

DH



DECCAN HERALD

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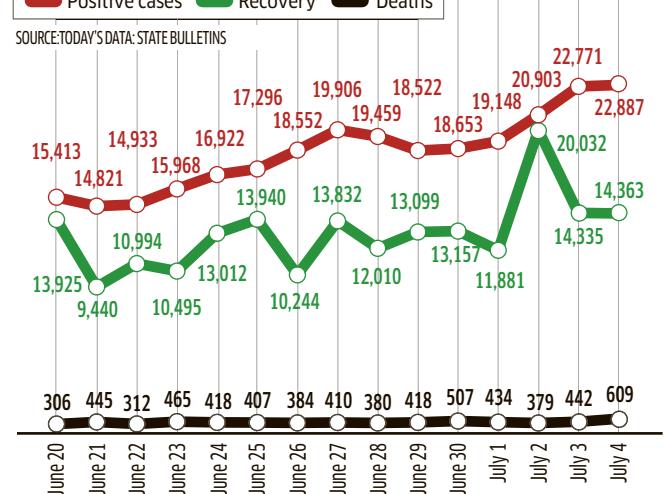
## Mind your head

We explore not only how to prepare ourselves to cope better with the current crisis but also how best to face the challenges of a post-pandemic world  
*Sunday Herald*

### TRACKING THE VIRUS

Confirmed Covid-19 cases in India hit 6,72,589 on Friday.

The death toll now stands at 19,271. Total discharged 4,08,656



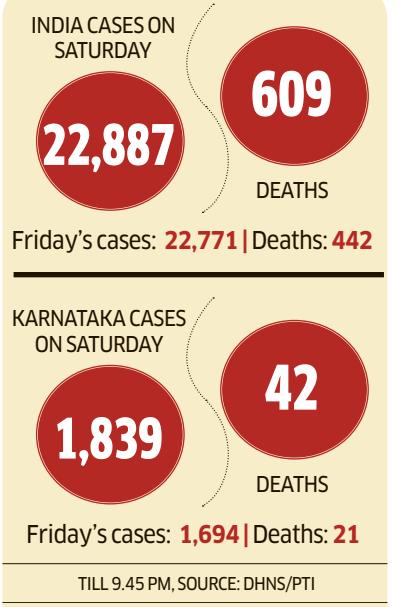
# Record Covid cases, deaths

42 deaths, 1,839 cases in state on Saturday; B'luru infections jump by 1,172

SURAKSH P  
BENGALURU, DHNS



Workers sanitising roads in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/S K DINESH



Karnataka reported a new single-day high of 1,839 Covid-19 cases and a record 42 deaths on Saturday, taking the toll to 335. Bengaluru, which accounted for 24 of Saturday's deaths, also recorded its highest one-day spike of 1,172 cases, making up 63.73% of the state's numbers.

Reacting to the sharp rise in the death toll, head of the critical care support team KV Trilok Chandra clarified that of the 42 deaths added to the bulletin on Saturday, only one died on July 4, while the rest had died between June 23 and July 4.

"The deaths can be attributed to late admission to hospitals. Some died within hours of admission, one was brought dead and three died at home. The reason for the late reporting of these deaths may be because the swabs were taken posthumously. According to the rules, we are allowed to take swabs up to six hours after the death," Chandra told DH.

The number of active cases is 11,966. The total number of positive cases are 21,549. The total number of samples tested decreased from 18,307 on Friday to 17,592 on Saturday. Bengaluru Urban saw 195 recoveries after data on recoveries had stopped coming due to the civic body's inability to collect discharge data from various hospitals.

South Zone has 2,062 active cases followed by 1,461 active cases in the West Zone, and 1,518 in the East Zone. RR Nagar, Bommanahalli, Mahadevapura and Yelahanka have active cases in triple figures while Dasarahalli has double figures. An analysis of the cases over the last 10 days shows South constitutes 26%

## 50-yr-old woman dies after 12 hospitals refuse admission

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 50-year-old woman with breathing difficulties died on Saturday after a shortage of beds forced 12 hospitals to refuse admission.

Her husband Babu said the family had approached 12 hospitals in three days, including Victoria Hospital and other private facilities, who all slammed their doors on them, citing a shortage of beds. The woman died on Saturday, a few minutes into her admission at KC General Hospital.

### Second death

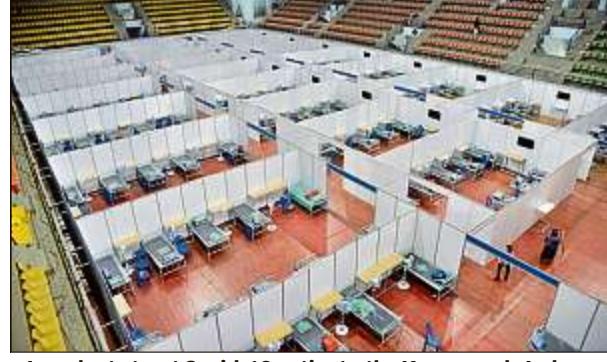
A 35-year-old man, Manjunath, also died on Saturday after enduring fever for three days and being refused admis-

sion at several hospitals due to a shortage of beds.

As his condition worsened, his wife admitted him to a private hospital on Saturday after hours of ordeal. But the man died less than 15 minutes after getting admitted. Hospital authorities took swab samples from the deceased and said the body would be handed over after the test results.

BBMP personnel also failed to shift the body of a Covid-19 patient in Kalasipalya almost a day after the death.

Despite civic workers disinfecting the place, the neighbours were in a state of panic after the body was kept at home.



In order to treat Covid-19 patients, the Kormangala Indoor Stadium has been transformed into a care centre.

## BBMP chief regrets Covid patient's death

BENGALURU, DHNS: BBMP Commissioner B H Anil Kumar on Saturday visited the family of the Covid-19 patient who died on the road in the rain, waiting for an ambulance for several hours on Friday.

Expressing his condolence while interacting with the family members, Kumar said he regretted the incident.

"It should not have happened," he reportedly told

the grieving family members. "I apologise on behalf of the BBMP officials and personnel," he said.

The 65-year-old, who tested positive for Covid-19, died while waiting for an ambulance. His body lay unattended for nearly three hours on the street, triggering a backlash against the civic body and the state government on various social media platforms.



BBMP Commissioner B H Anil Kumar apologises to the family members of the deceased in Gavipuram, South Bengaluru.

## BU staff directed to work from home

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bangalore University has asked its staff to work from home till July 10.

A decision in this regard was taken after five employees of the fire department, locat-

ed in the BU's Jnanabharathi campus, tested positive for Covid-19.

In a circular, the university has asked its employees to return to work on July 13 as July 11 and 12 are holidays.

**SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
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**TENDER NOTICE NO.55/2020**  
DL 03.07.2020  
**SUPPLY OF STORES ITEMS,**  
e-Procurement Tender Notice

The following Tenders have been floated online. Tenderers are requested to visit the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and submit their offers online. The Tender Description, Qty, EMD, SD may be seen in website. Offers submitted manually will not be accepted. Offers by post will not be entertained. Tender Closing time is 14.30 hrs of the Due date of the Tender. "For all Indigenous offers, EMD will be accepted only via online system as available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)".

Tender No BRIEF DESCRIPTION  
82.20.5106 High Flow Nasal Cannula

80.20.5001 Lube Oil 15 W 40

84.19.5003A Composite Decorative Glass Fabric reinforced Plastic sheet

93.19.1031A Compreg Playwood

83.20.1550W White Security Bond Paper

29.20.1399 Axle Box Bearing

**Note:- Due dates of Tender Opening:** S.No. 1. on 22.07.2020; S.No. 02 to 03 on 27.07.2020; S.No. 4 to 5 on 28.07.2020; S.No. 6 on 07.08.2020.

Beside above mentioned tenders there are other tenders having value below Rs. 25 lakhs.

For details, please visit Railway website above.

**Principal Chief Materials Manager/A0835 Secunderabad.**

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at [https://www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) or [www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in)

**South East Central Railway**  
TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

Tender no.: 708-EI-Mod-I-of-LATIA dated-30.06.2020

Name of Work: SST cables clearance in the yard/Home to Home signal to facilitate the engineering earthwork, yard remodeling work & modification of existing Centralized Electronics Interlocking of Latia Block Cabin (M/s Hitachi Rail STS formerly known as M/s Ansaldi STS) in connection with 4th line work between Bilaspur- Jharsuguda section of SEC Railway. **Tender value:** ₹ 4,47,71,40/- (Four crore Forty Seven Lakh Seventy One thousand Four hundred Two only). **EMD:** ₹ 33,73,900/- (Three lakh Seventy Three thousand Nine hundred only). **Closing of Tender:** up to 15:30 hrs. on 24.07.2020. For further details for the above work, please contact office of the CSTE(Con) SEC Rly. BILASPUR or refer /download tender document which is available on our website: [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

Deputy Chief Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/Con CPCR/10/148 S.E.C.Rly/Bilaspur f South East Central Railway @Seceil

Dated : 02.07.2020

"Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant/Bela (Distt. - Saran), Bihar 841221

E-Open Tender Notice No.: SIRWP/E/14/2020-21

Dated : 02.07.2020

"Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela and for on behalf of the Indian Railways invites online "E-Open Tender", through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14:00 hrs. SN. 1. Tender No. 01201029, Short Description of item: FERRO MANGANESE, Quantity: 140467.32 Kg., Date of Tender Closing/Opening: 28.08.2020 at 14:00. SN. 2. Tender No. 01201025. Short Description of item: FUSED SILICA POWDER, Quantity: 60875.00 Kg., Date of Tender Closing/Opening: 31.07.2020 at 14:00.

1. Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). 2. The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including Addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation with respect to the above tender. However, this information will also be invariably published in the concerned newspaper.

PCMM/RWP/Bela RWP/CPRD/Advt/2020-21/32

For details, please visit Railway website above.

Principal Chief Materials Manager/A0835 Secunderabad.

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, Please visit website at [https://www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) or [www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in)

# City's Covid count jumps, records 1,172 cases

The number of fatalities went up from 105 to 129

BENGALURU, DHNS

The number of Covid-19 cases continued to rise on Saturday, with the city recording 1,172 cases and an unprecedented 24 deaths. With this, the number of Covid-19 cases touched 8,345, of which 86% or 7,250 are active cases. The number of fatalities also rose on Friday from 105 to 129.

The disclosures have come along with the low testing figures. On Friday, the BBMP tested 4,662 samples for Covid-19, while on Saturday it reported no tests had been done.

Meanwhile, the positivity rate of cases per test done in the city has climbed to 6.92% — up by four points since June 28.

The bulk of Saturday's cases were males (771), in addition to 401 females. As in previous days, the bulk of male cases are in their thirties (176), while the majority female cases are in their twenties. Fifty-six women are in the vulnerable range of 60 years and above, as are nine female toddlers.

Among the males, 108 people are in the vulnerable age range of 60 and above, as are 15 toddlers. All the cases in



the city are listed as "contact under tracing", signifying that they are new cases, without a confirmed origin source of the infection.

However, official epidemiological charts shared with DH shows that the disease's growth rate was 18% as of July 3, with the city taking roughly about 17 days to double its number of cases. That presumes that on July 21, the city will likely have 16,690 cases.

At the same time, however, the RO (which indicates disease contagiousness) is about 0.95, which indicates

that each infected person will infect only one additional person.

### 24 deaths recorded

The 24 deaths disclosed on Saturday include 17 deaths which happened in June. Officials could not be contacted to comment on why the backlog of cases was not reported earlier.

The death of a 29-year-old man was unusual since he was asymptomatic, but died on June 25. He was HBsAG-positive (Australia Antigen), indicating that he also had Hepatitis B.

An 84-year-old man — also asymptomatic — died on June 26. He also had comorbidities like diabetes, hypertension, and Ischemic Heart Disease.

Three people died at home and were discovered to be Covid positive in posthumous testing.



Basavanapura corporator Jayaprakash (extreme right) during the phone-in Janaspandana, a citizens grievance redress meet organised by Prajavani and Deccan Herald in Bengaluru on Saturday. Health inspector Gururaj and BWSSB assistant executive engineer Ghouse Inamdar are seen. DH PHOTO/IRSHAD MAHAMMAD

## Basavanapura to be developed as a model ward

BENGALURU, DHNS

The rising Covid-19 cases in the city did not deter the residents of Basavanapura ward (Ward 53) from attending Janaspandana-Citizens for Change, organised by Deccan Herald and Prajavani on Saturday. They did not hold back from raising several civic issues.

Unlike the regular Janaspandana events at a public place, Saturday's event was a phone-in programme at the ward level. Officials from BBMP, BWSSB, Bescom, and the police department along with corporator B N Jayaprakash took part in the interaction and promised to resolve the issues at the earliest.

Residents from the Happy Garden and Wind Flower Layouts complained about the poor supply of potable water and high-priced private water tankers. Avinash, a resident, sought Cauvery connection at the earliest. In reply, Jayaprakash said: "The BWSSB work is in full swing in the locality. Due to the lockdown, the work has been delayed by two months. The problem will be resolved in another two months."

Seegehalli Muniraju, a resident, complained about the increased dust pollution due to the indiscriminate digging of roads. He said that pothole-ridden roads were

causing traffic pile-up also. The corporator replied that the roads had been damaged on account of the work taken up by the BWSSB. The roads would be restored once the work gets over. He added that some roads had already been asphalted.

Jayaprakash also revealed that Rs 35-crore project for the development of roads, parks, and other civic amenities were in progress. "KR Puram MLA Byrathi Basavaraj, who is also the minister for urban development, has assured of funds and we will complete all the pending works to make Basavanapura a model ward in the city," he assured.

K R Manjunath, another resident, alleged that garbage was being dumped on vacant sites leading to mosquito menace.

Jayaprakash replied that CCTV cameras had been installed at some places to prevent the illegal dumping of garbage. "Very soon, CCTV cameras will be installed in other locations and marshals will be deployed to keep an eye on the litterers."

Several residents thanked the corporator for supplying essential commodities during the lockdown.

## Anganwadi teacher ends life

BENGALURU, DHNS: Depressed over her boyfriend's constant harassment, a 27-year-old anganwadi teacher ended her life on Saturday afternoon in Agrahara Dasarahalli.

The police arrested her boyfriend Nagesh, whom the

woman — Pavithra, a resident of Manjunath Nagar in Dasarahalli — named in her suicide note. DCP (North) N Shashi Kumar said Nagesh had been harassing Pavithra for various reasons, leading to her depression and eventual death.

## Buses to remain off the roads

BENGALURU, DHNS

Passengers arriving in the city on Sunday by nine trains may have to organise their own commute home as the BMTC and KSRTC buses will not be operated. At least one taxi service has said cabs in their platform will be available.

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation, which has got an exemption from the night curfew, will conclude its services on Saturday night and resume services on Monday morning.

railways can't cancel trains en masse in the last minute due to reservation bookings. It would have helped us if we had known about the lockdown beforehand," an official said.

Meanwhile, South Western Railway officials said nine trains will arrive in Bengaluru on Sunday and one more will reach Gadag. Six of the trains are interstate, including three from Mumbai, whose passengers will be taken to institutional quarantine. "The

There was no communication from Ola, though a driver said they did not receive any message on operating the cabs on Sunday.

While it is common for

## Covid-19 spike triggers exit from city

BENGALURU, DHNS

The sporadic increase in the Covid-19 cases coupled with an enhanced restriction for containing the spread of infection appears to have triggered a mass movement of people from Bengaluru.

Bus stations across the city were teeming with people on Saturday with many deciding to leave Bengaluru for charting out a new livelihood in their hometowns. Those with their own vehicles rushed to the exit points of the city in



Vehicles carry household items out of the city.

1,800 WORKERS SURVEYED  
77% migrants in misery, says pre-Covid study



Even before the Covid crisis amplified their extreme challenges, the workers had no proper food, water, and toilets. DH FILE/RANJU

RASHEED KAPPAN  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Three months before the Covid-19 outbreak, a state-wide sample survey of construction workers had clearly established that 77% owned no land or were small and marginal farmers. Irregular income from agriculture forced them to migrate to cities for work, a fact dramatically exposed by the crisis.

The survey was part of a comprehensive study by Dr Y Narayana Chetty, retired Bangalore University professor, and director, Sri Alampally Chair on Labour Research. Covering 1,800 workers spread across 14 districts, the sample survey was completed in August 2019.

The findings also revealed that 80% of the respondents were not part of any labour union, and 12.4% were even terrified of any contractors and make do with low wages

that were often delayed. The pandemic and a hastily announced lockdown had triggered a massive, nationwide migrant crisis. The shutdown of inter-state trains and buses had

forced thousands to walk back, triggering deaths and misery. That the migrants were already in a precarious situation was brought out tellingly by the survey.

Although the survey data was analysed by December 2019, it could not be collated and printed in time due to the constraints imposed by the pandemic, Dr Chetty told DH. "We will soon be submitting the entire report to the chief minister."

Even before the Covid crisis amplified their extreme challenges, the workers had no

# Countdown begins for CET as KEA remains headless

The test is scheduled to be held on July 30, 31



A file photo of document verification conducted by the Karnataka Examinations Authority. The Covid-19 pandemic has cast a shadow on Common Entrance Test this year.

RASHMI BELUR  
BENGALURU, DHNS

The countdown for Common Entrance Test (CET) 2020 has begun, even as the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has postponed National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) and Joint Entrance Examinations (JEE). Meanwhile, the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA), which has remained headless, is yet to take a decision.

Considering the spike in Covid-19 cases across the nation, the MHRD postponed NEET and JEE and announced fresh dates for the tests. The CET is scheduled for July 30 and 31. However, the Authority is not in a position to arrive at a decision as the state government recently transferred its executive director, who was an IAS officer.

In addition, the director of pre-university education for whom the concurrent charge

was given, is yet to assume office. Sources said that as the director was busy with preparing PU results and had refused to take charge of the KEA.

"The director has communicated to the government saying that she cannot take charge as she was busy with evaluation work and results

preparations," said a source close to PUE director.

M Kanagavalli, Director, PUE department, refused to comment on the issue. Meanwhile, the officer had already been relieved and the post is lying vacant. Meanwhile, the students who have enrolled for CET-2020 are in a confusion. With the deferring of NEET and JEE, they are approaching the Authority seeking clarity about test dates. The CET has already been deferred once in the wake of nationwide lockdown.

Sources in the higher education department said discussions were going on at the government level to postpone test. "Looking at the current scenario, it is suggested to postpone the CET dates and discussions are in progress," said a source.

## HC declares 2k acres of land in 3 Mysuru villages as pvt property

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that around 2,000 acres of land in three villages in Mysuru are private properties.

The High Court set aside the orders of the then Mysuru deputy commissioner that declared the land in three villages -- Kurubarahalli, Alanahalli and Chowdanahalli as 'B' kharab government land.

The court held that the power to adjudicate the title over a property is the sole domain of courts. The bench stated that though the Karnataka Land Revenue Act traces its source of power to the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, it does not confer powers relating to adjudication of the title disputes.

After a detailed hearing on

the petitions filed by various land owners, Justice S Sunil Dutt Yadav passed the order directing the authorities to delete the entry of 'B' kharab wherever found in the revenue records of the respective land owners.

Background: Three deputy commissioners of Mysore from 2011 to 2015 had passed separate orders pertaining to the lands in Kurubarahalli, Alanahalli and Chowdanahalli villages in Mysuru.

The first order was passed in 2011 by the then DC Harsha Gupta declaring the lands as 'B' kharab. The next year his successor P S Vastrad reversed the order but classified the lands as 'A' kharab. However, Vastrad later withdrew his own order. In 2015, the then DC C Shikha passed a fresh order declaring the entire extent of land as 'B' kharab.

The owners of the land, in-

cluding Pramoda Devi Wodeyar, wife of Srikantha Datta Narasimharaja Wodeyar, moved the High Court challenging the order of the deputy commissioner. All the petitioners traced their title to the Maharaja of Mysore through registered deeds of conveyance.

The petitioners relied upon the Instrument of Accession entered into between the Maharaja of Mysore and the Dominion of India. The subsequent agreement entered into between the Governor General of India and the Maharaja of Mysore in 1950 had the list of immovable properties held by the latter.

The petitioners contend that the lands classified as 'B' kharab government lands by the deputy commissioner in 2015 were the very lands held by the Maharaja of Mysore.

## Check for primary contacts among SSLC examinees: Siddaramaiah

BENGALURU, DHNS: While the government is celebrating the conclusion of the Class 10 SSLC exams, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah on Saturday raised concerns over possible contagion among the lakhs of students who wrote them.

Over 7.5 lakh students wrote the SSLC exams that ended Friday.

"Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa seems to be motivated & overconfident to conduct more exams after assuming that SSLC exams were conducted safely. I, too, hope that everybody is safe. But we will have to wait for 15 days to know the exact outcome (sic)," Siddaramaiah said in a tweet.

"My strong suggestion to the government is to collect data from all Covid-19 positive patients...between 15th June to 20th July to check if

any of their primary contacts wrote SSLC exams," he said. "This will help the government to evaluate if at all exams can be conducted safely."

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader H K Patil came down heavily on the BJP government over its Covid-19 management, and demanded an all-party meeting.

"There's a shortage of nurses, doctors and health workers. You are asking people not to come to hospitals saying there are no beds," Patil said, urging the government to take up "emergency special recruitment" of nurses, health workers, doctors and pourakarmikas.

He also hit out at the government over the shortage of ambulances. "People are waiting 12-24 hours for an ambulance. Why can't the government make use of public buses that are lying idle," he said.

## Dial 1912 if a hospital denies bed

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka government got into damage-control mode after Covid patients died in Bengaluru while waiting for ambulances. Now, one needs to dial 108 for ambulance and 1912 if admission is denied by a hospital.

After bitter backlash by the people, the state also brought

about a mechanism to shift patients and inform them about bed allocation. 108-Arogya Kavacha is responsible for shifting patients in distress. This will include shifting to Covid Care Centers and hospitals (except between two private facilities). They are also responsible for receiving distress calls with respect to Covid.

The Covid positive patient or suspect should be shifted in consultation with BBMP's bed-allocation team. The 108 ambulance should shift such patients in an Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance with adequate manpower and PPE.

Advertiser

# Vedantu

## Revolutionising Online Learning

Student's across the world are feeling the ripple effect of Covid-19 as educational institutions have been shut down indefinitely due to public health concern. As a result, learners from all age groups are suffering. Online learning has surfaced as the most feasible and appropriate option that the world can opt, to ensure the entire generation of learners can continue and re-define their learning.

This sudden shift to e-learning has led the path towards an educational innovation that was unprecedented. Many schools and colleges across India are trying to provide online classes with the help of virtual platforms.

Vedantu, a pioneer in LIVE Online Learning, have given Free access to all their LIVE Classes and Premium Content for Grades 1-12, CBSE, ICSE, JEE & NEET. Safety has always been Vedantu's top priority and their aim is to ensure that learning is not interrupted, even amidst a global Pandemic.

One of the unfortunate consequences is that the Board examinations and all major entrance examinations including JEE & NEET have been postponed. However, the bright side to the situation being the students, have got more

time in hand to master the concepts to crack the exams with flying colours. The students must continue their preparation and embrace the new shifts in the approach to education. With Vedantu's LIVE Online Classes, learning in a classroom is fun and interactive. The real-time interaction with teachers along with Quizzes,

TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION



Leaderboards, Polls & Chats makes the classes more interactive and personalized. Their unique In-Class doubt Solving feature ensures that every doubt of every student is solved instantly, while they are attending the class. Vedantu's Master Teachers hail from IITs and other best renowned institutions of India and aim to provide quality education to students from the safety of their homes. This transition to Online learning, though imperative

in the current situation, have compelled people to rethink the conventional modes of education. Over 2 lakh students have chosen to learn LIVE Online with Vedantu. Virtual classes ensure that students complete their curriculum, sit for practice tests and assessments and are thoroughly prepared for school and competitive examinations from the safety of their homes. Students are getting additional time in hand, which they otherwise would have spent commuting from school to tuition and vice versa. The extra free time allows them the freedom to pursue other extra-curricular activities.

Online education is inclusive and prevents geographic, social, physical and economic obstacles between a student and his quest to gain knowledge. It will help the Indian educational system to move beyond the physical boundaries of city, location and classrooms and touch every students' life with quality education.

In the wake of the COVID 19 Pandemic, Virtual learning is receiving the recognition and acceptance it always strived for. Going forward, we can only hope that once the dust settles, online learning will become the new order of the day.

# Lifetime adventure for some.... is routine for us.



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2020

# No check on forest fragmentation

Elephant corridors, from Page 1

Even though the government identified about nine villages in the Hettur hobli of Sakleshpur taluk to notify as a corridor, the move has snowballed into a controversy. "The area identified by the government is not even a forest landscape and elephants hardly frequent those villages. The landscape does not suit the elephant population as an adult elephant forages on 150 to 200 kg of fodder on an average every day. Without such facilities, how would you declare a place as corridor?" questioned Vagish, a planter from Sakleshpur.

On the recommendations of an expert committee, the Karnataka High Court had ruled that the state government shall 'review all concessions and leases granted for coffee estates, tourism in the elephant range, in order to restore those lands as elephant habitats in a time-bound manner.'

"The government is not clear on how many such leases have been withdrawn till date. Also, the tourism activities in the area have never been reviewed and there has been an increase in such activities in the name of promoting eco-tourism," said a conservation activist from Dandeli. Former member of NBWL and trustee of Wildlife First organisation Praveen Bhargav had also apprised the experts committee to deflect infrastructure projects such as Chamarajanagar-Mettupalayam rail line, mini-hydel projects and Bandipur Highway.

Even as the Yettinahole project is likely to leave the elephant habitat in the region fragmented to a certain extent, the locals have now petitioned the state government not to dump any more developmental projects in the region.

Aware of the impediments at the government level that does not allow everything to happen at one go, the locals have taken it upon themselves to sensitise local people about the elephants.

Further, the experts have also been battling for a separate statutory authority. "Several conservation issues involve topics related to railways, electricity boards, agriculture, revenue and veterinary departments and there is need to evolve site-specific solutions. Hence, a single statutory authority must manage both tiger and elephant reserves. The existing National Tiger Conservation Authority must be upgraded with a mandate of securing both tigers and elephants including their habitat through appropriate amendments to the Wildlife Protection Act," said Praveen Bhargav.

Pointing at some flawed measures taken up by the Forest Department, he said that inappropriate creation of water holes close to boundaries of Protected Areas leads to increased human-elephant conflicts.

#### Lack of coordination

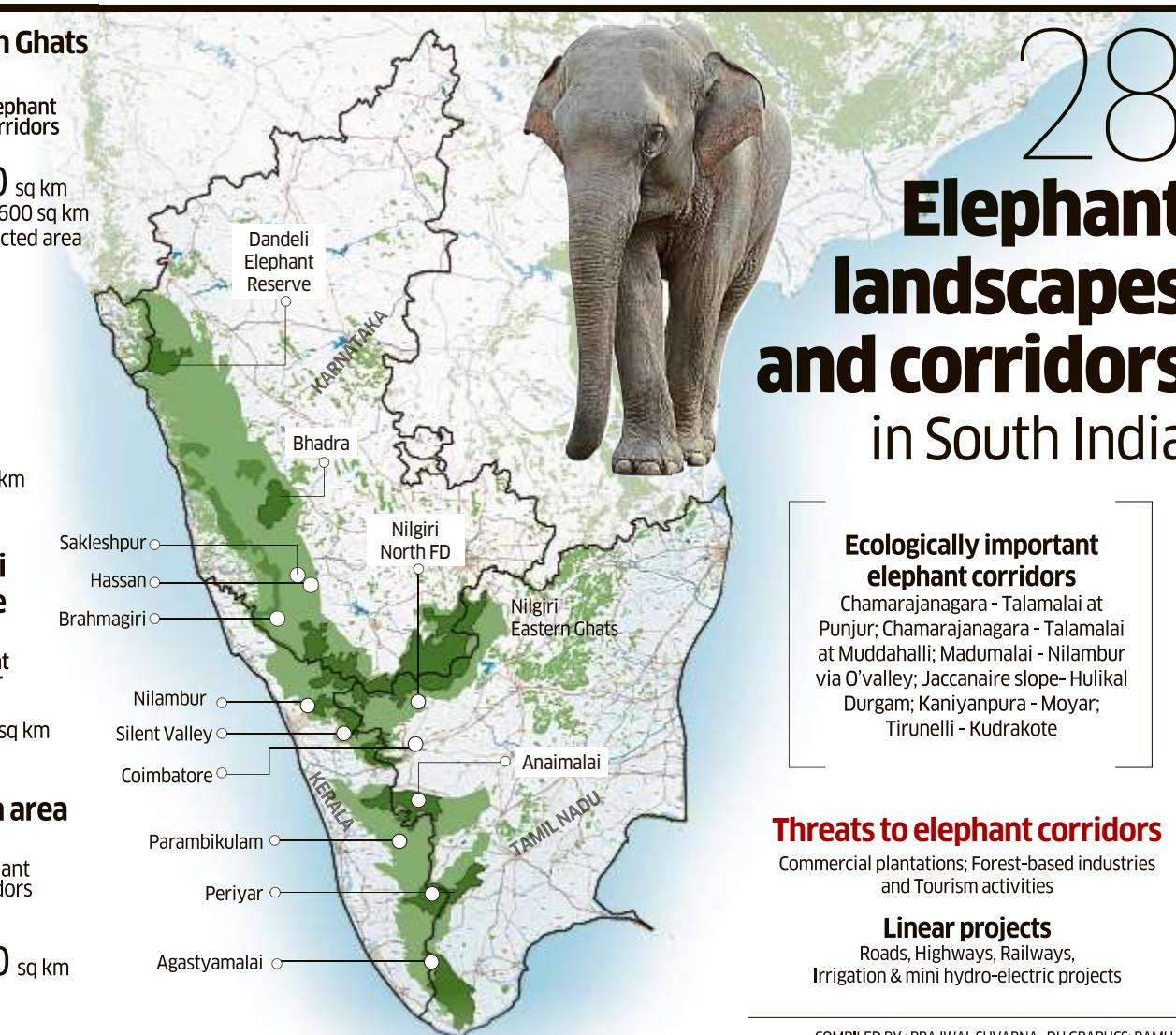
A similar trail of conflicts has also been reported from the neighbouring Kerala. Idukki, Wayanad and Malayattoor area near Ernakulam and Palakkad have witnessed high incidents of human-elephant conflicts. In fact, the casualties in human-elephant conflict is second only to snake bite incidents in Kerala, according to MN Jayachandran, member of the state animal welfare board.

Kerala has seven major elephant corridors and has received funding from the centre to take up several conservation projects. Sources in the Kerala forest department alleged that lack of initiative from revenue officials has delayed these measures. Unscientific fencing, blocking the elephants' path or access to water bodies has resulted in conflicts. Until 2019, a total of 2,413.7 km solar fencing was done in Kerala besides other initiatives like ele-

phant-proof trenching. About 7,200 hectares of forest land in Kerala is still under illegal possession of 8,390 private persons and organisations.

"The crisis in the Western Ghats area of Maharashtra started in the 2000s. It has been managed to quite an extent but being complex it can escalate," says Girish Punjabi, a wildlife biologist with Wildlife Conservation Trust.

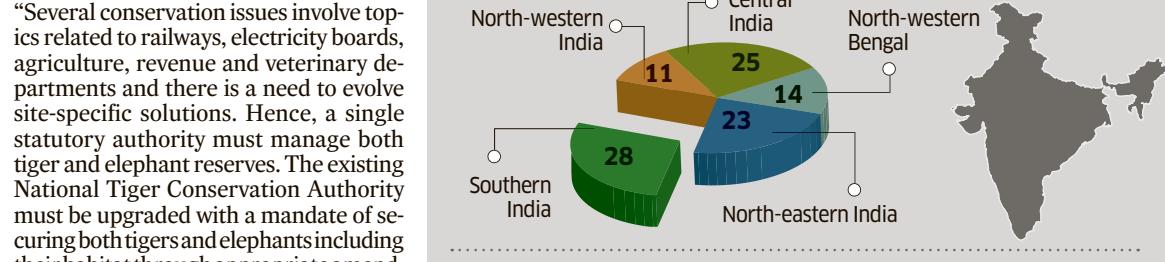
Working steadfast on the directions of the Karnataka High Court, the Karnataka



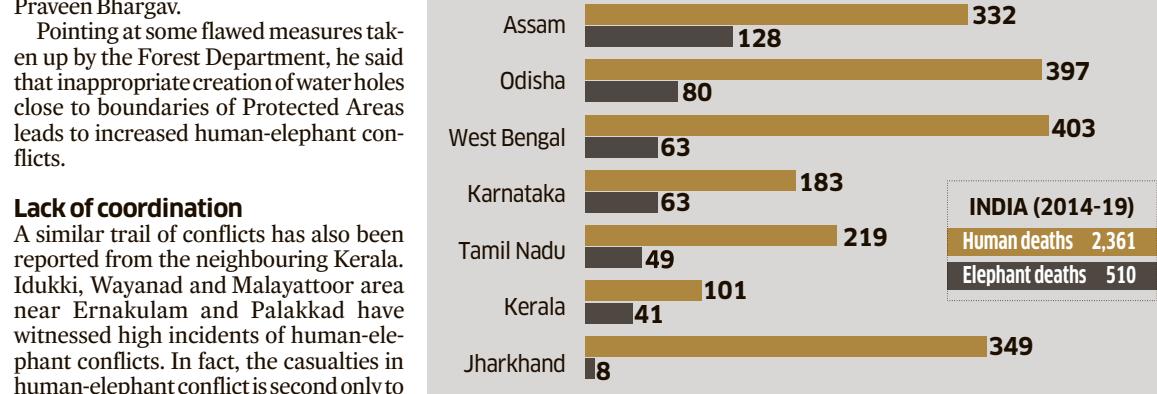
**NUMBER OF CORRIDORS** Karnataka: 10\* Kerala: 5 Tamil Nadu: 13

\*The corridors in Karnataka include five along the Tamil Nadu border and one along the Kerala border

#### Elephant corridors in different zones of India



#### Highest cases of elephant-human conflict 2014-19



Source: Right of Passage (2017) - Wildlife Trust of India, Ministry of Forest Environment and Climate Change, Karnataka Forest Department

forest department expressed that it would at least need another three to four years to minimise the incidents of human-elephant conflict across the state.

Sanjai Mohan, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, told DH that they have already prevented elephants from Kodagu area straying into Hassan side. "Our priority is to consolidate the elephant habitat boundary through rail fencing. In a few months time, the work around Bannerghatta will be complete and this

would reduce conflicts in the area. Even though there has been acute shortage of funds due to Covid-19 pandemic works, we have been mulling to utilise the funds available under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority. Karnataka has about Rs 1,350 crore share in it. For this year, we plan to utilise about Rs 200 crore and of which Rs 50 to 60 cr will be spent on rail fencing which will ensure movement of elephants on a known path rather than straying into

non-forest lands," the PCCF explained.

Officials from the Hassan Circle revealed that of the 6,000 plus elephants in Karnataka about 150 are identified as trouble makers. "As and when the conflict escalates, we try to capture the main female elephant in the herd and put a radio collar. But there is no proposal to capture any of the elephants," the official explained.

(With inputs from Arjun Raghunath and Mritunjay Bose)

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Clusters drive  
Covid surge  
in B'luru

CLUSTERS, FROM PAGE 1

Dr Srinivas Gowda, MHO, East Zone, BBMP, said that in Shantala Nagar Ward, the majority of cases stem from four densely populated areas: Nanjappa Circle, Anepalya, Bellie Street and Lakshmi Street, RR Nagar, which has the highest number of slums in the city, has reported 39 new cases.

"Within both of these wards are densely populated neighborhoods where the disease has erupted, explained Dr Badanur."

Covid-19 has become a disease of clusters, said Dr Giridhar Babu, senior member of the Covid Expert Committee.

"Cases in wards are concentrated in specific clusters," he said, reiterating that nearly 80% of new cases can be linked to places with high human transit.

Hemmingipura, an upscale area, is among those classified as "badly hit." The ward has a relatively low population density of 850 people per square kilometre. Nevertheless, since July 1, 29 new cases have been reported there due to increased movement of people.

Dr Bala Sundar, BBMP Health Officer, RR Nagar Zone, said that a majority of the infected are white-collar professionals who have moved around extensively. Some labourers are also infected.

## Mask violations

Mask violations and social distancing infractions topped the list in the 26 wards until the disease erupted. According to July 3 mask violations data from the BBMP, 11 other wards now show equally high numbers of social distancing violations. Further large outbreaks could result here, experts said.

These 11 wards are: Benaganahalli, CV Raman Nagar, Jeevanbhimanagar, Konena Agrahara, Kavalbyrasandra, Gurrupanpalya, Ganesh Temple, KR Puram, Kadugodi, HMT Layout and Mangamapalya.

Further violations were reported in Gandhi Nagar, Dharmarayswamy Temple, Jayanagar East and Singasandra, which have been already badly hit.

VARSHA GOWDA  
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Covid-19 wards in Victoria Hospital are high-strung and engulfed in a flurry of activity. The hospital has changed so much in a span of four months.

One of the most visible changes for Infection Control Nurse A H Sarawathy is that her colleagues now don personal protective equipment (PPE). The wards are full of anxious patients, but Sarawathy's sister, as she is affectionately known, has a singular focus.

She is in charge of collecting, handling biomedical waste, including the material that has come in contact with Covid-19 patients. She also tracks the movements of doctors and healthcare workers who treat infected patients and makes sure that each surface is disinfected after they leave.

"When people think of a nurse, they do not often think about

this work, but preventing further infection is an integral part of the recovery process even in non-Covid times," she says.

When Covid-19 cases started in the city in the beginning of March, Sarawathy knew it was only a matter of time before there would be an explosion in the number of cases. As the number started to balloon, wary of the close contact with Covid-19 patients, her two daughters, one an MBA graduate and another a BBA student, urged her to avail of leave.

Sarawathy says the oath that she took rings in her ears. "We took an oath to serve, protect and help when we can. Now is the time that the city needs us," she says.

But then she pauses and in a moment of vulnerability admits, "even I have my anxieties, I live with my family. It is scary, but I have a responsibility." She takes every precaution possible. As soon as she reaches home, she changes out of



Infection control nurse A H Sarawathy demonstrates the method to wear PPE to the staff in Victoria Hospital, Bengaluru.

her clothes and heads for a bath and isolates herself in a room.

Besides, she assures, with 23 years of nursing experience under her belt, and having confronted other outbreaks in the past, she feels handling Covid-19 is not out of her reach.

Sarawathy works with a team of six. Each ward has separate colour-coded bins for general, food, PPE, syringe, vials. These are carried in closed trolleys by the housekeeping staff. The team was

ON THE  
FRONT LINE

keeping people safe, "but I get a little sad when people who have known me for years avoid me."

He particularly admires Sarawathy's sister for her unending support for her team. "Even in her busy schedule, she calls up them to check if we've eaten and if we are wearing our gear properly," he smiles.

"In fearful situations like this, it is important to keep your peers happy, they should feel supported," Sarawathy says.

Two of her colleagues tested positive this month for the virus, "they were anxious, but we keep in constant communication with them, sending them positive WhatsApp messages and listening to them," she says.

As cases continue to pour in, Sarawathy says, "This is our agni-pariksha (trial by fire), and we will not give up until the city, the state and the country are Corona free."

## Former MLC Puttanna tests positive for Covid-19

## Infections continue to swell in virus-hit Ballari, DK

RAMANAGARA/BALLARI/  
VIJAYAPURA/HASSAN, DHNS

Former Member of Legislative Council (MLC) Puttanna on Saturday became the second high-profile politician from the state to contract novel coronavirus. On Thursday, Mangalore North MLA Y Bharath Shetty had tested positive for Covid-19.

Puttanna, whose term ended on June 21, 2020, took to Facebook to confirm that he has tested positive for the virus.

"I had fever and hence got tested for Covid-19 on Thursday. My report came back positive on Friday. I am undergoing treatment at a hospital. With God's grace and your wishes, I am confident that I will recover soon..." Puttanna, wrote on his Facebook page.

Magadi MLA A Manjunath



Health workers in PPE disinfect ambulances near the Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences in Ballari on Saturday. DH PHOTO

can breathe easy as his throat swab sample has returned negative for Covid-19. He went into self-quarantine three days back after his personal assistant tested positive.

Meanwhile, Ballari continued to remain the worst-hit district after Bengaluru Urban.

The district reported 50 fresh infections in the last 24 hours. Saturday's cases took the Ballari's Covid tally to 1,168. Of which, the Toranagallu-based Jindal steel plant (JSW) cluster alone has accounted for more than 400 cases.

A health department staff was among those tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday.

**Virus hits VIMS staff**

The designated Covid hospital, Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS), was sani-

tised on Saturday after as many as 19 medical and health staff, including doctors, staff nurse, lab technicians and PG medical students, tested positive for the virus in the last four days. More than 20 VIMS staff have been placed under quarantine.

Dakshina Kannada saw yet another spike in infections with 75 cases on Saturday.

Among the new cases are a newborn (10-day-old) and an 86-year-old man. A total of 29 people with influenza-like illness, 11 foreign returnees, six

SARI patients and 24 contacts of the Covid-19 patients among others have tested positive for the virus, Deputy Commissioner Sindhu B Roopesh told reporters.

## Covid warriors face heat

The number of corona warriors catching the infection is increasing with each passing day.

A doctor with the community healthcare centre (CHC) at Nidadgundi in Vijayapura tested positive for the virus on Saturday. Tahsildar Shivaling-

ga Prabhu has ordered to seal down the CHC.

Basavana Bagewadi and Kudgi police stations in the district were sealed after a cop each tested positive for Covid-19. The policemen were deputed for Covid-19 duty at the containment zone and the designated hospital, SP Anupam Agarwal told reporters.

Five civic workers of KR Pet TMC were among the 35 fresh infections reported from Mandya district on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the death of a 32-year-old man, a bakery owner in Holenarsipura has sparked concern among the Hassan district administration.

The baker was shifted to the government hospital after he collapsed at his house on Friday night. He died a while later and tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday. A policeman from Channarayapatna, and two KSRTC conductors from Hassan and Arasikere depots also tested positive for Covid-19.

On Saturday, as many as 19 districts reported infections in double digits with 14 of them recording more than 25 cases.

## Govt banks on community involvement to fight pandemic

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government has formed a dedicated group of officers to involve citizens in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in the urban areas.

Senior IAS officer L K Atheeq has been made the head of the committee responsible for community involvement.

"The idea is to involve community-level monitoring of Covid-19, guiding patients to basic healthcare, taking them to fever clinics, home quarantine, hospitalization of symptomatic and serious cases, general outreach," Atheeq said.

Atheeq will have two IAS officers - C Shikha and B B Cauvery - and IPS officer P S Harsha in the committee.

"More importantly, we want to monitor the ILI and SARI cases," Atheeq said.

## ◆ WEATHER ◆

## Overview

Rain/thundershowers likely to occur at most places over South Interior Karnataka and Coastal Karnataka and at a few places over North Interior Karnataka.

**Forecast 05:** Rainfall occurred at isolated places over the State.

## INTERIOR NORTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	NA	NA	NA
Vijayapura	30.9	22	00
Dharwad	25.3	20.5	2.4
Haveri	24.8	22	0.8
Kalaburagi	33.1	23.8	00
Raichur	32.6	24	00

## COASTAL

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Honnar	26.5	23	79.7
Karwar	26.2	23.9	119.2
Shirali	27.9	22.4	75.8
Mangaluru	28.7	22.9	86

## OTHER STATIONS

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
New Delhi	36	27	00
Kolkata	33	27	4.6
Mumbai	28	25	00
Chennai	33	23	8.6
Pune	29	23	2.4
Hyderabad	32	22	6
Trivandrum	30	24	2.3

## ◆ RESERVOIR LEVELS ◆

Name of the Reservoir	Full level*	Present level*	In feet
KRS	124.80	97.82	
Kabini	2284.00	2262.73	
Tungabhadra	1633.00	1591.26	
Malaprabha	2079.50	2053.70	
Almatti	1704.81	1692.14	

Source: KSNDC

\*in feet

## OBITUARY

Shri M N Gopinath Rao

passed away peacefully in Bengaluru on 26.06.2020.

He had a deep passion and understanding of plants and nature.

He was also an ardent supporter of learning and education.

We will cherish and celebrate his ideals in our lives.

Fondly remembered by Family and Friends as a loving and gregarious person.

In Memory Of

Smt. Nagamani Chandrasekhar

07-08-1935 - 26-06-2020

Wife of Late N.S. Chandrasekhar, Daughter in Law of Justice Nittoor Srikrishna Rao.

Ex International Inner Representative, Founder, Scham Clinic of Homeopathy

With love and fond remembrance from Children Anupama Jayashima (+91 96110 9800) and Raghuram Nittoor (+91 95388 02875), their spouses, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

## BATTLE BEYOND BOUNDARIES

## Mysuru-based PG med student is Assam's 1st plasma donor

SUMIR KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI, DHNS

A 26-year-old doctor from Mysuru won many hearts in Assam after he became the first person in the state to donate plasma, on Friday, for treating Covid patients.

Lithikesh D S, who is doing his third year post graduation in medicine in Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), turned up to donate his plasma two weeks after recovering from Covid-19. He had tested positive at GMCH on May 7.

"I said yes as soon as our pathology department contacted me for plasma through my professor. After all, plasma can save someone's life," Lithikesh told DH.





# DH Classifieds

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**SALE:** 2 BHK- 1087 Sqf  
Corner, Three Balconies,  
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Brokers Excuse. Call:  
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**2BHKK NEW Apartment**  
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**SITE FOR SALE** 3800sqft,  
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**REQUIRED FOR** Immediate  
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**AVAILABLE BDA Site**  
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Layout 1st Block  
30x40 East Facing  
Good Location, 6th  
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Buyers: 9743381719.....

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### Vishweshwariah Layout

**SALE:**  
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Independent and Duplex-3  
Floors- 9845230619,  
9980733501.....

### Sites

**Banashankari**

**'AVAILABLE**  
/WANTED'BDA Sites  
Banashankari 6TH  
Stage, 20x30,30x40,40x60,  
50x80.Genuine  
Buyers/Sellers:  
9902764626,  
9731907455.....

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9845390290,  
9591369367.....

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7892586674.....

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# Former TDP minister arrested in YSRCP leader's murder case

HYDERABAD, DHNS

The Andhra Pradesh Police on Saturday arrested TDP leader and former minister Kollu Ravindra in connection with the murder of YSRCP leader Moka Bhaskar Rao last month.

According to M. Ravindranath Babu, Krishna district Superintendent of Police, Kollu was part of a plan hatched by a few others to eliminate Rao, a close aide of YSRCP minister Perni Venkata Rao.

The murder took place at the Machilipatnam fish market on June 29. Five people,

including a local TDP leader Nanchariah, were arrested earlier in the case.

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Kollu, who was the backward class welfare minister between

2014 and 2019. The swindled amount is about Rs 150 crore out of a total procurement allocation of Rs 988 crore.

Three more former TDP ministers — Yamalama Ramakrishnudu, Nimmakayala Chinarajappa and Ch Ayyana Patrudu — are facing the arrest threat in cases booked against them under the SC/ST (Atrocities Prevention) Act.

TDP chief Naidu has accused Chief Minister Jagann Mohan Reddy of resorting to "vengeful" arrests of party's Backward Class leaders to damage the TDP. Backward Class are considered TDP's strong voter base.

The scam took place when he was the labour and employment minister between

**KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED**  
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprises)

Office of the Executive Engineer KNNL UTP Division, Shivamogga. Phone No. 08182-254832

1. Tender Notice No.: KNNL/U.T.P. D/PB-3/Tender/16 Date: 02.07.2020 2. Tender Notice No.: KNNL/U.T.P. D/PB-3/Tender/17 Date: 02.07.2020

## SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement only)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KNNL, Bengaluru, the undersigned invites tender through e-procurement portal from eligible contractors for three (3) works.

1) Approx. amount put to Tender: From Rs. 23.09 lakhs to Rs. 57.32 lakhs. 2) Last date for questions / clarifications regarding the Tender: 07.07.2020 up to 17.30 hrs. 3) Last date for submission of filled tenders: From 02.07.2020 to 10.07.2020 up to 17.30 hrs. (During Office Hours)

Date of opening of Tender / Details of work / E.M.D. Amount / Terms and Conditions of the Tender / Class of Contractor and further details can be obtained in the Tender Notification or from the office of the undersigned during office hours or through website <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Executive Engineer,  
KNNL UTP Division, Shivamogga.

DIPR/sm/No.24/07/mca/20-21

## Shivamogga City Corporation,

Office of the Executive Engineer

Shivamogga City Corporation, Shivamogga

No. 02/प्रकाशकाकावी-1/कंटेनर: 14/2020-21 Date: 03.07.2020

## Tender Notification (Two-cover system)

The Executive Engineer (Division -1), on behalf of Commissioner, Shivamogga City Corporation, has invited tenders in double cover system through e-procurement portal for providing 50 Nos. of Data Entry Operators. The interested Agencies can participate as per details given in tender document. More details can be obtained from the Office of Executive Engineer and also from e-procurement portal: [www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in).

**SI No:1.** Regarding providing 35 Nos. of Data Entry Operators for various Divisions of Shivamogga City Corporation. Nos: 35 Approximate amount (Rupees in lakhs): 75.50 Details EMD (In rupees): 1,51,00,000

2. Regarding providing 15 nos. of Data Entry Operators for Electoral Division of Shivamogga City Corporation. Nos: 15 Approximate amount (Rupees in lakhs): 32.50 EMD (In rupees): 65,00,000

The schedule of the tenders are as follows:

Last date to apply for tender forms through e-procurement payment: On 18.07.2020 (Upto 4.00 PM) Date of opening of technical bid through e-procurement: On 20.07.2020 (after 4.30 PM) Date of opening of financial bid through e-procurement: On 22.07.2020 (after 4.30 PM.)

Sd/-Executive Engineer—Division I City Corporation, Shivamogga

**KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION  
MANDYA DIVISION, MANDYA**

No: KST/MDY/TR/Com/156/2020-21 Date: 04.07.2020

## Negotiation Notification-06/2020-21

Subject: KSRTC, Mandya Division has invited tenders for advertisement through e-Procurement mode, the interested individuals/Parties/Contractors/Agencies/Firms/Social Organizations etc, are eligible to bid for (Bidders Should Possess Digital Signature Keys from e-Procurement cell) hoardings, Arch Unipoles, Glow Sign Boards, Platform Boards, Pillar Boards Advertisements at all bus-stands of its jurisdiction. The period of contract is 05 years. Download negotiation documents from "<http://www.ksrtc.in>" website. Submitting Negotiation application and Negotiation will be held on date: 22.07.2020 at 15.30 Hrs. For more details KSRTC, Mandya Division, Mandya on Contact no. 7760990652, 7760990661.

No: KSTMDY/TR/COM/158/2020-21 Date: 04.07.2020

## TENDER NOTIFICATION No.08/2020-21 (Through e-Procurement Portal only)

Applications are invited from interested parties through e-Procurement portal for Mechanized and Non-Mechanized cleaning and maintenance of Mandya Division Office and KSRTC Bus Stations of Mandya, Madduru, Malavalli, Nagamangala, K.R.Pete, Pandavapura, Srirangapattana, Melukote, Chinakurali, Belakavadi, Kikkeri, Halaguru, Bannuru, Adichunchanagiri, Koppa and K.M.Doddi and Crew rest rooms of Malavalli, Srirangapattana and Melukote Bus Stands in Jurisdiction of KSRTC, Mandya Division through Mechanized and Non-Mechanized House Keeping System. (1) Last date for enquiries: 15.07.2020 time 11.30 a.m. (2) Pre-bid Meeting will be held on: 15.07.2020 time 11.30 a.m. (3) Last date and time for submission of tender documents: 28.07.2020 at 17.00 Hous. (4) Submission of EMD DD and application DD: 29.07.2020 from 10.30 a.m. to 30.07.2020 till 17.00 Hours. (5) Opening of prequalification offers (Technical Bid): 04.08.2020 at 11.30 a.m. (6) Opening of commercial offers: 12.08.2020 at 11.30 a.m. For more information please contact our office No: 7760990652/7760990661 e-Portal Helpdesk: 080-46010000/ 080-22631200. e-Mail: <https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in>, [hphelpdesk.blr@intarcom.com](mailto:hphelpdesk.blr@intarcom.com) or [hphelpdesk.blr@gmail.com](mailto:hphelpdesk.blr@gmail.com)

Sd/- Divisional Controller, KSRTC.  
Mandy Division, Mandya.

DIPR/BU/479/MCA/2020-21

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Executive Engineer, No. 2, Building Division Bangalore on Behalf of Governor of Karnataka has invited item rate tender consisting of two cover system from Registered in PWD, eligible Class 2 & 3 and above tenderer for the work of various places in Bangalore - Bhimanagar, K.R. Circle and Koramangala with various Annual Maintenance works as below (KPWD/2020-21/BD/ WORK\_INDENT124497, KPWD/2020-21/BD/WORK\_INDENT124498, KPWD/2020-21/BD/WORK\_INDENT124499, KPWD/2020-21/BD/WORK\_INDENT124500 & KPWD/2020-21/BD/WORK\_INDENT124501) as per the Karnataka transparency in Public Procurement Act-2000 KW-3&4 rules, through Karnataka Government E-procurement Portal. Time limit for completion of the works and The Cost of tender processing amount is mentioned in E-protal. Maximum Amount put to tender: Rs. 127,54,284.27. Minimum Amount put to tender: Rs. 57,75,568.92. Maximum E.M.D: Rs. 1,91,500/. Minimum E.M.D: Rs. 1,29,400/. Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of the government of Karnataka from 02.07.2020. Last Date for submission of filled tenders through e-portal on 10.07.2020 upto 04:00 pm. Tenders will be opened through e-portal on 13.07.2020 at 04:30 pm. For further information please visit the website <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> and also from the above office during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer  
No.2 Building Division, Bangalore

DIPR/B-Urban/473/2020-21

**SHIVAMOGGA CITY CORPORATION,**  
Office of the Executive Engineer

Shivamogga City Corporation, Shivamogga

No. 02/प्रकाशकाकावी-1/कंटेनर: 14/2020-21 Date: 03.07.2020

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**OUR LIVES MATTER: INDIA MUST WAKE UP TO THE DANGERS OF THE POLICE BECOMING LAW UNTO THEMSELVES**

# Police impunity must end

The custodial deaths of an elderly man and his son in the Sathankulam police station in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, were a shocking eye-opener, if one was required, of what passes for policing in India. Those in uniform have in many cases become law unto themselves rather than the protectors of the rule of law. A long and pervasive culture of impunity, built into the police and political structures, has led to this state of affairs. Supreme Court-directed police reforms haven't happened because neither the police nor the politician is interested in such reform. A massive people's movement, such as the US Black Lives Matter protests in the US, may be the only to force those reforms through and ensure that citizens' legal and human rights are not violated in our police stations.



DEVIKA PRASAD

In late June, a 60-year-old man, P Jayaraj, and his son Emmanuel Bennix (31) died in custody after being tortured and assaulted for two days by police officers of Sathankulam police station in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu. Police officers, and others, reportedly beat and assaulted them, including forcible anal penetration with batons. They were arrested on June 19. Their crime: Jayaraj had kept his mobile phone shop open slightly beyond lockdown closing hours; and his son had later sought to defend and protect his father from police abuse. The killings symbolise the horrifying extent of police atrocities against persons in custody.

At first, the police denied any wrongdoing, buried itself only with perfidious suspensions, and dragged its feet on registering an FIR. The dogged intervention of the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court from June 23 has upturned seemingly limitless impunity into accountability. By July 2, policemen were booked for murder, wrongful confinement and tampering with evidence. To date, five policemen have been arrested and investigations have begun.

It is a relief that the rule of law has prevailed at this moment. However, that should not detract from the pervasive impunity that police forces enjoy, which enabled the killings and continues to cast its shadow on the case. The circumstances that allowed them to wilfully violate the legal and human rights of the two citizens are pervasive in the criminal justice system across the country.

## Gurgaon school bags top award for low cost isolation shelter

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** The Sushant School of Architecture, Gurgaon, has bagged the first prize in the competition held recently for designing low cost, effective and innovative quarantine shelters.

The competition was organised by Kaarwan ([www.kaarwan.com](http://www.kaarwan.com)), a social initiative by Architecture graduates of IIT-Roorkee who tied up with the Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) for the competition.

Students from across India participated in overwhelming numbers and they received over 300 design ideas for quarantine facilities.

The winning team, Rishabh Denis Rodrick, Khush Anand Gupta and Shrey Gupta designed a solution called 'Pichku Quarantine Facility' which is a prefabricated modular proposal aimed at rapid and dynamic deployment.

A press release said overall, the design solutions provided by the students can be easily constructed anywhere at a minimal cost.



## Lives Matter

- In the US, the recent killing of a Black man by a White policeman in Minneapolis led to the nation-wide protest Black Lives Matter movement.
- The protests compelled police forces to "take the knee" and apologise to citizens, withdraw highhanded behaviour and military-style weapons.
- In many cases of genuine introspection on their part, police forces themselves joined the protests.
- City Councils and state legislatures moved to disband or defund police forces.
- Why didn't India protest the custodial deaths of Jayaraj and Bennix?

## Anti-torture Measures

- Kerala Police have an anti-torture measure.
- Section 96 of the Kerala Police Act 2011 says any police officer who knows of "physical torture" going on should report it to his/her seniors.
- It shields such a whistleblower from internal reprisal.
- No other state police has such a provision. Why?
- Such a provision could have been a shield for Revathy, the woman constable who was brave enough to give a statement in the Thoothukudi case.

The very basis of Jayaraj and Bennix's arrest and detention by the police was to be strongly challenged. With it, the recourse to punitive action by the police as routine, virtually automatic, across India that goes unquestioned. It is important to recall a central axiom laid down by the Supreme Court in *Joginder Kumar vs State of UP and Others*: "the existence of the power to arrest is one thing, the justification for the exercise of it is quite another".

Even if the police claim that Jayaraj refused to shut his shop and put up resistance are to be believed, arresting him was not required. A mode of policing predicated on non-punitive action and skilled in effective communication and persuasion would have desisted from the punitive action of arrest – particularly against an elderly, unarmed man. As for Bennix, he was reportedly not even on the scene and yet he, too, was implicated for the same offences as his father. If the police could not restrain themselves from punitive action in a simple matter of a shop being open a little late past lockdown time, is there any hope of restraint from them in more challenging scenarios?

In the din of torture and extra-legal practices, the rigour of mandatory legal practice to justify arrest itself is rendered non-existent. We have no idea if

the police gave written reasons for the arrests as they were legally bound to. We can discern from the available reporting that the Sathankulam Judicial Magistrate did not ask for reasons, or any supporting materials like the FIR or case diary, to make his own determination, in writing, that the arrest was legal and further detention justified, as he was mandated to.

The magistrate's vigilance would have been the strongest chance of saving the lives of Jayaraj and Bennix, especially as the police stripped them of their right to a lawyer. One glance towards the unfortunate men would have alerted him to their precarious health and injuries. He would have realised they had been denied legal representation and the medical examination neglected severe bodily harm. There is indeed a strong reason to endorse the call by a retired High Court judge for the magistrate's dismissal. Magistrates across the country must be woken up to the import of their role as the first check on the police.

This case typifies the normalisation of torture in police custody in India. The inhuman acts perpetrated on Jayaraj and Bennix mimic those thought to be reserved for so-called terrorists or anti-nationals. The "types of accused" tortured by the police is not static. The

National Human Rights Commission's 2016-17 Annual Report says it plainly, "Custodial violence and torture is so rampant in this country that it has become almost routine". In the hours that the father and son were in Sathankulam police station, nothing resembling policing was occurring, only pure depravity. This has loud echoes across the supra-security contexts of Kashmir, Manipur, Chhattisgarh to Hindi heartland states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It is the systemic perpetration of torture that binds the tight knot of impunity.

It will take sustained efforts by the media, civil liberties groups, victim families and the courts to bring the uniformed perpetrators to book, as in the present case. Our policing system does not regulate itself to root out torture.

There is no doubt that the perpetrators among the district police have grown emboldened, knowing that their excesses in the past have gone unpunished – the cascade of torture victims that have come to light following the custodial deaths, all hurt by the same officers of Sathankulam police station, reveal as much. Once police impunity sets in, it resists accountability at every turn. No less than the Kovilpatti judicial magistrate, who conducted the mandatory inquiry into the deaths with the full backing of the High Court, was subject to insult, intimidation and obstruction by the Sathankulam police, in the presence of silent senior officers, including the district police chief. His swift response in reporting the obstruction in an email to the High Court, however, at least initiated a case of criminal contempt against the police officers present.

What took place in Sathankulam police station are among the gravest crimes, enabled by a culture of impunity. This calls into question the legitimacy of the police leadership itself. The Madurai bench of the Madras High Court has set a strong precedent of resolute action and monitoring. Immediate next steps must hold senior officers, starting with the district SP, responsible for the torture under their watch. For now, only a court-monitored investigation has a chance of sustaining against police impunity.

(The writer is Programme Head, Police Reforms, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi)

## Thoothukudi Again

- In May 2018, Thoothukudi police opened fire on a crowd peacefully protesting against the expansion of the Vedanta Group's Sterlite Copper Unit.
- Unidentified shooters in plain-clothes were involved.
- 11 protesters were killed in front of the district collectorate, and more in police action on the streets following the firing.
- Despite inquiries by the National Human Rights Commission, a single judge Commission of Inquiry, and CBI, no action has been taken against any police or government official yet.

## Something drastic needs to be done to reform the police



COLIN GONSALVES

suffer and quit.

The higher judiciary has given hardly a glance at the precipitous decline in police integrity over the last decade. Not many cases are now reported on police criminality as compared to the earlier decades. It does not figure in the judiciary's agenda of important public interest issues that require internal discussion and a plan of action. Freed from the earlier scrutiny that the judiciary exercised over the police, the latter have become law unto themselves. By the time the judiciary wakes up to the danger of large-scale police contempt up to the rule of law, it could well be too late.

Against the general trend, the Supreme Court in a recent judgement held that it was usually unnecessary to arrest any person for any offence which carries a sentence of less than seven years. Investigation can be done without incarceration. This was suggested as a measure to control arbitrary arrests as well as to control the ever-expanding undetrial population in prisons. Nevertheless, unnecessary, and worse, politically motivated, arrests continue and the police pour people into jails in ever increasing numbers using the power of arrest to spread terror and to extort money. Despite the ruling in Madhu Limaye's case that no arrests should be made merely on suspicion that a crime may be committed in the future, thousands of innocent persons, including workers returning home late at night after a shift's work, are picked up by the police and money taken from them or they are jailed.

The only Supreme Court decision in the recent past that stands head and shoulders above all others is the decision in the Manipur case relating to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act where the court ordered the prosecution of the police and army personnel for allegedly engaging in fake encounters. Even men in uniform are not immune from prosecution in a criminal court for crimes they have committed.

Something drastic needs to be done. Perhaps like in Minneapolis, where a White police officer killed a Black man, George Floyd, recently, entire police forces must be disbanded. There is no doubt that the perpetrators among the district police have grown emboldened, knowing that their excesses in the past have gone unpunished – the cascade of torture victims that have come to light following the custodial deaths, all hurt by the same officers of Sathankulam police station, reveal as much. Once police impunity sets in, it resists accountability at every turn. No less than the Kovilpatti judicial magistrate, who conducted the mandatory inquiry into the deaths with the full backing of the High Court, was subject to insult, intimidation and obstruction by the Sathankulam police, in the presence of silent senior officers, including the district police chief. His swift response in reporting the obstruction in an email to the High Court, however, at least initiated a case of criminal contempt against the police officers present.

The root of the problem lies in the recruitment at the state level, where local politicians interfere at will and where criteria such as a person's innate attitude towards women, Dalits, poor people and minorities and other vulnerable sections of society is hardly tested.

Focusing on only physical – height and weight – standards, all kinds of anti-social elements get in easily. And then there is the usual presence of politicians and others who get in a large number of their own people. Finally, there are the usual stories circulating of persons paying those in the hierarchy of power to get appointed, and after that to get plum postings where the income is considerable and can be shared upwards.

With this kind of a mess, is it any wonder that policemen merrily commit terrible crimes – whether the merciless assault on students, breaking bones, cracking skulls and blinding a student at Aligarh Muslim University and the Jamia Millia or the torture and custodial deaths in Thoothukudi.

At root also is the pervasive control that the minister has over all aspects of police functioning, which makes the policeman a servant of the politician. There is no protection for an honest police officer to do his duty in accordance with the law and also rise in the hierarchy. A good officer must necessarily

(The writer is a well-known human rights lawyer and activist)

## NATION

### Modi: BJP gave representation to SC/STs, OBCs

ANAND MISHRA

NEW DELHI, DHNS

In the face of mounting criticism from the Opposition over his government's handling of the Covid-19 crisis and, in particular, the plight of migrants, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday highlighted the party's campaign to serve the poor during the lockdown and flagged the political representation given by BJP to OBCs, SCs and STs.

"At a time when everyone in the world is engaged in protecting oneself, we have dedicated ourselves to the service of the poor, ignoring personal concerns. Our karyakartas knew that they were taking risks, but continued to work with full dedication during this pandemic. Some workers even lost their lives while serving the people and the nation," Modi said addressing a video meeting attended by top Union ministers and party chiefs of the seven states affected by the migrant issue.

Modi asserted that the BJP has worked to empower de-



A man pushes a car, stuck in a flooded road, during heavy rain in Mumbai on Saturday. REUTERS

### UP cops' killing: Inspector had tipped history-sheeter of raid

**LUCKNOW, DHNS:** An Uttar Pradesh Police inspector was on Saturday suspended and taken into custody on suspicion of tipping history-sheeter Vikas Dubey about the raid during which eight cops were killed in Kampur on Friday.

Vinay Tewari, who was also the SHO of the nearby Chaubepur police station and part of the team that had raided Dubey's residence at Bikar village, was detained and quizzed by the special taskforce sleuths.

Sources said that Tewari had visited Dubey's residence on Friday in connection with

a case. Sources also said that the call details of the history-sheeter had revealed that he had cell numbers of many police personnel, including Tewari.

"The way the raiding police team came under fire from different sides clearly reveals that Vikas had prior information about the raid and that he was ready," said a senior police official in Kampur on Saturday.

Meanwhile, 25 police teams have been formed to nab the history-sheeter, who continued to be at large after Friday's encounter.

They were denied furlough and parole respectively.

The court said since the sentences awarded to the petitioners barred consideration for remission for a fixed number of years in the case of Valmiki and for the remaining life in case of Jha, they cannot be said to be eligible for grant of remission and consequently furlough.

### Jail term without remission not entitled to furlough: HC

ASHISH TRIPATHI

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Delhi High Court has ruled that a man, sentenced to life imprisonment without remission till he completes a particular term, cannot be granted furlough, which is a conditional release to break the monotony of prison life.

Such prisoners, however, are entitled to parole for re-establishing social and family ties, it

added. In a judgment, Justice Mukta Gupta answered in negative to a legal issue whether a convict, who has been sentenced for life with the stipulation that no remission would be granted for a particular period or for the remainder of the life, is entitled to furlough during the said period of sentence.

The court pointed out that the Supreme Court, in its various decisions, has held that pa-

### Amarnath Aarti on Doordarshan

**SRINAGAR, DHNS:** The Amarnath 'Aarti' this year will be telecast live on Doordarshan and in view of the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic, Jammu and Kashmir government has decided to allow only a maximum of 500 yatri to proceed from Jammu by road daily to perform darshan.

This was decided during a meeting of the sub-committee constituted by the Supreme Court for Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

### Police quiz Vellappally

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS:** NDA convener in Kerala and BDJS state president Tushar Vellappally was quizzed by the police on Saturday in connection with the recent suicide of a local leader of SNDP at Alappuzha. Tushar faced the allegation of abetting the suicide of SNDP local leader KK Maheshan. Some letters, purported to be suicide notes of Maheshan, said that he was being made a scapegoat in an ongoing Crime Branch probe into a cheating case related to a micro-financing scheme of the SNDP.

OUTSIDE THE  
ECO-CHAMBER



Vivek Kaul

lives to read  
crime fiction, and  
unlike his honest  
ancestors, makes  
a living writing on  
economics

@kaul\_vivek

# From Sadak to Sadak 2: OTT is an idea whose time has come

It was December 1991. Director Mahesh Bhatt's *Sadak*, starring Sanjay Dutt and Pooja Bhatt, had just released. I had queued up outside Welfare Cinema in Ranchi, hoping to watch the first day first show.

With most tickets being sold in black, tickets at the box-office ran out as soon as it was my turn to buy one. Given that it was the '90s, and everyone had a lot of time, I came back a couple of hours later to queue up for the second show. A helpful constable who had seen me queue up for the first show, got me the ticket for the second one.

Watching the movie turned out to be a miserable experience. The fans were not working. The seats were all broken and infested with bedbugs. And, I found Sadashiv Amrapurkar's character in the movie extremely repulsive.

Cut to 2020, nearly 30 years on, *Sadak 2*, the sequel, is all set to release on an OTT (over the top) media platform. I can watch the movie lying down on my bed, sipping coffee intermittently. It also means that I don't have to pay extra for exorbitantly priced popcorn and coffee that

multiplexes sell these days. Also, I can watch the movie anytime I want to, and even pause it. And on top of everything else, if I don't like the movie, I don't have to watch it completely. Switching the TV off is easier than walking out of a cinema hall after having paid for it. On the flip side, watching anything on a TV cannot be the same as the big screen experience.

Over the past few months, as Covid-19 has spread and it has become clear that it isn't going away any time soon, many movie producers have chosen to release their movies on OTT media platforms. It makes immense sense for them to do so.

Making movies is an expensive business. And unless a movie is released, there is no way that a producer can hope to recover the money invested. Also, many producers invest borrowed money into making movies. This money can only be repaid once the movie is released. Every month they don't repay the money, they need to pay interest on the outstanding debt. Even when big studios are

involved, unless a movie releases, the money invested in it remains stuck. This explains why movies of some of the biggest stars are releasing on OTT platforms.

For OTT platforms, buying up and releasing new movies make immense sense. Given that they are a new medium, they need to attract more and more people onto their platforms, and movies and cricket remain the easiest way to do so.

The strategy that helped private entertainment channels build a huge audience in the 1990s is playing out all over again. Even at that time, it was movie-related content (starting with film songs) that moved people away from Doordarshan to cable TV. This explains why some of the biggest TV entertainment channels have also gotten into the OTT business. The idea is to cannibalise their own business, before someone else does.

Of course, in all of this, the theatre owners and the multiplex owners are crying foul. Their monopoly over new movie releases has

been broken. And whenever any monopoly is broken, the incumbents are bound to get hurt. A similar thing happened when the first automobiles started to make an appearance, the horse-owners didn't like it one bit. But we all know how that played out.

Any new invention or innovation that offers more choice to the end-consumer should always be welcomed. If an individual wants to watch a movie only in a theatre, he will still be able to, once cinemas re-open post-pandemic. But entertainment is an important part of our daily lives, and right now, the new movie releases on OTT platforms are providing that.

Obviously, falling internet charges have made this strategy viable. Up until a few years back, one had to think before watching any video content on the phone, given how expensive internet bandwidth was.

As far as new filmmakers are concerned, OTT might just be a better platform for them. The way the film industry has evolved in the last two decades, a bulk of the money made

by any movie is made in the first few days of its release. Basically, the first weekend decides which way the movie will go. Will it be a hit or a flop? Hence, the chance for the word of mouth to work its magic is very low.

On an OTT platform, once a movie lands (as the OTT platforms like to put it), it remains there. Hence, the movie has a chance to do well over a period of time, if word of mouth works in its favour, unlike in a cinema hall where most movies get pulled down at the end of one or two weeks.

Further, there is one area where OTT platforms will have to innovate. Currently, every OTT platform wants consumers to take on a subscription. They need to gradually move to a pay-per-view system. I may want to watch a cricket match on an OTT platform but nothing else they have to offer. Same goes with a movie. With micropayments becoming possible, this shouldn't be difficult.

Let me conclude using a cliché, new movies on OTT platform is an idea whose time has come.

## DEBATES WITH MY DAUGHTERS

### What do you think of the UN?

I got mildly worried a couple of weeks ago when Airy became extremely knowledgeable about the Republic of Kazakhstan. When she informed me that the land-locked Central Asian country had transferred all the nuclear weapons it had to Russia back in the early 1990s and is a firm supporter of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), I was jolted into attention. When I started to explain why Astana adopted this position, she told me that my knowledge might be outdated because the capital itself has been renamed to Nur-Sultan, after the long-serving president who stepped down last year.

Airy, it turned out, had gotten into the Model United Nations (MUN) circle. She had been assigned the role of the delegate from the Republic of Kazakhstan (she insisted that I refer to the state by its official name) and was involved in discussions that included nuclear non-proliferation. We spent the next couple of days discussing what actually happened in the online MUN and many subsequent days talking about the United Nations.

I have long been a UN-sceptic. The Cold War ended when I was in high school and since then, its effectiveness has been far short of its presumed importance. The General Assembly is a propaganda pulpit for domestic audiences and the Security Council is a cover for permanent members to pursue their national interests. It couldn't stop genocides in the Balkans, Rwanda and Darfur; and despite proclaiming a Responsibility to Protect (R2P), it did nothing to save lives in the Middle East, and now in Myanmar. It didn't prevent the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France from invading other countries, nor indeed do much about brazen state-supported international terrorism in the 1990s and 2000s. The Human Rights Council is a travesty, with countries like China and Saudi Arabia getting to assess liberal democracies. Its specialist organisations from the ICAO, ITU and even the WHO have now caved in to Beijing.

The general point, I told Airy, is that it's an outdated outfit created by the victors of the Second World War and neither reflects the global power distribution today nor is equipped to handle global (as opposed to inter-national) issues. Therefore, she should focus on promoting the national interests of the Republic of Kazakhstan and not get carried away by highfalutin talk and principle. She assured me that she was doing just that, but could I offer good arguments in support of the United Nations?

So I asked my friend Richard Gowan, one of the best scholars of the UN. His main point was that we overlook a lot of very solid unglamorous work it does in offering food, shelter and medicine to lots of people around the world, in challenging circumstances. It would be a nastier world if WFP and UNHCR didn't exist. While we lament WHO's mistakes on Covid-19, we forget that it does important work every year on containing polio and malaria. A lot of multilateral diplomacy, he argued, is dull and technocratic but matters; and although moments of UNSC brilliance are rare, they have averted wars that might have otherwise occurred.

He also advised me not to destroy Airy's illusions about the UN. These arguments got her even more interested in MUN, which I think is a good thing.

Curious to find out where Fairy stood on the subject, I asked her last night what she thought of the United Nations. "I don't think about the United Nations," she replied.



Nitin Pai  
is an unapologetic  
proponent of dad  
jokes

@acorn



## THE LIVING STREAM

### The missing forum for farmers' welfare

In the evening primetime show, following the news of the financial package to revive the Indian economy in mid-May, a news anchor of a major television channel turned to the president of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII): "A voice from India Inc on what the PM has announced. What's your first reaction?" The guest said: "I'm smiling. I'm relieved. Within the first three weeks after the Covid crisis broke out, the CII asked for a package of roughly Rs 7 or 8 lakh crore. Last week, we upped our demand and asked for roughly Rs 15 lakh crore and that comprised a lot of things that we believed would take the country ahead. But the Rs 20 lakh crore package is way beyond our expectations."

Had any forum placed demands before the government on behalf of rural India? Why didn't the news anchor feel the need to seek a reaction from a farmers' representative? The absence of an all-India organisation to clarify to the government and to the country how best to secure the future of rural India, where two thirds of Indians continue to make their lives, must count as a bitter irony.

India has indeed seen several powerful farmer movements over the decades. Centred on charismatic leaders such as Mahendra Singh Tikait and MD Nanjundaswamy, these movements dissipated following their demise. Their inability to evolve a second rung of leadership and their decision to enter electoral politics, which made them vulnerable to tough electoral realities, are among the chief causes here.

Large mobilisations of farmers continue to be seen periodically. Two years ago, for instance, around 50,000 farmers in Maharashtra marched to Mumbai asking for assured minimum support prices and

compensation for crop damage. In the previous year, the Kisan Mukti March saw over one lakh farmers from across the country gather in New Delhi to ask for stable prices for their crops. Usually led by a coalition of farmers groups and political parties and focused on retail demands, such mobilisations have been short-lived.

Lobby groups of specific crop growers, like the sugar lobby in Maharashtra or the coffee growers' lobby in Karnataka, which bargain with the government to secure their sectoral interests, have been around. But a durable, non-partisan platform to articulate the concerns of Indian agriculturists is what is needed: a dedicated forum for understanding the means by which

**Chandan Gowda**  
looks for  
news ways  
of looking

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farm-based livelihoods can be sustained and nourished, to ask the government to act as if the welfare of rural India mattered,

to make Indians understand the sophisticated knowledge and art that constitute the activity of agriculture and take pride in how farmers enable food security as well as the dazzling culinary universe of the country.

Such a forum would proactively offer constructive policy proposals to the central and state governments and critically monitor their governance measures aimed at farmers. It would seek innovative solutions with the ideals of farmer autonomy and ecological sanity in view. (From this ethical vantage point, cooperative land cultivation is a wiser solution, for instance, to the prob-

lem of low productivity arising from small land-holdings, than contracting the latter out to large corporate companies, which would take away the autonomy of farmers in deciding what to grow or how to treat the soil). It would engage with democratically committed farmer and ecological activists, scholars and policy experts grappling with matters of agriculture across the country and abroad and emerge as an intellectual powerhouse in the world of Indian agriculture. It would build media platforms to help the wider public grasp the historical and contemporary picture of agrarian India. And, staying non-aligned between political parties, it would insulate the livelihood concerns of farmers from the cynical compulsions of party politics.

Farmers, of course, are not a monolith community: some of them are landed and some landless; some own large-sized holdings and some small ones; some have dry land and some have access to irrigated water; some grow cash crops and some food crops; some are upper caste and some lower. Internal differences like these, however, do not preclude the pursuit of a common maximum programme for farmers.

Building a forum for the welfare of Indian agriculture indeed needs ample financial and infrastructure resources, but a modest start needs to happen with the hope that it will galvanise goodwill and support towards ensuring a future for India's agriculture.

Over 330,000 farmers have taken their lives over the last 25 years. For economists and policymakers, the agricultural sector continues to be an afterthought. And, last month, three ordinances which are said to bring adverse shifts in Indian agriculture were passed by the central government without consultation with any farmer representatives. It cannot go on like this.



Mohamed Zeeshan  
is a student of all  
things global and  
master of none

@ZeeMohamed

This isn't the first time that Indian politicians have had trouble reconciling domestic rhetoric with foreign diplomacy. The list is too long to recount here. But in recent times, domestic politics has increasingly hurt India's interests overseas. Consider Home Minister Amit Shah's statement in Parliament last year, which now reads like a preface to the current stand-off in Ladakh. After abrogating Article 370, he said that his government would take back Aksai Chin from the Chinese: "We will give our lives for this region." The Home Minister may have impressed his domestic constituency, but he failed to consult the military and the foreign ministry before shooting off his challenge to China. Beijing immediately protested, and started to prepare. Months later, as soon as the weather allowed them, they were setting up camps on Indian soil.

Elsewhere, as India quibbled with Nepal over Kalapani, the Indian Army Chief pish-poshed Nepal's statements, saying that they were merely acting "at the behest of someone else." (Imagine Richard Nixon saying that to Indira Gandhi during the 1971 war!) Nepal then promptly redrew its map – with unanimous support from all parties in its parliament – to include the entire disputed region as its own territory.

Let's not even go into India's public positions on the American presidential elections: There, the prime minister and many members of his party have openly endorsed Donald Trump – and burnt most bridges that existed with the Democrats.

In all the above cases, the government has played to the gallery at home – stoking misplaced national pride and jingoism, at the cost of India's national security and foreign policy interests. Politicians say dangerously careless things because they believe that the voters reward dangerous carelessness – so long as it is what they want to hear. So, the onus is on the voters to tell them otherwise. The next time the Chinese come intruding, don't blame the prime minister if he is not fully honest with you.

## SANS THE SACRED

### Might, wit or craft – what's your formula to win in a conflict?



Anusha S Rao  
Is a doctoral  
student in Religion  
and oscillates  
between scholarly  
pursuits and abject  
laziness

@AnushaS Rao2

As if the world acknowledges that people under lockdowns need something to discuss and argue over, an unending number of conflicts have been in the news over the past month. Skirmishes of all kinds have been in the news lately – the clashes between India and China over the border, followed by the banning of apps with links to China; America's freeze on H-1B visas, and Pakistan referring to Osama bin Laden as a martyr.

Conflict is the foundation stone of any story, and so we have innumerable myths on winning fights – through might, wit, or craft. Everyone knows the four means to resolve conflict – through talks and alliances (sama), through gifts and bribes (dana), through dividing the enemy and causing dissension (bheda), and

finally through force or punishment (danda). But there are a zillion variations on these.

The Panchatantra tells us the story of a sandpiper bird who outwitted the mighty ocean. When the sandpiper's wife was about to lay eggs, she was considering safe places for a nest for the little ones. The sandpiper dismissed her and argued that their home by the ocean was the perfect spot. When she objected that the ocean could sweep away their eggs with a single wave, the sandpiper claimed to be much stronger than the ocean. Soon enough, the curious ocean swept the eggs away on a whim to see what the sandpiper would do.

The sandpiper, determined to fight back, teamed up with the other birds and ap-

proached Garuda, the king of all birds and Vishnu's mount. The sandpiper made it sound like the ocean had personally offended Garuda. "If the ocean dares to commit such an act towards us while we are in your care, Garuda, we think we are really weak and cannot fend for ourselves," the sandpiper argued. Garuda, dejected at the news, promptly poured out his woes to Vishnu, who ordered the ocean very sternly to give back the eggs he had stolen from the sandpiper. Talkabout using influence to get out of a scrape!

There is also the unfortunate story of a poor camel, Kathana. There was once a lion in a forest, who had three followers – a jackal, a leopard, and a crow. The lion, proud as he was, went on a hunt, and his friends ate the leftovers

once he was done. This was their usual routine, when a camel from elsewhere ventured into the forest and sought the shelter of the lion. He then joined the group, but of course, he didn't quite belong yet. Once, the lion got into a fight with a wild elephant and was gravely injured. Unable to hunt, he rested in a cave while he and his followers starved for days. The leopard, jackal, and crow tried to hunt by themselves, but ended up exhausted, with no prey.

So, they hit upon a plan – they would eat the camel! Just one problem, though: How could they eat someone who had sought refuge with them? Sticking to the letter of the law, they decided it would not be a crime if he were to offer himself up. But who would ever do that? The wily crow came up with a plan. They each

walked up to the lion, and told him, "I cannot bear to see you in this plight. Please accept me as your next meal and save yourself, and I will be freed of my debt of gratitude to you for taking care of me this long". The lion refused all three, saying they were too small to offer him any sustenance. So, the poor camel decided this was his chance to belong, by offering himself and being refused. Except, no sooner had he offered himself than the animals tore him apart and satisfied themselves.

Who is it that finally ends up losing every fight? This popular Sanskrit verse tells us – "It is not the horse, nor the elephant, and certainly not the tiger. It is the goat that ends up being sacrificed, for even fate destroys the underdog."



# US sends carriers to South China Sea during Chinese drills

Beijing and Washington have accused each other of stoking tension

WASHINGTON, REUTERS

Two US aircraft carriers were conducting exercises in the disputed South China Sea on Saturday, the US Navy said, as China also carried out military drills that have been criticised by the Pentagon and neighbouring states.

China and the United States have accused each other of stoking tension in the strategic waterway at a time of strained relations over everything from the new coronavirus to trade to Hong Kong.

The USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan were carrying out operations and exercises in the South China Sea "to support a free and open Indo-Pacific," the navy said in a statement. It did not say exactly where the exercises were being conducted in the South China Sea, which extends for some



A US fighter jet prepares to land on aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan following their patrol at the international waters off South China Sea. AP/PTI FILE

1,500 km and 90% of which is claimed by China despite the protests of its neighbours. "The purpose is to show an unambiguous signal to our partners and allies that we are committed to regional security and stability," Rear Admiral George M Wikoff said.

Wikoff, commander of the strike group led by the Ronald Reagan, said the exercises were not a response to those being conducted by China, which the Pentagon criticised this week as "counter-productive to efforts at easing tensions and maintaining stability".

## 'Boycott China' protest

A large number of Indian-Americans staged a protest against China at the iconic Times Square on Friday, demanding an economic boycott and a diplomatic isolation of the country for its aggression against India, PTI reports from New York. Members of the Tibetan and Taiwanese community also joined the protest against China.

## China's role suspected in Lanka's plan to review port deal with India, Japan

ANIRBAN BHUMIK  
NEW DELHI, DHNS



A view of Colombo Port City construction site, which is backed by Chinese investment. REUTERS FILE

As Sri Lanka is set to take a relook into its pact with India and Japan to develop and run the East Container Terminal (ECT) of the Colombo Port, New Delhi suspects that Beijing had nudged Colombo to review the 2019 tripartite deal.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has constituted a committee comprising of five senior officials to review the deal signed in May 2019 for development of the deep-sea container terminal. The move came after workers of the Colombo Port staged a stir and threatened to go on an indefinite strike if the government allowed any foreign country to develop the terminal.

The government headed by Rajapaksa and his brother Mahinda also accepted the demand of the workers to install in the ECT three gantry

majority share in the adjacent Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT).

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa was quoted by the island nation's media as stating that no final decision had been taken to allow India and Japan to develop and run the ECT.

A source said that New Delhi would still expect Sri Lanka to go by the 2019 agreement and initiate talks with India and Japan to finalise the shareholding pattern. He pointed out that the agreement would give the Sri Lanka Port Authority the majority of shares in the ECT – unlike the CICT, where the controlling stake is held by China. "Security and development of Sri Lanka and India are inseparable," the source said.

Sri Lanka is one of the Indian Ocean nations where China is trying to outsmart India to spread its geo-strategic influence.

## No need for talks with US: N Korea

SEOUL, AFP: North Korea does "not feel any need" to resume talks with Washington, a senior diplomat for the country said Saturday, days after Seoul called for a summit as it seeks improved ties with Pyongyang.

The statement by the North's vice foreign minister Choe Son Hui came after former US national security advisor John Bolton on Thursday reportedly said President

Donald Trump might pursue another meeting with leader Kim Jong-un in October.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in -- who has long backed engagement with the North -- on Tuesday also called for another meeting between Kim and Trump, saying the South would be making "utmost efforts" to make it happen.

Washington "does not consider the DPRK-US dialogue as nothing more than a tool for grappling (with) its political crisis", Choe said.

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**BFC academy gets two-star status from AFC**

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Bengaluru FC Academy was conferred with two-star Academy status by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) on Saturday.

In addition to the Indian Super League club, AFC also conferred the All India Football Federation with the AFC Elite Youth Scheme full membership status. The Reliance Foundation Young Champs Academy was also given a two-star status.

"We are delighted to confer to the All India Football Federation the AFC Elite Youth Scheme full membership status and the Reliance Foundation Young Champs Academy and JSW Bengaluru FC Academy the two-star Academy status, which is subject to re-evaluation after three years," the AFC said in a letter.

BFC is the only professional club to gain the recognition.

The Bengaluru club has their development programmes set across Bengaluru and Ballari while their Soccer Schools are set up in multiple states. Ballari also has the residential setup for the academy kids. And BFC CEO Mandar Tamhane was happy their work has been rewarded.

**SL minister ready to offer more evidence**

**COLOMBO, AFP:** Sri Lanka's former sports minister said on Saturday he has offered more evidence to cricket's world governing body that he says shows the 2011 World Cup was fixed.

Mahindananda Aluthgama's remarks come a day after local police dropped an investigation into the claims, citing a lack of evidence that Sri Lanka deliberately lost the final to hosts India. But Aluthgama, who was sports minister at the time and is now state minister for energy, said there were "powerful people who are spending huge sums of money to hush up the investigation".

He said that he has informed Alex Marshall, anti-corruption chief at ICC.

**United rip apart Bournemouth**

**LONDON, AFP:** Manchester United powered into fourth place in the Premier League with a 5-2 rout of struggling Bournemouth, while Leicester got back on track in a 3-0 win against Crystal Palace on Saturday.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side boosted their bid to qualify for next season's Champions League thanks to a swaggering display at Old Trafford.

Marcus Rashford, Anthony Martial, Bruno Fernandes and Mason Greenwood, who netted twice, were all on the score-sheet to lift United one point above fifth-placed Chelsea.

Third-placed Leicester are three points above United as the race to reach Europe's elite club competition heats up.

United have won their last four games in all competitions, scoring 13 goals in the process. They were rocked in the 16th minute when Junior Stanislas gave Bournemouth a shock lead. Stanislas' initial effort was blocked but he cleverly nutmegged Harry Maguire on the touchline and shot past David De Gea at his near post.

**Salary cap for Indian coaches removed**

**NEW DELHI, PTI:** The Sports Ministry on Saturday removed the Rs 2 lakh cap on the salary given to Indian coaches training elite athletes in a bid to encourage them to produce better results and attract former players to become high performance trainers.

The announcement came after the ministry's decision on Thursday to extend the contracts of all foreign coaches till September 30 next year and to make all future hiring -

**FORMULA ONE AUSTRIAN GP**

# Bottas upstages Hamilton

## Finnish driver seizes pole; Ferrari disappoint

SPIELBERG BEI KNITTELFELD (AUSTRIA), AFP

**V**altteri Bottas survived a high-speed spin as he upstaged Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton with a dazzling display Saturday to claim pole position for Sunday's delayed season-opening Austrian Grand Prix.

The Finnish driver outpaced the six-time champion with a best lap in qualifying in one minute and 2.939 seconds and then survived an 'off' into the gravel and a spin on his final lap to remain 0.012 seconds clear of the Briton.

It was Bottas' third pole at the Austrian Grand Prix and the 12th of his career, a feat that followed Hamilton's clean sweep of the three practice sessions on Friday and Saturday morning.

"It feels really good - I've missed this feeling," said Bottas. "The qualifying shakes! It's something special when

you push the car to the limit and I've been waiting for a long time - we seem to be in our own league."

Max Verstappen was third for Red Bull, half a second adrift of the two newly-painted 'black arrows' cars whose dominating performance delivered a 65th front row lockout for the team, equalling Ferrari's record.

Lando Norris was an impressive fourth for McLaren ahead of Alex Albon in the second Red Bull and Sergio Perez who was sixth in Racing Point's 'pink Mercedes'. Charles Leclerc was a disappointing seventh for Ferrari ahead of his future team-mate Carlos Sainz in the second McLaren, Lance Stroll in the second Racing Point and Daniel Ricciardo of Renault.

On a warm, sunlit afternoon in the Styrian Alps, Verstappen shone in Q1 before Mercedes found their rhythm. Five drivers were eliminated led by Kevin Magnussen of Haas, in



Lewis Hamilton (right) congratulates Valterri Bottas after the qualifying round at the Austrian Grand Prix on Saturday. AFP

16th along with George Russell for the improved Williams team, and Antonio Giovinazzi and his Alfa Romeo team-mate Kimi Raikkonen.

Canadian Nicholas Latifi, who crashed heavily in the second Williams in Saturday morning's third and final practice session, was 20th - a tough

baptism for the rookie on a day of encouragement for the 'up for sale' Williams team.

Bottas and Hamilton were first out on track for Q2 ahead of Stroll, the 'black arrows' running on softs while behind them, when he emerged, Verstappen took to medium compound tyres.

**Grid position (provisional times):**  
Valterri Bottas (Mercedes) 1:02.939,  
1; Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) 1:02.951, 2; Max Verstappen (Red Bull) 1:03.477, 3; Lando Norris (McLaren) 1:03.626, 4; Alexander Albon (Red Bull) 1:03.868, 5; Sergio Perez (Racing Point) 1:03.868, 6; Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) 1:03.923, 7; Carlos Sainz (McLaren) 1:03.971, 8; Lance Stroll (Racing) 1:04.029, 9; Daniel Ricciardo (Renault) 1:04.239, 10.

# Badminton great Lin Dan retires

SHANGHAI, AFP

**C**hina's two-time Olympic champion Lin Dan, arguably the greatest badminton player of all time, announced his retirement on Saturday aged 36.

It means that Lin, who won gold at the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Games, will not compete at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, which have been pushed back to next summer because of coronavirus.

The end of Lin's glorious career comes just over a year after the retirement of his great rival and friend, the Malaysian star Lee Chong Wei.

The duo reigned over badminton for more than a decade and have only relinquished that hold in recent years as their powers waned.

Lin, who had something of a "bad boy" reputation during his younger days and has several tattoos - unusual for Chinese athletes - ends with 666 singles wins and a glut of medals.

"My family, coaches, teammates and fans have accompanied me through many peaks and difficult troughs," he said

in a post on China's Twitter-like Weibo that quickly went viral.

**Dan good stats**

- Born: October 14, 1983
- Birthplace: Longyan, China
- Career records: Wins: 666; Losses: 128
- Career titles: 66
- Olympic champion: 2008 (Beijing), 2012 (London).
- World champion: 2006 (Madrid), 2007 (Kuala Lumpur), 2009 (Hyderabad), 2011 (London), 2013 (Guangzhou).
- World Cup gold: 2005 (Yi-yang) and 2006 (Yiyang).

Lee called his nemesis Lin "my greatest opponent". "Please believe that the laughter, tears and all the promises are unforgettable diary entries," the 37-year-old Lee wrote on Weibo.

As well as the Olympic golds, Lin was also a five-time world champion and long-time world number one.

He earned the nickname "Super Dan" at the peak of his career.

However, the left-hander's career has tailed off in recent years as age and injuries took their toll. Just last year he refused claims that he was about to retire following a series of first-round exits at tournaments.

At Rio 2016 Lin lost in the semifinal to Lee in what was a rare victory for the Malaysian on the biggest stage of all.

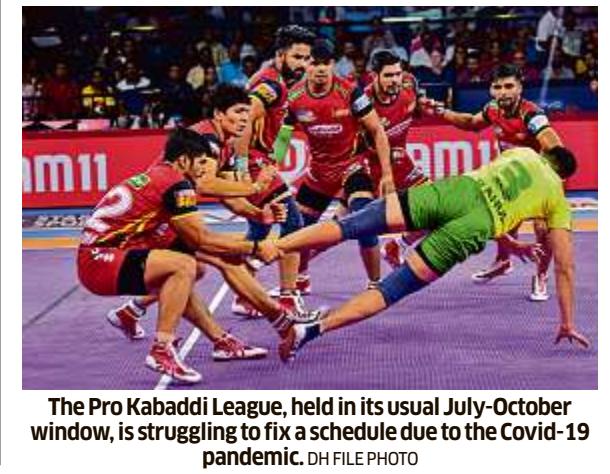
"Every forceful jump was a desire for victory. I have dedicated everything to this sport I love."

**Morata double spurs Atletico**

**MADRID, REUTERS:** Atletico Madrid stayed firmly on course to secure Champions League football next season after two goals by Alvaro Morata and a late strike from Koke gave them a 3-0 home win over struggling Mallorca in La Liga on Friday.

The result left Atletico third on 62 points from 34 games, five ahead of fourth-placed Sevilla and eight in front of fifth-placed Villarreal who both have a game in hand.

Morata fired Atletico ahead in the 29th minute with a twice taken penalty after goalkeeper Manolo Reina was harshly adjudged to have come off his line when he saved the initial spot-kick. Morata doubled the home side's lead on the stroke of halftime.



The Pro Kabaddi League, held in its usual July-October window, is struggling to fix a schedule due to the Covid-19 pandemic. DH FILE PHOTO

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# Pro Kabaddi League stares at uncertainty

## PKL faces multiple challenges to get going this year

cities, there was a plan to hold the league in just one venue. The plan was to reduce the 130-day league to 90 days and hold it in front of minimal or no spectators," said a source.

The source added the idea has now seemed to have fallen flat with growing talks of the BCCI zeroing in on the September-November window for IPL as both leagues have the same broadcaster. "The rising cases mean the foreign players are apprehensive to participate."

The biggest problem for the organisers is the nature of the sport as Kabaddi cannot avoid physical contact. Charu Sharma, the PKL co-founder, said: "In my personal opinion, we can create biospheres and take as much care as possible. But you are dealing with a particularly large number of people. It's not easy to sanitise the venue completely for a long period of time," Charu told DH.

The PKL functions in a caravan format, with teams travelling from one city to another during the course of the league. Charu explained the complications involved in this process. "Sports like kabaddi are slated in multi-sport venues. In the current situation, many of these venues might not be available as they are being turned into centres to treat the Covid-19 patients. To get these venues at a complex set of schedules isn't easy," he said.

In case the league is cancelled, the PKL could lose the annual sponsorship deal of Rs 60 crore, from its title sponsor Vivo.

# The mystery of the great game

PAGE 3



# Silence of the looms

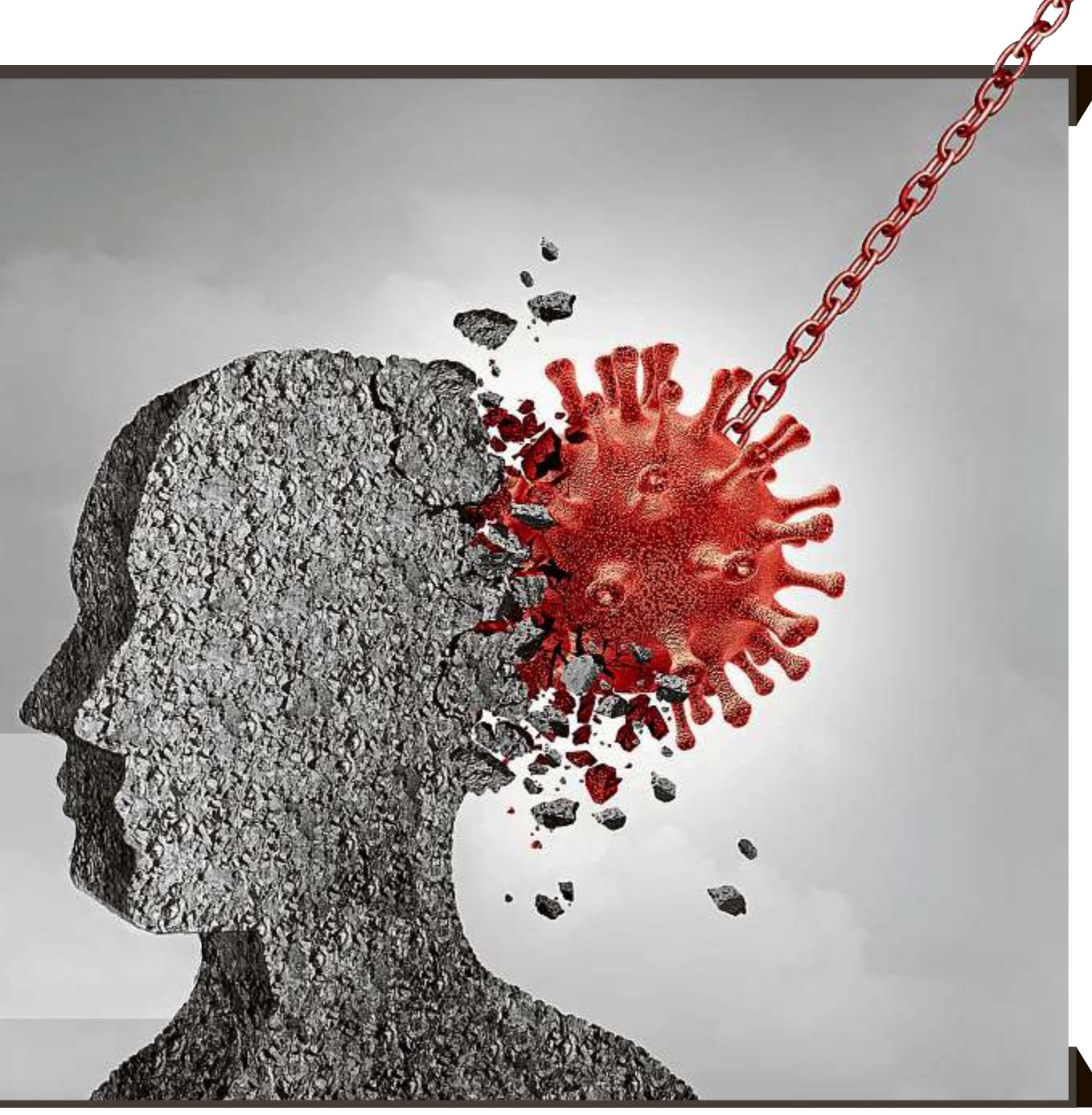
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# Sunday Herald

## MIND YOUR HEAD

In the second and concluding part of our mental wellness special, **Manoj Chandran** tells us how we can prepare ourselves better not only to cope with the current crisis, but also to deal with challenges in a post-pandemic world



**W**hen we first heard the word Coronavirus (and then Covid-19) in February, we were not sure what it would mean to us. We did not have the faintest idea of how it would change the world and our lives.

When my colleagues and I decided to close our office and shift work to our homes in mid-March, we told each other we shall meet in a fortnight's time. But then, on March 22, a lot changed in the way we started looking at the pandemic. In the time since then, if there's one word that I am constantly hearing in most conversations, it is 'uncertainty'.

**Not trained for uncertainty**  
And uncertainty or lack of predictability about our future is not something we are trained to handle or cope with. Any sudden change can have an adverse impact on our mental health, if we do not have an effective coping mechanism to deal with the change.

In a webinar conducted by our Foundation, Dr Shekhar Saxena, Professor of the Practice of Global Mental Health, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, said: "Fear is a strong emotion, along with apprehension. And then, the lack of control on the future and our circumstances. These are strong stressors." And, when we live with these stressors for a period of time, it can potentially lead to mental health issues, he added.

**What's your coping mechanism?**  
We all have our own coping mechanisms to deal with adverse and challenging situations. These coping mechanisms have been put to one of the toughest tests today. Aparna Joshi, practising psychotherapist and Assistant Professor at the School of Human Ecology, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, explains: "Most of us have had coping mechanisms to deal with normal stressors. A lot of these coping mechanisms were about going out or externalising ourselves. Taking a walk in the park, meeting friends, shopping, going on vacations and so on. During the lockdown (and post that), many of these options are not available. And we don't know how to adapt ourselves to suit the new reality or develop a new coping mechanism. That is one possible reason why people are reaching out to helplines (for their emotional distress)."

It is, therefore, not surprising that many mental health professionals have reported a spurt in mental health issues immediately after the lockdown was announced. The emotional dis-



### Take charge of your emotions

Dr Prabha Chandra, Professor of Psychiatry at NIMHANS, points out that people are not born emotionally resilient. However, it is possible to develop skills to successfully emerge out of tough situations. Here are her tips on how to control our emotions better to help us stay mentally healthy:

- Manage your emotions in a socially acceptable manner.
- Look at solutions rather than focussing only on problems.
- Manage conflicts through discussions.
- Be flexible with your environment, needs and expectations.
- Look back and think how you resolved problems in the past — this will also give you a sense of control.
- Reach out for support, whenever necessary.

tress faced by people have manifested in a range of issues. Anxiety, perhaps, has been the most commonly reported.

#### Relationship issues

It has also been noticed that relationship issues in the family have increased. Aparna points out that iCALL has received a number of calls from people saying that it was becoming difficult for them to stay with their family members. "While they are drawing energy from the place they call home, they are also being forced to negotiate their space from this very place. Old issues of fear and anxiety within the household are suddenly being triggered," she adds. This is also leading to a lot of cases of domestic violence. There are also cases of alcohol and substance use connected with the current situation. While we don't know if suicidality has increased due to these situations, several deaths due to suicide across

the country have been attributed to the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown. Though I must hasten to add that mental health issues may not always be a factor in deaths due to suicide.

#### Looking ahead

Various studies point out that during

large-scale adversities such as natural calamities or war, the prevalence of mental health issues can increase by as much as five times. We must know that by the time the pandemic is behind us, a far greater number of people would be emotionally affected by the pandemic and the drastically changing situations than those of us who will eventually be hit by the virus. Moreover, its impact on the mental health of several of us will be felt for a much longer time.

Therefore, there's a need to work towards ensuring that we, as individuals and collectively as a community, are resilient to the challenges that lay ahead of us.

At an individual level, each one of us must prioritise our mental health and take steps to stay emotionally resilient. We must also actively create a supportive environment for those among us who may be more vulnerable.

The first step to addressing the problems relating to mental health issues is to acknowledge its presence, or, if we are more aware, its triggers. We must accept that we are living in difficult times and they could lead us to emotionally stressful situations.

The next step is to be preventive in our approach. As a preventive step for our physiological health, several of us have learnt newer methods of boosting our immunity in the last two-three months.

Only because, we have been told that good immunity can help us combat the virus better. Similarly, we must learn to take preventive steps to ensure that we build emotional resilience.

In a recent discussion with me, Dr Prabha Chandra, Professor, Department of Psychiatry at NIMHANS, pointed out how having a purpose in our lives can help us build emotional resilience. "If people have a sense of purpose — if they are helping someone, reaching out to someone — then, even in a crisis, that purpose gives them a lot of meaning," she explained.

#### Bring a sense of purpose in your life.

- Use your internal resources, including your previously-tested coping methods.
- Pick a way to divert your mind off the triggers; by packing in activities, for instance.
- Maintain your social connections; build newer social contacts, if pos-

#### Simple coping tips

- sible. Ensure the connections you build are not toxic.
- Take pride and confidence in what you are able to do.
- These are difficult times and if you are coping, you ought to give yourself a pat.
- Follow a routine and stay as disciplined as possible.

#### Seek help here

Here's a mental health helplines' ready reckoner:

- NIMHANS (also GOI helpline): 080-46100007
- HelpAge India (for the elderly): 1800-180-1253
- National Commission for Women helpline for women experiencing domestic violence during Covid-19: +91 7217735372
- iCall helpline (specifically for Covid-19-related issues): + 91 9152987820
- Covid Saathi: +91 77025009238
- Swaasthi (by iCall for healthcare providers): +91 9152987824

We have our own **stress triggers** and we need to identify them. And we must stay away from those triggers or reduce our exposure to them, if possible. For instance, the daily dose of data on the spread of Covid-19 can be a trigger to some of us. So, consuming less of such 'news' can be helpful.

We must **acknowledge** that we are a social animal. Our social skills have been a strong coping mechanism for most of us. The pandemic and the lockdown have severely restricted our socialising activities. Even as we maintain physical distancing, we must not create social distancing.

Mental health experts point out to the greater need for us to maintain our social connectedness and build newer ones in times like these.

#### No shame in reaching out

Despite all our efforts, if we see the worsening of our mental health, we must reach out to someone to seek help. The earlier the better. We must accept the need for help and seek professional help, if needed.

Similarly, if we find someone around us who may seem to need help for their emotional distress, let us encourage them to reach out to a mental health professional. It is the delay in our decision to reach out for help that makes the matter worse. No symptoms or stress are too small to seek professional help.

Clearly, there would be some among us who may be more vulnerable to the stressors of the environment. We must identify them and reach out to them

and help them. People with a history of mental health issues are facing grave situations. Children, many of whom have been exposed to much longer periods of screen time and reduced socialising opportunities, can find themselves facing the risk of emotional distress. The geriatric population, those who have lost their jobs or earnings, women, whose rights have been curtailed due to the lockdown — there are several sections of our society who are vulnerable to severe emotional distress. We must reach out to them and help them seek professional help.

As much as we as individuals must take appropriate steps to prioritise our mental health, there's a strong need for the country's leadership to rise to the occasion as well. We must create greater awareness among people and educate them to become emotionally resilient.

It was heartening to see how several states set up helplines to address issues of mental health immediately after the lockdown was announced. This has not only helped those who need assistance, but also mainstreamed mental healthcare in a big way.

Workplaces, local communities, social service organisations and healthcare professionals — all must include mental healthcare in their plans to address the anxiety of the population at large.

The author is the CEO of White Swan Foundation For Mental Health, a non-profit knowledge service organisation.

#### Write to us at

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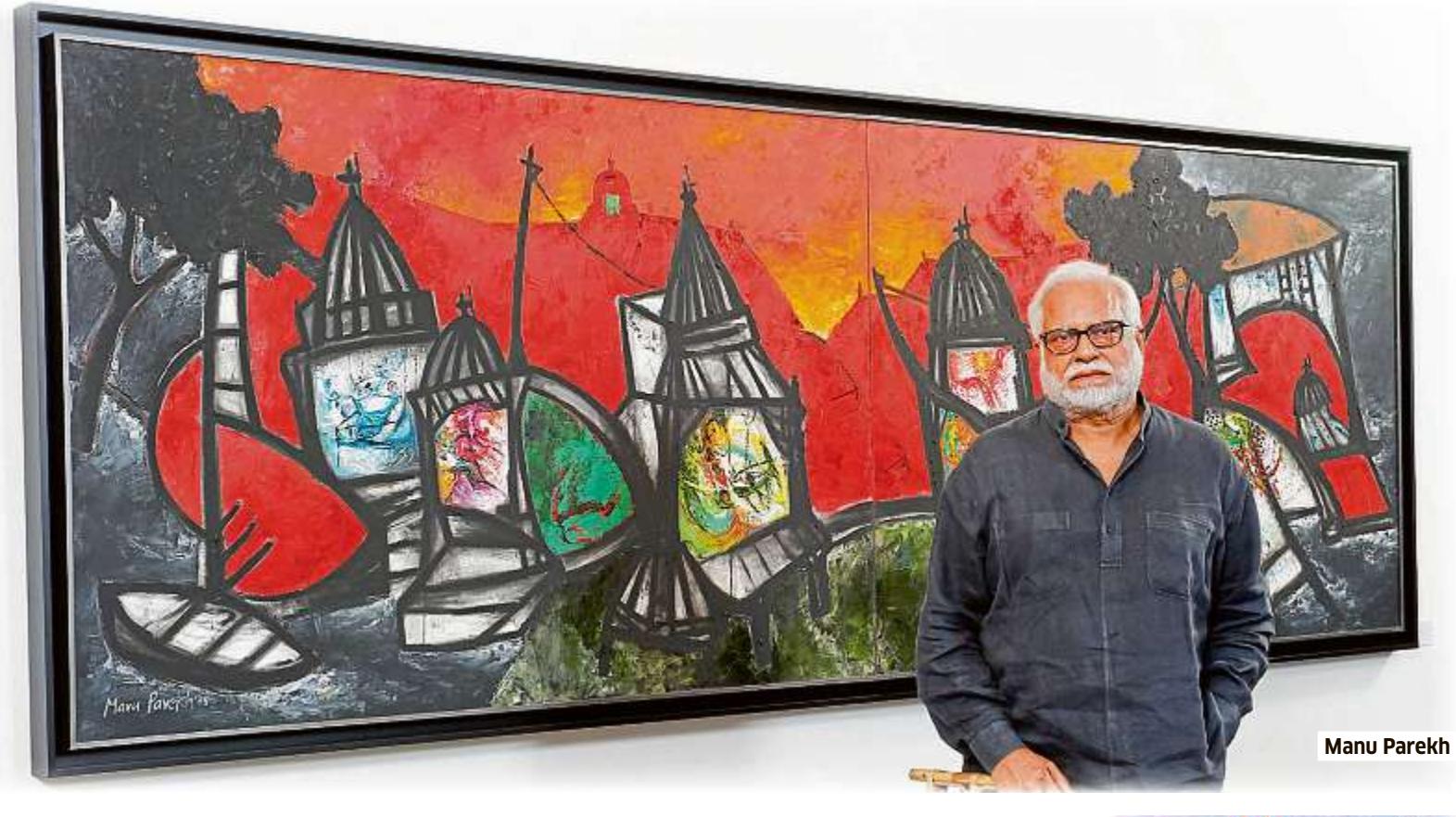


# SundayHerald ART & CULTURE

Viralart

With the pandemic raging on, the University of South Florida Contemporary art museum is hosting a real time exhibition on what artists are up to now. The exhibition is set to go on till December.

## PAINTER'S PARADIGM



Manu Parekh

The world has been in lockdown and I have been busy at home — painting," says the celebrated senior artist Manu Parekh from his home in New Delhi. The only time he needed to step out was to visit the dentist "for a treatment that couldn't be avoided." While for most people, WFH (work from home) has been a novel experience, for Parekh, "it's nothing new" as his sprawling studio lies in the basement of his house itself.

Home-bound he may have been, but the 81-year-old artist has been "extremely disturbed" by the news of migrants who, for want of any form of transportation, have had to walk for hundreds of miles to reach their homes in places as far as Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand. The experience and sufferings of these people, he says, "will always remain like a dark cloud over our heads."

While being pained by the sufferings of these migrants, Parekh looks at the other end of the spectrum as well — at how the lockdown has unleashed an 'amazing phenomena' — and cleansed the earth. "Now that it has shown the way, we need to keep our carbon footprint in check and act more responsibly," says the artist famous for immortalising the holy city of Benaras in his paintings.

**Learning experience**  
Going back in time, he remembers the days when he was working with the Weavers' Service Centre under the legendary Pupul Jaykar. "That was a great learning experience when I was exposed to the rich textile weaves of Bihar and Orissa." And then, after a 10-year stint in Calcutta in 1975, he got posted to Delhi. For one who had also dabbled in theatre

## BENARES IN HIS BLOOD

Celebrated artist Manu Parekh tells Purnima Sharma why the holy city will always remain his muse and how he is looking at the lockdown differently

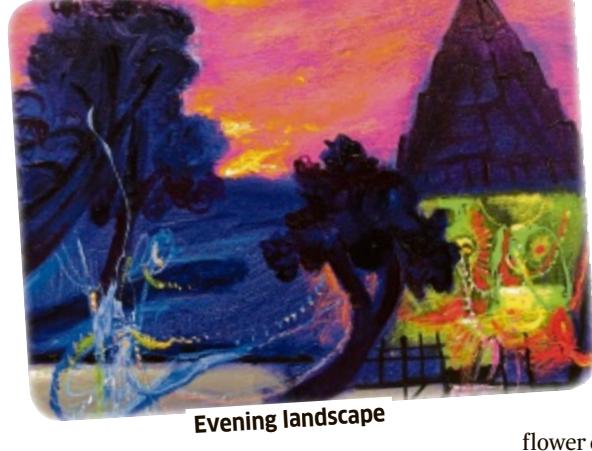
till he gave it up consciously to pursue art, the City of Joy had been a virtual haven. "At that time, stalwarts like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and Utpal Dutt were taking the city to great heights. It was great to be there," he recalls. "I also became part of the Society of Contemporary Artists that had people like Bikash Bhattacharya, Ganesh Pyne and Shyamal Dutta Ray as its members."

Unable to adjust emotionally and relate to his new city, Parekh says, "I was looking for a replacement for Calcutta and happened to visit Benaras after the death of my father." And the rest, as they say, is history.

"The city that has even inspired the likes of greats such as M F Husain and Ramkumar had me completely floored as well," Parekh smiles, recalling the "dramatic experience" of the evening he took a boat trip, his first, down the Ganga. "What I saw before me was sheer magic — lights reflecting on the flowing river waters, sounds of bells coming from temples proudly silhouetted against the dark red and orange sky, people praying on the banks... I sure was mesmerised — for life," he smiles.

### Soul of a city

And that's when Parekh felt he would



Evening landscape

&lt;/



# SundayHerald MELANGE

## WARPED REALITY



Silk on the loom

**T**he sound of clacking looms is music to the ears of Assamese women. It depicts self-reliance and a steady income, as meagre as it may be. Nowadays though, the looms have fallen silent.

Sewali Devi, who hails from the village of Saraiabah in the Morigaon district of Assam, is a weaver who owns two looms. Her husband helps her in warping and spinning. Her only source of income comes from weaving handwoven *gamosas* with intricate motifs and designs. During *Bihu* festival, the Assamese New Year, and the wedding season, from September to January, she would be flooded with orders.

*Gamosas* woven in silk and cotton are worn around the neck by the bridegroom during a wedding. Sewali Devi would sell one *gamosa* ranging between Rs 700 and Rs 1,200. With the lockdown, however, her entire business has collapsed. She has received no orders this year. She fears that just like the lack of business during the *Bihu* festival this year, the wedding season would be subdued too, even though the lockdown would be lifted fully. Managing her family's basic needs is going to be really tough for her.

### Key to economy

The handloom sector plays a central role in Assam's economy, being the largest activity after agriculture for rural Assam. Weaving is part of Assam's culture, its heritage and identity for Assamese people. Mostly women weave the *mekhela sadors*, the traditional Assamese attire and the *gamosas*, a traditional towel which is used in every household across Assam.

Most rural weaver women usually sell only within their own villages or at the nearby local market and to middlemen who come from the nearby local markets or towns. In the wedding season, many weavers are able to get orders to weave *mekhela sadors* or *gamosas* from other village families. However, the lockdown has dried up all that income. With



Gamosa

**Coil of silk thread**

## SILENCE OF THE LOOMS

**With the handloom industry in Assam facing an unprecedented crisis due to Covid-19, most weavers fear the worst—that they will never recover from this, write Rakhee Chaudhary & Venky Raghavendra**

markets and local shops closed, middlemen have stopped coming to the villages. With dwindling incomes, purchases within their communities have also stopped.

The men do menial jobs and are daily wage earners. With the restrictions in movement, most village men also have not been able to venture out. Every year in the month of March, looms start clacking in almost every Assamese rural household. Thousands of handwoven *gamosas* flood the markets in the villages and cities across Assam.

Handwoven *gamosas* are purchased by almost every Assamese household and are given as gifts by the younger ones to the elders as a mark of respect.

The *Bihu* festival (during the second week of April) brings in the highest incomes to almost all weavers weaving *gamosas*. Thousands of *gamosas* are ordered by both government and private retail shops.

In fact, the *Bihu* festival and handwoven *gamosas* are culturally interwoven in Assam.

**Supply hit**  
With the supply chain broken, most of the women



weavers have not woven since the lockdown. The markets are closed and their supply of raw material is disrupted.

These women can only manage to buy their raw materials in small quantities as that is all they can afford to invest. Given the restrictions on large gatherings, markets are not assured in the near future as exhibitions and artisans' bazaars are unlikely to be held this year.

It is not only about their daily survival, but also about how the weavers are going to repay the microfinance loans they owe to various microfinance institutions and banks. Most of

(Rakhee Chaudhary leads the NGO Mulberry working in the villages of Assam while Venky Raghavendra is a social entrepreneur engaged with various community-led organisations.)

## STAR SPEAK (JULY 5-11) GURUJI SHRI ARNAV

### ARIES MAR 22-APR 20

The coming week renders the Aries-born individuals slightly more sensitive to the environment around them. The good part is that you become more aware of inner desires. Knowing what you want could give a greater sense of fulfilment. You could be more inclined towards giving a hobby more time. Creative activities are favoured over the routine ones.

### GEMINI MAY 22-JUNE 21

This should be one fairly easy and relaxed week for the Gemini-born individuals. There could be forced rest for some as the past few weeks may have been exhausting. Interpersonal relationships will be good. You may realise that the true wealth of the world lies in physical well-being but you will do well to give it only as much importance as it deserves.

### LEO JULY 24-AUG 21

The theme of the coming week seems to be money for the Leo-born individuals. You may experience some level of anxiety as mounting expenses are anticipated. You could be working up new ideas to generate more money. Inflow of funds increases no doubt, but expenses level it out again. Keep your focus steady and some good may come out of it.

### LIBRA SEP 22-OCT 23

The individuals born under this sign of the zodiac could be in a quiet and contented frame of mind. Even when there is hectic activity and interpersonal dynamics working up a storm around you, it may not ruffle your feathers. It is wise to keep your focus high and expectations low from others. There will be success and appreciation at work.

### SAGITTARIUS NOV 22-DEC 21

There is some anxiety for the Sagittarius born individuals but there is a deep sense of pride in the achievements of loved ones. There could be some discord or disagreement at home and if allowed, it may just get stretched too far. You need to resolve the issue, looking at things objectively. Keep your anger and harsh words in check.

### AQUARIUS JAN 21-FEB 19

This is a phase reserved for your personal interests and loved ones. You could be taking a break away from routine. It could be a spiritual retreat too. You are now drawn towards the people and things that really make you feel alive. And this happens with realisation of the fact that your worldly commitments are important but so is your inner being.

### TAURUS APR 21-MAY 21

It is a very good week for the individuals born under this sign of the zodiac. Monetary situation is under control. In fact, you find that your efforts put into work in the last few weeks may generate interest. An old investment pays off now or money you had parked away helps now. You will be gregarious and generous. People enjoy your company.

### CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 23

The coming week is likely to be a phase that brings out an important matter to the fore. There will be situations where your love and support will be required to soothe and calm a loved one. You will also be drawn to your mate/s spouse and the relationship may touch a new level of understanding. However, don't allow emotions to direct your actions.

### VIRGO AUG 22-SEP 21

This phase could be a little tough on the Virgo born individuals. Issues and expectations that you have been brushing aside for long will surface and you will have to deal with some emotionally uncomfortable things. It wouldn't help to question fate or wallow in self-pity. Things begin to become better as the week progresses.

### SCORPIO OCT 24-NOV 21

Things look up for people born under this sign of the zodiac. Those looking for suitable employment or a newer opportunity will be successful. Once you have a foot in the door, the rest depends on your efforts and potential. Single and eligible individuals have a reason to be upbeat as chances for finding a suitable alliance are big. Rein in unnecessary expenses.

### CAPRICORN DEC 22-JAN 20

The pace of work will be far too fast and you may have to strain to keep up. It will be in your interest to seek advice from experts/mentor if you feel doubtful about a decision. There may also be personal commitments to handle side by side. It will be counterproductive if you try to wash your hands off them. You may need to take care of your health.

### PISCES FEB 20-MAR 21

It could be a slightly demanding time for the Pisces born folk. And your sensitivity may make it more difficult. The agony comes through the indifference of a loved one, where misunderstanding can cause unnecessary damage. What you need to keep in mind is that you should not be seeking validation from anyone nor go to undue lengths to explain yourself.

### One for the swing

In many ways, golf is a perfectly constructed activity for our sudden 'new normal'. The rules limit groups to four or fewer. It's also naturally socially distancing as players have no reason to ever be within six feet of one another.

## REFLECTIONS

### On course, to a tee

**T**he weekend round for any golfer is like an elixir, the most-looked-forward-to moment. And my four-ball is not an exception. Unfortunately, these were cruelly snatched away by the impact of coronavirus. The news of re-opening of golf courses was akin to the excitement created by the opening of liquor shops. Numerous Zoom calls were made between us to decide the day, venue, time, strokes allowed etc. However, the social distancing restrictions allowed only a maximum of three players in a group and that too, for only nine holes. Luckily all of us were adults under 60 years of age, else we would have had to make do with just listening to the stories from the golf course.

One of us had to sacrifice his place. I offered to sit out. However, the brotherhood in us prevented me from being a martyr. So, one more Zoom call was made to decide the casualty through luck of the draw.

Lo and behold! The effects of coronavirus (not the beer) began to show the moment we met at the parking lot. After having not seen each other physically for over two months, the urge to hug your buddies came naturally, but we had to resort to elbowing each other and mocked a hug.

The waiting time of more than 15 minutes gave us the opportunity to check our supplies—golf balls, sanitisers, extra masks, water, fruits etc., before we hopped to the hallowed spot on the first tee. There was a weird feeling as the regular camaraderie, which is usually seen amongst our "most jovial four-ball"—a title crowned on the group by our caddie—seemed totally absent, and so were the caddies themselves.

Each one of us looked solemn. The focus, now, was more on how to avoid breaking any rules/conditions of the SOPs, rather than how to avoid the roughs and water. I could not sleep well the previous night, mentally visualising my shots and to try and play to my handicap of 18. However, the new playing conditions, added to the rust, showed in my results right from the first shot which never rose above the ground and travelled no more than 100 yards, leaving me with almost the same distance just to make it to the fairway.

Thanks to the one-metre circle drawn around the hole where you can pick up the ball if it lands inside it, I made a forgettable quadruple bogey on the par-4 opener. Going by my form, I guess I would have missed that three-footer too! Determined to



**WISH WE HAD A COVID 'STROKE ALLOWANCE' ON THE LINES OF MORATORIUMS ON LOANS ANNOUNCED BY BANKS.**

improve my performance after the dismal start, I battled on but without much success. The best I could manage was a double on our finishing par-5 ninth, which in itself was eventful. I pulled my drive, but it ricocheted off the tree onto the fairway. But now, I was in trouble. There was no rough, no water and no sand, all of which I had gotten used to in the first eight holes. So I decided to use the safest club, the 7-iron. However, the magic club was missing from my bag. I then remembered I had left it back on the seventh hole while playing my fourth shot. Facing a tricky 140-yarder, I had carried both the 7 and 8-irons, finally relying on the latter and, in celebration of a good shot, forgot the club behind. This is where I missed my caddie, Vikram, the most. Had he been there, I could have saved at least six golf balls out of eight that I lost during the round, not to mention the strokes and the agony of forgetting my clubs.

Coming back to the finishing hole, I nailed a 20-footer left-to-right curler. My playing partner did even better, chipping in for a birdie. Thanks to the proximity clause of the SOP, we had to celebrate it with high-fives in the air. Having lost track of the number of shots we played, (no scorecards available), the winner was decided on the number of balls lost. I came a close third! The yardage in the card for nine holes was 3,270 yards, but I must have walked more than 4,500 yards. Wish we had a Covid 'stroke allowance' on the lines of moratoriums on loans announced by banks. The post-round re-galing session—where bets are settled, beers are guzzled and heroics on the course recounted—was sorely and surely missed as was the shower that takes away all your weariness.

We returned home thinking, was it worth playing without the usual charm of weekend golf? Well, the fantastic putt and the chip-in birdie answered our question to a certain extent.

PAARTH SINGH

