuesday said it was open-sourcing Aarogya Setu.

The government has also launched a "Bug Bounty" programme wherein financial rewards will be given to security researchers for finding any vulnerability in the application or suggesting improvements to the source code.

"With the release of the source code in the public do-

main, we are looking to expand collaboration and to leverage the expertise of top technical brains amongst the talented youth and citizens of our nation and to collectively build a robust and secure technology solution to help support the work of frontline health workers in fighting this pandemic together," the government said.

While the source code for the Android version of the application will be available for review on GitHub, the iOS version of the application will be released as open

users are on Android platform.

"...the step will have a positive impact on the privacy of Indian users. This will improve transparency on how the data is used, improve security by minimising bugs and empower experts to improve the app via public contributions," said Udbhav Tiwari, Policy Adviser, Mozilla Corporation.

The "Bug Bounty" programme will be open to Indian and foreign nationals, but only Indians will be eligible for rewards offered under the scheme. Anyone who

source within the next two weeks, the Ministry of Electronics and IT said in a statement.

Almost 98% of over 11.4 crore users of Aarogya Setu

points out a security vulnerability in the app source code will be eligible for a reward of up to ₹3 lakh, and up to ₹1 lakh for pointing out a suggestion or improvement in the source code.

Mishi Choudhary, technology lawyer, said, "The government of India has an amazing policy on adoption of open source software that encourages formal adoption and use of open source software in government organisations. We will be verifying that all code is open source and global best practices are followed."

Researchers can suggest improvements to the source code of the app. ■AP

They booked tickets for a flight to Kolkata from Mumbai, which was cancelled

neutralising antibodies may be associated with protective immunity for SARS-CoV-2 infection."

High neutralising activity was associated with time since onset of symptoms, in subjects having a dry cough, male participants, those with a high BMI, and high blood pressure. All these characteristics remained independently associated with high neutralising activity in multivariable analysis except for high blood pressure, the paper said.

The authors state: "We further report that the neutralisation activity of the serum increases with time, reaching 97% four weeks after the onset of symptoms. Therefore, it is a fair assumption that the majority of individuals with mild COVID-19 generate neutralising antibodies within a month after onset of symptoms." They go on to add: "Although not yet demonstrated, several lines of evidence suggest that the presence of

anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies using two assays: a rapid test and the S-Flow assay.

The authors state: "We further report that the neutralisation activity of the serum increases with time, reaching 97% four weeks after the onset of symptoms. Therefore, it is a fair assumption that the majority of individuals with mild COVID-19 generate neutralising antibodies within a month after onset of symptoms."

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Navlakha taken to Mumbai a day before bail hearing

He had surrendered before NIA in Delhi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Civil rights campaigner Gautam Navlakha was taken to a Mumbai jail by the National Investigation Agency on Tuesday, a day before his interim bail plea was to come up in the Delhi High Court.

Mr. Navlakha, 67, surrendered before the NIA on April 14 in New Delhi for his alleged involvement in the Bhima-Koregaon riots of 2018. He was sent to judicial custody in Tihar jail by a city court on May 23. His partner Sahba Hussain said she received a call from Mr. Navlakha at 1.15 p.m. on Tuesday from a court in Mumbai where he was produced.

His partner Sahba Hussain said she received a call from Mr. Navlakha at 1.15 p.m. on Tuesday from a court in Mumbai where he was produced. "I was completely

shocked. We could speak barely for two minutes as the magistrate was kind enough to allow him the call," she said.

Ms. Husain said Mr. Navlakha was taken on a train by an NIA team on Monday evening, exposing him to all kinds of infection, including COVID-19. "He told me his blood pressure had shot up to more than 200. Is this the way to treat an [undertrial] prisoner? What was the tearing hurry to shift him to a Mumbai jail when the NIA knew about the bail hearing in High Court," she asked.

She said none of the family members or lawyers was informed by the NIA before he was moved "secretly" to Mumbai. After concerns over his health were raised, he was shifted to solitary confinement in Tihar on May 24 from a cell with 3-4 others.

Marauding locust swarms killed in Dausa with insecticide spray

Operation launched in Kota Patti village at midnight when insects arrived from Jaipur

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

The huge locust swarms, which appeared in the skies of Jaipur on Monday, were killed in Rajasthan's Dausa district on Tuesday with the spray of high-intensity insecticide by the Agriculture Department officials.

The swarms came from Didwana in Nagaur district and entered Jaipur through Kishangarh, Renwal and Jobner. They moved towards Dausa without settling at any green patch, though a few groups landed on the roofs of some high-rise buildings.

State Agriculture Commissioner Om Prakash said since there was a lack of vegetation in the agricultural fields after the harvesting of rabi crops, the tropical grass-



A locust swarm killed in Dausa district's Kota Patti village on Tuesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

hoppers were short of food and were moving fast towards other areas.

People in Jaipur clanged utensils and burst firecrackers to drive away the locusts. The Agriculture Department has been trying hard to kill the insects by spraying pesti-

cides on trees where they settle during night, but the height of the trees and their location have posed a difficulty. Mr. Prakash said the locusts perched on high trees move towards other areas during the day.

Agriculture Minister Lal

Chand Kataria said his department had controlled locusts in an area measuring 61,725 acres across the State in coordination with Jodhpur-based Locust Warning Organisation of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. "Wherever we get the information about the arrival of locust swarms, we take up survey and launch action for control," said Mr. Kataria.

The operation to kill locusts in Dausa district's Kota Patti village, around 53 km from Jaipur, was started after midnight when the swarms arrived from the State capital. Mr. Kataria said the spray of high-intensity malathion insecticide helped in killing almost the entire swarm of insects at the pasture land.

Fisheries scheme has no relief component

PMMSY plans to double incomes

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

Though the Pradhan Mantri Mysya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) was announced as part of the Centre's economic stimulus package in response to COVID-19, it does not seem to contain any components aimed at relief or financial assistance to provide immediate help for the hard-hit fisheries sector.



Girraj Singh releasing a booklet on the scheme to boost the fisheries sector.

Fisheries Ministry responded to the NFF's demand by sending letters to the State governments asking for estimates on losses to fishworkers, leading to hopes that the stimulus package would provide such support.

"We have heard nothing further from the Ministry after those initial discussions and the package announced by the Finance Minister has nothing much for small and traditional fishers," said Mr. Peter.

Anal T. Varghese from the secretariat of NFF in Delhi said, "The Ministry itself put out a statistics handbook in 2019 with clear estimates of number of fish workers in each State and their average earnings."

Fishing ban

On Monday, the Ministry reduced the duration of the annual fishing ban in the monsoon season from 61 days to 47 on the demand of mechanised fishing boat owners, saying it was to provide COVID-19 relief.

"The ban is there for important environmental reasons to ensure that fish spawning can take place during the monsoon and regeneration of fish stock," Mr. Peter said.

Channel gets notice for sacking woman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has issued a show-cause notice to a Guwahati-based satellite news channel for allegedly forcing a journalist to resign because she was pregnant.

The NCW issued a statement condemning the "insensitive attitude" of Prag News for sacking Ranjita Rabha, who had put in 14 years with the channel. Reports said Ms. Rabha was told to quit as her pregnancy "restricted her agility" that the channel required of its journalists.

SOP for reopening of museums

Online ticket booking, masks and social distancing to be strictly followed

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI



No entry: The Gandhi Museum in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, closed for visitors as a preventive measure.

While a decision on re-opening and the rules to be followed for that would be notified by the National Dis-

aster Management Authority under the Ministry of Home Affairs, a senior Culture Ministry official said an SOP

was being drafted for safe opening of museums and monuments. The official said online-only ticketing system, mandatory wearing of masks by all, and placement of hand sanitisers to maintain hygiene were being considered as a part of the SOP.

Tourism sector

Limiting the number of visitors at a given time was also being considered, the official said.

Another official said guidelines for the tourism sector, including hotels, would also be drawn up as a large number of visitors to the cultural sites are tourists.

Centre: order on full wages withdrawn

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that it had withdrawn a contentious March 29 order requiring private employers to pay full wages to workers during lockdown.

Appearing before a Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan in a virtual court hearing, Attorney General K.K. Venugopal said the May 17 order of the government extending the lockdown also saw the withdrawal of the condition requiring private establishments to pay full wages to workers.

Centre: order on full wages withdrawn

PMMSY plans to double incomes

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+ THE HINDU

OPPORTUNITIES

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT • JOBS • TECHNOLOGY

Will work ever be the same again?

Three CEOs present scenarios that overturn widely accepted notions about working and the corporate workplace

PRINCE FREDERICK

Titled "Strategies For Returning To Work", the webinar led one to expect slot-machine answers to the question of "how" to get back to the cubicle when partial normality returns.

As it turned out, the one-hour long exercise over Zoom, organised by Freshworks, was pleasantly wide-angled in its focus, covering answers to the "whys" and "why-nots" around the immediate and distant future of work.

Significantly, the panellists drawn from three SaaS companies – Girish Mathrubootham, Founder & CEO, Freshworks; Suresh Sambandam, CEO, KissFlow; Krish Subramanian, Co-founder & CEO, Chargebee – explored newer work scenarios for a post-COVID-19 world.

Early on, moderator Suman Gopalan, CHRO at Freshworks, quizzed the panellists about their schedules for opening their offices, and the three were on the same page about continuing with remote-working as long as it would be safe for employees to head back to their desks, and the free-wheeling answers threw up some thought-provoking ideas – vulnerability score; cultural onboarding; transfer of intangibles; and two inter-related concepts "work from anywhere" and "hybrid approach to remote working".

Vulnerability score
Girish said there were two components to being ready – the workplace and the workforce.

While workplace readiness



is seen as a straightforward necessity, and precautions are automatically put in place; workforce readiness is only rarely acknowledged.

Girish pointed out their strategy for opening offices, whenever that would happen, included calculating the "vulnerability score" of each employee, and this would factor in whether they had at-risk people at home. Girish called

transport another major component and employees either travelled by their own cars or took the office cabs, and in the case of the latter, social distancing norms would be spelt out. "Nobody should be allowed to take public transport," explained Girish, adding that all safety protocols were laid out in a playbook.

Work from anywhere

"We are seriously evaluating moving our company to a full-fledged remote-working format," declared Suresh.

Thinking aloud, he pictured for the audience a future scenario of his employees working from their hometowns.

"Because I am a big believer in the equality of urban versus rural populations," disclosed Suresh, adding that many of

his senior managers were from small towns.

Suresh believes the "Work From Anywhere" model could be an answer to lopsided development that unfairly favoured urban geographies.

If the corporate workforce were distributed, it could bring greater "purchasing power" to small towns, leading to improvement in social infrastructure, he reasoned it out.

Adding to Suresh's observation, it could also check urban congestion and agglomeration.

Hybrid approach

Krish guided the discussion along what he termed a "hybrid approach" to remote working, one that would take employees' preference into consideration, before it did anything else.

In this approach, Krish expounded, "Everyone works remotely, and working out of offices becomes optional, with multiple offices being provided (to the workforce)." Girish was also favourable to the notion of moving out of huge centralised offices to smaller distributed offices, in a post-COVID scenario.

Lockdown recruits
While the panellists delved into the disadvantages of the work-from-home model, the question of cultural onboarding came up.

Suresh expressed his bewilderment about how to integrate those recruited in the middle of a full-fledged remote-working scenario into the company's cultural process. He wondered how regular cultural onboarding programmes, including "Lunch with the CEO", were off-limits, new recruits could be offered a cultural baptism. Girish built on the idea, explaining that onboarding on culture was a challenge even with remote offices.

The ethos

In a WFH scenario, tangible resources are often shifted so that employees could work from home. Can the intangibles be shifted too? Girish pointed out how they tele-ported the company's cultural value as a "happy workplace" by organising virtual activities for the remote-working workforce.

Example – The best Zoom background competition. Suresh explained that his organisation had managed to keep its cultural DNA from being shredded by organising an employee-led podcasts series, and reading session, among other things.

(A longer version of this story can be read at thehindu.com)

GENERAL

MALABAR CEMENTS LIMITED
(A Government of Kerala Undertaking)
Walayar Post, Palakkad - 678624, Kerala

PA-2/RE-13/2020 27 May 2020

Applications are invited for the following post:

- Dy.General Manager (Personnel & Administration) Gr.M2
- Manager (Marketing), Gr.M3
- Dy.Manager (Production& Quality Control), Gr.M4
- Asst.Manager (Materials), Gr.M5
- Legal Officer, Gr.M6

For further details visit www.malabarcemts.co.in/en/careers.

Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR

For complete details, visit the University Website:

GENERAL

UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD
(A Central University established in 1974 by an Act of Parliament)

P.O. Central University, Prof. C.R. Rao Road, Gachibowli, Hyderabad - 500 046.

Employment Notification No. UH/Rectt./2020-01 dated 18-05-2020

Applications are invited from Indian citizens for Group A, B and C Non-Teaching Positions on Direct/Deputation basis (14 positions).

Last date for submission of hardcopy of application by post/courier : 30-06-2020

For complete details, visit the University Website:

<https://www.uohyd.ac.in/careers-uoh/>

Place : Hyderabad Date : 18-05-2020

SD/- REGISTRAR

Aravali Power Company Pvt. Ltd. is a joint venture company with a 50% share of NTPC Ltd., 25% share of Haryana Power Generation Corporation Ltd. (HPGCL-Haryana State Company) and 25% share of Indraprastha Power Generation Company Ltd. (IPGCL-Delhi State Company) located near village Jharsi, Distt. Jhajjar, Haryana. Its Thermal Power Plant named Indira Gandhi Super Thermal Power Project presently with 3X500 MW under stage-I is supplying 46% electricity to Haryana State Government, 46% to Delhi Government and balance 8% to rest of the country.

To cater to the manpower requirement in the area of Q&M, the Company is looking for dynamic candidates with a passion for excellence and a drive to partner in the nation's growth.

SELECTION PROCESS

Step 1 : All interested candidates who have qualified in GATE-2019 are eligible to apply. Candidates will be shortlisted for further selection process based on the performance in GATE-2019 (Score) and interview.

Step 2 : Candidates need to apply online for the post of ET-2020 by visiting www.apcpl.co.in. The application process will commence from 04.06.2020.



All in the family This naked roadster is now the most affordable big BMW in India
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL

RISHAAD MODY

BMW has just launched its new F 900 R and XR in India and the bike you are reading about here is the R. This naked roadster is now the most affordable, big BMW in India. Despite that, the F 900 R makes a lasting first impression because it looks like it is all set to punch you in the face. The 900's angry, broad-chested stance is far more aggressive than the F 800 R it replaces – a bike that never came to India, but was famous for being stunt legend Chris Pfeiffer's weapon of choice. With its fat fuel tank and large side panels, the F 900 R looks more like litre-naked than the Triumph Street Triple/KTM 790 Duke rival it actually is, and this will no doubt appeal to many big-bike enthusiasts in India. Strangely, the rear section is quite bland in comparison with the rest of the bike, aside from an interesting-looking exhaust.

Swing a leg over and you will appreciate the reasonable, 815mm seat height, as well as the crisp 6.5-inch TFT display, which is part of the standard equipment. This one brings in more functionality over the screens in the 750/850 GS, and it even gets an S 1000 RR-style dynamic display with a lean angle indicator. The display is controlled via BMW's peculiar scroll-wheel system on the left handlebar, which never feels instantly intuitive, but is something you will eventually get used to.

The F 900 R's riding position is more aggressive than I was expecting. The bar is set at a reasonably sporty position, but the foot pegs are quite high up. This results in a riding position that is certainly more com-

The aggressive BMW F 900 R makes a lasting first impression because it looks like it is all set to punch you in the face



mitted than on something like a 790 Duke. That does not mean it handles like the KTM though, and while the F 900 R is effective, it feels a lot more like an old-school roadster. Where the KTM and even the Triumph Street Triple are deliciously light and nimble on their feet, the BMW is more front-heavy and needs to be pushed around. The bike feels as big and heavy as it looks, and that is no surprise because it tips the scales at 211kg.

Once you get the hang of how it wants to be ridden, the F 900 R is quite a bit of fun. We rode the top-spec model, which is not coming to India, but all of its features can be purchased as optional extras in our market. These features include two more riding modes over the standard Rain and Road, namely, Dynamic and Dynamic Pro. Switching to Dynamic Pro firms up the elec-



tronically adjustable rear shock (optional in India) and sharpens up the throttle response. Meanwhile, the 43mm USD fork is non-adjustable on all models, but the setup is balanced quite well.

The first set of roads we hit were narrow, occasionally gravelly and peppered with sudden sharp corners, with unforgiving drops just a few feet away. The F 900 R was not very enjoyable here, partly due to the extra muscle required to change direction, but also because the ride



SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	895cc, In-line-twin, Water-cooled
MAX POWER (HP @ RPM)	105hp at 8500rpm
MAX TORQUE (NM @ RPM)	92Nm at 6500rpm
FRONT SUSPENSION	43mm USD fork
FRONT SUSPENSION TRAVEL (MM)	135mm
REAR SUSPENSION	Monoshock
REAR SUSPENSION TRAVEL (MM)	142mm
FRONT WHEEL (INCH)	17-inch
FRONT TYRE	120/70 ZR17
REAR WHEEL (INCH)	17-inch
REAR TYRE	180/55 ZR17

by-wire throttle felt a little abrupt, especially when moving from open to close. Once we got to the more typical wide, fast and flowing mountain roads of Spain, the bike felt much nicer. You could even call it fun, although like with most BMWs, you will silently applaud its talents, but never to the extent of shouting with sheer joy in your helmet.

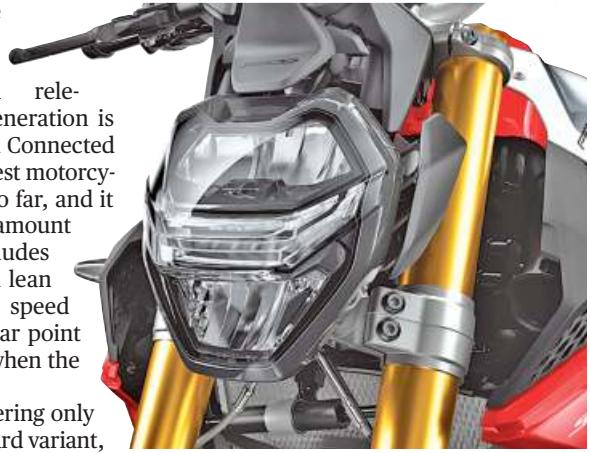
On the faster roads, the F 900's meaty midrange was something to appreciate. Its engine is essentially a bored-out version of the 853cc motor seen on the F 850 and F 750 GS models. Displacing 895cc, the new motor now makes 105hp, which is up from the 95hp in the 850 and 77hp from the detuned F 750 GS engine. Outright refinement is quite good at normal speeds, but a mild buzz does creep in as you approach the top of the rev ceiling. The up/down quickshifter is a familiar affair and it works well at high RPMs, but feels chunky at city speeds. The exhaust, meanwhile, produces quite a deep and pleasing note, and the sound tends to blend well with the look of the bike and the way it rides.

Keeping the F 900 R relevant for the younger generation is BMW's free-to-download Connected App. This is one of the best motorcycle apps we have used so far, and it lets you analyse a huge amount of ride data. This includes areas such as maximum lean angles, maximum speed achieved at any particular point on the route, and even when the ABS was triggered.

For India, BMW is offering only the F 900 R in the Standard variant,

which gives you basic ABS and traction control, LED lighting, two riding modes and TFT display. However, if you are willing to tick a lot of boxes, you can option many additional features, including cruise control, the up/down quickshifter, the electronic rear suspension, cornering headlamps, Dynamic and Dynamic Pro riding modes and keyless ignition. Naturally, all this will have a significant impact on the price.

Regarding the price, with a badge like that, it is no surprise that the F 900 R is not cheap, especially considering the fact that it comes as a CBU from Berlin. At ₹9.9 lakh (ex-showroom), it will face strong competition from soon-to-be-launched bikes like the Triumph Street Triple R and BS-VI versions of the KTM 790 Duke and the Ducati Monster 821. But like we mentioned in the beginning, this is now your most affordable ticket into the exclusive world of big BMWs, and that alone will be all that matters to some riders.



Buying a used Hyundai i20 Active

The cross-hatch is spacious, comfortable and well-equipped, making it worth considering

SOHAM THAKUR

While not as popular as a regular hatchback or compact SUV, cross-hatches offer a blend of elements from both sides. They sport a more rugged look than the conventional hatchback and some even ride higher as well – such as this, the i20 Active. Hyundai's cross-hatch is spacious, comfortable and well-equipped, making it worth considering as a used buy.

Before you go ahead and buy one, though, there are a few things you should know.

The i20 Active was launched in 2015, with its USP being the substantial 190mm ground clearance. The Active has body cladding on the sides, front and rear faux skid plates, along with roof rails, giving it a rugged look.

The Active offered the same engine options as the i20 – a 90hp, 1.4-litre, turbo-diesel engine paired with a 6-speed manual gearbox and an 83hp, 1.2-litre, naturally aspirated petrol engine coupled with a 5-speed manual gearbox. Hyundai did not bring in any automatic options to the line-up.

The CRDi diesel motor is smooth and refined in nature. The engine loves to be revved, and it delivers power in a linear manner. The slick, 6-speed manual transmission works well; it is light and lets you cruise at low speeds in high gears without any hesitancy. Fuel efficiency for the diesel is rated at 21.19kpl.

The naturally aspirated petrol



engine is refined and mated to the smooth, 5-speed manual gearbox, makes for a nice city runabout. Although the performance of the petrol is peppy, it lacks the punch that the larger diesel engine provides. The 1.2-litre unit has an official fuel economy of 17.19kpl.

The Active does not drive all that differently from the standard i20. The handling is good overall, but the light and inconsistently weighted steering, stops it from being fun to drive. There is some bodyroll too, but it is well contained. The ride is slightly on the softer side, making it feel comfy at low speeds, but the suspension does sound chunky, especially over bumps.

The cabin too, is almost identical to that of the standard i20, though it gets an all-black theme instead of the dual-tone scheme of the standard model. Cars with lighter exterior paint colours get cool blue highlights in the cabin, while darker paint shades come with bright orange accents. Fit and finish of the dashboard and quality of materials used inside are both very good.

The i20 Active was launched in three trim levels – Base, S and SX. Following the 2018 facelift, the model was sold in just S and SX trims. The latter also gets the option of a dual-tone exterior paint scheme. Being a Hyundai, the top-spec i20 Active SX is loaded with

Hyundai trademark

The i20 Active is reliable
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

HOW MUCH TO SPEND

₹5-7 lakh

Used examples can be found on sale for anywhere between ₹5-7 lakh, depending on the engine and trim level. Try and find a 2018 facelift, as they are better equipped, with features such as six airbags and wireless charging on the top trims. Demand is not very high for used i20 Actives, so you could negotiate to bring the price down.

Some owners have also reported that the brake pedal becomes difficult to apply at low speeds, so make sure to check for that. Also, keep in mind that the touchscreen on higher variants is prone to freezing as well as lagging, at times.

Multiple owners of petrol-powered i20 Actives have complained about poor fuel-efficiency figures, ranging between 9-12kpl in the city. This is also worth considering before you decide to buy one.

The 1.4-litre diesel with the 6-speed manual gearbox helps you see the i20 Active in its best light. The punchy diesel engine suits its characteristics well, is fuel efficient and nice to drive too.



Q AND A WITH HORMAZD



Upsized tyres

Vishal, Mumbai: For my 2017 Honda City, which tyres would be best for city and occasional highway driving: Bridgestone, Michelin or Good Year? Is it advisable to use oversized tyres?

■ You could upsize the tyres from the Honda City's original 175/65-R15 to the 185/60-R15s. The increased width will give you better road-holding capability and comfort. You could consider Michelin as it is a good option for city drives with occasional highway use.

Tank up

Rohit Jangid, Alwar: I have recently purchased a new Honda Activa 6G. However, during the lockdown situation, BS-VI fuel is not available at any nearby petrol station in my city. So which fuel would you recommend? Should I use one of the premium fuels available?

■ BS-VI fuel will soon be available in all areas of the country. However, do not worry about using BS-IV fuel in your BS-VI vehicle as it should not cause any issues. Using premium fuels is purely a matter of personal choice and your scooter will run just fine on regular petrol.

Changing gear

Bharat Malkani, Mumbai: I am impressed with the Honda WR-V's performance even though it is under-powered. However, living in Mumbai, I am not in favour of using a stick shift. Are there any plans by Honda to bring in an automatic transmission version in the form of a CVT or torque converter, and not an AMT?

■ It is unlikely that Honda will bring an automatic version of the WR-V, as the model is likely to be replaced with another compact SUV sometime next year. Honda doesn't favour AMTs and future compact Honda automatics will all have CVTs.

Hormazd Sorabjee is the editor of Autocar India. Mail your feedback and queries to roadshow@thehindu.co.in

Where white water flows

The COVID-19 lockdown seems to have given rise to the demand for freshly extracted toddy, specially in the villages of Telangana. The tappers are happy to pour you some. Just don't shake hands

cause it is crowded. About 10 cars are parked outside the shacks, an indication that toddy is in demand despite the challenges of physical distancing. With lockdown eased in Telangana allowing inter-district travel in Green zones, travellers taking the NH 365B are making pit stops for a quick drink.

Inside the village, the only sound is the tap-tap echo of men climbing and descending palm trees with toddy. The sound is created when the tapper moves the harness tied to his waist. Made of rubber and high-duty plastic ropes the harness is used as a tool to balance from the tree. The toddy tappers refuse to shake hands with visitors. "You might not be infected, I might be. When health experts say we must maintain distance



let's always do it. It is for our safety," says 45-year-old Raju, coming down from the tree after felling a few bunches of toddy fruit (*munjali*) for us to be served. The gelatinous, soft fruit is easy to eat. It is filled with mildly sweet water reminiscent of tender coconut.

Akhil Goud, another toddy tapper arrives on a two-wheeler, from the handle of which hang two pots of palm toddy frothing at the brim, harvested a few minutes ago. He hands each of us a leaf of the palash tree (*moduga* in Telugu) and gives a quick demonstration on how to hold it, and drink from it. As we drink, he pours the toddy steadily, tailoring his pours to the speed at which each of us drinks.

To use *moduga* leaf as receptacles, one must hold both ends of the leaf with the index and thumb of each hand, bringing it closer to resemble a small cup. The leaf is the best alternative if you prefer not to drink from a bottle. The toddy is sweet, indicating that it is fresh. The longer it stays in the pot and heat, the more it will ferment, developing an edge of sourness along with a heady kick.

Kallu replaces whisky this year
"During the lockdown with 'hard-liquor' shops shut, we were the heroes; people thronged our village for toddy but we had to maintain distance and sell. So we only sold them

when they handed us bottles," says Akhil.

He adds, "In the village, our entry and exit points were closed, so we didn't have outsiders coming in. We stay here, eat our own produce and only sell toddy. Since our district is COV-19 free, we feel safe."

Are they selling to people outside their district? "Only at the toddy huts. We do not allow too many people from outside into our village. The demand for toddy has gone up with people opting to have fresh, natural foods. It is a good thing for us and for consumers as well. As long as toddy is natural and unadulterated, there is nothing to fear," he smiles.

In pre-pandemic days, the village had a steady stream of tourists who would visit for toddy picnics. "There are a few good home cooks here, so they engage them for a simple meal of country chicken with rice or chappati," says 42-year-old farmer Chintakaya Ravi.

As we sip our toddy appreciatively, a man approaches, carrying a bag. Akhil introduces him to us as Kanakaya. He opens the bag to reveal a bowl of spicy *natu-kodi* (country chicken) curry and *chapatis* that he has brought us for lunch. We settle down for a memorable meal, set to the rhythm of the tappers going about their work. In the background a bright muster of peacocks scream.



Cheers to good health (Clockwise from top) Munjal; toddy served in the leaf of 'palash', or 'moduga' tree; Akhil Goud, a toddy tapper; and palm trees in Siddipet • PRABALIKA M BORAH

PRABALIKA M BORAH

Daring the heat, we set out to Telangana's Siddipet district for a taste of the season's fresh palm toddy. People of the district claim that they have zero COVID-19 cases, crediting authorities for efficiently quarantining those who returned to their homes when the all India lockdown was announced in March. The toddy tappers however, jokingly claim it is the magic of their 'white water'!

'White water' is the locally-coined term for palm toddy (*kallu*) because the toddy tappers feel anything with an English name sells better. As we drive past Siddipet town and approach the villages, we see palm trees with pots hanging from the top. Despite the blazing sun, the greenery around the area is soothing.

We skip the toddy tappers at the entrance road to Ankerapalli village, 15 kilometres from Siddipet town, be-



Accessibility is key A still from *Being Bhaijaan*
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Chasing the nuance in cinema

The satirical *Being Bhaijaan* is up first on YouTube, along with a discussion with the filmmakers on Zoom and the IIHS Facebook page

APARNA NARRAIN

The Indian Institute for Human Settlements has moved its monthly film screenings online with the first screening, *Being Bhaijaan* directed by Shabani Hassanwalia and Samreen Farooqui. The film explores Indian masculinity by mapping the emotional, spiritual and philosophical contribution star Salman Khan makes to the lives of three men in India who find themselves increasingly disassociated with a changing country.

While the film is already available for viewing for free on the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT) YouTube channel, a discussion with the filmmakers will be held on May 27 at 6 pm on Zoom and the IIHS Facebook page.

Says Yashodara Udupa, external consultant, IIHS Media Lab, "PSBT had uploaded *Being Bhaijaan* a few months ago. It is not time-bound. These are the kind of films we are going for. Something that is already available online and free and not something that requires a subscription or particular access. We have always tried to make whatever we have as accessible as possible."

Stating that the discussion with the filmmakers is very important to them,

she adds, "It's not just that you watch the film and you take away something, but also that you watch it with other people and somebody points out something that you did not see. These things add value to the screening process. When we do a film screening, we also record the conversation with the director. It's on our YouTube channel (IIHS channel) called Dialogue with Filmmakers. We hope that people can come back to it at their own time and listen to how the practice of this particular filmmaker has evolved over time and how they look back and reflect on their work. Hopefully, it will be a resource for somebody at some point."

Yashodara adds that the discussion with the filmmakers of *Being Bhaijaan* will be hosted on Zoom (<https://bit.ly/3bXKmOQ>) where people can type our questions and participate. "We understand that not everybody may find that easy, so it will also be streamed live on Facebook. People can leave questions and comments and we will collate it from there and loop it into the conversation. We have already asked people to start sharing. The discussion will be recorded and we will upload it to our YouTube channel after the event."



Tochi Raina, Ricky Kej and Usha Uthup in Hungama's online concert line-up

Hungama Artist Aloud will be hosting an online concert, featuring over 75 artistes, on May 31. The multi-format programme will feature artistes from different fields performing comedy, poetry, music and more. Ricky Kej, Tochi Raina, Usha Uthup, Shashaa Tirupati and Shaan among others will perform. "The digital medium is already revolutionising the way we interact with the world," said Usha in a statement handed out. "Platforms such as Hungama Artist Aloud will become all the more important for artists to perform and engage with their fans."

Ricky agreed with her. "I am certain that we are going to see more such properties in the future. I look forward to performing for my fans and wish them health and safety, within their homes."

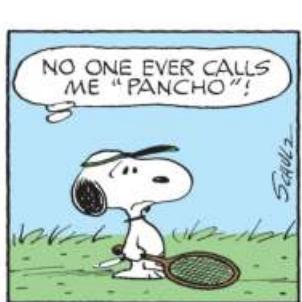
Tochi added, in the same release, "These are uncertain times and music is known to help soothe and get people through difficult situations. This is why I'm delighted to be a part of this concert that will help entertain people and also offer them a momentary respite from everything going on around us."

The concert will be streamed live on Hungama Music's Facebook page, their YouTube channel and more.

POOCH CAFE



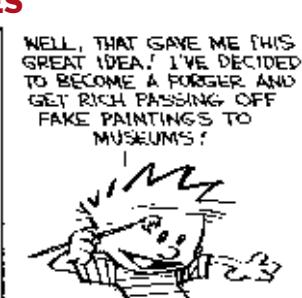
PEANUTS



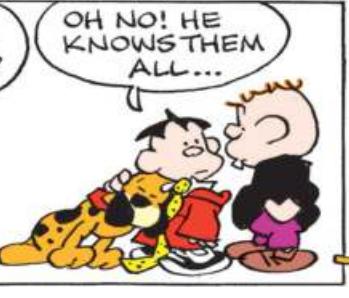
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



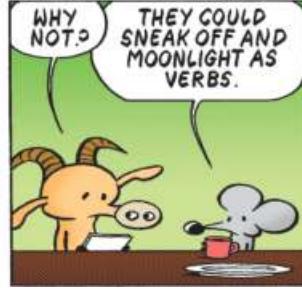
CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



Xi meets PLA, urges battle preparedness

In annual meeting with PLA representatives, Xi orders military to think about worst-case scenarios

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China's President Xi Jinping on Tuesday called on the military "to think about worst-case scenarios" and "scale up battle preparedness".

He made the remarks during his annual meeting with the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) representatives attending the National People's Congress or Parliament in Beijing.

Mr. Xi had also referred to "battle preparedness" during his meeting with the PLA in 2019. This year, his speech focused on the post-pandemic situation, as he heard the PLA members of Parliament reporting on "strengthening training amid the epidemic, and accelerating capacity building on biosafety defense".

Mr. Xi said the epidemic "brought a profound impact on the global landscape and



Battle-ready: A file photo of President Xi Jinping speaking to PLA's Navy fleet in the South China Sea. ■AP

on China's security and development as well".

He "ordered the military to think about worst-case scenarios, scale up training and battle preparedness, promptly and effectively deal with all sorts of complex situations and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and develop-

ment interests," the official Xinhua news agency reported.

While the comments are not new, Mr. Xi's remarks will be closely parsed in India, amid the ongoing border stand-off, and also in Taiwan, with heightened tensions. The NPC's annual report this year for the first

time mentioned "reunification" with Taiwan, a long-standing goal, without the usual prefix "peaceful". China's Defence Ministry spokesperson, PLA Senior Colonel Wu Qian, told reporters on Tuesday that "Taiwan independence is a dead end".

Neither Senior Colonel Wu nor China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who addressed his annual press conference on May 24, were reported as referring to the current tensions with India.

China's media has largely been silent on the tensions, barring the English-language *Global Times*, a Communist Party-run newspaper intended for an international audience.

'Necessary moves'
A commentary in the paper on Tuesday blamed India for the stand-off. "India in recent days has illegally con-

structed defense facilities across the border into Chinese territory in the Galwan Valley region, leaving Chinese border defense troops no other options but making necessary moves in response, and mounting the risk of escalating stand-offs and conflicts between the two sides," wrote Long Xing-chun, a senior research fellow at Beijing Foreign Studies University.

"Unlike previous stand-offs, the latest border friction was not caused by accident, but was a planned move of New Delhi. India has been clearly and definitely aware that the Galwan Valley region is Chinese territory."

"If India failed to stop such provocations as soon as possible," he added, "it will impact Beijing-New Delhi ties – and may even exceed the sort of intensity of the Doklam standoff."

Trump threatens to pull GOP event out of North Carolina

He wants Governor to ensure there are no curbs on crowds

SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN

U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to pull the Republican Convention out of North Carolina if its Governor did not guarantee that there would be no restrictions on crowd numbers. The convention is an event to nominate the GOP's presidential candidate (expected to be Mr. Trump).

As the U.S.'s 50 States are in various stages of reopening, the number of coronavirus deaths approached 100,000.

Tweeting to the Governor of North Carolina, Roy Cooper, a Democrat, Mr. Trump said the GOP was spending millions constructing the arena for the convention and that Mr. Cooper was still in "shutdown mood", unable to guarantee if a full crowd would be allowed to attend the August 24-27 convention.

"They [the Republicans] must be immediately given an answer by the Governor as to whether or not the space will be allowed to be fully occupied. If not, we will be reluctantly forced to find, with all the jobs and economic development it brings, another Republican



Donald Trump

National Convention site. This is not something I want to do," Mr. Trump wrote on Monday, which was the Memorial Day holiday in the U.S.

Science and data

Mr. Cooper tweeted out a statement in response, which said the State would review its plans for the convention and would rely on data while making decisions.

"State health officials are working with the RNC [Republican National Convention] and will review its plans as they make decisions about how to hold the convention in Charlotte. North Carolina is relying on data and science to protect our State's public health and safety."

North Carolina is in 'Phase 2' of opening – this allows an easing of some restrictions, such as restaurants opening with limitations on capacity and permission for gatherings of 10 people indoors and 25 outdoors. Mecklenburg County, where Charlotte is located, recorded more than 3,200 cases and 73 deaths as per the Johns Hopkins University coronavirus database.

Nominating conventions are typically attended by about 50,000 people, including thousands of media representatives. The Democrats, who will nominate former Vice-President Joseph R. Biden Jr., moved their convention, to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from mid-July to mid-August due to the pandemic. Earlier this month, the party gave its convention organising committee the power to hold a virtual convention if needed.

Mr. Trump is reluctant to take the GOP down that route. "We'll have a convention. I'm a traditionalist, but we'll have to see, like everything else, but I think we'll be in good shape by that time," he told the *Washington Examiner* earlier in May.

'Security law not a threat to Hong Kong'

Carrie Lam says 'no need to worry' even as protesters take to the city's streets

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONG KONG

The city's chief executive, Carrie Lam, told reporters that there was "no need for us to worry" over the move being considered by China's ceremonial National People's Congress.

"Hong Kong has proven that we uphold and preserve those values," Ms. Lam said. "Hong Kong needs this piece of legislation for the bigger benefit of the great majority of Hong Kong people."

Ms. Lam also said that transit service would resume at Hong Kong's international airport on June 1, but that foreigners would still be banned from entering the city as part of measures to prevent a new wave of coronavirus infections.

The move by China to pass the legislation signals the central government's de-

termination to take greater control of Hong Kong after months of pro-democracy protests last year. Beijing has appointed new representatives in Hong Kong who follow the hard line laid down by Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is also the head of the ruling Communist Party.

Sharp criticism
Such a move has long been under consideration and was hastened by last year's street protests in the former British colony, which was returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Beijing promised that the territory could retain its own relatively liberal civil, legal and economic systems that contrast starkly with the much more centrally controlled and authoritarian system in mainland China.

The U.S. has sharply criti-

cised the proposed legislation and threatened to withdraw preferential trade status for Hong Kong.

Some "foreign politicians" have "expressed untrue opinions" about the plan to impose the law on Hong Kong, Lam said, without giving details.

She repeated claims that the law would only target "a minority," citing concerns about terrorism and subversion.

Protesters have returned to Hong Kong's streets to oppose the legislation, with thousands turning out on Sunday as police fired tear gas and deployed a water cannon to disperse the crowds. On Tuesday, over 100 protesters gathered at a luxury shopping mall in Hong Kong's Central business district, condemning Lam and her administration.

The protests are a continuation of a months-long pro-democracy movement that began last year and has at times descended into violence between police and demonstrators.

Beijing has increasingly pushed for measures such as punishment for disrespecting the Chinese national flag or anthem along with a boost to pro-China patriotic-themed education in schools.

Initial reports have said the Pakistan International Airlines jet crashed after an apparent engine failure.

Pakistani aviation authorities said on Tuesday they have shared their initial findings with the visiting 11-member team from the European plane maker.

The Airbus experts and engineers are also to visit the crash site.

Only two people on board Flight PK-8303 survived the crash.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

Pakistan announced on Tuesday that Airbus experts have opened a probe into last week's plane crash that killed 97 people when an Airbus A320 went down in a crowded neighborhood near the airport in the port city of Karachi.

Initial reports have said the Pakistan International Airlines jet crashed after an apparent engine failure.

Pakistani aviation authorities said on Tuesday they have shared their initial findings with the visiting 11-member team from the European plane maker.

The Airbus experts and engineers are also to visit the crash site.

"I cannot in good faith tell them they were all wrong and one senior adviser to the government was right."

He added that Mr. Cummings' interpretation of government rules was "not shared by the vast majority of people".

The resignation will pile more pressure on Mr. Cummings, who held a press conference Monday to justify driving his wife and young son on a 425-km trip from London to Durham during the height of crisis.

U.K. Minister quits to protest Johnson aide's lockdown trip

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government was hit by its first resignation on Tuesday over the controversy surrounding top aide Dominic Cummings' cross-country trip during the lockdown.

Douglas Ross, a Minister for Scotland, quit in protest.

"I have constituents who

didn't get to say goodbye to loved ones; families who could not mourn together; people who didn't visit sick relatives because they followed the guidance of the government," he said in a Twitter statement announcing his departure.

"I cannot in good faith tell them they were all wrong and one senior adviser to the government was right."

He added that Mr. Cummings' interpretation of government rules was "not shared by the vast majority of people".

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Sri Lanka Minister Thondaman passes away

MEERA SRINIVASAN

COLOMBO



Arumugam Thondaman

Ceylon Workers' Congress [CWC] leader and Sri Lanka Cabinet Minister Arumugam Thondaman passed away on Tuesday night, after a sudden illness. He was 55.

Earlier on Tuesday, Minister Thondaman met Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay and held discussions on development partnership in Sri Lanka's hill country, where Malayala Tamils, or Tamils of recent Indian origin, reside.

Nearly 1,50,000 people from the million-strong community work in the tea estates. "It was very sudden. He was very active through the day, holding several work meetings," a family member told *The Hindu*.

Arumugam Thondaman,

Health authorities have issued guidelines for eateries, restaurants, salons, and other social gatherings

MEERA SRINIVASAN

COLOMBO

After over two months, authorities in Sri Lanka lifted the curfew – except during nights – in capital Colombo on Tuesday, signalling Sri Lanka's "gradual return to normalcy" since the coronavirus pandemic hit.

From March 10, the island nation has reported 1,278 COVID-19 positive cases, 712 recoveries and 10 deaths, as of Tuesday evening.

Colombo district accounted for the highest number of cases so far – 150, according to the Epidemiology Unit of the Health Ministry – and has been on police curfew, though the curfew was eased in most other districts sooner.

Health authorities have is-



Risky ride: Commuters boarding a bus in Colombo following the lifting of curfew after two months. ■AFP

sued operational guidelines for eateries, restaurants, salons, conduct of weddings and funerals that include limiting the number of people – a maximum of 100 for weddings – regular disinfection of surfaces, providing hand washing facilities,

checking temperature and mandatory face masks.

Further, senior police official Ajith Rohana on Monday warned that those who fail to maintain physical distancing in public places will be arrested. In the last two months, police arrested

some 60,000 "curfew violators".

Meanwhile, a task force entrusted with COVID-19 control, on Tuesday proposed to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa that Sri Lanka reopen its airports to foreign tourists from August 1.

President Rajapaksa underscored the need to follow health guidelines "issued by international and local health experts", according to a statement issued by his media division. Sri Lanka could be at the forefront of tourism revival, based on a "well-planned strategy", he said.

While the lifting of curfews would help a "gradual return to normalcy", the risk of COVID-19 has not been "eliminated 100%", accord-

Curfew lifted in Colombo after 2 months

The govt's virus-tracking software has been collecting information, including location data, of people



A man holding up his smartphone that displays his health status through an app at a security check in Beijing. ■REUTERS

now, officials in some places are loading their apps with new features, hoping the software will live on as more than just an emergency measure.

Health guardian
Zhou Jiangyong, Communist Party secretary of the eastern tech hub of Hangzhou, said this month that the city's app should be an "intimate health guardian" for residents, one that is used often and "loved so much that you cannot bear to part with it," according to an official announcement.

Governments worldwide are trying to balance public health and personal privacy as they pull out the stops to protect their people from the virus. In China, however, the worry is not just about po-

tential snooping.

The country's leaders have long sought to harness vast troves of digital information to govern their sprawling, sometimes unruly nation more efficiently.

But when computer systems have so much authority over people's lives, software bugs and inaccurate data can have big real-world consequences.

"Epidemic prevention and control needs the support of big data technology, but this does not mean agencies and individuals can randomly collect citizens' information by borrowing the name of prevention and control," Li Silui, a researcher at Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan, wrote in a recent commentary. ■NY TIMES

China's virus apps could survive the outbreak

The govt's virus-tracking software has been collecting information, including location data, of people

now, officials in some places are loading their apps with new features, hoping the software will live on as more than just an emergency measure.

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Arrest of media persons in Bangladesh raises concern

Attacks on scribes in India on the rise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The South Asia Media Defenders Network (SAMDEN) on Tuesday raised concerns over the "detention of media professionals in Bangladesh, attacks on journalists in Punjab, and the dismissal of a pregnant reporter in Assam as part of a pattern of official and corporate arbitrariness against media in the case," it said.

It also raised concerns over actions against media in India, including police beating up a journalist in Chandigarh and cases filed against reporters in U.P., Punjab and Gujarat for reports filed by them.

SAMDEN also supports journalist Ranjita Rabha from Assam, who says she was forced to resign by Prag News as the organisation had "no policy of maternity leave for employees."

MARKET WATCH

	26-05-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	30,609	-0.21
US Dollar	75.66	0.38
Brent oil	35.78	3.6

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	315.60	5.00
Asian Paints	1629.85	11.95
Axis Bank	341.30	4.35
Bajaj Auto	2564.85	11.10
Bajaj Finance	4097.25	-218.30
Bharti Airtel	1829.00	-66.30
Bharti Airtel	559.25	-33.95
BPCL	313.15	-2.05
Britannia Ind	3163.85	-3.25
Cipla	627.70	-11.65
Coal India	127.25	2.05
Dr Reddys Lab	3864.30	-28.55
Eicher Motors	14805.10	882.70
GAIL (India)	88.15	0.95
Grasim Ind	532.65	0.30
HCL Tech	524.00	-6.40
HDPC	1502.15	-14.00
HFDC Bank	852.40	13.55
Hero MotoCorp	2113.65	-36.95
Hindalco	129.10	4.25
Hind Unilever	1977.80	-10.10
ICICI Bank	292.70	1.65
IndusInd Bank	348.20	9.85
Bharti Infralet	208.15	0.65
Infosys	680.55	-11.80
Indian Oil Corp	77.15	1.65
ITC	191.70	5.35
JSW Steel	176.25	10.10
Kotak Bank	1153.20	-7.00
L&T	825.55	9.85
M&B	429.15	2.80
Maruti Suzuki	5246.15	111.85
Nestle India Ltd.	16655.15	440.00
NTPC	93.00	2.05
ONGC	77.00	0.85
PowerGrid Corp	157.35	1.50
Reliance Ind	1424.05	-7.50
State Bank	151.40	0.55
Shree Cement	20667.30	757.05
Sun Pharma	459.15	-10.25
Tata Motors	83.10	0.30
Tata Steel	280.45	6.00
TCS	1943.00	-7.35
Tech Mahindra	520.45	-9.20
Titan	892.75	43.10
UltraTech Cement	3786.00	147.05
UPL	367.05	-4.10
Vedanta	87.90	-1.20
Wipro	188.80	-0.20
Zee Entertainment	165.20	1.95

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 26		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	75.46	75.78
Euro	82.66	83.02
British Pound	92.89	93.29
Japanese Yen (100)	70.07	70.39
Chinese Yuan	10.58	10.62
Swiss Franc	77.92	78.27
Singapore Dollar	53.16	53.40
Canadian Dollar	54.38	54.62
Malaysian Ringgit	17.29	17.38
Australian Dollar	49.97	50.19

Source: Indian Bank

Glenmark to conduct 'FAITH' trials

Study to test combined efficacy of Favipiravir, Umifenovir as potential COVID-19 treatment strategy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

With the number of COVID-19 patients rising in India, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd., has announced a new randomised, open-label study to test the combined efficacy of two antiviral drugs – Favipiravir and Umifenovir – as a potential COVID-19 treatment strategy.

The two antiviral drugs have different mechanisms of action, and their combination may demonstrate improved treatment efficacy by effectively tackling high viral loads in patients during early stages of the disease, the company said in a statement.

Early administration of a combination of antiviral medications acting by different mechanisms is desirable for the treatment of COVID-19, since the viral load of SARS-CoV-2 peaks around the time



One set of patients will receive Favipiravir and Umifenovir, and the other will get Favipiravir over 14 days. ■REUTERS

of symptom onset, it added.

The current Glenmark study will examine whether early administration of a combination of Favipiravir and Umifenovir enhances anti-viral efficacy on COVID-19 patients. Hence, a combined use of Favipiravir and Umifenovir acting on different mechanisms offers a comprehensive

antiviral cover on pre-entry and post-entry life-cycle of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the company said.

Both Favipiravir and Umifenovir inhibited virus infection in vitro and have shown efficacy in COVID-19 clinical trials. Dr. Monika Tandon, V-P & Head, Clinical Development Global Specialty /

COVID-19

parameters." Stujesh Vasudevan, president, India Formulations, Middle East and Africa business, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals said, "This is another step in our effort to launch a treatment for COVID-19 patients. We will do all it takes to ensure accessibility of the product across the country if the clinical trials are successful."

The new combination clinical trial will be called FAITH (FA vipiravir plus Um I fenovir (efficacy and safety) Trial in Indian Hospital setting). As many as 158 hospitalised patients of moderate COVID-19 infection will be enrolled in the combination study and randomised in two groups.

While one group will be receiving Favipiravir and Umifenovir (with standard supportive care), the other group will receive Favipiravir along with standard supportive care. Patients taking the drug will receive Favipiravir 1800 mg bid and Umifenovir 800 mg bid on Day 1. Thereafter, they will receive Favipiravir 800mg bid and Umifenovir 800mg bid for the remaining course of treatment. Duration of treatment will be 14 days and patients will be discharged after clinical cure and two consecutive negative tests.

REEs changed hands on NSE and BSE on Tuesday, with a traded value of ₹288.5 crore, the data showed.

Over ₹1,290-cr. REEs traded in 4 days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The de-materialised trading of Reliance Industries Ltd. - Rights Entitlement (RIL-RE) continued to draw strong demand on day four on Tuesday with an average premium of more than 7% over the intrinsic value.

While the oil-to-telecom behemoth RIL's ₹53,125 crore mega rights issue opened for subscription by shareholders last week, it became the first issue where eligible shareholders got the rights entitlements (REEs) in demat, which could be traded on the stock exchanges.

RIL-REs, on an average, commanded a premium of ₹12.07 on Tuesday, over 7% premium over the intrinsic value, according to stock exchange data.

At a time when marquee companies such as Bharti Airtel and Kotak Mahindra Bank are selling their equity stakes at 5-6% discount to their market price, RIL's RE continues to command a premium over its intrinsic value. The volume-weighted average price (VWAP) of RIL-REs stood at ₹183.75 on Tuesday.

RE's intrinsic value is the difference between RIL share price and the rights issue price of ₹1,257.

As RIL's VWAP of ₹1,428.70, the RE's intrinsic value works out to ₹171.10 on Tuesday (difference between ₹1,428.70 and the rights issue price of ₹1,257).

In total, 1.57 crore RIL-



REEs changed hands on NSE and BSE on Tuesday, with a traded value of ₹288.5 crore, the data showed.

Over ₹1,290 crore of RIL-REs have traded on the stock exchanges in the first four days of listing, notwithstanding the fact that it is listed in the trade-to-trade segment and buyers must take delivery of the REs.

Almost 6.7 crore RIL-REs have traded on the stock exchanges in the four trading sessions of listing. This is more than 15% of the total REEs issued (42.26 crore).

First tradable RE
RIL-REs is the first rights entitlement ever traded on stock exchanges.

In the rights issue, the company will offer one share for every 15 shares held at ₹1,257 per share.

This will be the first issue where the rights entitlements will be credited to eligible shareholders' demat accounts and will be freely tradeable.

Bharti Telecom raises over ₹8,433 cr. via stake sale

Dividends from Bharti Airtel proved insufficient in servicing loans taken to acquire shares of the telco

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Bharti Telecom, the promoter firm of Bharti Airtel, on Tuesday raised over ₹8,433 crore by selling 2.75% stake in the mobile services provider in the secondary market.

"The sale proceeds will be utilised to fully repay debt at Bharti Telecom Limited, which was raised primarily to finance the acquisition of Bharti Airtel equity shares in the past, and make the promoter holding company a

debt-free company," the company said in a statement.

It added that with Bharti Telecom becoming a zero-debt company, Bharti Airtel's credit profile would also be augmented as it would stand to benefit from deleveraging on a consolidated basis, including any debt of the promoter holding company.

Bharti Group and Singtel will continue to own a majority stake in Bharti Airtel at 56.23% even after the transaction and as the largest shareholders, they remain

committed to the business and long term prospects of Bharti Airtel", it said.

Harjeet Kohli, group director, Bharti Enterprises, said, "The strong and wide response received from a diverse mix of investors across geographies, even during challenging global macroeconomic conditions, clearly demonstrates the competitive strength and the long term prospects of Bharti Airtel. With the proceeds, Bharti Telecom Limited will become a zero-debt company,

providing an even stronger financial flexibility and capacity to provide any additional shareholder support as may be desired by Bharti Airtel from time to time."

As per Jefferies India, the move by Bharti Telecom is mainly to de-leverage its balance sheet as the dividend payments from Bharti Airtel are insufficient to service its debt of ₹85 billion. "The stake sale will lower Singtel and promoters' effective stake in Bharti Airtel to 32% and 24% respectively," it ad-

ded. The stake sale was made to institutional investors through an accelerated book building process in the secondary market. The company said the allocation was done to over 50 accounts with the top 10 getting two-thirds of the overall allocation.

The total sale proceeds of over ₹8,433 crore (\$1.15 billion) was over-subscribed multiple times with a healthy mix of all categories of investors and hedge fund investors in India, Asia, Europe and the U.S.

Bata sees demand revival by Sept.

Investment appetite remains; no price hike in short-term'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Bata India on Tuesday said while it anticipated only need-based shopping in the short-term, revival in demand is expected around the festive season beginning September this year.

The shoemaker posted a close to 57% drop in net profit for the January-March 2020 quarter. Amid COVID-19-related uncertainties, the company has put on hold plans to open any new stores in the next three-six months; however, it has curated a new product line up 'to stay relevant', including washable footwear and anti-viral masks. "I do expect us to go through a short phase where people will stick to essentials for example chil-



dren outgrowing shoe size or replacement because of usage, sports shoes for training at home... the festivities as they come in September onwards, will be a big kick for us as a full industry," Sandeep Kataria, CEO, Bata India, said.

Mr. Kataria added that over the last three weeks, the company had seen an uptick in demand with tier 3, tier 4

and tier 5 towns and in residential areas recovering faster. Bata India is also focussing on e-commerce to reach out to customers.

To a query on capex, he said, "We've had a relook at that. We are not planning to open any new stores in the next three to six months... the capex and the investment appetite for India is very much still there. But we do need to fully understand how the demand unfolds before we go back and look at new stores."

Mr. Kataria said that the company is not looking at offering discounts in order to avoid crowding at stores, nor will it hike prices in the "short-term" to offset increase in costs due to new safety practices.

TVS Motor announces pay cuts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

TVS Motor Company Ltd. has announced a temporary reduction in the salary of junior executives and senior management for six months, starting May 2020, due to COVID-19.

"In the wake of the unprecedented crisis, TVS Motor Company has rolled out a temporary salary reduction for a period of six months from May to October 2020. There will be no salary reduction at the workmen level," said an official spokesman.

"There will be a 5% salary reduction at the junior executive level and about 15% to 20% at the senior management level."

ICC finalises election procedure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) Board met on Tuesday to finalise the election procedure for the chairman's post.

The decisions of the Board, headed by Shashank Manohar who is set to vacate the post after serving as the first independent chairman for four years, will be announced after a crucial meeting on Thursday to discuss the fate of the T20 World Cup, scheduled to be held in Australia in October-November this year.

SAI opens stadia for training

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

Sports activities finally resumed in the city with the Sports Authority of India opening up the stadia under its charge on Tuesday in adherence to guidelines issued by the Sports and the Home Ministries earlier this month.

However, only non-contact sports with minimal sharing of equipment have been allowed at the moment. The Shyama Prasad Mookerjee Swimming Complex remains closed.

Archery, table tennis, badminton and tennis have been approved at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium.

SAI is still working on the logistics of opening up Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium and Karni Singh Shooting Ranges.

Nakamura in semifinals

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Hikaru Nakamura drubbed Levon Aronian 3-1 to enter the semifinals of the \$150,000 Lindores Abbey Rapid Challenge on Monday.

Quarterfinal results: Second mini-match: Hikaru Nakamura (USA) bt Levon Aronian (Arm) 3-1; Ding Liren (Chn) bt Yu Yangyi (Chn) 2.5-1.5.

BCCI mulls change in Ranji format

The proposal is for having a shorter tournament with fewer group-stage matches

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
KOZHIKODE

The BCCI is considering a change of format for the Ranji Trophy.

The proposal is to split the Elite teams into five groups instead of the current three, *The Hindu* has learnt. At the moment, Elite Groups A and B have nine teams each while Group C has 10. The Plate group has 10 teams.

In the new avatar, each Elite group will have six teams, while the Plate group will consist of eight (the top two from the previous season will be promoted to Elite Group E).

Toppers qualify

The teams that finish on top of the five Elite groups will qualify directly for the quarterfinals.

The three remaining spots in the last eight will be identified from playoffs featuring



Pick of the lot: Team Saurashtra, the reigning Ranji Trophy champion. ■ FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

the five second-placed teams and the Plate winner.

This means the number of matches will reduce drastically – from 169 to 113.

The proposal was submitted before the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, but with the pandemic disrupting the sports calendar the

world over, the BCCI could be tempted to test it for the next season, which is almost certain to be shortened.

Some BCCI officials feel that the new format could make the domestic season less crowded, reduce travel and lessen the workload for several players who feature

in the IPL and in matches for India-A. "The BCCI's (yet-to-be-appointed) cricket committee will have to take a decision on this, of course," a BCCI official said.

It will be interesting to see how the players respond to the proposal.

Those on the fringe may

not want to lose three matches per season (at present, they can play eight games in the league phase, but that number will come down to five in the new format).

Fewer games would mean less money, too. A player gets approximately ₹1.4 lakh per four-day match.

Shield and County

So how many games do First Class teams in England and Australia – two countries with a robust domestic structure like India – play?

A top-division English county team participates in 14 First Class matches per season (eight teams play each other, home and away). Australia's Sheffield Shield is also played on a double round-robin format: all six sides play 10 games each and the top two clash in the final.

Ab boarding paas hai!



daCunha/AB/1396

IN BRIEF



SL cricketer suspended for possessing drugs

COLOMBO
Sri Lanka Cricket on Tuesday suspended pace bowler Shehan Madushanka from all forms of the game, two days after he was arrested allegedly in possession of 2 grams of heroin. Madushanka, who took a hat-trick against Bangladesh on his ODI debut in 2018 and has played two T20I matches, has not played an international since due to injuries. AFP

Cancelling Slams than play without fans: Kvitova

PRAGUE
Two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova has said she would prefer Grand Slams did not take place as opposed to playing them behind closed doors due to COVID-19. "Of course, I would like to play another Grand Slam. But, playing without fans who are our engine doesn't look nice to me and the Grand Slams don't deserve it," said the 30-year-old Czech. AFP



McIlroy thinks Ryder Cup will be moved to 2021

LONDON
Rory McIlroy believes the Ryder Cup will be moved back to 2021 under pressure from players. "They want to play in front of crowds, that makes the Ryder Cup so special. "At the end of the day, the players are the ones that make the Ryder Cup and if they don't want to play then there isn't a Ryder Cup," said the four-time Major champion. AFP

Ibrahimovic has calf injury: AC Milan

MILAN
Zlatan Ibrahimovic has picked up a calf injury and not ruptured his Achilles tendon as feared, AC Milan confirmed on Tuesday. "Ibrahimovic has sustained an injury to his right soleus muscle during Monday's training session. The Achilles tendon is perfectly intact. The player will undergo a scan in 10 days' time," said the Serie A team. AFP



Ayushi resumes training after cyclone Amphan

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

After protecting her guns and other equipment from Cyclone Amphan, promising shooter Ayushi Podder has shifted her focus back to training at home.

Anticipating that the cyclone would be a severe one, Ayushi's father and coach Pankaj wrapped her kit bag and other equipment in polythene sheets and stored them in the shower cubicle of his flat's bathroom.

As the cyclone hit on May 20, water gushed in through a window of the Podder flat, situated on the fourth floor of a housing society on the outskirts of the city in Hooghly district. "Our house was flooded with rain water. Since we don't have cupboards in the house, at least 10 pairs of Ayushi's sports shoes and some clothes got drenched. We had to give the shoes away to needy people.

Sumit conceded that he would not challenge the ultra-fit Somdev Devvarman over an 800-metre race, as he had lost to him.

When asked what car he would buy for his dad, Nagal said that he would rather buy him a 'Bullet' as the one he had bought for him was stolen.



Hindu. Now, Ayushi, who competes in 50m prone and 50m 3-positions rifle events, has resumed her training.

"Ayushi has begun her training again by doing simulation at home. Sometimes, we go downstairs to the makeshift range to train. Since the lift is not functioning, going down these days is a tough job," said Pankaj.

With uncertainty surrounding the resumption of the National camp and competitions due to the lockdown, 19-year-old Ayushi will continue to train at home.

We Are One' film festival line-up is out

NAMRATA JOSHI
MUMBAI

Two of the best contemporary independent films from India – Prateek Vats' *Eeb Allay Ooo!* (Hindi) and Arun Karthick's *Nasir* (Tamil) – have been chosen to represent the country in the first edition of the prestigious 'We Are One: A Global Film Festival'. The Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival unveiled the India line-up on Tuesday.

Besides the two feature films, there are two shorts on the menu – Shaan Vyas' *Natkhat* and Atul Mongia's *Awake*. All four films have been made by first and second-time directors. Jio MAMI is the only film festival from India that has been invited for this unique online initiative.

"*Eeb Allay Ooo!, Natkhat, Nasir, and Awake*, represent urgent, relevant and diverse aspects of India and the world. The apathy towards the migrant workers, the mindless devastation of communal violence, deep-rooted patriarchy, and ideas of love and possession, will find resonance across continents. The challenge and responsibility for us always is to consistently push the different film cultures that co-exist in India and bring to the surface new and exciting voices," said Smriti Kiran, artistic director, Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival. The full schedule is available at www.weareoneglobalfestival.com.

Spreading the gospel will take a back seat to attracting the moolah

ne in which fans consume the activity.

While in the short term there might be a great hunger for any form of competition, anything live on television, we can't be so sure of the long term.

The new normal, as the new cliché goes, might just as easily see a decline in viewership. Priorities change when real life crashes into sport with such force. It is impossible to say now which way the wind will blow.

What is likely, however, in the short term is that cricket's missionary zeal to spread the gospel (so to speak) will get much weaker.

Forget the non-Test nations, even

many of the Test nations will find themselves out of the loop as the emphasis shifts to the top four or five teams that can bring in the moolah.

The caste system which already exists will thus be endorsed. The 'lesser'

associate members will find even less encouragement than they do now. It is possible that the caste system will be sanctified by dividing teams into two groups with promotions and relegations.

Annual world tournaments?

The emphasis on white ball cricket to bring in the money might see the ICC insisting on a world tournament every year. This was already on the anvil – an annual tournament every year from 2023 to 2031 – the keenness explained by the fact that the money from these went into the ICC's account, unlike in a bi-lateral series.

The Big Three (India, England, Australia), meanwhile had planned an annual four-team Super series of One-Day Internationals where the money went to the respective boards.

This was proposed by the then recently-elected BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, and called "innovative" by Australia. And now Ganguly seems to be the favourite to take over from

Shashank Manohar as Chairman of the ICC. His competition is likely to be England's Giles Clarke, so in a sense it's all within the family.

Unless, of course, all other candidates pull out and the election is unanimous. The ICC's objectives are obviously different from the BCCI's, a distinction Manohar made clear.

But the question remains: Who will take care of developing the game worldwide? Will stronger boards be given the responsibility at least in their geographical areas? Where does self-interest meet global need?

This is not to say that the poorer boards are all angels and the rich ones all devils. Recently Michael Holding alleged that the half a million dollars the BCCI had given the West Indies board had been misused.

Spectre of corruption

Corruption is an issue with many boards. Last year the ICC called the Sri Lanka board the most corrupt in the world. Zaheer Abbas recently accused the Pakistan board of being soft on corruption. When the ICC banned Zimbabwe, it had as much to do with political interference as corruption.

Against this background, the BCCI might have an argument for not only claiming the lion's share of the money in cricket (after all they generate the lion's share too), but hanging on to it for the growth of the game in this country.

In October, the BCCI and the ICC are set to come into conflict (which will, of course, be resolved much earlier). The IPL might be scheduled then, leading to the postponement of the World T20 in Australia.

The cancellation of the IPL will mean a loss of \$530 million, the BCCI has said; even without Ganguly in the ICC, therefore, it is likely that a World championship will make way for a domestic club tournament.

How museums can use technology to take art and history to people

Explore new options during pandemic, suggests expert

T. K. ROHIT
CHENNAI

Museums are repositories of history, culture and societies, and in the future may display items that will remind us of the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, museums are among the worst hit spaces and the pandemic is forcing new ways of accessing them.

As funding decreases and footfalls come to a standstill, museums in India have a tremendous opportunity to revolutionise museology by leveraging technology and taking museums to the people, according to Vinod Daniel, Member, International Council of Museums (ICOM), Paris.

"The idea should be for museums to go to people rather than people coming to you. You can redefine museology and become a world leader in museums," Mr. Daniel told *The Hindu*.

Worldwide, museums are dependent largely on government funding and gate tickets, besides cafes, bookshops and restaurants within the premises. But with governments across the globe tightening the belt, they have to look at other priorities. "The fall in funding is likely to be about 60%. In India, as most museums depend on government funding, there might be only enough money to pay salaries and not to undertake major renovations," he said.

Mr. Daniel, who is also chairman of the Board for



Staying interactive: Vinod Daniel suggests that the bronze collection, right, in the Government Museum in Chennai could draw a virtual audience. ■ FILE PHOTO

Plus, there is the problem of people coming into museums in limited numbers as social distancing norms are put in place.

"About 60% museums in China opened in the first week of May, 19 of them in Beijing alone. The average turnout [of visitors] was only around 250, while earlier it used to be in the thousands," he added.

Partnership model
Mr. Daniel said this is where museums in India can score by tying up with corporates, the entertainment industry, and universities. "India's entertainment industry has an excellent ability in putting together packages. Universities can do background research. And we have the world's best IT industry, which can provide the mechanisms for taking museums to homes," he said.

Mr. Daniel, who is also chairman of the Board for

AusHeritage, a network of Australian heritage management organisations, said that each museum can play to its strengths. "For example, the Bronze Collection at the Egmore Museum – you can come out with snippets on bronze-making, provide a virtual tour of places where such sculptures are seen, and put together a well-researched insight. People at home might want to spend an hour or two on an afternoon to learn something," he said.

"The online model can be very successful through a partnership approach. It can be done by getting companies to spend a bit of their CSR (corporate social responsibility) budget on museums, or it can even be a commercial partnership. Providing this content to schoolchildren, preferably in their local language as well, will have a great impact," he said.

Planning it out

It would be interesting to know if the International Cricket Council has worked out both immediate and overall future plans. Leaving it to the market will mean the future will be much like the past, only more so.

It is not difficult to envisage shorter tours in the future, a revival of the four-day Test, and a greater focus on the more profitable competitions. Perhaps even emphasis on white ball cricket versus red ball, for a third.

All international sports must now prepare two sets of strategies, when competition returns. There is the short-term matter of getting over the initial hump following the cancellations, and then the long-term one of making structural changes to the way they are played.

Planning it out

The virus which has halted all sporting events might also change the man-



BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

The pandemic has brought into sharper focus the issues that already plague cricket. Club versus country, for one (IPL or World T20?), rich versus poor, for another (Big Three or the 'lesser

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