



Age no bar for learning for Jharkhand Minister Jagarnath Mahto
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Rahul attacks govt. over report on Facebook 'interference' in polls
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Raj Bhavan under surveillance, claims West Bengal Governor
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China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi visits border areas in Tibet
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NEARBY



Capital witnesses 652 new cases, fewer tests

NEW DELHI
The national capital reported 652 fresh COVID-19 cases on Sunday, taking the total to 1,52,580, said a health bulletin released by the Delhi government. Also, eight more deaths were reported, pushing the toll to 4,196.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

4G Internet restored in two J&K districts

SRINAGAR
The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Sunday decided to restore 4G mobile Internet in the twin districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur on "a trial basis". It's the first time in over a year that the J&K administration has decided to restore 4G services on mobile phones.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

Father-son killed in fight during panchayat meet

LUCKNOW
A man and his son were killed in a fight between two families in Shiekhpura village in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh during a panchayat meeting, the police said on Sunday. The meeting had been called to resolve a land dispute between the two families.

NORTH & WEST ▶ PAGE 5

EDUCATIONPLUS ▶ PAGE 11

U.S. FDA nod for rapid, inexpensive saliva test

It assures high accuracy in detecting the presence of virus

R. PRASAD

CHENNAI

In what could prove a game-changer in the global battle against COVID-19, a new, rapid diagnostic test for the novel coronavirus that uses saliva samples was granted an emergency use authorisation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Saturday.

The inexpensive test, called SalivaDirect, developed by a team from the Yale School of Public Health, has high sensitivity and can detect the virus even when the number of virus copies in the saliva sample is as low as 6-12 copies per microlitre.

In contrast, tests using nasopharyngeal swabs lead to false negative results due to errors at the time of sample collection. The sensitivity of the new test was about 93%, according to a preprint posted on medRxiv.

"Official data shows 88-94% [sensitivity]. If you assume 90% sensitivity, this is the best accuracy (sensitivity) of any saliva test," Andy Slavitt, a former acting administrator of the Centres for Medicare and Medicaid Services in the Obama administration, tweeted.

Stephen Hahn, the Food and Drugs Administration Commissioner, said the new saliva test would increase ef-

New test on the block

SalivaDirect, a new rapid detection test for COVID-19 is touted to be simple, cheap and accurate

WHY IS IT DIFFERENT?

SalivaDirect uses saliva samples, as opposed to the more invasive nasopharyngeal swabs

IS IT AFFORDABLE?

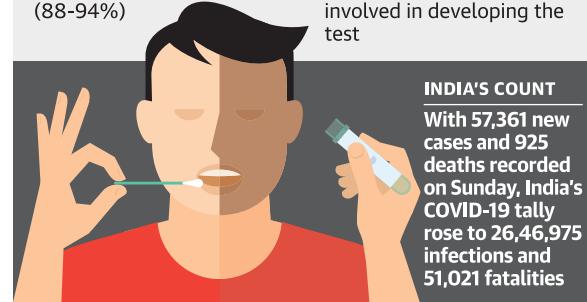
Compared to other tests approved by the Food and Drug Administration, SalivaDirect is affordable – each test could cost as little as \$10, or less – and has the highest sensitivity (88-94%)

WHO DEVELOPED IT?

It was developed by researchers from Yale School of Public Health in partnership with the National Basketball Association (NBA)

HOW ARE SAMPLES COLLECTED?

The test could allow for at-home, self-administered sample collection, according to a researcher involved in developing the test



INDIA'S COUNT
With 57,361 new cases and 925 deaths recorded on Sunday, India's COVID-19 tally rose to 26,46,975 infections and 51,021 fatalities

iciency and avoid shortage of crucial test components such as reagents.

Collecting and testing saliva samples involves three steps – collecting saliva without preservative buffers, proteinase K treatment and heat inactivation, and duplex RT-qPCR virus detection.

The Yale team was led by Nathan Grubaugh and Anne Wyllie, who partnered with

the National Basketball Association and the National Basketball Players Association, to validate the efficacy of SalivaDirect in part by testing players, coaches and staff looking to continue playing while ensuring health safety. Prior to testing on NBA players, Yale tested it on 44 inpatients and 98 health care workers.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

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OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW
The Uttar Pradesh government has come under fresh criticism after a 13-year-old girl was raped and strangled in Lakhimpur Kheri district. Talking to the media, the victim's father claimed that the body, which was found in a sugarcane field, was mutilated. However, the district police chief on Sunday said the reports of injuries to the



Sharp dip: Just 21 lakh passengers travelled in July, down 82% compared with the corresponding month last year.

As infections started to mount and travel restrictions were imposed in March, the number of unique passenger trips fell by 33%. On March 25, the government imposed a ban on domestic flights, which was lifted two months later. Flights resumed on May 25, but demand remained te-

pid – 21 lakh passengers travelled in July, which is just 18% of the figure for the corresponding month last year.

Scraping the barrel

With thinning revenue streams and depleting cash reserves, IndiGo dug into its

reserves and withdrew up to ₹2,000 crore after register-

ing a loss of ₹2,800 crore between April and June 2020. Tata Sons is also said to have extended equity to support Vistara.

"Except IndiGo, most of the airlines have no cash and are totally dependent on their promoters. The financial impact is very severe and demand risks will conti-

nue. Airlines have to recapitalise and fund next two years of operations and without massive recapitalisation, I don't see some airlines surviving," Kapil Kaul, India CEO at Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA), told *The Hindu* in an email.

The slump in passenger demand has also forced airlines to tweak business strategies to keep as many planes flying and open new revenue streams.

Before COVID-19, SpiceJet was the only airline that had three to four planes exclusively for cargo; other private carriers used the belly of their passenger flights for shipments. This has begun to change.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Airlines fighting to stay airborne

Cargo revenues provide crucial cushion

JAGRITI CHANDRA

NEW DELHI

From dipping into reserves and using cargo flights as a source of revenue, Indian airlines have struggled to stay afloat as COVID-19 fears continue to haunt travellers across the country.

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"Except IndiGo, most of the airlines have no cash and are totally dependent on their promoters. The financial impact is very severe and demand risks will conti-

Two held in connection with student's death case

U.P. police rule out harassment angle

Police reject body was mutilated

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

girl's eyes and tongue were "completely false".

The Bulandshahr police on Sunday arrested two men in connection with the death of Sudeeksha Bhati, a 19-year-old girl who was raped and strangled in Lakhimpur Kheri district.

The police have arrested two men, both locals. They have been booked under the National Security Act.

The police said the body was found in the field hours after the girl had gone out to answer the call of nature.

However, the district police chief on Sunday said the reports of injuries to the

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

ged that she was harassed by "two men on a motorcycle" when she was going to meet her uncle on a motorbike.

SSP, Bulandshahr, Santosh Kumar Singh ruled out the harassment angle. "CCTV footage of 12 different locations revealed that the accused were always ahead of the motorcycle on which Sudeeksha was riding pillion."

He said investigators had come to the conclusion that it was a case of an accident.

Kolkata, Darjeeling zoos go online

SHIV SAHAI SINGH

KOLKATA

Animal lovers in West Bengal will now be able to watch wildlife from the comfort of their homes with the forest department starting live streaming of animals from Alipore Zoological Garden,

Kolkata, and Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling.

The live streaming facilities were inaugurated by State's Forest Minister Rajib Banerjee on Sunday.

"This is a unique initiative. Every year about 35

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 4

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THEY ARE BACK

SHINJINI GHOSH

NEW DELHI

The Anand Vihar bus terminal – where thousands of migrant workers had assembled four months back in a desperate bid to return to their home towns after a nationwide lockdown was announced – is again abuzz with labourers, but this time they are desperate to return to the city.

With the lockdown virtually shutting down the economy, labourers said they were “forced” to return to their villages in March, and are now coming back in the “hope” of finding work again.

Sitting behind a tea stall after reaching the Capital from Uttar Pradesh’s Sambhal district, Prem Singh and 32-year-old Nausheen said that lack of income in the last four months had taken a toll on their family.

“There is absolutely nothing to do in the village. No source of income whatsoever for me. I have a family to look after. I have been staying in Delhi for the last 10-15 years and have sustained my family in whatever way I could. But with the lockdown, everything went for a toss. How long can we stay away from

With few job opportunities in villages, migrant labourers who had left the city in March are returning in droves

work? We have to restart our lives somehow,” said 37-year-old Mr. Singh, a rickshaw puller in Shahdara.

Having just reached the city from U.P.’s Sultanpur district and waiting for a ride to Gurugram, 42-year-old Shashi said: “I was lucky to leave the city a day before the lockdown started. I at least reached home safe. But with not much work there it was becoming difficult to sustain ourselves.”

“We were scared of the virus at that time so went back. But now income is also important. So what option do we have but to risk our lives again and make the journey back,” said Mr. Shashi, who reached the city with his wife and two children.

For Sanjay Sharma, from Bihar’s Gorakhpur district, coming to Delhi was a “way out” of months of distress in the family.

“This is my first time in the city and I have come here with my older



Migrant workers (above) returning to Delhi, at the Anand Vihar bus terminal; labourers trying to get out of the city in March.

■ R. V. MOORTHY, FILE PHOTO

brother. The last few months were particularly difficult as my brother returned to the village due to lack of jobs. He was the sole earner of the family. But now

that buses have started plying again and people are saying that things are returning to normal, we thought of coming to the city in search of work. I have accom-

panied him as an extra pair of hands is always helpful for the family,” said the 19 year old.

While a steady stream of daily wagers are returning in search of livelihood, the ones who “survived” lockdown in the Capital are not too hopeful of the current scenario.

Near Okhla Mandi, Yusuf and Anil, both from U.P.’s Bahraich district, said: “We survived the lockdown somehow by lending a hand to vegetable sellers on. But now there is no work whatsoever. There are times when we get work once in five days and earn anything between ₹100-₹200. Rest of the day,

There is absolutely nothing to do in the village. No source of income whatsoever. I have a family to look after. How long can we stay away from work? We have to restart our lives somehow

PREM SINGH

From U.P.’s Sambhal district

we are forced to while away time.”

Among the ones who stayed back in the city are those living on the banks of the Yamuna near Kashmere Gate.

While the Delhi government had initially shifted them to government shelters, the labourers said they were “dropped back” at the Yamuna Pushtra in June, adding that “social distancing” had proved to be an issue at the shelters.

With work not picking up, the daily wagers also pointed out that the return of migrant workers from U.P. and Bihar had led to employers reducing wages.

Manav, 45, said: “With people from U.P. and Bihar beginning to come back, employers have also started bargaining. Sometimes they are paying us half the amount that we received earlier for a day’s work. Recently, for some construction work which we did, we got around ₹200 instead of the ₹500 which we used to get earlier.”

Manoj Singh, from Darjeeling, said: “There is hardly any work here these days. We are involved in the hotel and wedding industries. With everything shut and no weddings taking place, our work, which ranged from setting up tents to other related stuff, has become redundant. All we can do is sit and hope for a better tomorrow.”

Hit-and-run case: security guard killed in south Delhi

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 33-year-old security guard, who was on his way to work on a bicycle, died after being hit allegedly by a car in south Delhi’s Hauz Khas, the police said on Sunday.

The accident took place on August 14 evening near Jija Bai College when Farooq Ahmed was going to his office in Hauz Khas for covering a night shift, the police said.

He was rushed to AIIMS where he died during treatment on August 15 evening, Atul Kumar Thakur, DCP (South), said. The police were informed around 9.40 p.m on August 14.

A case was filed under IPC Section 279 (rash driving), 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life) at Hauz Khas police station and later Section 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) was added, the DCP said.

Manudeem, who lives in Tughlakabad Extension, said he received a call about his brother-in-law’s accident on August 14. “He had sustained severe head injuries and was on ventilator. His family arrived here from their village in Uttarakhand the next morning,” he said.

“CCTV footage are being scanned to trace the offending car,” the DCP said.

DU executive council writes to political parties over salary dues

It has requested meetings with State unit party leaders

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Members of the executive council of DU on Saturday wrote to the State units of AAP, BJP and Congress, raising concerns over non-payment of salaries to staffers of about 12 colleges funded by the Delhi government.

Thousands of teachers and employees have not received salaries for more than three-and-a-half months as funds to these colleges had not been released, the letter said. It requested meetings to be held with party members along with EC members and office-bearers of the DU Teachers’ Association.

Education Minister Manish Sisodia, however, recently hit out at the complaints of non-release of funds alleging corruption in the use of funds at these colleges. He argued that over the last five years, funds to these institutions had increased by about 70%.

DU, in a recent statement, however, said it took strong exception to “sweeping allegations”. Dean of Colleges, Balaram Pani, said that accounts of the colleges were reviewed by three audits under internal and external agencies of the university, Delhi government and the Centre. Regarding increase in funds, Mr. Pani listed out

various expenses under the salary head, such as implementation of the Seventh Pay Commission, increase in wages paid by contractual staff as directed by the Delhi government, salaries of ad hoc teachers, annual increment and others, leading to an increase of about 80% to 100%. Apart from this, he said, an increase of about 300%-400% in expenditure came from various non-salary-related heads.

Mr. Pani called upon the government to release the funds due to these colleges, arguing that the release was not tied to the formation of the governing bodies of these institutions.

Four held for robbing man of cancer injections

Accused wanted to make quick money

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Four men have been arrested for allegedly robbing a pharmacy employee of injections used in the treatment of cancer patients, worth ₹1.5 lakh, the police said on Sunday.

Aman Sharma (26), Vikas Swami (30), Sakib Khan (28) executed the robbery on the pretext of purchasing the injections and Prabhu Jha (32) bought those from them.

The incident was reported on August 13. The complainant said that a man, later identified as Mr. Khan, introduced himself as Sudhir Dixit and placed an order for six injections used for treating cancer patients. The person then asked him to hand over

those to him near Red Fort. When Mohd. Anas, the pharmacy employee, reached with the injections near Red Fort, the person asked him to go with him on his scooter to Okhla to receive the payment. Their scooter was later overtaken by two bike-borne men who slapped Mr. Anas, robbed the injections and fled.

A case was filed and the accused were subsequently arrested. The accused said they were facing financial crunch due to the lockdown and planned the robbery to earn quick money. They sold the injections to one Dhruv Jha and Prabhu Jha at ₹1.10 lakh, the DCP said. Mr. Dhruv is absconding, the police said.

When Mr. Dixit reached Sarai Kale Khan, a man allegedly came from behind, threatened him with a blunt object and sat behind his two-wheeler. Two other men on another motorcycle followed him, he said. When they reached near Barapulla Flyover, the men allegedly robbed him of the cash. A case was registered.

Later, when Mr. Dixit was taken to the spot he started changing his statements. During cross questioning, he finally confessed that he had faked the robbery.

The money was recovered from his house.

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RISE 05:52	SET 18:59
RISE 03:38	SET 17:55
TUESDAY, AUG. 18	
RISE 05:53	SET 18:58
RISE 04:41	SET 18:43
WEDNESDAY, AUG. 19	
RISE 05:53	SET 18:57
RISE 05:48	SET 19:28

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36°C Few spell of rain and thunderstorm would occur at some places with cloudy sky.

Delhi Pilm Tomorrow
35°C Spells of light rain and thunderstorm likely at some places with cloudy sky.

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Survey state of animals in circuses: HC

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has asked the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) to conduct physical survey of all circuses in the country to verify the condition of animals being kept there.

A Bench of Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar said the survey report shall include the photographs and videos of animals, the surroundings they are kept in, their health condition as well as the quality of food being provided to them.

The court gave the order after AWBI stated that in compliance of the court's July 21 order, it had issued letters to all the circuses stranded and unable to perform due to the pandemic, to give details of animals kept by them along with the information whether they would be able to maintain them. AWBI had asked the circuses if they were inclined to surrender their animals for rehabilitation. The board said out of 19 circuses registered under Performing Animal Rules 2001 seven have submitted their reports.

Biodiversity park to come up in Aravalli

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

A biodiversity park will be developed on around 100 acres in Kasan in the Aravalli mountain range. The village panchayat has adopted a resolution to pledge land for this park.

Forests, Education and Tourism Minister Kanwar Pal visited the village and the area, where the proposed park will be developed.

Mr. Pal, during his visit to Gurugram, said the State had the target to increase its reserve forest cover from 3% to 20%. For this, 125 million saplings will be planted in the State this year and 1,100 villages of the State have been selected for this plantation. He was interacting with the mediapersons after his visit to Kasan.

Earlier, the Minister planted saplings at the proposed biodiversity park area in Kasan and interacted with the Sarpanches of the villages over increasing greenery. He appreciated the initiative taken by Kasan village and said others too should come forward for the same.

THE HINDU

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Capital witnesses 652 new cases, fewer tests

DDMA Chief Secy. says no to pandals on Ganesh Chaturthi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Capital reported 652 fresh COVID-19 cases on Sunday, taking the total number of cases to 1,52,580, according to the health bulletin released by the government.

Eight deaths were reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of deaths to 4,196. The government also said that 1,310 patients have recovered and the total number of recoveries stood at 1,37,561. There are 10,823 active cases in the city. The number of fresh cases recorded on Sunday was the lowest after July 27, when Delhi registered 613 cases. The Capital had recorded 1,276 cases on Saturday.

The government said 3,024 RT-PCR and 7,685 rapid antigen tests were conducted in the last 24 hours. However, the number of tests conducted on Sunday was far lower than Saturday. The bulletin stated that 5,667 RT-PCR 12,604 rapid antigen tests were conducted on Saturday. A total of 13,020 tests have been



A Rickshaw puller leaves after collecting his rapid antigen test result from a COVID-19 testing van at Ashok Nagar in Delhi on Sunday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

conducted till date.

Due to the pandemic, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) issued an order prohibiting setting up of pandals during Ganesh Chaturthi.

No religious procession

It also said there would be no religious procession on any occasion, including Moharram. DDMA Chief Secretary, Vijay Dev, said: "During Ganesh Chaturthi, no idol of Ganesha shall be set up in the tent/pandal/ public place, nor any kind of permission shall be granted for

procession. Similarly, no permission shall be granted for procession/taijiya during Moharram."

The order stated that the public will be encouraged/advised to celebrate festivals at home and not in public. It added that sufficient police force will be deployed in all communally sensitive areas and containment zones across the city.

Mr. Dev asked District Magistrates and District DCs to ensure compliance and convene meetings with religious/community leaders to get their cooperation.

Reconsider benchmark for out-of-turn promotion'

Delhi Police criteria for recovery of over 50 children per year is impractical: HC

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has asked the police to reconsider the benchmark of recovering 50 missing children for Constables and Head-Constables, to be considered for an out-of-turn promotion (OTP), noting it was "not practically achievable".

A Bench of Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar said the criteria for OTP may "not serve as an incentive". The court's direction came after the police said the OTP and 'Asadharan Karyya Puruskar' is being considered as part of an incentive to encourage its personnel to trace missing children.

The police said any Constable or Head-Constable who recovers 50 or more missing

children below the age of 14 years (15 children out of them of the age group less than 8 years) within a period of 12 months, would be considered for grant of OTP, subject to the availability of vacancies under OTP quota in the year concerned. Delhi Police's Standing Counsel Rahul Mehra suggested that the number could be reduced to 10 chil-

dren to begin with as that would be a more realistic target, which the officers may be able to meet. "The Commissioner of Police may look into this aspect and issue necessary orders in that regard," the court ordered taking note of Mr. Mehra's suggestion.

The court's direction came during the course of hearing on a habeas corpus petition filed by a father seeking to trace his minor daughter who went missing on July 08, 2020. The father said he was forced to approach the court as even after an FIR was registered, there was no action taken on his complaint.

"Unfortunately, time and time again, we have come across the same situation in any number of cases that we have dealt with over the

years," the Bench had said. "We have found that often, either the case is not registered – when a complaint of a child going missing is made to the police station or even if a case is registered – no substantial and concrete steps for investigation are undertaken on the ground, till a petition is filed before this court and advance copy thereof is served," it had stated.

Observing "this situation is completely unacceptable", the court has ordered the Commissioner of Police to get a performance audit conducted of all the districts under the Delhi Police in relation to compliance of the provisions of standing order, which enlists the duties of the police station staff in cases of missing children.

INTERVIEW | VINAY KUMAR SINGH

'RRTS is going to be the backbone of passenger transport in NCR'

Despite the pandemic and lockdown challenges, the NCRTC has been able to commission projects on time, says its managing director

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

As lockdown restrictions ease, infrastructure projects that had hit a roadblock are picking up pace once again. Vinay Kumar Singh, managing director, National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC), talks about its priority projects, their progress and how they will make travel smoother in the city. Excerpts:

The lockdown has impacted several infrastructural projects between March and June. How did it impact the NCRTC Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) projects?

■ The COVID-19 crisis is indeed an unprecedented situation for every sector. However, such situations also present an opportunity for each sector in a unique way. We saw this as an opportunity to upscale the deployment of technologies.

In 2016, I had conceived NCRTC as a technology-driven organisation with extensive use of digital tools in project management and execution of RRTS projects. We have been using electronic platforms and IT tools in our day-to-day functioning such as internal approvals, procurement, designing etc. Thus, during the lockdown, we were able to sustain the momentum fairly well.

While the construction activities came to a halt during lockdown 1.0, we diverted our efforts and focused

on other activities. Tender processes were expedited; for the first time pre-bid meetings were held through videoconferencing. Further, activities related to finalisation of detailed design and drawings of civil structures, stations etc. were accelerated. Once the relaxations were announced, we resumed the civil construction with strict adherence to standard operating procedures and guidelines issued by the governments.

In about sixteen months from the sanction of the project, we recently launched the first segmental span on Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor between Guldhar and Duhai, which demonstrates NCRTC's meticulous planning and collaborative approach with stakeholders to deliver the project on time.

What is the level of progress of the RRTS station at Sarai Kale Khan, where it is supposed to serve as the backbone for multimodal connectivity with existing modes of public transportation?

■ Sarai Kale Khan will be seamlessly integrated with the Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station, Delhi Metro

DMRC begins work on bridge over Yamuna

It will be the first ever metro bridge over the river to be built using CLC method

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

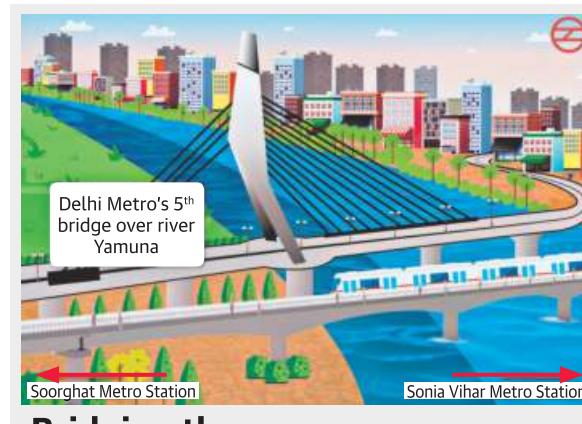
The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Sunday said that it had begun work on building the fifth metro bridge over the Yamuna on the Majlis Park - Maupur Metro corridor of its Phase IV.

The 560-metre-long bridge will connect the Soorhat Metro Station and Sonia Vihar Metro Station and will be the first ever metro bridge over Yamuna to be built using the cantilever construction (CLC) method, the DMRC said. This bridge crosses river Yamuna at about 385 metre downward of Old Wazirabad Bridge and 213 metre upstream of existing Signature Bridge.

"Employment of this construction method will make the bridge look aesthetically better. A cantilever is a rigid structural element which extends horizontally and is supported at only one end. Cantilever construction allows overhanging structures without additional support," the DMRC said.

3D model

It added that the design of the bridge was finalised using the 'Building Information Modeling' (BIM) technology that allowed DMRC's engineers to work on a 3D model



Delhi Metro's 5th bridge over river Yamuna

Soorhat Metro Station

Sonia Vihar Metro Station

Source: DMRC

Length: 560 mm Total spans: 8 No. of piers: 9 (188 to 196)

Method of construction:

- Cantilever Construction (CLC)
- CLC construction of span 60+80+80+60 in 2 modules

Metro bridges over river Yamuna constructed so far

Sl. No.	Location	Corridor	Length
1.	Yamuna Bank	Blue	698.8 metre
2.	Nizamuddin	Pink	602.8 metre
3.	Kalindi Kunj	Magenta	574 metre
4.	Shastri Park	Red	553 metre

Source: DMRC

of the bridge with intricate details of the proposed structure even during the days of the pandemic when physical

meetings weren't possible.

To utilise the available time during this monsoon, a cofferdam has been con-

structed, away from the active course of the Yamuna by raising the level of the ground by filling of earth and sand with protection of its slope through bamboo, jute netting and sand bags, the DMRC said.

The level of the cofferdam has been kept same as that of the adjacent road to ensure supply of requisite construction material like steel reinforcement, metal liner, ready mix concrete etc., the DMRC said.

Environment friendly

A DMRC official said all the construction activities are being carried out with minimum effect on the floodplains. Also, the restoration of the floodplain that may be impacted by the construction of bridge alignment in the Yamuna floodplain/pillars will be carried out. The official added that the muck/debris generated would be disposed off scientifically and no dumping shall be allowed.

"All mandatory approvals from the agencies concerned have been obtained. The DMRC is committed to fulfil the conditions given by Principal Committee on Yamuna for construction of the bridge," the DMRC statement added.

HC tells police to submit status report on petition filed by Pinjra Tod activist

Judge orders police to serve a copy of it to petitioner's counsel

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The High Court has asked the police to submit its status report in connection with a plea filed by Pinjra Tod activist Devangana Kalita, seeking bail on a case related to the communal violence in north-east Delhi.

Ms. Kalita has challenged a trial court's order, which had dismissed her bail application. The plea was rejected on June 14 on the ground that there was no merit in the application and that it was amply clear from the chargesheet that the investigation was still pending and it has been filed against other accused persons also.

The trial court further said considering the investigation so far and the nature of the offence and the role being ascribed to the accused, there were no reasons at all to grant bail. Ms. Kalita is currently facing four different FIRs connected with the anti-CAA protests in Jaffrabad, north-east Delhi riots and violence in Daryaganj during a protest against the new citizenship law last year.

Ms. Kalita was first arrested on May 23, along with fellow JNU student Natasha Narwal in relation with an FIR registered on February 24 over the sit-in protest at Jaffrabad metro station against the CAA. The police also invoked sections of the stringent anti-terror law – Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act – in a separate case related to the communal violence against Ms. Kalita.

rounding areas. Subsequent to GNCTD's (Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi) approval, pre-construction works have been initiated. Soil investigation is complete and pile load test and diversion of utilities such as 11 KV, 33 KV (BSSES & DTL) lines are in progress. The construction of the station is expected to start after monsoon.

How will the NCRTC manage crowds? Will the station be overground or underground? Have these questions been discussed with the Delhi government?

■ The RRTS is going to be the backbone of passenger transport in NCR. It will be an elevated station, which is the most efficient and economical option, and will facilitate simultaneous development of ISBT. The decision to make this station overground was taken after convincing all the stakeholders, including the Delhi government.

To efficiently plan the design of the Sarai Kale Khan station, we have done the simulation of passenger movement in and around the station by a design team consisting of national and international experts as well as experts from DIMTS (Delhi Integrated Multi Modal

Transit System), DTIDC (Delhi Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation) and Transport Department, GNCTD.

What's the progress on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor?

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NOTICE is hereby given that our client has negotiated and agreed to acquire and purchase from **BPTP LIMITED** CIN NO. U45201HR2003PLC082732, PAN NO. AACCB2442A and **COUNTRYWIDE PROMOTERS PRIVATE LIMITED** CIN NO. U70101HR1996PTC082720, PAN NO. AAACCS280H ("COMPANIES") both having their registered office at OT-14, 3rd Floor, Next Door, Parklands, Sector-76, Faridabad-121004, Haryana , all their rights and interest in the Plot described in the schedule hereunder written ("Plot"). By a Sale Deed dated 13.05.2005 bearing Deed No. 2033 registered in the Office of Joint Sub Registrar-Faridabad, Haryana Sh. Kesri son of Ramchand has sold the Plot to M/s. Real Value Overseas Pvt. Ltd., (now BPTP Resorts Pvt. Ltd.) Thereafter, BPTP Resorts Pvt. Ltd., vide Deed of Transfer dated 26.09.2007 bearing Deed No. 12675 registered in the Office of Joint Sub Registrar-Faridabad, Haryana transferred the Plot to Countrywide Promoters Private Limited.

Any person having any claim, demand, right, benefit or interest in respect of or against to the Plot or any part thereof by way of sale, transfer, assignment, exchange, lease, sub-lease, tenancy, sub-tenancy, license, mortgage, gift, lien, charge, trust, encumbrance, occupation, maintenance, easement, pre-emption, inheritance, bequest, possession, development rights, right of way reservation agreement, its pending family arrangement, settlement decree or order of any court of Law, partnership of whatsoever nature or otherwise howsoever, are required to make the same known in writing supported by authenticated photocopies of valid/effective documents to the undersigned at their office within fourteen (14) days from the date of publication hereof, otherwise the transfer of the Plot in favour of our client will be completed without reference to such claims and the same if any will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE**[Description of the Plot]**

ALL THAT piece and parcel of land measuring 1.125 Acres, Commercial Plot No. II, Block-D, Sector-85, Faridabad comprised in Rectangle No. 92, Killa Nos. 5/1Min(0-17), 5/2Min(0-4), 6/4(10), 15/1Min(2-6) and 15/2Min(1-3), Village Kheri Kalan, Tehsil and District Faridabad, Haryana bounded and bounded as follows:-

On North :12 meter wide road & future commercial development;

On South :12 meter wide service road adjacent to 45 meter sector road;

On East :BPTP commercial- future development;

On West :BPTP commercial park central.

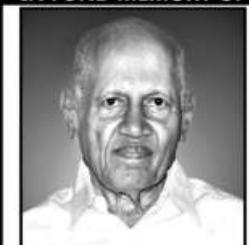
Faridabad, Haryana, dated 17.08.2020

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Attorneys and
International Legal Consultants,
A9, Nizamuddin East,
New Delhi-110013, India

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South Indian required to do Address Verification in South India. Probe, Padma Tower-L1, Rajendra Place, N.D-08 # 9250007007

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Pravakar, Shibani & Family

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Philippians 3:20



SHANTHY DANIEL
(Former Audit Officer - P&T Audit)

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The Warmth of our heart,
The enduring spark in our souls,

Till we meet on that beautiful shore,

DANIEL DHARMARAJ & Family

DEATH

N.S. GOPALAKRISHNAN (79) s/o Nott Sankara Rao attained the lotus feet of Shirdi Sainath on 15th August 2020. Tel 9840249778, 8056284730

For enquiries on
announcements in this
section, please contact our
office at the following number
between 10a.m. and 8p.m.

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

Animal lovers in West Bengal will now be able to watch animals and birds from the comfort of their homes with the West Bengal Forest Department starting live streaming of animals from Alipore Zoological Garden, Kolkata, and Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling.

The Minister said that live streaming will be available for an hour each in the morning and the afternoon from social media handles of the respective zoos.

"This is a unique initiative. Every year about 35 lakh people visit Alipore zoo. Many of these visitors are regulars and they make it a point to visit the zoo at least once a year. We do not want to deprive these people, including children, anymore," Mr. Banerjee said.

The Minister said that live streaming will be available for an hour each in the morning and the afternoon from social media handles of the respective zoos.

Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling.

The live streaming facilities were inaugurated by State's Forest Minister Rajib Banerjee on Sunday at Alipore Zoological Garden.

Shashi Kumar Samanta, Di-

'Voting' on
reopening of
Assam schools

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

The outcome of an analysis of suggestions from people will decide whether or not schools, colleges and other educational institutions in Assam would be reopened, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has said.

Educational institutions have remained closed since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The State government had a fortnight ago proposed some guidelines for reopening schools and colleges from September 1 besides seeking feedback from the stakeholders.

"We have been receiving suggestions from the people. We will take a call after analysing them on August 25," he said on Sunday.

The government would also weigh the recommendations of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Punjab govt. failed to curb sand mafia: Congress MPs

HC had ordered the CBI to conduct a preliminary enquiry

VIKAS VASUDEV

CHANDIGARH

After the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to conduct a preliminary enquiry into the alleged existence and operation of illegal checkpoints near some mining sites - had ordered a preliminary enquiry by the CBI. On February 19 this year, the High Court had asked the CJI to prepare a report on the matter after the State government had informed the court that there were no illegal checkpoints near the mining sites in Roopar.

The two Rajya Sabha MPs, Partap Singh Bajwa and Shamsher Singh Dullo, have alleged that it was evident that the State's Department of Mines and Geology and the Home Department have completely failed in their responsibility in curbing 'illegal mining' and the 'sand mafia' in Punjab.

motu cognisance and expand the ambit of the investigation to the entire State.

"To prevent further damage to the environment and erosion of public trust with the institutions that govern the State, an independent and fair inquiry must be ordered into the operations of the sand mafia in Punjab. We seek an end to this menace and hope that the orders of the Punjab and Haryana High Court is a wake up call for the government of Punjab," they said in a statement.

Shiromani Akali Dal leader and spokesperson Daljit Singh Cheema said that reckless illegal mining activities were rampant across the State and "goonda (goons) tax" was being collected at the behest of leaders of the ruling party.

Virus effect: Kolkata, Darjeeling zoos go online

Live streaming of animals, birds for an hour each in the morning and evening

SHIV SAHAY SINGH

KOLKATA

Animal lovers in West Bengal will now be able to watch animals and birds from the comfort of their homes with the West Bengal Forest Department starting live streaming of animals from Alipore Zoological Garden, Kolkata, and Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling.

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Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling.

The live streaming facilities were inaugurated by State's Forest Minister Rajib Banerjee on Sunday at Alipore Zoological Garden.

Shashi Kumar Samanta, Di-

rector of Alipore Zoological Garden, said closed-circuit cameras have been installed in different enclosures of the animals.

Zoo on mobile phones'

Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZP) Director Dharamdeep Rai said that visitors can now enjoy a visit to the high-altitude zoo on their mobile phones.

"PNHZP will be live on social media every day from 9 to 10 a.m. and 3 to 4 p.m. with a tour of the zoo. Visitors can



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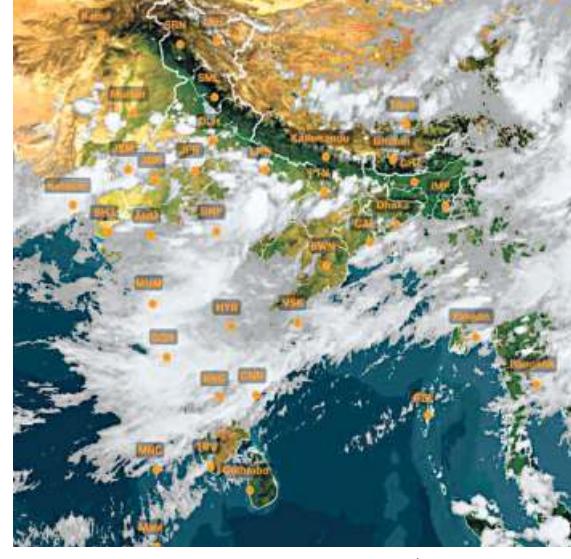


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WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, west Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Saurashtra & Kutch, Vidarbha, Konkan & Goa, Telangana and coastal Karnataka

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	9.5	31.6	25.3	Kozhikode	10...30.6...	23.6	
Ahmedabad	0.7	31.4	26.3	Kurnool	5...26.6...	23.1	
Aizawl	-	25.2	20.1	Lucknow	-...35.7...	27.2	
Allahabad	-	34.6	25.8	Madurai	-...38.6...	25.1	
Bengaluru	-	23.0	20.0	Mangalore	0.2...	29.4...	25.0
Bhopal	0.9	30.8	24.0	Mumbai	19.5...	29.5...	25.8
Bhubaneswar	2	31.7	25.2	Mysuru	1...	26.9...	20.6
Chandigarh	0.9	34.0	26.4	New Delhi	-...36.5...	26.8	
Chennai	-	32.9	27.1	Patna	-...32.2...	27.7	
Coimbatore	-	32.8	23.4	Port Blair	-...31.0...	26.2	
Dehradoon	9.6	30.7	23.8	Puducherry	-...34.6...	26.2	
Gangtok	4.5	21.2	18.2	Pune	18.9...	26.1...	21.8
Goa	108.2	26.6	23.8	Raipur	18.8...	25.8...	24.8
Guwahati	-	34.0	26.0	Ranchi	34.6...	29.6...	23.6
Hubballi	-	23.0	22.0	Shillong	1.5...	24.1...	18.1
Hyderabad	31.6	24.2	21.0	Shimla	16.6...	23.6...	17.8
Imphal	7	30.4	22.7	Srinagar	-...35.3...	20.4	
Jaipur	1.8	33.1	27.1	Thiruvananthapuram	-...32.2...	25.0	
Kochi	-	30.2	25.4	Tiruchi	-...36.2...	25.6	
Kohima	47.6	25.2	18.5	Vijayawada	1...	29.4...	24.4
Kolkata	5	34.0	27.4	Visakhapatnam	7.5...	29.2...	24.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES SO₂ NO_x CO PM_{2.5} PM₁₀ CODE

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	16	.56	37	.55	...80	GREEN
Bengaluru	10	.28	38	-	...94	GREEN
Chennai	.6	.12	69	.91	-	GREEN
Delhi	12	13	92	.50	.66	GREEN
Hyderabad	.6	.35	41	6	.8	GREEN
Kolkata	11	.17	14	.38	.61	GREEN
Lucknow	.9	.37	60	.33	.55	GREEN
Mumbai	59	.11	4	.30	.49	GREEN
Pune	17	.6	48	.16	.17	GREEN
Visakhapatnam	15	.29	14	.31	.46	GREEN

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m. in Jamnagar, Gujarat recorded an unhealthy quality index (AQI) score of 280 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 7

Fight erupted during panchayat meeting

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

A father and son were killed after violence broke out between two sides during a village panchayat meeting called to resolve a land dispute in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Saurashtra & Kutch, Vidarbha, Konkan & Goa, Telangana and coastal Karnataka

Two lawyers, Vimal Tiwari and Suresh Chandra Tripathi, were acting as mediators

However, even as talks were on, the two sides got engaged in a physical fight and used lathis on each other, said Pratapgarh Superintendent of Police Abhishek Singh.

Mr. Daya Shankar and his son Anand died of their injuries, while Mr. Chandramani Mishra and three others were injured, said the police

ice. An eyewitness told local media that the other side attacked them with an axe.

While the police have arrested one accused Rakesh Mishra, son of Mr. Chandramani Mishra, four teams have been formed to nab the others.

Mr. Singh said that after the violence, the two sides took their injured to hospital but did not inform the police about the incident.

A sub-inspector and two constables were suspended for keeping a watch on the dispute and failing to get the case disposed of, the police said.

Jammu police file cases over 'sensitive' videos

Man allegedly attacked by vigilantes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Sunday filed cases against uploading communally sensitive videos online and beating up of a local resident allegedly by cow vigilantes.

An incident involving a video of communally sensitive nature has gone viral on social media which seems to have been maliciously posted to create communal tension," said IGP, Jammu, Mukesh Singh.

Guftar Ahmed, spokesman of the Gujjar Bakarwali Youth Welfare Conference J&K, said two incidents took place in Jammu's Reasi. "In one video, a person used derogatory words against the Prophet and in another incident some hate mongers almost

reasi Deputy Commissioner tweeted, "I will not allow anyone to disturb peace of my district. Anyone forwarding this video on social media shall be booked as well."

Reasi Deputy Commissioner tweeted, "I will not allow anyone to disturb peace of my district. Anyone forwarding this video on social media shall be booked as well."

The Vaishno Devi Shrine Board threw open the shrine for devotees on Sunday morning. Only 2,000 pilgrims can visit the shrine per day.

Jamia Masjid, Vaishno Devi shrine to reopen

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Locals said Asghar was attacked by some cow vigilantes while he and his son were heading for a pasture land with their cattle.

"Will the government please come out with a response," Peoples Democratic Party leader and ex-Minister Naem Akhtar said.

The police said two FIRs have been lodged — one where Asghar's son "hurt the sentiments of a community by injuring a cow with a sharp-edged object" and "another in a case where people attacked Asghar".

Reasi Deputy Commissioner tweeted, "I will not allow anyone to disturb peace of my district. Anyone forwarding this video on social media shall be booked as well."

The Vaishno Devi Shrine Board threw open the shrine for devotees on Sunday morning. Only 2,000 pilgrims can visit the shrine per day.

'Don't allow accused in Dr. Tadvi case to resume postgraduate studies'

Coalition of anti-caste, tribal groups appeal to State government

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

A coalition of anti-caste discrimination and tribal organisations have appealed to the Maharashtra government to seek a direction from the Supreme Court to prevent the accused doctors who have been booked for allegedly abetting the suicide of Dr. Payal Tadvi from resuming their postgraduate studies at any medical college in the State.

Dr. Tadvi, a second-year postgraduate medical student at Nair hospital in Mumbai, was found dead on May 22 last year. "One cannot be given admission to another college after being accused of a crime in one college. Going by the charge sheet filed in the sessions court, this is a case of casteist mental torture in higher educational institutions," said Dr. Sanjay Dabhade, convenor of Jati Anta Sangharsh Samiti, a collective of anti-caste discrimination organisations in Maharashtra.

After consultations and suggestions, the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar will be reopened for prayers from August 18th," said a spokesman of the Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid, a caretaker body of the mosque. The body has appealed worshippers to adhere to health regulations and standard operating procedure.

He said all Ambedkarite and tribal organisations are united in not allowing the accused gain admission to medical colleges in the State as they have been charged with serious crimes like casteism, abetment to suicide, tampering with evidence. Dr. Dabhade said it would set a bad precedent.

overnment to give its opinion on allowing the accused to complete their education at any other college run by the State or the Brihamumbai Municipal Corporation in its next hearing on August 31.

"There will be protests across the State if the government allows them to migrate to another college," Dr. Dabhade said.

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1,120 new cases take Gujarat's COVID-19 tally to 78,783

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat recorded 1,120 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, taking its total case tally to 78,783. The State also recorded 20 more deaths, pushing its toll to 2,787.

Ahmedabad district crossed the 29,000-mark, with 164 new cases raising its cumulative case load to

Kutch: BSF nabs Pak. fisherman, seizes 4 boats

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHUJ

Four Pakistani boats were seized by the Border Security Force (BSF) on Sunday from Harami Nallah creek along the India-Pakistan border in Kutch district.

A fisherman, identified as Alla Bachao Siddique (25) from Sindh province of Pakistan, was apprehended, while the others managed to escape. A patrolling team of the BSF's Bhuj unit observed movement of four to five Pakistani men on boats near the creek around 6 a.m.

The Pakistani fishermen were attempting to enter into Indian territory by taking advantage of the rough sea. The alert patrol party intercepted the Pakistani intruders the moment they tried to enter into Indian territory. The intruders then saw the patrol party and jumped into the water. The patrol team chased them and apprehended one Pakistani fisherman. The rest of the fishermen managed to escape by taking advantage of the slushy and marshy terrain.

All four seized boats were searched and nothing suspicious was recovered from them. "The BSF launched a thorough search operation of the area, which was under way in the evening as well, and nothing suspicious was recovered," an official said.

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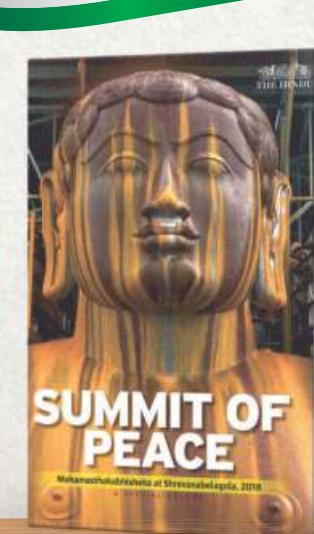
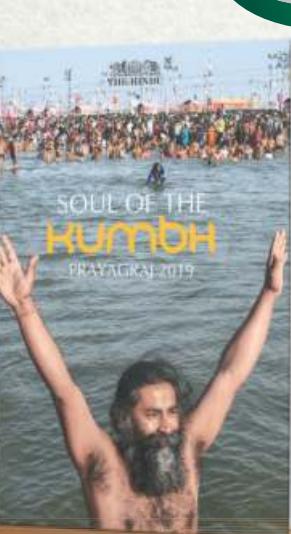
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Lapsing into contempt

Finding Prashant Bhushan guilty of contempt reflects a low threshold for criticism

The Supreme Court's order finding advocate Prashant Bhushan guilty of contempt of court reflects poorly on the institution's tolerance of criticism. The judgment of a three-judge Bench on the *suo motu* contempt proceedings against Mr. Bhushan hardly adds to the dignity and majesty of the Court that it ostensibly sets out to uphold. It is unfortunate that two tweets, and not any set of scandalous or scurrilous allegations, have occasioned this heavy-handed treatment. In the 108-page opinion that largely draws upon past judgments delineating the circumstances in which the Court will act in aid of its institutional reputation and authority, there is little more than a perfunctory analysis leading to the finding that the tweets amount to criminal contempt. The first tweet, in which an image of Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde in an informal setting has been used to make a critical remark that he was denying citizens recourse to justice for fundamental rights violations, may be an exaggerated or even unwarranted view on the absence of physical hearings now. However, it is quite a stretch to say that it undermines the Court's dignity, lowers its authority or interferes with the administration of justice. At best, it touches partially on the CJI's personal conduct and partially on his administrative decision-making. Neither part brings with it any exceptional malice or scurrility warranting action for criminal contempt. It is precisely this sort of criticism that the judiciary ought to be able to shrug off.

The second tweet, in which Mr. Bhushan has blamed the Court, more particularly, the last four CJIs, for "the destruction of democracy" in the last six years, "even without a formal Emergency", requires no defence. It is clearly in the nature of a political opinion, be it with reference to the working of the institution or the four persons who headed the judiciary during the period. It is difficult to agree that the mere voicing of an opinion that successive CJIs have destroyed democracy would undermine public trust in the judiciary; especially in the backdrop of some former judges, too, holding sharply critical opinion of the conduct of some of them. In its nature, intent and sweep, Mr. Bhushan's abrasive animadversion of judicial conduct is no more discordant than a former CJI being accused by his colleagues of being under executive influence, or misusing his powers as master of the roster with a view to obtaining favourable outcomes. There is some inadvertent irony in the Court's claim that allowing Mr. Bhushan's remarks to go unpunished would lower the country's image in the comity of nations. The highest court built its stalwart fame on stellar judgments and record of fearless independence. If at all it falls in the estimation of the world now, it may only be because of a growing perception of judicial evasion, self-imposed reticence and quiet acquiescence in the face of executive power.

Big goals

While celebrating milestones, India must not lose sight of governance challenges

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech on the 74th Independence Day – his seventh consecutive one – on Saturday sought to reassure the nation on the twin challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and external aggression. He has always used his oratorical skills to foreground concerns that have traditionally not been considered worthy of a Prime Minister's personal attention. The very fact that he mentioned menstrual hygiene will encourage health workers to be more attentive to the issue and create more awareness. Sanitation and access to drinking water have been issues dear to Mr. Modi's heart, and the speech reflected that. The Jal Jeevan Mission that seeks to provide piped drinking water to every home, along with the expanding networks of electricity, the Internet, banking and cooking gas, will equip India to rise higher. Slogans such as self-reliance, "vocal for local", "make in India to make for the world" are just old rhetoric for a new occasion, but their reiteration could spur the state apparatus into action, besides galvanising opinion. Mr. Modi has been an exceptional user of the I-Day pulpit to outline priorities, and deserves credit for it. While celebrating the nation's milestones, the massive challenges of governance and development must not be glossed over.

Announcing new schemes that do not resolve, but camouflage, these challenges are of little help. The PM promised to bring a revolution, as the National Digital Health Mission, which will give every Indian a digital health ID that links up all her medical records. But the real issue is the abject lack of primary health facilities in much of India. Digitalisation is welcome but is no substitute for inadequate human resources and infrastructure in the health sector. Mr. Modi also reiterated his vision for India in relation to the world, a tightrope walk of promoting import substitution on the one hand and seeking global partnerships on the other. The challenges in managing such an approach were apparent when he mentioned India's successes in attracting FDI and talked about self-reliance in manufacturing PPEs in the same breath. He did mention 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' – the world is one family – as India's guiding principle, but his characterisation of its centuries-old interactions with other populations and cultures appeared more in line with his Hindutva politics than with the spirit of the freedom struggle. The construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya now has the support of most political parties and is on the basis of a Supreme Court judgment, but its mention did not address concerns regarding what it portends for India's future. Ambitious collective goals can inspire a community, which must be increasingly inclusive as it progresses. Triumphs that are not equally shared are no triumphs at all.

Adversity has mellowed the leader

In his Independence Day speech, the Prime Minister had to assure the nation that he was not clueless amidst troubles



HARISH KHARE

It was a becomingly chastened Narendra Modi who stood at the nation's grandest pulpit at the Red Fort last Saturday. Last Independence Day he was glowing with a newly furnished electoral mandate and had the "370" trophy neatly tucked under his belt. This year the Prime Minister could not be oblivious to the realities of an uneasy land; and, the country has slipped up badly under his watch during these last 12 months.

Much trauma

The India that Narendra Modi faced this August 15 was in desperate need of an assurance that the nation's affairs were in safe, competent hands. A nation stands jolted out of its comfort zone as a foreign power has made ingress into our territory and there seems very little that our leadership or generals can do to restore the status quo ante. The nation has been forced to breathe the pre-2014 air of helplessness. The India this Independence Day is a land also devastated by an unseen enemy, a deadly virus that refuses to fade away. In March the Prime Minister had invoked the Mahabharata imagery to promise a decisive victory in 21 days; that has turned out to be just one more empty promise. Instead, India today has the dubious distinction of having the world's third largest coronavirus caseload, behind only the United States and Brazil. Thanks to an unapassable virus, India today is a land devastated by economic dislocation, disruption and destitution, a kind of suffering

not seen in a long, long time, even if no one is talking – or wants to talk – of the millions of fellow Indians who were forced to migrate back to the comfort of their homes in rural India.

And, then, just a little over 10 days ago, the Prime Minister had made it a point of participating in an elaborate religious ceremony of a *shilanyas* in Ayodhya. That participation by the Prime Minister had caused apprehensions, especially among the country's 200 million Muslim citizens, whether India was finally de-weaning itself from its secular commitments and promise.

It was this troubled context that invested the Prime Minister's Independence Day performance with extra significance, because he had barricaded himself away from any obligation of democratic accountability, all in the name of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The Prime Minister had a choice: he could choose to aggravate the nation's fault-lines, take the low road, crank up sectarian passions of his base, or, try to undertake some kind of course correction. He must have known that much was at stake this Independence Day; serious doubts had arisen about the reputation of his government for competence and whether his own leadership has exhausted its inspirational touch. In particular, the nation needed to hear from him whether he was capable of changing leadership gear.

Strategy of rhetoric

In the end he did what he does best: dig deep into his rhetorical armoury to shore up the spirits of a deeply dispirited nation. But even by his standards, it was, at best, a laboured effort, an over-the-top invocation of curative and creative potential of the "will" and the "dreams" of over a billion people.



He had to necessarily give hope to a traumatised nation, and even promised that as many as three anti-coronavirus vaccines were on the anvil.

Otherwise, Mr. Modi devoted much of his time at the Red Fort pulpit in an extended exposition of his government's initiatives and policies – the kind of spirited account Prime Ministers ordinarily give at the end of the debate on the President's Address to the two Houses of Parliament.

There was a sobering tone to this cataloguing of 'achievements' – an acknowledgement that slogans do not produce governance and that the un-glamorous task of brick-by-brick grinding chores still have to be performed. These six years have seen an excessive preoccupation with headline management but governance is certainly much more than the sum total of spectacularly manufactured events.

Sober and muted

All this beating the drums of self-congratulations was predictable; but equally significant was the note the Prime Minister did not strike. To begin with, there was no Hindutva triumphalism. Many of his admirers must be dismayed that he did not pronounce the death of the Nehruvian republic; nor did he announce the birth of a

Hindu political community. May be the Prime Minister is keeping his powder dry for the next electoral battle, but for now the minorities have not been made to feel spurned or unwanted. The Republic has been spared needless trauma.

Then, there was no mention of China or Pakistan. These last six years the nation has been encouraged to feast on xenophobia and a virulent nationalism, which has paid rich electoral dividends, but there must now be a sobering realisation that the Chinese have truly settled the Prime Minister's hash. The Narendra Modi who stood at the Red Fort this year must have understood that his over-investment in personal summit diplomacy with China's President Xi Jinping only helped the Chinese size him up – and, the country has to suffer the humiliation of a military kind. The bravado was definitely muted.

Notwithstanding the periodic invocation of 'national pride' and the regular serenading of the valour of our brave soldiers, the Narendra Modi regime appears for now, determined not to let the hotheads in television studios ramp up conflict with China. The 'LoC to LAC' formulation may not satisfy the belligerent Modi constituency, but the test of prime ministerial leadership would be to stay the new course of moderation and realism.

To the middle classes

A third significant course correction was an attempt to repair the relationship with the middle classes at home. There was this extended ode to the middle classes. Implicit in this wooing was a concession that too much of this mandir business and too much of an encouragement to the Yogi Adityanath-type of rough governance and rough justice can only cause

deep disquiet among the Hindu professional middle classes – the very old, original Mammooh Singh constituency, whose defection away from the Congress had brought respectability to the Narendra Modi Prime Ministerial project.

Beyond electoral calculations, the Narendra Modi regime should know that the grand vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' cannot be achieved without the requisite global skills and talent, which could only come from the middle class ranks. This serenading of the middle classes is a vital course correction, because so far the Hindutva cheerleaders have taken considerable pride in dismantling institutions and innovations of higher learning and research. The falsity of the 'Harvard versus the hard-work' binary seems to have finally dawned on the Narendra Modi crowd. Without a mobilisation of the middle class's imagination, the 'new India' would remain just an over-worked cliché.

Narendra Modi practises with considerable finesse the demagogue's familiar trick of imposing his slogans and prejudices as emerging out of a national imagination. But after six years in office, he has run out of enemies who needed to be tamed and vanquished. He can no longer avail himself of the excuse of the acts of omission and commission of past governments.

The onus is on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to help the country extricate itself out of a quasi-civil war and a sinking economy. After six years the nation is entitled to ask him to grow out of his deeply ingrained truculence and become much more than the leader of a political faction. He did hold out a hint.

Harish Khare is a senior journalist based in Delhi

Freedom and identity, the right to be

The aspirational values in the Constitution will make sense only when the average Indian realises the freedom to be



DEBASISH CHATTERJEE

Tulsidas, who wrote one of the several influential versions of the Ramayana, described Ram Rajya as a place where everyone felt free to do what they were supposed to do and where there was no fear, sorrow or disease. Mahatma Gandhi recognised the values of Ram Rajya as a shared universal consciousness. Underlying the articulation of both these exponents of Ram Rajya was the conception of a citizen as a free being.

Bound by laws

The final quest of all of life is freedom. This means that life as we know it is not free. We are all struggling from bondage to freedom. What binds us? We are bound by one law or the other. What is a law? Any event or phenomenon that repeats itself is a law. For example, an apple seed will always produce an apple. This seed will keep on producing apples – perhaps one million apples will come from that one seed. An apple seed will not produce bananas because an apple seed is bound by its own

law – it is programmed to produce apples. All of nature is nothing but an expression of laws – the repeated occurrence of form and phenomena. By this law a fish learns to swim and an eagle learns to soar in the sky. By this very law our hearts beat 72 times a minute and our body temperature is maintained at 98.6° Fahrenheit. So to break a law is to go against nature and risk one's life.

Finding freedom

Can we, therefore, ever be free? We can, provided we learn to look beyond nature's law-bound forms toward something deeper that is always free. This is slightly difficult to explain, but one can try. Take a long rope and tie it into a knot in the middle. As you tighten the knot it takes a definite shape. The knot is bound by its own nature. If the knot were alive, it would imagine itself to be a knot that is limited within the shape of the knot. But someone who has tied the knot will know that all that it requires for the knot to be free is to pull at the right place – the knot breaks free and straightens into a rope again.

So what is required to find freedom is just this knowledge that you are not a knot. Just this awareness that if you look beyond your physical form to your original state, which is formless and free, you indeed become free. What is



that formless state?

Classical Indian wisdom calls this state *adhyātma*. The compound word *adhyātma* is a combination of two words, *adhi+atma* which means awareness of self. The human body-mind complex is animated and powered by this spiritual dimension called *atma* that can be described as soul or self. The body is the hardware, the mind is the software and *atma* is the UPS (uninterruptible and independent power source). That which sets a human being free is the knowledge of the self – that spontaneous animating principle which runs the body-mind complex. Living in the light of *atma* or self is the true meaning of Swarajya. Etymologically, Swarajya means, *swena rajate* or self-luminous existence. Take the case of a person who burns his lips while sipping a cup of hot tea. He may think that the tea has burnt him. It is not the tea but the invisible heat that permeates the tea that has burnt him. Heat is not a property of the tea but it can per-

vade the tea and make it appear to be hot. Likewise, it is the *atma* that permeated the body mind that is responsible for our experience of the world.

On choices

Many people confuse freedom with multiplication of choices. Multiplication of television channels, political outfits, or shampoo brands tend to confuse us rather than help us choose better. Fewer good options would have been a better way to weed out undesirable options. At its core, freedom is not about choices; it is rather about identity. Do I get identified with a compulsive and conditioned mind-body or do I identify myself with a liberated self that refuses to be labelled by the market, polity or society as belonging to a pre-deterministic category? The free being that is our self, expresses itself not through an algorithm but awareness.

In the Mahabharata, in a deep dialogue, Yashoda asks Yudhishtira this question, What is the strangest thing in this world? Yudhishtira responds: The most startling thing is, though humans have a mortal body, everybody goes about their life as if they are going to live in their body forever.

The awareness of *atma*, inherent in pure being, sets us free from the illusion that we are nothing more than our bodies and our

minds. The knot of illusion that we are this body-mind complex unravels itself as realisation of our being dawns on us. We become aware as the rishis of the Upanishads did, of that *Anindatam svadaya tadekam*, one ultimate being in us that exists freely by itself. How does one access the freedom of pure, uninterrupted power of being? In the stillness of being, not in the quest for being this and that or the other, we find the doorway to our own freedom.

Not being co-opted

From Ram Rajya to Swarajya is a continuum – the journey from the temporal to the transcendental; from the civic to the sacred. The Preamble of the Indian Constitution promises the delivery of aspirational values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity for its citizens. They make sense only when the average Indian realises the freedom to be and not be co-opted by the politics of identity, machinations of the market or the dictatorship of the digital world. Swarajya in thought and education that liberates the free being, *sa vidya ya vimuktaye*, can only rescue India from a myopia of the post-colonial leadership. Until then, Ram Rajya will remain an enchanting utopia.

Debasish Chatterjee, the author of 'Timeless Leadership', is the Director of IIM Kozhikode

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

A health account

The Prime Minister's announcement during his Independence Day address, of the launch of a National Digital Health Mission that would "work as each Indian's health account", where the A-Z of a person's medical record will be stored, is a bit intriguing. This appears to be one more initiative in the "one nation-one..." series and one is a bit sceptical given the progress that has been achieved in the earlier "one nation, one..." schemes. This particular exercise will be doubtless massive. How far it would be practicable will be known only while implementing it. Citizens may seek privacy in disclosing the diseases they suffer from. The diseases may fluctuate and specialists to be contacted may vary depending on the disease, to look at one

aspect of this. It is not understood what purpose is going to be served.

D. SETHURAMAN,
Chennai

Case of contempt

Right from the beginning, there have been calls to drop the *suo motu* contempt proceeding initiated against civil rights lawyer Prashant Bhushan. Notwithstanding this, the Bench proceeded to hear it and convicted him. Only the sentencing remains. The statements issued by persons of stature such as Sitaram Yechury and D. Raja and the former Chief Justice of India R.M. Lodha and many other responsible persons as to the unseemly hurry in taking up this matter when there are other burning issues pending seem to point to general apprehension that the Bench was likely to

convict him. Such an impression does not augur well for a fearless and independent judiciary.

The general impression among lawyers and judges is that Mr. Bhushan is a tireless crusader for larger causes of civil liberties and democracy and is a man of conviction. All his life, he has not been in the pursuit of wealth, but excellence. Convicting him for contempt is making a mockery of democracy and scandalising the system. It is said that lawyers and judges are two arms of the judiciary. If that be so, to punish Mr. Bhushan would amount to maiming one arm of this vital organ of democracy.

N.G.R. PRASAD,
Chennai

TAX ASSESSMENT

The Prime Minister has announced a taxpayers'

charter which is a welcome feature for honest taxpayers. Its proper implementation should be followed and watched. In addition to this charter it would have been a bigger boon for the honest taxpayer to have had their income level raised for paying income tax or a tax reduction to a minimum level.

One wonders why the government stays away from the advice of economists such as Dr. Subramanian Swamy who openly declare that the personal income tax system should be done away with. This will encourage more people to come into the taxpayers' circle and investments will flow into government-regulated banks even if there is a lowering of interest in savings bank accounts. As announced by the Prime Minister, if the assessment

system is judicially implemented, corruption can be brought down to an extent. There should be stringent punishment for corrupt officers in the IT department.

V.P. DHANANJAYAN,
Chennai

Out of the blue

The Instagram announcement of August 15, 2020, that from '19.29 hrs', Mahendra Singh Dhoni has retired from international cricket signals the end of a glorious chapter in Indian cricket history. It would be fitting to remember 'Mahi' as an embodiment of post-liberalisation India. He was

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The centrality of devolution in development

In Sri Lanka, the Tamil people's political and economic aspirations must not be separated



MEERA SRINIVASAN

The outcome of Sri Lanka's August 5 general election had few surprises. The Rajapaksa family is decisively at the country's helm for the next five years. The fragmented political opposition is struggling to come to terms with their decimated parties and in some cases, sealed fate.

In the north, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), which almost solely represented Tamils living in the north and east for a decade since the country's civil war ended, is swallowing a bitter pill. Its presence in the 225-member Parliament, where the Rajapaksas have just garnered a formidable two-thirds majority, has diminished from 16 to 10 seats.

Tamil voters in the north not only chose three candidates from hard-line Tamil nationalist groups critical of the TNA, but also elected four candidates from parties aligned to the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP or People's Front) of the Rajapaksas. In fact, they gave Angajan Ramanathan of the SLPP-aligned Sri Lanka Freedom Party the highest share of votes in Jaffna.

While the TNA has ceded ground to rivals on either side, political observers have read the outcome as an unmistakable shift. Voters, they note, have moved away from their chief political concerns – which the TNA sought to foreground – to their growing economic distress that the TNA is accused of ignoring.

Letting down its own people

It is not hard to appreciate this reading, given that the TNA-led Northern Provincial Council squandered its first, big opportunity to govern the province in 2013. The irony of then Chief Minister C.V. Wigneswaran, who spearheaded its failure and subsequently broke away from the party, contesting separately and winning a seat in this poll is another matter. But it doesn't change the fact that the TNA, as an influential Alliance and a collective of legislators, was mostly apathetic to its people's everyday



"The Tamil voters' message to both national leaders and their own elected representatives has been unambiguous in every crucial election post-war." Voters wait to cast their votes in Jaffna before the Northern Provincial Council election in 2013. ■ MEERA SRINIVASAN

misery. It was neither able to envision a revived economy to help families cope with the war's cruel aftermath, nor willing to course-correct after the Northern Provincial Council's wasted term ended in 2018.

In the four years of the Maithripala Sirisena-Ranil Wickremesinghe government, the TNA privileged a political solution by way of constitutional reform over everything else, including war-time accountability that the southern polity is reluctant to honestly or fully confront. Its leaders' efforts towards a new Constitution cannot be rubbish in retrospect, for the TNA, like many others, believed that the prospects for such reform were greater under an unprecedented 'national unity' government than Sri Lanka's two main national parties cohabited. They gave the former government a real chance. Except that the Sirisena-Wickremesinghe government badly let down the TNA, on whose support it managed to survive its term. In turn, by ambitiously putting all its eggs in one basket, the TNA let down its own people.

The youth were jobless, while their parents' livelihoods rapidly dwindled. Farmers were hit by alternating droughts and floods, while fisherfolk, faced with conflicts big and small, struggled to stay afloat. Scores of women in the north and east, sole breadwinners in their families, suffocated in predatory debt and some tragically ended their lives. In 2016, Sri Lanka's poverty headcount was highest in the Northern and

Eastern provinces, according to the latest Household Income and Expenditure Survey.

An unhelpful separation

The grave economic conditions of Tamils living in the north and east, and the apparent shift in their voting pattern in this poll, might lead analysts to frame their mandate as one merely for urgent economic relief.

It is true that the TNA, controlled largely by Tamil elites, is paying a huge price for separating the political and economic realities of its electorate, focusing narrowly on one while neglecting the other. But to construe the vote against the TNA in some constituencies in favour of candidates aligned to the Rajapaksa administration as a shift away from long-pending political demands is at best reductive and at worst dangerous.

Those averse to the Tamil community's historic demand for greater political autonomy may readily embrace this economic logic to dilute or even disregard their persisting call for political rights. Prominent supporters of the Rajapaksa regime have already sought abolition of the provincial council system and the 13th Amendment. An outcome of the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, the Amendment remains the only legislative assurance till date for devolving powers to the provinces. It is part of the few incremental, but crucial, gains made from the 1980s, against the tide of Sinhala-Buddhist majori-

tarianism that swept the island since Independence. The Tamil leadership, including the TNA, may deem the 13th Amendment insufficient but none would disagree that it is necessary. After all, at the heart of the Tamils' long-pending demand is the legitimate desire for greater control of their lives. To be able to actively shape their political and economic destinies is first and foremost a democratic right, but also a vital check against a majoritarian state deriving power and legitimacy from its core ethno-nationalist base.

Moreover, political empowerment is not reducible to economic progress, but economic development – which the Rajapaksa brothers have promised to now expedite – will prove futile unless citizens have the political agency to inform the process. For development to speak to the needs of the people, devolution of power is central, not incidental. Devolved political power alone can ensure citizens are able to build, strengthen and access local administrative structures, institutions and expertise that are crucial to thoughtful development and its sustenance.

It is over a decade since the TNA unequivocally abandoned past calls, including from the LTTE, for separation. The Tamil people have no appetite for another armed struggle and the southern leadership knows this well. The Tamil people's quest for justice post-war is different, as they navigate their realities with resilience and pragmatism. To them, justice is not merely a set of issues on a checklist or a United Nations resolution to be addressed sequentially. It is about dealing with the destruction and trauma of the past, the livelihood distress and lingering militarisation of the present, and the challenge of a just and dignified future.

The Tamil voters' message to both national leaders and their own elected representatives has been unambiguous in every crucial election post-war, about their political and socioeconomic priorities – be it the 2013 northern provincial election, the 2015 presidential and parliamentary polls, the 2018 local government polls, the 2019 presidential election and the recent parliamentary election. Are the leaders willing to listen? —

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FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

The uncertainties over COVID-19 numbers

The problem with data confusion lies with the government, not with researchers who are trying to make sense of the numbers



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

On August 10, *The Hindu* carried an op-ed, "COVID-19 deaths may be higher than reported", by two community physicians, Hemant Deepak Shewade and Giridara Gopal Parameswaran. They argued that the COVID-19 death figures for India may have to be adjusted for low coverage of medical certification of cause of death (MCCD). They were criticised for estimating COVID-19 deaths by relying on the fact that only 22% of deaths are medically certified in India. This exercise amounted to fudging of data, some said.

Flagging issues surrounding data

I would like to give the piece some context before I evaluate the complaints against it. *The Hindu* has been flagging issues of data suppression and data manipulation since the Central Statistics Office started re-basing GDP estimates. Economist R. Nagaraj has explained in more than one lead article why there is distrust in the GDP figures. Writers have spoken of how the integrity of numbers should be restored. In this column, I wrote about the disastrous effects of data manipulation by quoting Nobel Prize-winning economist Ronald Coase: "If you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything."

With reference to COVID-19 numbers, there are many speculative reports from government bodies themselves. For instance, in June, a PTI report quoted scientists associated with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) saying that the pandemic in India would peak around November 2020. When *The Hindu* carried the report, the ICMR issued a clarification on Twitter: "The news reports attributing this study to ICMR are misleading. This refers to a non-peer reviewed modelling, not carried out by ICMR and does not reflect the official position of ICMR." Another report by PTI, "Facing criticism for 'under reporting' of COVID-19 deaths, Delhi issues SOP for hospitals" (May 10), flagged the issue of under-reporting. Since the break of the pandemic, this newspaper has carried analytical articles as well as ground reports. The 'Ground Zero', 'Telangana's COVID trials and tribulations' (Ju-

ly 18), was about lack of transparency of data and inadequate testing. It is in this context that one has to read the recent op-ed on under-reporting of COVID-19 deaths.

Giridara R. Babu, Professor of Epidemiology at the Indian Institute of Public Health, Bengaluru, in his lead article, "The challenges in counting the dead" (August 14), explained the complexities involved in calculating COVID-19 deaths. He wrote: "To obtain unbiased, reliable estimates, nationally representative verbal autopsy surveys such as the Million Death Study can be helpful. In the meantime, India has to adopt a strategy of transparency in data flow and reporting, with increased investments in innovations for improving data collection and reporting."

A fair assumption

The August 10 article flagged major lacunae in the Indian system of collecting data relating to death. Critics pointed out that the analysis was based on the MCCD report for 2017 when the report for 2018 had been released a few weeks prior to the publication of the article. I agree that the writers should have revised their article based on the latest report; their arguments would have stood ground even with the 2018 report. The article's assumption was that COVID-19 death reporting is similar to non-COVID-19 death reporting in the absence of specific data from the Indian government pertaining to COVID-19. This seems to be a fair assumption; they were not fuelling conspiracy theories.

We have reached a situation where efforts to make sense of numbers, in the absence of rigorous methods from government institutions, are characterised as partisan readings. In a May 20 report, "Is India undercounting its COVID-19 deaths?", *The Hindu* had raised the same question based on available data. If that report is read along with "Coronavirus deaths increasing significantly in several States" (June 16), it is clear that the problem with the data conundrum lies with the government and not with researchers who are trying to make sense of numbers by stitching together pieces of available information. One can differ with the writers' methodology and their estimate, which is based on a raw factor of multiplication and could have been refined with other variables that could affect the count, but that does not diminish their plea for a robust health data system.

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The cost of stifling voices

In doing so, we risk the disengagement of those most invested in preserving our democratic institutions

ROHINI SOMANATHAN

Ethical explorations often begin with emotional injury. Something simply feels wrong, and you ask yourself whether you are missing an important bit of information or the right perspective. This happened when I read the Supreme Court judgment pronouncing senior lawyer Prashant Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his two "scurrilous" tweets. I have known the Bhushan family for over three decades, a family of lawyers defined by their commitment to preserving and strengthening the judicial system and using it in the public interest. How could Mr. Bhushan be accused of malice against the system? How did we get here? I searched for the tweets, and the discussion around them. The court took a position on an important ethical question: Do we strengthen or weaken institutions by criticising some of the actions of those holding public office? The judgment sets a worrying precedent and affects all of us who raise our voices within public institutions and hope to improve them.

Exit and Voice
Students who are interested in economics often ask me what they should read. The little book on the top of my list is always Albert O. Hirschman's *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*. Each time I look through it, I come away with something new. I opened it again now, searching for a peg for my thoughts. Hirschman contrasts Exit and Voice as two alternative mechanisms for the repair of societal institutions. When consumers switch from one firm to another, an employee moves to a job with better working conditions or a family moves across neighbourhoods, they are all exercising exit. When a partner in a marriage complains of abuse, or workers protest against management action, it is voice. Exit and voice work together. Without any possibility of exit, voices would remain unheard, and if exit were too easy, very few would invest in voice. Public health and education work best in countries where they are inclusive. When the wealthy and most educated exit to private providers, public systems are often starved of resources and ideas. In politics, exit is used at the time

of elections, while voice makes incumbents accountable. The relative importance of the exit and voice mechanisms varies across organisation types, but, as Hirschman points out, "In a whole gamut of human institutions, from the state to the family, voice, however 'cumbersome', is all their members normally have to work with."

Judicial initiative, often in response to public interest litigation, has led to many progressive decisions over the last two decades. These include the Supreme Court's order that free meals should be provided for all schoolchildren in public primary schools. Scrutinising the behaviour of the legislative and executive arms of government did not lower the dignity associated with those offices or undermine democracy. On the contrary, it improved their functioning. Moreover, such scrutiny relied on critical voices from the field. Social activists pointed to growing grain stocks with the Food Corporation of India which could be used to eliminate child hunger.

Strengthening institutions

Courts exist to promote justice by adjudicating on disagreements. The judiciary relies on listening to testimonies and deciphering them to extract evidence. The many voices they hear are rarely non-partisan. They are muffled, broken, acrimonious, vengeful, disingenuous, arrogant, self-righteous and many other things. Yet judges know, better than anyone else, that good jurisprudence relies on listening to all of these and separating the wheat from the chaff. If they were to restrict themselves to the cool and candid, the result would often be silence. Most of us do not speak when we are calm, we enjoy the feeling while it lasts.

Voice has the potential to strengthen institutions and help them adapt to a changing environment. Deliberation and debate are needed if we are to pool information, negotiate our differences, and make better collective decisions. In stifling voice, we risk the disengagement of those who are most invested in preserving our democratic institutions.

Rohini Somanathan is Professor, Delhi School of Economics

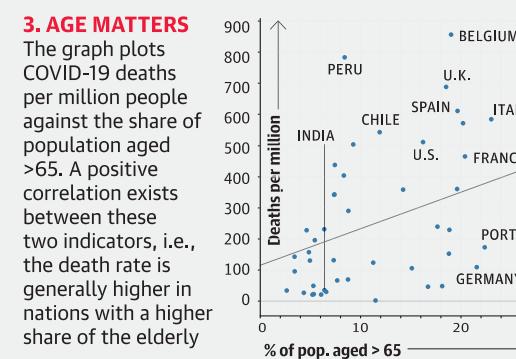
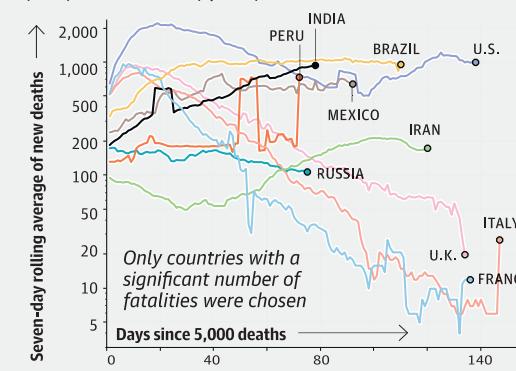


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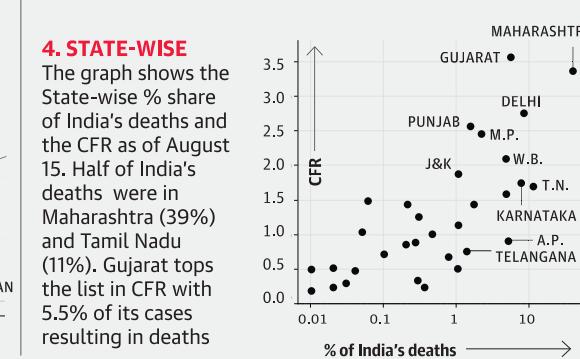
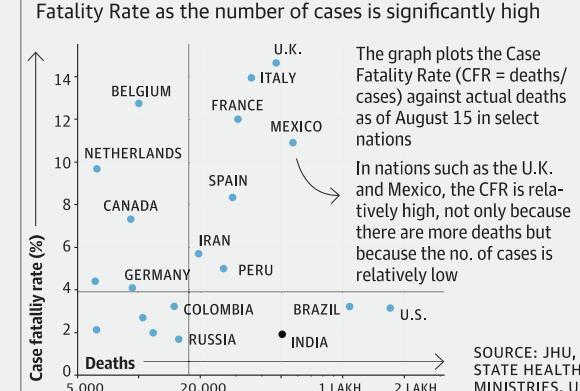
Deaths on a steep rise

On August 15, India crossed the 50,000 COVID-19 deaths-mark, becoming only the fourth nation to do so. While it took 86 days for the 10,000-mark to be breached, the last 10,000 cases took just 10 days. The average daily deaths are nearly 950 a day with the daily fatality curve still rising steeply. By **The Hindu Data Team**

1. AVERAGE DEATHS | As of August 15, on an average India recorded 948 deaths per day, slightly behind Brazil (965) and the U.S. (1,008)



2. DEATH RATE | Along with Brazil and the U.S., India has recorded a high number of fatalities but a relatively low Case Fatality Rate as the number of cases is significantly high



FROM PAGE ONE

U.S. FDA nod for rapid, inexpensive saliva test

They found that saliva samples taken from just inside the mouth provided "greater detection sensitivity and consistency throughout the course of an infection than the broadly recommended nasopharyngeal approach," according to a Yale release.

The study also found less variability in results with the self-sample collection of saliva.

Open source protocol
Dr. Grubaugh and Dr. Wyllie said they are not seeking to commercialise the method and instead want the simplified testing method to help those most in need. The testing protocol has been provided as an "open source", allowing laboratories in the U.S. to perform the tests.

"Thus, SalivaDirect will be free to use by diagnostic labs. NGOs may apply for a licence. While the licence will be free, if you represent a for-profit organisation, we may issue a licence. The licence will be free, but we will want to negotiate how much you charge for the tests. We made this to be inexpensive, and we need those savings to be transferred to your customers," Yale said.

The new test makes sample collection non-invasive and reduces the need for trained healthcare workers to collect the samples, reducing the risk of infection during collection.

The collection of a nasopharyngeal sample requires a swab to be inserted into the back of the nostrils, very often causing irritation, leading to sneezing and coughing, thus exposing healthcare workers to the virus.

Collecting nasopharyngeal samples can also be uncomfortable, discouraging people from getting tested. The easier saliva test is likely to increase testing compliance.

"Saliva samples are a viable alternative to nasopharyngeal swabs and could allow for at-home, self-administered sample collection for accurate large-scale SARS-CoV-2 testing," Dr. Wyllie said in a release.

The saliva sample can be collected in any sterile container. The diagnostic test also does not require the use of preservatives at sample collection, does not require specialised reagents or equipment for nucleic acid extraction.

The researchers validated SalivaDirect using several common and available reagents.

They claim the test is inexpensive costing between \$1.29-\$4.37 per sample.

(With PTI inputs)

Airlines fighting to stay airborne

In its forecast, CAPA said all airlines, barring IndiGo, may need ₹18,750 crore until the market begins to turnaround, and more during the recovery phase.

"Promoters, bankers, private equity, & government are all unwilling to provide support given demand risk & uncertainty," CAPA India tweeted last week.

"CAPA India reiterates that this could have an unprecedented impact on air connectivity, and on economic recovery. The two critical elements for the industry to survive and navigate this crisis are demand [traffic risk] and capital," industry body added.

"We shifted our focus from profitability and growth to managing cash and liquidity amidst the crisis situation – reducing our unit costs even further, making our fleet more efficient, ensuring our capacity is right sized to the market, and experimenting with new network and revenue models," IndiGo's CEO Rojoy Dutta told *The Hindu* in an e-mail.

Fuel efficiency
To save on the most crucial expense – fuel costs – the airline has prioritised flying its fuel-efficient NEOs over older CEO-powered A320 planes. Negotiating better prices and favourable credit terms as well as selling and leasing back its older CEO planes are the different ways in which the airline aims to generate liquidity of ₹3,000 to ₹4,000 crore.

Since the interview, IndiGo's board has approved raising another ₹4,000 crore through issue of equity shares.

UP. govt. under fire after rape, murder of minor

The district police chief, however, said while the body had blood stains near the eye, the victim may have received cut marks from sugarcane leaves. He added that the tongue getting pressed between the teeth was a sign of strangulation.

Terminating the incident as shameful, BSP chief Mayawati demanded strict action against the guilty. "With such incidents, what dif-

ference is there between the SP government and the current BJP government," she asked in a tweet.

'At its peak'
Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said the oppression of girls and women under the BJP rule in U.P. was at its peak. Ajay Kumar Lallu, Congress U.P. president, claimed there was a "jungle raj" in the State.

A.P. tally close to 3 lakh as it adds 8,012 cases

Telangana testing drops over weekend; 124 deaths, 7,040 cases in Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala reported 1,530 new cases of COVID-19 and 1,099 recoveries on Sunday. The total for cases was 44,415 and the number of patients under treatment in hospitals rose to 15,310. In all, 28,894 persons had recovered.

With the increase in cases, mortality was also higher. On Sunday, the Health department added 10 more deaths,

pushing up the toll to 156.

Five of the deaths confirmed were from Kannur, two in Ernakulam and one each in Pathanamthitta, Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam. Among Sunday's cases, nearly 92% or 1,404 cases were locally acquired infections, of which 53 were

health care workers. Thiruvananthapuram reported the highest cases among districts at 519 new cases.

There were over 1.62 lakh people in quarantine, 13,424 with mild symptoms isolated in hospitals. Samples tested in 24 hours stood at 30,123.

Andhra Pradesh's tally moved closer to the three lakh mark, with 88 deaths and 8,012 new infections.

The death toll touched 2,650 and the tally was 2,89,829 on Sunday, the Health department said.

Also, 85,945 COVID-19 cases were active. The government tested 48,746 samples in the past day, adding up to 28,60,953 so far. The positivity rate of tests was 10.13%. Chittoor reported the highest number of new cases and new deaths at 981 cases and 10 deaths.

Cases in Telangana stood

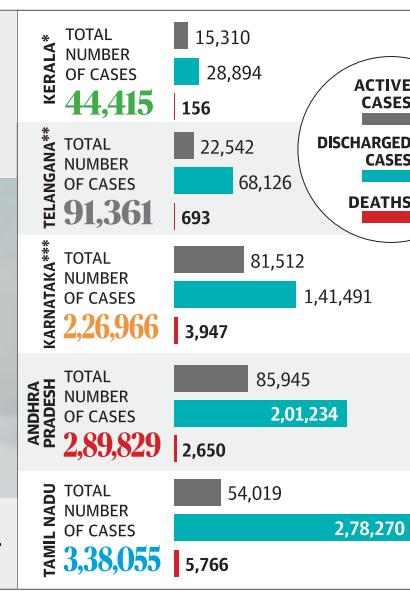
Trying times

As COVID-19 cases continue to surge, State governments have shifted their focus to testing as many as possible. The graphs show the spread of the pandemic in the southern States



Age no bar: A health worker collecting swab sample from a child at a mobile testing centre in Vijayawada.

■ K.V.S. GIRI



at 91,361 with 1,102 new cases on Saturday, against the previous day's incidence of 1,863. Testing to detect the virus was lower too. Usually, around 20,000 tests were conducted in a day, but on Saturday it was only 12,120.

Tests to detect COVID-19 in a day were seen to be dropping every weekend, only to rise on Mondays, since the last week of July.

Of the 1,102 cases on August 15, 234 were from Greater Hyderabad Municipal

Corporation (GHMC), 101 from Karimnagar and 81 from Rangareddy. Test results of 1,046 samples were awaited. The toll touched 693 as nine more patients died. Of the total, 22,542 were active cases, 68,126

were discharged, and 693 died.

Karnataka's case trend continued with 124 more deaths on Sunday, raising the overall toll to 3,947. In addition, 7,040 new cases were reported, the tally rising to 2,26,966. Of Sunday's cases, 2,131 were from Bengaluru Urban. Ten other districts had over 200 cases. Of 81,512 active cases, 692 were in ICU.

The State conducted 43,626 more tests.

With 5,950 more people testing positive for COVID-19 on Sunday, the number of active cases in Tamil Nadu rose to 54,019 and the tally of positive cases to 3,38,055. On the same day, 6,019 persons were discharged, taking the total number to 2,78,270.

Fatalities remained high as 125 more persons died of the infection on Sunday. So far, a total of 5,766 persons have died due to COVID-19.

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

Flood alert sounded as Godavari level rises

100 tribal hamlets in West, East Godavari districts inundated; streets in Bhadrachalam waterlogged

RAJULAPUDI SRINIVAS

VELERUPADU (WEST GODAVARI)

Officials issued the third warning with the water level in the Godavari river touching 55 feet at Bhadrachalam by 7 p.m. on Sunday. The level might increase further, Central Water Commission officials said.

At 6 p.m., the water level at Koida was 26.12 metres, coffer dam 29.35 metres, Polavaram 14.18 metres and Old Railway bridge (Havelock bridge) 17.48 metres. The discharge from the Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage (at Dowleswaram) was 15.23 lakh cusecs.

More than 100 tribal hamlets in West and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh were under knee-deep water. Residents of several habitations in Devipatnam, V.R. Puram, Chintur and other mandals were shifted to safer places. Officials sounded alert in Kukumur, Velerupadu, Polavaram, Chintur, V.R. Puram, Kunavaram and other mandals. National Dis-

aster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and police teams were pressed into service, said Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority officials.

Above danger mark

In Telangana, the swollen Godavari river continued to flow above the danger mark

on Sunday, triggering the threat of flooding in the riverside areas of Bhadrachalam Agency.

Road connectivity between Bhadrachalam-Dummuigudem-Charla, Charla-Venkatapuram and various important routes along the inter-State borders with Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh was disrupted as the

floodwaters surged through the low-level road points at Turubaka, Kudunuru, Alubaka and various other agency areas.

As the river turned perilous, the authorities started evacuating people living in the flood-prone areas to safer places and ramped up emergency response measures.

The backwaters of the Go-



Rough waters: People moving to rehabilitation centre in Khammam on Sunday. ■ G.N. RAO

More arrests in D.J. Halli case

309 arrested and detained for Bengaluru violence

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

Seethus from the Central Crime Branch (CCB) raided a house in Hegde Nagar, north of the violence-hit D.J. Halli in Bengaluru, and arrested eight youths, most of whom are alleged workers of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), on Saturday night.

The police have also arrested a man named Saleem, who is said to have played a key role in organising the mob that gathered outside the D.J. Halli police station. "He has sent messages on WhatsApp groups calling upon people to gather in front of the station," a senior officer said. With these arrests, the total number of detentions and arrests have risen to 309, in a total of 52 FIRs re-

gistered in connection with the violence. Of those detained, three have tested positive for COVID-19. The investigation has been able to not only uncover messages on messaging apps and social media platforms used to organise the mob, but also pinpoint those who provided other logistics like supplying fuel for the

rioters that night to indulge in large-scale arson, a police officer added.

Meanwhile, several women gathered outside D.J. Halli and K.G. Halli police stations on Sunday, alleging that their sons, husbands and brothers have been wrongfully detained. Several of them were seen breaking down, pleading with police to let go of their relatives.

In an August 14 advisory, K. Vasuki, Director, Agriculture, directed field-level officers of the department to warn farmers against opening unsolicited seed parcels originating from unknown sources. Farmers should inform the nearest Krishi Bhavan immediately and take steps to destroy the parcels by burning, the advisory said.

The recipients have also been asked to properly sanitise their hands after handling the parcels. Further, the Agriculture Department has warned them against procuring seeds from suspicious sources. Seeds should be purchased only through authorised agencies, the department said.

Second advisory

This is the second advisory issued by the department after the Centre issued a nationwide alert on August 6.

On August 12, the department had asked its field offices and department farms/nurseries to keep an eye out for suspicious seed parcels originating from unknown sources.

Prisoner dies of COVID-19 in Kerala

145 more test positive for the virus at the central prison in Thiruvananthapuram

STAFF REPORTER

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Poojappura Central Prison in Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram, which has been ravaged by COVID-19, reported its first casualty after an aged undertrial prisoner succumbed to the virus on Saturday. Raising the spectre of a large community cluster having formed in the prison, 144 more inmates and an assistant prison officer tested positive for the infection.

The deceased, a 71-year-old Kilimanoor native, was the first inmate to be diagnosed with the disease. Suffering from various other co-morbidities, including asthma, he tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 after falling unconscious on August 11. Though he had exhibited various symptoms, including fever, jail officials had initially considered COVID-19 a remote possibility considering his lack of parole history.

Imprisoned since 2016, the deceased had been awaiting trial in a murder case. He had been arrested

positive within six days. As many as 660 people, including around 20 officials, have been tested so far there.

Prison hospital

All those infected are being treated at the hospital on the prison premises. However, with one of the two medical officers indisposed, the Prison Department has written to the Health Department seeking the services of a medical team to attend to the growing number of COVID-19 patients.

Revised norms explore new treatment options

Focus on clinical observations

C. MAYA

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala has brought out revised treatment guidelines for the management of COVID-19, a comprehensive document drawn from the best of evidence-based practices from across the globe and encompasses the experience of the State's clinicians in treating those infected till date.

The new guidelines bear

disease epidemiology and transmission dynamics of COVID-19 and the newer treatment options, including the use of steroids, antivirals, and plasma therapy.

"We have assimilated the best from the national guidelines but have added guidance based on our clinical observations too. The highlight, however, is the algorithmic approach to treating patients with exertional desaturation [drop in oxygen level]," a clinician said.

IN BRIEF



Pranab's health remains unchanged, vitals stable

NEW DELHI

There is no change in the health condition of former President Pranab Mukherjee and his vital parameters are stable, the Army's Research and Referral Hospital said on Sunday, adding that he continues to be on ventilator support. Last Monday, Mr. Mukherjee underwent an emergency surgery for brain clot. He has also tested positive for COVID-19.

Maken is AICC general secretary for Rajasthan

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday appointed Ajay Maken as the new All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary for Rajasthan. The three-member committee will look into the issues raised by the rebel MLAs. Congress treasurer Ahmed Patel and general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal are members of the committee.

Heavy rain in Odisha, 2 die in wall collapse

BHUBANESWAR

Heavy rain lashed parts of Odisha affecting normal life, cutting off roads and inundating low-lying areas. Two persons died in Patnagarh block of Balangir district when a wall collapsed on them. Four members of a family had gone to attend a religious event on Saturday evening. They stayed back in a thatched house in the night. Due to heavy rain, a portion of wall collapsed leading to the accident.

98-year-old war veteran defeats COVID-19

NEW DELHI

Sepoy Ramu Laxman Sakpal (Retd.), a 98-year-old war veteran who contracted COVID-19, was discharged from the Navy hospital in Mumbai on August 15 after being fully cured, the Navy said on Sunday. "Sepoy Sakpal, a resident of Nerul, was admitted to Indian Naval Hospital Ship Asvini in a critical state and diagnosed with pneumonia due to COVID-19 a few weeks ago," the Navy said in a statement. Mr. Sakpal served in the Mahar Regiment of the Army.

Raj Bhavan placed under surveillance: Dhankhar

Charges a rebuff to Mamata's outreach

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

and the Raj Bhavan.

However, the Governor's new allegations have stirred up a new political controversy.

"I would like to tell you all that the Raj Bhavan is under surveillance. That should never happen," Mr. Dhankhar told a group of journalists on Sunday during an event at his official residence.

TMC leadership rubbished the allegations. "Why will the State government have surveillance on Raj Bhavan? These are unrealistic allegations," said Minister Rajib Banerjee.

On Saturday, the Chief Minister had sounded a reconciliatory note when she came for a chat without any appointment, signalling a thaw in the relations between the State government

TMC leadership rubbished the allegations. "Why will the State government have surveillance on Raj Bhavan? These are unrealistic allegations," said Minister Rajib Banerjee.

Sources said Mr. Rajak, Phulwarisharif MLA, was hurt over "neglect" in the party.

Of late, the party had been promoting Arun Manjhi in the reserved constituencies.

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After the 2015 Assembly election, when the *maha-gathbandhan* came to power, he was not inducted into the Cabinet.

However, after Nitish Kumar parted ways with the RJD to form the National Democratic Alliance government, Mr. Rajak was made the Industries Minister.

He had become the "Special Thakur Force", in a dig at the Thakur identity of the Chief Minister.

Since then, Mr. Singh said the police had lodged FIRs against him in five districts, including Muzaffarnagar, Baghpat and Aligarh. He was charged with spreading animosity between communities and hurting national integration.

Mr. Singh's remarks fit in

to the recent onslaught against the Yogi government in which Opposition leaders are accusing it of for allegedly pandering to Thakurs and targeting the Brahmin community through police.

"I am in Lucknow. You have lodged FIR in five districts. Arrest and send me to jail," Mr. Singh dared the Chief Minister.

The police are yet to respond to the MP's allegations.

Despite having 58 Brahmin MLAs in the State, BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma was unable to raise his voice for his community, the AAP leader said, levelling similar charges against Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya.

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to the recent onslaught against the Yogi government in which Opposition leaders are accusing it of for allegedly pandering to Thakurs and targeting the Brahmin community through police.

"I am in Lucknow. You have lodged FIR in five districts. Arrest and send me to jail," Mr. Singh dared the Chief Minister.

The police are yet to respond to the MP's allegations.

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4G Internet restored in 2 J&K districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The Jammu & Kashmir administration on Sunday decided to restore high-speed mobile Internet, 4G, in the twin districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur on "a trial basis".

"The high speed mobile data services in the districts of Ganderbal and Udhampur shall be restored forthwith, on a trial basis, while in rest of the districts, the Internet speed shall continue to be restricted to 2G," an order of the J&K Home Department said.

Internet services were snapped in J&K on August 5, 2019, the day its special status was revoked, and was later restored in a phase-wise manner. However, the speed on mobile phones was restricted to 2G.

There was a persistent demand from locals, especially traders and students, to lift the ban on the 4G speed, which was affecting their day to day life.

It's for the first time in over a year that the J&K administration has decided to restore 4G services on mobile phones.

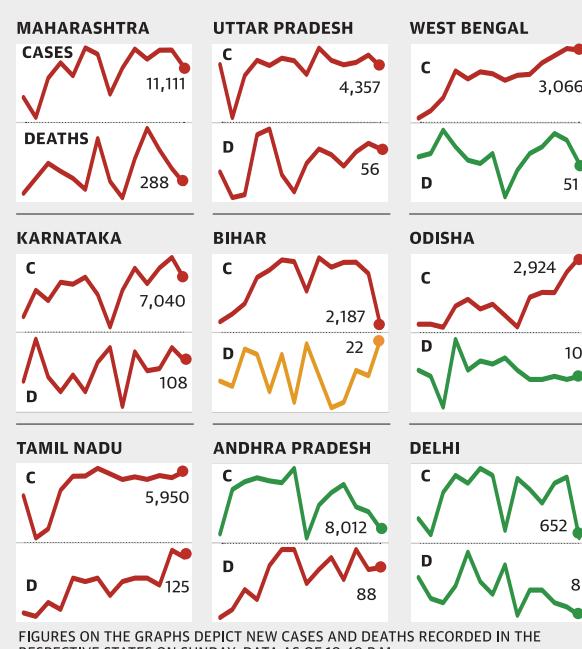
It's no time to lower guard, warn experts

Follow safe behaviour every moment, every time, says V.K. Paul, member of Centre's response team

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

Viral tracker
With a surge of 57,361 new cases on Sunday, India's COVID-19 tally stood at 26,46,975. As many as 925 new deaths were registered on the day. The graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days across select States. The States are classified based on where cases or deaths are rising (red), falling (green) or flattening (orange).

NEW CASES AND DEATHS
CASES 57,361
7 DAY-CHANGE +8.2%
DEATHS 925
7 DAY-CHANGE +4.4%



FIGURES ON THE GRAPHS DEPICT NEW CASES AND DEATHS RECORDED IN THE RESPECTIVE STATES ON SUNDAY. DATA AS OF 10.40 P.M.

"India's large population is fodder for the virus. What we have understood till now is that it cannot be controlled, stopped or prevented. All we can do is to slow the spread. India is moving rapidly to its peak viral load," said T. Jacob John, virologist and former Professor at the Christian Medical College, Vellore.

He said always wearing a mask, following proper hygiene and ensuring measured, small scale and effective lockdowns is our only way forward.

"The speed of growth of epidemic depends partly on how many importations occurred. We had probably too few compared to U.S. and Brazil. Wait and we will surpass both countries," he said.

"The growth of infection spread by asymptomatic patients is a cause of worry. The pandemic seems to be following the same path that we saw with 2009 pandemic influenza. It is travelling from large cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad to small cities, etc. But the two advantages that India has is the fact that the country has a relatively young population

and the small portion of people who seem to have 'hidden protection'. World over 100% people aren't getting it and the trend is evident in India also," he said.

He said the vaccine will come when it will. "We have to strengthen lockdown measures and ensure that all human interactions are undertaken wearing a mask."

Falling fatality rate

The Health Ministry, on Sunday, said India is registering a sharply falling case fatality rate, which is one of the lowest across the world.

"Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Delhi, West Bengal, Bihar, U.P., Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat and Telangana have the maximum caseload. The case fatality rate stands at 1.93% and while the U.S. crossed 50,000 deaths in 23 days, Brazil in 95 days and Mexico in 141 days, India took 156 days to reach this national figure," it said.

It said India is now rapidly moving towards completing 3 crore COVID-19 tests. "2,93,09,703 samples tested so far and 7,46,608 tests were done in the last 24 hours," the Ministry said.

'Allegations of graft not per se contempt'

Bhushan tells SC in 2009 case

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Allegations of corruption cannot be "per se" contempt because truth is a defence to contempt proceedings, civil rights lawyer Prashant Bhushan has told the Supreme Court.

Mr. Bhushan was responding to a contempt case against him for his remarks on "corruption in judiciary"

in an interview to the *Tehelka* magazine in 2009. A three-judge Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra is scheduled to hear the case on merits on Monday.



Prashant Bhushan

under Section 13 (b) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971. "When such truth/defence is invoked, the court to hold the alleged contemnor guilty of contempt will have to necessarily return a finding that (a) such defence is not in public interest; and (b) the request for invoking such defence is not bona fide," Mr. Bhushan argued.

Mr. Bhushan said he used the word 'corruption' in a wider sense to include any act of impropriety other than merely financial corruption.

He said the factum of corruption in judiciary had been stated in parliamentary panel reports on prevention of corruption, commented upon by ex-judges and noted in judgments.

INTERVIEW | JAGARNATH MAHTO

Age no bar for learning: Minister

'When I became Education Minister, people mocked me over my qualification'

SATYASUNDAR BARIK

A break of two decades from the classroom could not dampen the spirit of 54-year-old Jagarnath Mahto, Jharkhand School Education and Literacy Development Minister, from wearing the hat of a student again. The last time he stepped into a classroom was when he appeared for the matriculation examination in 1995. Driven by the urge to complete his education, Mr. Mahto decided to jump headlong into the world of learning despite his advancing age. He spoke about his rather curious journey.

Congratulations for resuming your studies. What made you decide to return to the classroom after so many years?

■ When I was sworn in as Education Minister in the Hemant Soren government in January this year, people mocked me over my educational qualification. They were taunting as to what a matriculate Education Minister can do for Jharkhand. According to them, an Education Minister must lead by example. I was very hurt. I resolved not to respond by issuing mere statements, but by action. So I took admis-

sion in XI standard in Devi Mahto Inter School at Nawadih in Bokaro district, which I had helped set up in 2005.

Tell us about your educational journey and why you had to leave it midway?

■ I belong to a poor farmer family. I passed my matriculation examination in the year 1995 from Nehru High School at Telo in Bokaro. Many people have written that lack of resources had become a hindrance to my continuation of studies. It is wrong. There are many examples of great personalities overcoming poverty to achieve new heights in their lives. I could have also found an answer to the issue of financial crisis. But, there was a bigger challenge before me. I joined the separate Statehood movement led by Sibu Soren and Binod Bihari Mahto.

Do you regret discontinuing your education?

■ No. I have realised a bigger dream. The creation of Jharkhand as a new State has reduced the backwardness of the region. Had the State continued under Bihar, I would not have dreamt of making it to higher echelon of governance. Now, I am a Minister and contributing



I have taken admission in Standard II in Devi Mahto Inter School at Nawadih, which I had helped set up in 2005

my part to shape the future of Jharkhand.

Now, you have already taken admission in a school. How will you do justice to your duty as an Education Minister, which is a very demanding job, and role of being a student?

■ I have accepted the challenge that I will study hard as a student and facilitate education for all as the Education Minister, which is a very demanding job, and role of being a student?

■ I have accepted the challenge that I will study hard as a student and facilitate education for all as the Education Minister. Besides, I will also carve out time to till my land as a farmer. I am confident of fitting into each role. I have the backing of my Chief Minister who always lays emphasis on education.

Did you ever feel that lack of

higher education was a hindrance to executing your official duty?

■ Never. I have been in public life for over two decades. I have seen the condition of our education system from very close quarters. As a Minister, I have brought all my experience into play. While my role is to give direction and ensure that people's issues are reflected in policies, the bureaucracy takes care of process nitty-gritty.

Will the other Ministers who have not completed college education take a cue from your decision? (As per Jharkhand Election Watch, four other Ministers have just passed matriculation.)

■ There is no age for learning. One can get education at any point of time. But, going back to school is my personal choice. I cannot tell about other Ministers. They will take a call on it.

What is your observation on the status of education in Jharkhand?

■ Government schools have been neglected for long. Children coming to government schools require motivation and attention similar to what is being provided in privately-run schools.

Did you ever feel that lack of

India is moving towards a form of elected autocracy'

Judiciary appears once again to be failing us, says Justice Shah

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With Parliament becoming a "ghost town" due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the judiciary having 'abdicated' its role, accountability mechanisms have become diluted and the central executive has become all-powerful and given free rein to do whatever it pleases", former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court A.P. Shah said in a hard-hitting speech on Sunday.

He was speaking at the inauguration session of the Janta Parliament webinar being organised jointly by hundreds of civil society groups this week.

Justice Shah said the budget session had been adjourned sine die on March 23, despite the fact that Parliament had previously continued to function through other times of crisis, including the wars of 1962 and 1971, and met the very next day after its own building faced a terror attack in 2001.

Parliaments of other countries had also continued to function through hybrid or completely virtual sessions through the pandemic, enabling remote voting to ensure that legislative business



Justice A.P. Shah

could continue.

In contrast, the Indian Parliament "has remained a ghost town since March 2020," said Justice Shah. "Besides failing to provide leadership to the people in a time of crisis, like the pandemic, it compounds the problem of representation and accountability by granting the executive a free rein to do as it pleases. Executive accountability, in these conditions, is a thing of memory, for there is no one to raise any questions about its actions," he said.

Social activist Aruna Roy accused the government of "using this opportunity to push through policies in the most undemocratic way". She listed the dilution of labour laws, waiving of environmental protections and ramming through a new education policy with no vetting by Parliament as examples.

Justice Shah did not spare his own branch of the government either. "Today, the judiciary appears once again to be failing us," he said, drawing parallels to the Emergency and accusing the apex court of ignoring or delaying cases related to important issues such as the Kashmir trifurcation, the Citizenship Amendment Act and electoral bonds. "In some cases, such as that of Internet access in Kashmir, the Supreme Court has all but abdicated its role as arbiter, and handed over the matter to an executive-run committee to determine," he said.

He warned that the dilution of accountability mechanisms during the pandemic is the continuation of a dangerous trend, moving India towards "a form of elected autocracy".

"What we see happening in India today is an insidious takedown of each of these institutions and mechanisms empowered to hold the executive accountable," he said.

NCC set for big expansion in border areas

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved a proposal of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) for a major expansion scheme in all the border and coastal districts, the Defence Ministry said on Sunday.

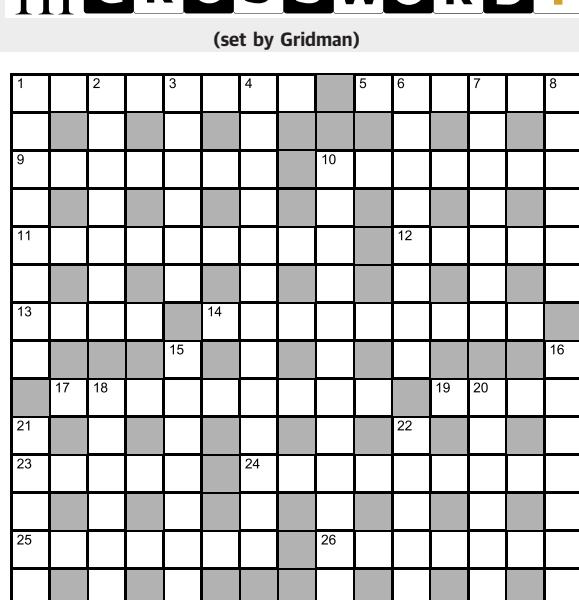
"A total of one lakh cadets from 173 border and coastal districts will be inducted in the NCC. One-third of the cadets would be girl cadets. More than 1,000 schools and colleges have been identified in border and coastal districts where NCC will be introduced," the Ministry said in a statement. As part of the expansion plan, a total of 83 NCC units will be upgraded – Army 53, Navy 20, Indian Air Force (IAF) 10 – to impart NCC training to the cadets in the border and coastal areas, it stated.

The proposal on NCC expansion was announced by PM Narendra Modi in his Independence Day address on Saturday. The Army will provide training and administrative support to the NCC units located in the border areas, Navy to the units in the coastal areas and IAF to the units close to Air Force stations. The expansion plan would be implemented in partnership with the States.

TH CROSSWORD + 13016

(set by Gridman)

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ACROSS

- 1 Dek, spots fixed for computer models (8)
- 5 Round wall inset with line smudged out is not clear (6)
- 9 Flyer has one drink (7)
- 10 Tavern's dismissed help (7)
- 11 Stern enforcement makes expert depressed (9)
- 12 Mistake, which to a T, causes panic (5)

- 13 Foreigner loses a claim (4)
14 Elegy lass rewrote is for all time (9)
17 Exit so Clare might appear (5,4)
19 The chorus includes repeat (4)
23 Custom makes you and me to develop (5)
24 Drunk to say I left quietly (5,4)
25 Old man in stripped house is threatening (7)
26 Cowardly member of a brood (7)
27 A month that is grand (6)
28 He keeps an account of instrument (8)
- DOWN
- 1 I am up in calm residence (8)
2 Engineer wildly tears around to notch (7)
3 Translation's distasteful and difficult to understand (6)
4 It helps to have a better vision (4,2,7)
6 Awkward way of paying a poet? Not exactly (8)
7 What a bad workman may have with his tools (7)
8 Blackmail former wife for wrong (6)
10 A for one? (6,7)
15 Very hungry Black? (8)
16 Regulating device of head of State (8)
18 Top court statement not soft (7)
20 Dishonest Chennai leader swindled (7)
21 Distinctive look about golden dawn (6)
22 Boy wised up about one fish (6)

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13015

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■ NICHOLAS FRANCIS

Higher education in India is regulated through autonomous bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), the Medical Council of India (MCI), and the Bar Council of India (BCI) among others. This allows for a professional outlook and facilitation of research at the macro level.

However, one area that needs a regulatory authority in the form of a national council is Social Work Education. While addressing current social issues, it also needs to consider emerging realities and focus on being application-oriented and generation of skills.

The issues

A mechanism to monitor the methodology and evaluation of Social Work Education is required, as there seems to be no coherence in terms of syllabus, teaching practices, field work and evaluation at various levels. This issue has come to the forefront now, as it is being offered as a job-oriented course. However, adequate infrastructural facilities are lacking and there is no adherence to the requisite norms.

The approach to social work education also needs to change. The charity-based approach should be replaced by a socio-economic and developmental approach. The syllabus has to be overhauled by removing outdated concepts and incorporating current and future needs like the emerging rise of civil societies and the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that makes corporates take on the role of service providers in the social sector. With the



GETTY IMAGES/STOCK PHOTO

Time for a change

Social Work Education and its professional practice within the country should focus on current realities and being application oriented

Human Development Index (HDI) being the benchmark for progress today, the standard of social work education is important to address the different needs of various communities.

The inclusion of disability along with modern rehabilitative systems is essential. Social Work Education should also encompass working with special groups such as adolescents, victims of natural calamities, the elderly, self-help groups, and others. Social legislations have to be reviewed and newer acts must be included, as must topics like human rights, community

The charity-based approach to social work should be replaced by a socio-economic and developmental approach

health, social networking, NGO management, fund raising and communication strategies. The involvement of practising professionals in designing the course, teaching and evaluation will also add value.

Most important is the blend of classroom teaching and practical field work training. The latter aspect is imperative to expose students to varied systems and structures pertaining to the developmental sector.

Statutory provisions

'The National Council for Professional Social Work Bill, 1993', which sought to

sional authority on the management and implementation of Social Work Education.

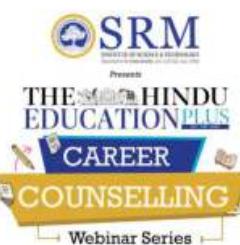
The council can not only offer recommendations on various social policies adopted by local, state and central governments, but can also offer consultancy services to private, corporate and government agencies when required.

It can also facilitate interaction and networking between professional social work and other allied disciplines like Rural Development, Science and Technology, Welfare and Social Justice, Health and Rehabili-

tation, Human Resource Development, and Research and Training Councils among others. While such a council may initially seem to take away the autonomy and freedom of individual institutions, it will be in the larger interest of enhancing the professional status of social work and its relevance for the future.

The writer has been a senior-level functionary in Developmental Social Work and is on the board of studies in Social Work in many colleges. Email: nicholasmdu@gmail.com

Disclaimer: The views expressed are personal.



The Hindu Education Plus will host a series of free webinars – presented by SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai – through August on 'Current and Emerging Career Opportunities' in different fields.

The first webinar in August will be on Nursing and Paramedical Sciences.

The speakers are Dr. Bellur Rajashankar, former Dean, Manipal College of Health Professions; Dr. Roy K. George, National President, Trained Nurses Association of

counting and Finance, International Banking and Finance, Investment and Finance, Financial Technology or Finance and Management. Last date to apply: August 24, 2020. Write to sbs.admissions@strath.ac.uk for more information

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The hospital reimaged

How our healing centres can be built in a post-COVID world

SOMA BASU

Delhi resident Mallika Kumar endured a terrible tooth ache, relying on home remedies, during the lockdown. Recently she sought an online consultation with a dentist, but is apprehensive about visiting the doctor for treatment.

"A friend suffered a fall injury and was compelled to go to a hospital for an X-ray following which she was wheeled in for immediate knee surgery. During post-op recovery, she was diagnosed with COVID

symptoms and passed away subsequently," Mallika narrates, unable to get over the incident. The foundation of her fear is a possible hospital-acquired Coronavirus infection.

In Kolkata, Rebecca De Souza is unable to avoid hospital visits as the only caretaker of her ailing brother, who requires mandatory dialysis. She is anxious about bringing any infection home, because she lives with her elderly mother. "Though we get appointment slots, wear masks, try not to touch anything, sanitise our hands, and rush for a bath after returning home, the mind is just not at peace," she says.

Mallika and Rebecca are not isolat-



ed cases for this loss of confidence.

An article in *The Guardian* published in May 2020 quoted in *The British Medical Journal*, reported that up to 20% of NHS patients in the UK contracted COVID-19 in hospitals while being treated for another illness.

Many requiring health check-ups and routine ongoing treatment are wary of entering hospitals that have poorly ventilated lounges, often situated in the basement of a building, and air-conditioning that will probably not pump in fresh air.

"It is a new order health crisis," says Dr K Srinath Reddy, president, Public Health Foundation of India. "It is difficult to identify the asymptomatic, and pre-symptomatic, who can dis-

Maximum security Hospitals can be reconfigured to use ultra-violet lighting and PPEs for all healthcare staff. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

seminate the virus unintentionally," he says.

What hospitals can do

To quell the uneasiness, hospitals can be reconfigured to facilitate good air flow and space utilisation, to use ultra-violet lighting to reduce microbial threats and PPEs for all healthcare staff. "The way we redesign and build our structures and follow the patient dealing processes may never be the same again," says Dr Reddy.

Mumbai-based architect Shantanu Poredi, who has done the space and medical planning of several hospitals, including Mumbai's Kokilaben Hospital and the 250-bed multi-specialty Reliance Hospital on the Navi Mumbai-Thane highway, says the bane of modern structures is the vertical box construction without any cross-ventilation.

"Ideally, we should go back to separate self-contained units, like how it is in majority of the old Government hospitals, built by the British, where each department is an independent block with the greatest amount of

RESHAPING HOSPITALS

Bar attendants from entering.

Set up multiple and separate entry and exit points to distribute the crowd.

Establish pop-up triages outside the main building to take the load off the hospital, so that those who don't need admission can be given a prescription and sent home.

Allow patients inside in small batches depending on the size of the waiting hall

Have the mandatory hand wash and temperature check at the entrance

Staff, patients, visitors – all should wear fresh surgical mask while entering

Set up automated opening/closing of all doors and windows

Announce reminders over the public address system not to lean against walls or unnecessarily touch surfaces

Get the patient's history over the phone as they wait their turn, thereby reducing doctor-patient meet time

Fix seating arrangement in waiting hall as per social distancing norms.

Make online registration and appointment mandatory for paying patients

Encourage telemedicine, strengthen primary care, day care procedures and ambulatory home care

flexibility and ventilation," he suggests, while acknowledging that land is a luxury in cities.

To help mitigate the highly contagious virus, Poredi says the focus needs to shift from fixing the critical care infrastructure to reimaging the hospital space. "Total temperature control should not be restricted to ICUs, OTs, burns, neo-natal and few other critical care wards. Entire complexes need to go green with large windows and efficient air conditioning systems with HEPA filters, powerful exhausts, air curtains to effectively filter the circulating air."

About to complete a 250-bed hospital in Indore and start work on a 300-bed hospital in Rajkot, Poredi says he may alter the hospital architecture wherever possible depending on the client's choice and investment, but running them will be technology-dependent in future.

For instance, he is reworking his designs, introducing sliding doors and touch-free, remote controlled switches, handles, monitors and other common contact points. He is replacing curtains and blinds with smart glass partition screens that are easy to clean and maintain with long lasting surface disinfectants, developing more pop-up triages (where decisions are taken on critical care) in open and empty areas around the hospital and installing cubicles with anti-microbial coated walls in place of open counters inside the building.

Working on existing facilities

It is a tactical war on the virus and innovation is the key to minimising pathogen transmission inside hospitals, says Prof Anil Dewan, Head of Building Engineering and Management at Delhi's School of Planning & Architecture.

Along with architect Sandal Kapoor he presented a paper at a webinar on post-Covid healthcare strategies where the duo looked at potential intervention in the existing facilities. "Retrofitting old hospital buildings is tough but compulsorily everything needs to be pushed behind protective screens now," says Dewan. "We have redefined the protective environment with prefabricated modular approaches and mobile constructions," adds Kapoor.

The critical safety protocols, according to them, include screening of patients with robotic scanners; sanitised entries; AI enabled kiosks for registration, billing, enquiry, pharmacy; spacious and well ventilated common areas; circulation of constant fresh air; UV sanitisation sections and more isolation rooms and makeshift treatment rooms. "The adaptive reuse is to effectively segregate crisis pandemic patients from the uninfected," says Kapoor.

The Chief Medical Officer at Aravind Eye Hospital, Puducherry, Dr R Venkatesh, says hospitals are actually safer than malls, offices and hotels now on account of more rigorous sanitising. While the out patient rush has dropped by three-quarters and surgeries by a fifth during lockdown, he says the hospital is preparing to deal with more patients when they start returning (*See box*). "How long will they avoid treatment? Hospitals will have to take a paradigm shift in clinical and administrative management while healthcare models will continue to evolve," he says.

To begin with, we must return to the primary care doctor for the basics, "and remember, less healthcare is always better healthcare," says Dr Puneet Bedi, a gynaecologist with Indraprastha-Apollo, Delhi.



WORDS OF WISDOM

SOMA BASU

The Pandemic Century: A History of Global Contagion from the Spanish Flu to Covid-19

by Mark Honigsbaum, Penguin RandomHouse India

A timely book that traces the history of 10 major outbreaks of disease in the last 10 decades with a new chapter on COVID-19. This riveting book by medical historian

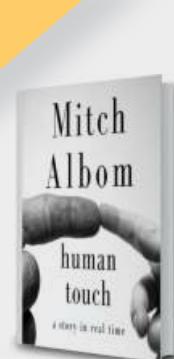
Mark Honigsbaum, combines medicine, sociology, science, history and frontline reportage of the pandemics through the last century. He builds the story around the 1918 Spanish flu, 1924 pneumonic plague in Los Angeles, 1930 parrot fever pandemic to the recent SARS, Ebola, Zika and the present novel Coronavirus, outlining some striking similarities among the diseases. It leaves the reader with a renewed sense of being cautious: a state of preparedness is a better option than reacting with fear or indifference.

Yes to Life In spite of Everything

by Viktor E. Frankl, Penguin RandomHouse India

The 1946 book about horrors in Nazi concentration camps where the author's parents, wife, and brother died, has been published for the first time in English. It holds good as a profound and timeless lesson to look at everything in life as an opportunity, even when times are dark.

Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry at the University of Vienna Medical School, Viktor's voice during the Holocaust finds resonance in these uncertain times, as he tells us never to lose compassion, spirit, and the thirst for life.



Human Touch

by Mitch Albom, Hachette India

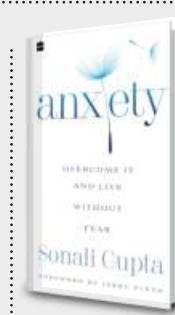
This is an eight-part series of a fictional story of people in a small town in Michigan, where the Coronavirus takes root and compels hitherto friendly neighbours into distancing and mistrust. Only self-protection matters as humanity begins to fray. The plot is built around a doctor and a pastor and their respective families, an elderly couple and a young Chinese couple whose housekeeper has an eight-year-old son. The little boy Moses unsuspectingly becomes a focal point in the plot as he has blood that protects him against everything. He secretly visits neighbours' homes and gives them what everybody is missing now, the human touch. He hugs and embraces fellow citizens and soon becomes an object of medical curiosity.



The Rules of Contagion: Why Things Spread – and Why They Stop

by Adam Kucharski, Profile Books

This book delves into peoples' lives and behaviour following a deadly viral explosion. A political movement and an innovative idea work in tandem to establish the new normal and connect the world like never before. At a bewildering speed, Kucharski introduces a mesh of friendships, information networks, hidden laws, crumbling financial systems and dithering social dynamics that collectively explain how we can get better at predicting what can happen next. The author is an associate professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and works on global outbreaks such as the Ebola epidemic and the Zika virus, he says.



Anxiety: Overcome It and Live Without Fear

by Sonali Gupta, HarperCollins Publishers India

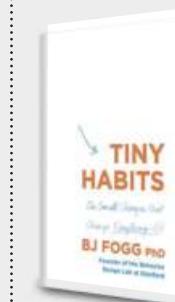
Are we able to differentiate between anxiety and stress? Mumbai-based clinical psychologist Sonali Gupta offers empathetic guidance to not only identify anxiety as a mental health crisis affecting 30 lakh Indians at the moment, but also how it is triggered at work, in relationships, and by social media. By highlighting multiple case studies, she gives a glimpse into the lives of those affected and how they confront fears to take control of the situation.



Soap and Water & Common Sense: The Definitive Guide to Viruses, Bacteria, Parasites, and Disease

by Dr Bonnie Henry, Juggernaut

The author, who currently helms COVID-19 operations in Canada's British Columbia, takes readers through the world of microbes. Written simply, despite its technical content, it gives us a brief history of various diseases from pathogens: smallpox, SARS, influenza, cholera, malaria and more. She helps us understand how we get sick, who the 'disease detectives' have been through time, and takes up famous case studies like Typhoid Mary, who was responsible for spreading the illness to many.



Tiny Habits: The Small Changes that Change Everything

by BJ Fogg, HMH Books

This is a much anticipated book by the Founder of the Behavior Design Lab at Stanford because he shows us how to change our lives for the better, one tiny habit at a time. Based on 20 years of research and his experience of coaching over 40,000 people, BJ Fogg cracks the code of habit formation whether you want to sleep better, lose weight, work smarter or be a hands-on parent. The author says the secret is to start small. Using his science-based approach, Fogg asks us to focus on what is easy to change, instead of going after what you 'should do'. Quick wins can be smart solutions to make changes that are simple to achieve and sticky enough to last, he says.

Q&A



I get a headache when I run, but when I walk it's fine. Why is this happening?

■ It could be exercise induced exertional headache, caused when a person does not have enough glucose in the blood. Ensure you eat something like a banana about an hour before. However, there could be underlying reasons like anaemia which could cause hypoxia, where the brain is deprived of oxygen. Some women may also experience this during the period, so you can avoid running at the time. Try and look at running as a time of relaxation, not one of stress, so don't take office calls or think about anything stressful at this time. Note the time, dates, what you ate, your workload, and then consult a doctor if this persists.

I am preparing for a competitive exam and don't have time to go out and play a sport.

What can I do at home?

■ You can use the stairs to go up and down or walk on the terrace, if you haven't exercised much before. If you have, try short bursts of HIIT for 7 to 15 minutes a few times a day. Exercise stimulates endorphins and helps you refocus on your work better.

I am a 24-year-old who has developed a bit of a belly in the last four months. What is the best exercise to get this off?

■ Ensure a healthy diet with no junk or processed foods. Include three days of aerobic exercises (brisk walking, cycling) for about 45 minutes and three days of strength training (using weights or your own body weight) for about 30 minutes. If you are regular, you could lose the belly fat in three to four months.

I am a 21 and suffer from constipation.

What exercises will help me?

In addition to aerobic exercises and strength training, make sure you do mid-sectional exercises (sit-ups, crunches) that increase intestinal motility.

D.Kannan Pugazhendi is a renowned sports physician and fitness consultant with over two decades of experience

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

As live play performances and readings crowd virtual platforms, theatre is going through a 'dramatic' shift from stage to screen. Are new formats here to stay?

GOWRI S

Actors wait with bated breath for their scene. This time, they are not backstage. At home, they face laptops propped on boxes, books, even ironing tables. Dialogue flows, scenes shift and an audience, ranging from a 100 to 2,000, from around the world, watches.

In a COVID-19 world, where performances have been forced to migrate online to survive, live theatre has found creative ways to adapt. That said, the democratisation of theatre is perhaps the only consolation: all virtual theatre poses many novel challenges, starting with denying performers the ability to connect with the energy of a live audience. A full-fledged live play online is a result of weeks of hours-long rehearsals and the determination to "crack the tech." A play is not a play without its fair share of blocking, physicality, improvisation and stage (in this case, screen) presence.

As theatre outfits across the world shift from stage to screen, many opt for the more tech-friendly live reading or monologue options while others go the extra mile to present an entire play with a solid cast through virtual platforms. Either way, with virtual theatre, you are always "at the mercy of the Internet Gods," as director and co-founder of Mumbai-based QTP, Quasar Thakore Padamsee aka Q, puts it.

Groping in the dark

Chennai-based performing arts company, Eavan, is more than 10 plays into this journey. Ask co-founder Sunil Vishnu what this shift means, and he says it is nothing less than a "revolution" for theatre.

"In March, around Women's Day, we had about 50 performances lined up. We managed to present 25 of them. As COVID-19 hit, the rest vanished. It was a shock," he says.

April and May were spent trying to crack the new medium. "Around that time, people also started working online which means people are already online for six to seven hours a day," continues Sunil. "What could one create that would give them a different experience?"



Improvising (Left) Eavan's Sunil Vishnu amid online performances; (below) a Zoom performance of *The Odd Couple* ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

WHEN IN ROME...

The Tovstonogov Bolshoi Drama Theater in St Petersburg staged a brief version of Anton Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, within the popular online game Minecraft in June. Ninety players were able to watch the performance from within the Minecraft version of the Bolshoi Drama Theater. While others had to join the YouTube live stream

The Gorch Brothers, an up-and-coming troupe in Tokyo, stages contained performances on the back of trucks, that can be driven around the country

Conquest Theatre, in Canmore, Canada put up two one-act plays in a forest — in founder Marjorie Sutton-Bridge's acreage — with the woods as the backdrop, with social distancing in place

From matching the backgrounds and eye lines to keeping up with the lag on a virtual platform, the process is ever-evolving, especially when multiple actors log in from across the country.

There have been instances where actors sent each other matching bedsheet via Dunzo to create the same backdrops. The direction, then, would cater to the screen: for instance, if multiple screens are involved on a window, actors' positions and body language need to align with co-actors. They cannot always see their co-actors on screen. Careful, scene-by-scene choreography then, is necessary. This is called 'blocking' in the online space.

In Q's opinion, the actors should be given all the credit for being able to execute these intricacies. His *Every Brilliant Thing*, an intimate theatre piece on mental health that requires audience participation, recently went online. Performed by Vivek Madan, the play followed the format of a free-flowing informal conversation, in a bid to adapt. The audience at the Zoom session were asked to unmute themselves and join in whenever they felt like it. "In the first couple of rehearsals, Vivek found it liberating because he didn't have to be aware of the audience. But, as we started getting to the crux, we realised it is tough. In the theatre, we take a line, get a response and then build on it. Here, there is no response."

Vivek adds, "It is acting to a camera, and you are alone. You are performing as well as checking whether you are on frame. And pulling back where you normally would let go. Sometimes, it is not necessary to give as much because you are too close to camera and the dishonesty of the moment surfaces."

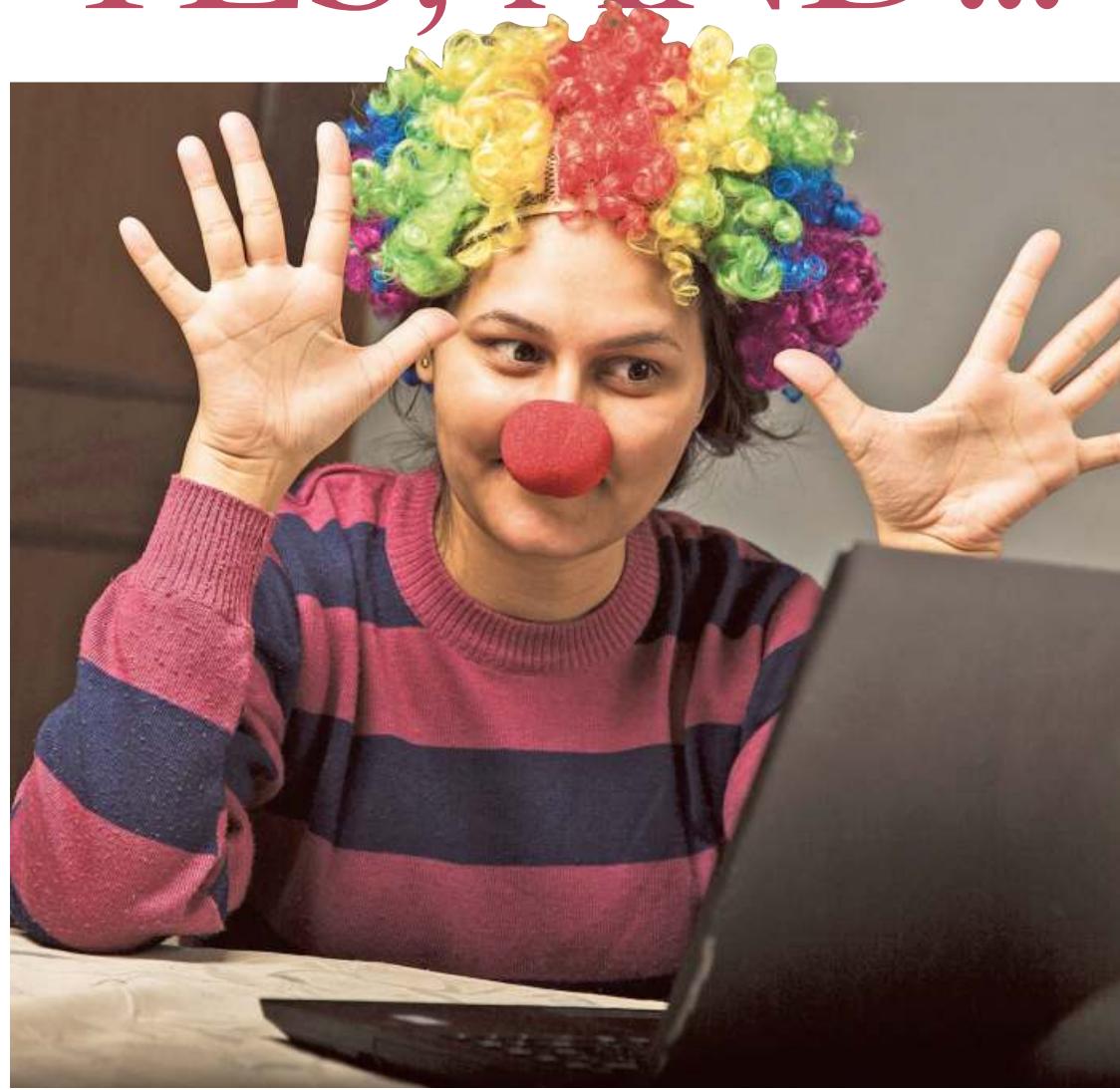
It is not surprising to notice the shift in language, when it comes to screenplay. Sunil agrees, "If we are doing an existing script, we work with that. But, when a new script emerges we will be

cognizant of the medium. One needs to think like they are writing for the camera or an OTT platform."

For instance, actors are given marking spots (like, while shooting movies) for a Zoom performance. Actors also need to have a presentable room, for background.

Chennai-based Dramact recently presented Neil Simon's comedy, *The Odd Couple*. Over two-and-a-half hours long, it was performed live on Zoom and streamed simultaneously on YouTube and Facebook. The response was overwhelming, with 2,000-odd people watching it from across the globe, says director Nilu, suggesting that audiences too are warming up to this format. "There is also the joy of the fact that there are hundreds of people who would want to watch it later, and now they actually can. There is so much potential."

Does this format have an expiry date? Many artistes don't think so: they see it existing parallel to live performances, maybe even as an independent genre. Nilu adds, "The reach is phenomenal and I see it as a great possibility. It is in fact, giving theatre much larger opportunities."



HOMING IN



For this week's lockdown **Reading List**, we have recommendations from author **Amandeep Sandhu**, whose semi-autobiographical *Roll of Honour* was nominated for The Hindu Literary Prize for Best Fiction-2013

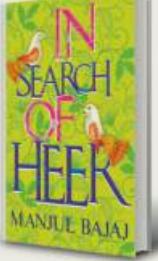
SOMA BASU

Man's Search For Meaning by Viktor Frankl



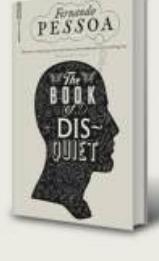
Recently, to write a long form piece on how the lockdown affected the nation's mental illness, I re-read this book. It is an account by a trained psychiatrist of Frankl's calibre and experience as an inmate in Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War. The power of the book lies not in the description of the horror, but in its assertion of the meaning of life, and how it can be found in every moment.

In Search Of Heer by Manjul Bajaj



I love this re-telling of the famous ballad from Punjab – Heer Ranja, first attributed to Damodhar Gulati in the 17th Century and later to other poets including the famous Waris Shah version in 1766. Manjul Bajaj's version is a riveting, modern and lyrical take which makes for a very good read. Bajaj not only brings alive the story of love, betrayal and loss framed by patriarchy and feudalism, but also experiments with points of views and gender norms.

The Book Of Disquiet by Fernando Pessoa



In these uncertain times, I am constantly reminded of anonymity best practised by someone we know in literature as Fernando Pessoa, who created around 75 heteronyms or figures from his own self. These heteronyms often talked to each other through his writings. Published four decades after Pessoa's death, the book is an interesting series of fragmented notes and ruminations from a faceless autobiographer.

Secret Writings of Hoshang Merchant



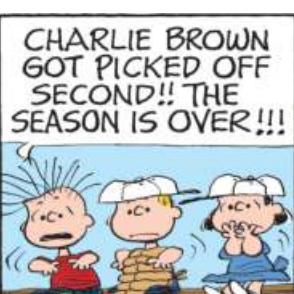
A recent biography I enjoyed – not only because the writer is my teacher but also because he gave me courage to open myself to the world – is *Secret Writings of Hoshang Merchant*. While Merchant is prolific and a well-known poet, I loved his prose for it reminded me of his classes. He speaks in his book as he did during his lovely lectures and invariably repeating the points: to be truthful, be yourself, and confront the world. I am glad now a much wider audience can access the poet's mind and heart.

We would love to know how you are keeping busy at home. Tell us who you are watching live, at metro@thehindu.co.in.

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



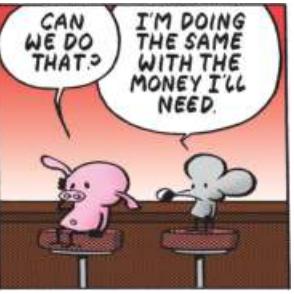
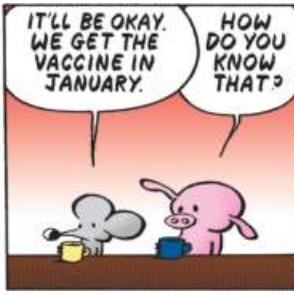
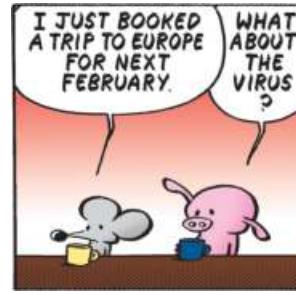
CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



Chinese Minister makes rare visit to Tibet border

State media links it to tensions along Line of Actual Control

ANANTH KRISHNAN

CHENNAI
China's Foreign Minister and State Councillor Wang Yi has made a rare visit to inspect "border infrastructure" in Tibet, which Chinese media has linked to the recent tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India. Mr. Wang on Friday met with the top Communist Party official in Tibet, Wu Yingjie, as well as the chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) government, Qizhala, and called for efforts "to safeguard national security".

Mr. Wang was quoted as saying "the diplomatic front will work with people in Tibet to safeguard national security and support Tibet's opening-up" and that "the security and stability of the region is important to the overall development of China", said a report in the Party-run *Global Times* citing the official Tibet Daily newspaper. *The Global Times* said the "trip came against the backdrop of China-India border clash in the Galwan Valley in June".

Construction of villages
Mr. Wang "also visited the border area to learn about the situation of poverty alleviation, infrastructure building and the construction of villages," the report said.

State broadcaster China Global Television Network (CGTN) reported that Mr. Wang "held a symposium briefing local officials on the current international situation and the main schemes of the diplomatic work." He



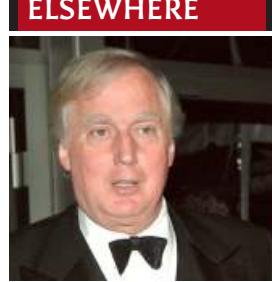
China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi. ■ AP

referred to challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and "the dramatically evolving international situation", and said the Foreign Ministry "will be working with local officials to thoroughly implement the plan of the Communist Party of China in governing Tibet."

Without specifically referring to the border tensions with India, the report quoted the Foreign Minister as mentioning "the current international situation and China's diplomatic work" and said "Tibet has made great achievements regarding economic development, stabilizing and developing border areas, joining external cooperation and participating in projects under the Belt and Road Initiative."

Among the BRI projects under way in Tibet is a cross-border economic corridor to Nepal, called the Trans-Himalayan Multi-dimensional Connectivity Network project, which also envisages a railway link connecting China and Nepal. *The Global Times* noted that Mr. Wang "conducts special research trips to several Chinese regions every year" and had visited the China-Myanmar border in 2019.

ELSEWHERE



Trump's younger brother Robert passes away

BEDMINSTER
U.S. President Donald Trump said that his younger brother, Robert Trump, died on Saturday night, a day after the President visited him in a New York hospital. In a statement, Mr. Trump called Robert, a business executive and real estate developer, his best friend. ■ REUTERS

Lukashenko urges people to defend country

MINSK
Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on Sunday spoke in front of a crowd of supporters at a rally in central Minsk asking them to defend the country and its independence. As mass protests continued against his rule, he told supporters: "I called you here not to defend me... but for the first time in a quarter-century, to defend your country and its independence." ■ AFP

Thousands of Canadian govt. accounts hacked

GCKey is used by some 30 departments

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TORONTO
Tens of thousands of user accounts for online government services in Canada were recently hacked during cyberattacks, authorities said on Saturday.

The attacks targeted the GCKey service, used by some 30 federal departments and Canada Revenue Agency accounts, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat explained in a press release. The passwords and usernames of 9,041 GCKey account holders "were acquired fraudulently and used to try and access government services," the authorities said.

About 5,500 Canada Revenue Agency accounts were targeted in this and another attack, the authori-

ties said, adding that access to these accounts has been suspended to protect taxpayer information.

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An investigation was launched by the government and the federal police to determine whether there were any breaches of privacy and whether information was obtained from these accounts, the authorities said.

According to the CBC, a number of Canadians have reported since the beginning of August that their banking information associated with their Canada Revenue Agency accounts has been altered. Payments related to the Canadian Emergency Benefit have also been issued in their names without their request.

CMYK

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ties said, adding that access to these accounts has been suspended to protect taxpayer information.

Probe launched
An investigation was launched by the government and the federal police to determine whether there were any breaches of

ASK US

VIDYA BALA

Q. I am 22. Once my father retires from the State electricity board he will get pension, a lump sum amount and other benefits. How can he invest to gain financial autonomy?

PRAVEEN D.S.

A. In the following suggestions where mutual fund is mentioned, use them sparingly and only if your father's pension, by itself, entirely covers his monthly expenses. Else, stick to the other options elaborated.

Create an emergency corpus of 3-6 months' expenses. These must be partly in bank savings account and the rest in short-term FDs of six months to one year so that you can break them any time. Then, explore the following:

Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme (SCSS) and the government's pension scheme PM Vaya Vandana Yojana (PM VVY through LIC), will be the top options. He can invest a maximum of ₹15 lakh in each. Note PMVVY's rate will change post March 2021 but that is ok. Rates will still be better than that on FDs. The third option is RBI Floating Rate Bonds with a lock-in of 7 years, with interest payout. There is no maximum limit in this. All these options will generate regular income for your father and importantly, provide full capital safety. The income from all of them will be taxable at his slab rate.

Beyond this, two optional investments he could consider are quality corporate deposits from top non-banking financial companies such as the HDFC or the Sundaram Group. At present, the rates are not attractive but if they do get better in a year's time, you could consider them.

The final option, which should account for a small chunk and that too only if your father understands them (and has adequate income), is debt mutual funds (MFs).

Look at a minimum three-year period to invest in corporate bonds or banking and PSU debt funds. These will have quality papers, with marginally higher returns than FDs, and tax efficiency (if he is in the 20-30% tax slab). The returns are not fixed or guaranteed. So, there is definitely some risk here. Use the first three options well and keep corporate deposits and MFs as the last option for small diversification if the corpus is large.

Q. I am a 23-year-old mechanical engineer with a monthly salary of ₹25,000. My dad is retired and gets a monthly pension of about ₹30,000. At present, our total monthly investments are — ₹5,000 in equity mutual fund, ₹5,000 in RD with 6% interest and ₹10,000 in gold chit funds. How can I diversify my portfolio and improve returns?

JAGADEESAN M

A. It is good to know you are saving early. Just to maintain your father's financial independence, try and keep both your savings distinct so that the risk-taking ability for both is marked and he need not depend on his children in future. For your father, if he has any lump sum invested in FDs, he could shift some to avenues such as Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme (available in post office/SBI and other PSU banks) and also consider RBI Floating Rate Bonds. These will provide the much-needed safety of capital and regular income to augment his pension income, if he needs more in future.

As for you, equity funds and RDs are good, provided you don't lock into long periods in FD in this current low-interest scenario. You can keep it short (one year) and renew it. Your overall portfolio has 50% in gold, which is a considerably high exposure and that too, through less regulated or unregulated avenues. Reduce gold to 15-20% and raise your equity component to 50-60%. Financial savings in gold through gold funds or bonds are better options than gold chit funds that are risky and have hidden costs. For equity, have a time frame of not less than 7 years. In the years in between, be prepared for low returns or even negative returns.

(The author is co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)



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

LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"Helping me out? No, a coin fell and rolled off as he was counting money..."

A multiple-asset strategy can help drive higher returns

Improving asset allocation is critical and serves as a building block in wealth creation



COVER NOTE: AGENT DECODED

Where the agent acts as friend and guide

A person can have the agency of a life insurance firm, one non-life insurer and one standalone health insurer without conflict

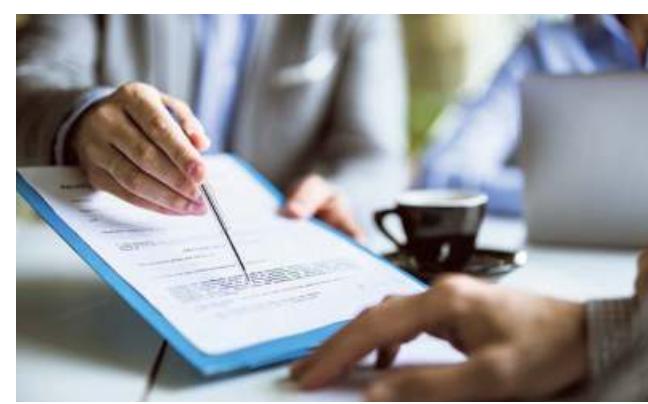
K. NITYA KALYANI

We saw in the previous instalment of this column that there are many insurance distribution channels through which you can buy a policy, such as through agents, insurance brokers, marketing firms, corporate agents and web-aggregators.

You can also buy directly from the insurance company, usually on their website.

To recap, the best channel depends on the kind of policy you need and to know that you have to do a bit of serious research. This is because insurance is definitely a product where one size does not fit all, and the same could be said of the sales channel you choose to buy insurance from. Let us take a look at various intermediaries starting with agents.

Agents are the ubiquitous in-



Sign here, please: Agents can handle documentation that requires handholding on account of complexity. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

surance sales partners. They are the simplest intermediary to deal with, being individuals like us, and we all know one or more agents frequently, across generations in our families.

Agents are the sheet anchor of insurance distribution in In-

dia, especially life and non-life personal insurance such as health and motor. Their legal status is they represent one (and only one) insurance company and are authorised to sell its products, service the sales and maintenance of the policy

as well as assist in claims.

In India, insurance companies can sell only one category of insurance – either life or non-life policies. Some are set up to sell only one type of non-life policy such as health insurance. So, a person can have the agency of one life insurance company, one non-life insurance company and one standalone health insurance company without conflict.

We do find individuals who are able to offer you products of more than one company through agencies in the names of family members.

The agent is selected, licensed and trained by the insurer according to norms laid out by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) from time to time. At the basic level, they would be trained about insu-

rance concepts, products of the specific insurance company and sales techniques. But, a good agent would be able to carry out an intelligent need analysis and suggest suitable products and can even be a trusted financial adviser for the family – across generations, as mentioned earlier.

Code of conduct

The agent is bound by the code of conduct of his profession that specifies, among other things, that he has to recommend products according to the needs of the prospective buyer and has strict norms to prevent mis-selling or selling of policies through misinformation or misrepresentation of facts.

Having said that, his actions are binding on the company according to even a simple read-

ing of the laws relating to agency. So, the customer is protected.

When it comes to claims, agents still play an end-to-end role in life insurance claims. Documentation, which can be mystifying and highly specific, requires handholding; especially at a time of family grief, agents and companies are geared up to deal with it.

Motor claims, too, are aided by agents, but when it comes to health insurance, an entity called Third Party Administrators – health services (TPAs) have been in the picture for over a couple of decades, and they are the claims-settling partner of the insurance company where you have your health policy.

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

PERSONAL LOAN - RATES AND CHARGES				
Name of Lender	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure - 5 years	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure - 5 years	Processing fee (% of loan amount)
State Bank of India	9.60-13.85	10,525-11,595	2,105-2,319	Upto 1.5% (Maximum Rs 15,000)
Citi Bank	9.99-16.49	10,621-12,290	2,124-2,458	Upto 3%
HDFC Bank	10.75-21.30	10,809-13,611	2,162-2,722	Rs 2,999-25,000
Bank of Baroda	10.25-15.60	10,685-12,053	2,137-2,411	Rs 1,000-10,000
Axis Bank	12.00-24.00	11,122-14,384	2,224-2,877	1.5%-2%
ICICI Bank	11.25-21.00	10,934-13,527	2,187-2,705	Upto 2.25%
Bank of Maharashtra	9.70-10.70	10,550-10,797	2,110-2,159	1% (Minimum Rs 1,000)
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.75-24.00	10,809-14,384	2,162-2,877	Upto 2.5%
Canara Bank	10.20-13.90	10,673-11,608	2,135-2,322	Upto 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000)
Punjab National Bank	8.80-11.65	10,331-11,034	2,066-2,207	Upto 1%
HSBC Bank	10.50-17.84	10,747-12,653	2,149-2,531	Upto 1%
Federal Bank	11.49-17.99	10,994-12,694	2,199-2,539	Upto 3%
Bajaj Finserv	12.99 onwards	11,374 onwards	2,275 onwards	Upto 4.13%
Punjab & Sind Bank	11.10	10,896	2,179	1%

NEW CAR LOAN-RATES AND CHARGES				
Name of Bank	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs) Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure-5 years	Processing fee (% of loan amount)	
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.10-7.45	9,924-10,007	Nil	
Union Bank of India	7.15-7.50	9,936-10,019	Rs 1,000	
Punjab National Bank	7.15-7.65	9,936-10,055	Up to 0.25% (Max: 1,500) For Insta Vehicle Loan: Rs 1,000	
Bank of Baroda	7.25-10.25	9,960-10,685	0.50% (Rs 2,500-10,000)	
Canara Bank	7.30-9.90	9,972-10,599	0.25% (Rs 1,000-5,000)	
UCO Bank	7.45-7.70	10,007-10,067	Up to 1% (Max: Rs 1,500)	
State Bank of India	7.70-11.20*	10,067-10,921	Up to 0.50% For Green Car Loan: Rs 1,000 - Rs 1,500 Application through YONO: NIL	
Dhanlaxmi Bank	8.10-9.20	10,162-10,428	1%	
South Indian Bank	8.20-8.40	10,186-10,234	1% (Max: Rs 10,000)	
Federal Bank	8.75	10,319	Rs 1,500-Rs 2,500	
HDFC Bank	8.80-10.00	10,331-10,624	1% (Rs 5,000-Rs 10,000)	
Lakshmi Vilas Bank	8.80	10,331	0.50% (Rs 1,000-Rs 10,000)	
Axis Bank	8.95-11.20	10,367-10,921	Rs 3,500-Rs 5,500	
RBL Bank	12.00-14.00	11,122-11,634	Up to 2%	

*Additional concession of 0.25% on application via YONO. Further concession of 0.20% on purchase of EV

Rates and charges as on August 13, 2020

Source: Paisabazaar.com

JOYDEEP SEN

The importance of allocation of investments to multiple asset categories such as equity, debt and others continue to be discussed, but it tends to get missed out in implementation. A case in point, over the last one year, the two asset classes that have given highest returns are international equity and gold.

Returns have been 48% from gold over last one year, including the rupee depreciation. U.S. equities, over the last one year, have given 20% returns. Investors have been underallocated to these two assets. Overall allocation in the Mutual Fund industry i.e. assets under management may be taken as an indicator. What we see is in the industry AUM of ₹25.5 lakh crore as on June 2020, the AUM of Gold ETFs is ₹10.4 thousand crore and that of feeder funds investing overseas is ₹3.8 thousand crore. That is, exposure to Gold ETFs and overseas funds, the ones that have run up this year, at ₹4.2 thousand crore is about 0.5% of the overall

AUM. This is not an absolute indicator as there are other avenues for investment than Mutual Funds, but this gives us a perspective.

The point is not to predict how much return would come from one asset class, but to follow a discipline in allocation of funds.

Why is allocation important?

It has been proven by empirical research that more than 90% of volatility is explained by asset allocation and not chasing one asset class such as equity or debt. The importance of allocation was highlighted in 1986 when three researchers called Brinson, Hood, and Beebower (acronym BHB) explained the impact. Research by BHB found that asset allocation is the primary factor for a

portfolio's return variability, as much as 93.6%. Active portfolio management i.e. security selection and market timing are minor factors. **What is the best way to follow this principle of allocation?** Investors can define the allocation i.e. percentage to equity, debt, international equity and gold and invest accordingly.

Performance of the fund can be volatile in the short term. In the long run, however, you will get optimum returns

We can understand this concept from a simple perspective that there is wide fluctuation in returns every year in various asset categories such as domestic equity, international equity, gold, and to a lesser extent in debt. In certain years, equity gives phenomenal returns and in other years it is negative. Same is the case with gold.

The only way to smoothen out the impact of the volatility in these various investments is to allocate, and still earn optimum returns, as shown by the research mentioned above. Your returns will be optimum over a long holding of period as the asset classes will perform as per market movement and the volatility also would be lower.

How would you do the allocation?

While direct investment in assets such as equity, bonds or gold is possible, it is advisable to invest via mutual funds as there is a team of experts (fund managers) and other professionals working for you. Within mutual funds, there are various categories of funds like equity, debt, hybrid (mix of equity and debt), etc. and you can invest in those.

The other way to execute multi-asset investments in MFs is to invest in one fund that offers all asset classes i.e. equity, debt, commodities, etc. If you do the allocation through one fund, then the AMC is doing the allocation as per the mandate of the scheme and you are holding units in it. Examples follow:

ICICI Prudential Multi-Asset Fund has a corpus size of more

than ₹10,000 crore. The first version of this fund was floated in 2002 and repositioned as

TV PICKS

England vs Pakistan: Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour Finals: Eurosport (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Europa League: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

IN BRIEF



Portland ousts Memphis, meets Lakers in playoffs

ORLANDO
Portland Trail Blazers booked an NBA playoff showdown with Los Angeles Lakers with a 126-122 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies, in the first play-in game to determine a post-season berth since 1956, on Saturday. Damion Lillard scored 31 points and Jusuf Nurkic 22 points as Portland rallied from an eight-point fourth-quarter deficit.

The result: Portland Trail Blazers 126 (Lillard 31, McCollum 29, Nurkic 22) bt Memphis Grizzlies 122 (Morant 35, Valanciunas 22, Clarke 20).

More rain, less play

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SOUTHAMPTON

Pakistan's Shaheen Afridi needed just four balls to remove England's Rory Burns for a duck before bad weather again interrupted the second Test on Sunday.

England was seven for one in reply to Pakistan's 236 when rain ended play on the fourth day. Earlier, Mohammad Rizwan topped for Pakistan with 72.

The scores: Pakistan 236 in 91.2 overs (Abid Ali 60, Babar Azam 47, Mohd. Rizwan 72, Stuart Broad four for 56, James Anderson three for 60) vs England seven for one in five overs.

A gutsy man who beat the odds

Known for his gentle ways, Chauhan remained Gavaskar's most trusted partner

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI
Gutsy Test opener Chetan Chauhan, who scripted many memorable cricketing tales with his illustrious partner Sunil Gavaskar, breathed his last at Gurugram on Sunday.

Chauhan was diagnosed with COVID-19 last month in Lucknow and was transferred to Gurugram's Medanta Hospital. His condition took a turn for the worse following kidney failure and was on life support since Saturday morning. He was 73.

Trusted partner

Known for his gentle ways, Chauhan remained Gavaskar's most trusted partner and the two formed one of India's most durable opening pairs.

For long a man with most Test runs without a century, Chauhan came close to scoring centuries, he so richly deserved, on several occasions.

He had seven 80-plus scores with 97 as his highest. Privately, he regretted the missed opportunities, including twice on 93, but the smile

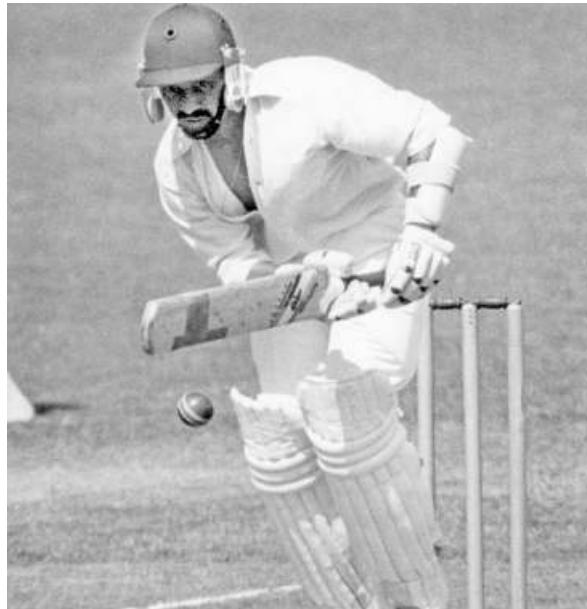
A wonderful cricketer and a diligent political leader

TWEET BY PM NARENDRA MODI

would return when one mentioned his treatment of Dennis Lillie on the 1981 Tour of Australia. By this time, the helmets with optional visors, were used by a growing number of cricketers, Chauhan, like Madan Lal, gained the most from the use of helmets and duly added years to the international career.

In his own words, talking about the infamous walkout of Gavaskar during the Melbourne Test, Chauhan once said, "Sunny wanted me to walk out with him (after he angrily questioned the leg-before decision), realised if we both crossed the boundary line, it would amount to forfeiture of the game. Soon our manager made me stay on the ground."

"The situation was saved and, of course, we went on to win that Test after Vishy (G.R. Viswanathan) scored a memorable 114."



Perfect foil: Chetan Chauhan, a gritty batsman, forged one of India's most durable opening partnerships with the legendary Sunil Gavaskar. ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Chetan Chauhan's numbers

	M	Runs	HS	Avg.	50s/100s	Catches
Tests	40	2,084	97	31.57	16/0	38
ODIs	7	153	46	21.85	0/0	3
First Class	179	11,143	207	40.22	59/21	189

When Chauhan turned saviour

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI

Not many are aware that Chetan Chauhan came to the rescue of a young Navjot Singh Sidhu, Yograv Singh and Rajinder Singh Ghai in the days following the assassination of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984.

The incident took place when the North Zone team was returning by train from Pune after the Duleep Trophy semifinal against Central Zone. The final had been cancelled in view of the tense situation that prevailed in the country after the assassination.

"I remember Navjot was very scared. Chetan Ji ensured Yograv and Ghai were safe and were not spotted by the mob. He showed tremendous guts in a situation that left most of us nervous.

sured Yograv and Ghai were safe and were not spotted by the mob. He showed tremendous guts in a situation that left most of us nervous.

"He was a gutsy cricketer. I recall a Delhi-Haryana Ranji Trophy match at Rai (October 1976). He came to the crease with a broken jaw and scored an unbeaten 158 against us. He scored two more centuries in the next two matches (200 against Punjab) and 147 against Karnataka. He took Ranji Trophy matches as seriously as Test matches. I don't think we'll see another human being and a cricketer of such calibre again," concluded Talwar.

Carlsen leads in Set three

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI

Riding on the confidence gained by winning the second set, Magnus Carlsen claimed the opening game of the third set to lead 1.5-0.5 midway through the best-of-four rapid games in the Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour Finals on Sunday. He nailed Nakamura to start the third set.

The results: Final: Set Three:

Game One: Hikaru Nakamura (USA) lost to Magnus Carlsen;

Game Two: Carlsen drew with Nakamura. **Set Two:** Carlsen bt Nakamura 3.5-2.5. After two sets, Carlsen level with Nakamura 1-1.

May your soul have everlasting peace, partner

SUNIL GAVASKAR

maker, not me".

Aaja, aaja, gale mil (come, come, give me a hug), after all we are in the mandatory overs of life" was the usual greeting of my opening partner Chetan Chauhan whenever we met over the last two or three years.

I would say to him that "no, no, we must have another century partnership" and he would laugh and then say "arre baba (oh boy!), you are the century-

never in my wildest nightmares could I believe that his words about being in the mandatory overs of life would come true so soon. It's so hard to believe that his laughter and cheerful banter won't be there the next time I go to Delhi.

Chetan always said that if we are asked what was our best contribution to Indian cricket we should say that it was getting the exemptions for the cricketing fraternity.

His desire to help others manifested in him joining politics and right till the end he was a giver, not a taker.

He had a good sense of humour too. His favourite song as we walked out to face some of the most hostile bowlers in the world was "muskura ladle muskura (smile, darling, smile)".

That was his way of easing the nerves while confronting challenges. May your soul have everlasting peace, partner.

Chauhan never flinched: Bedi

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Bishan Singh Bedi: He would stand up to the opposition. He never flinched and made such an enormous impact on cricket in the North. He did not mind playing second fiddle to Gavaskar. In fact, he played in the sha-

dow of Gavaskar but had his own identity.

Kapil Dev: He was like my big brother. So composed, so organised. What a gentleman, what a lovely human being! I never saw him raise his voice, never saw him lose his temper.

I was actually surprised

Lyon ends City's hopes

REUTERS
LISBON

Substitute Moussa Dembele struck twice as Lyon stunned Manchester City 3-1 win on Saturday to move into the semifinals of the Champions League where it will face Bayern Munich. It is the first time that two French teams will compete in the semifinals.

Semifinals schedule: Aug. 18: PSG vs Leipzig; Aug. 19: Lyon vs Bayern.

The results: Lyon 3 (Cornet 24, Dembele 79, 87) bt Manchester City 1 (De Bruyne 69).

Friday: Barcelona 2 (Alaba 7-0, Suarez 57) lost to Bayern 8 (Mueller 4, 31, Perisic 22, Gnabry 27, Kimmich 63, Lewandowski 82, Coutinho 85, 89).

MARUTI SUZUKI

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