

# The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

CHANDIGARH | GURUGRAM | JALANDHAR | BATHINDA | VOL. 141 NO. 131 | 12 PAGES | ₹5.00 | REGD. NO. CHD/0006/2021-2023 ESTABLISHED IN 1881

CHINA DEFENDS QUAD  
WARNING TO B'DESH WORLD

₹18,100-CR PLI SCHEME FOR PROMOTING  
ACC BATTERY MFG BUSINESS

QUALIFIER CANCELLED, SAINA'S  
TOKYO DREAM OVER SPORT

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THURSDAY | 13 MAY 2021



A relative of a patient carries an oxygen cylinder for a refill in New Delhi. PTI

**3.48 LAKH FRESH CASES**  
**TOTAL DEATHS** 2,54,197  
**ACTIVE CASES** 37,04,099  
**4,205 DEATHS IN 24 HOURS**  
**₹322.5 CR FROM PM CARES**  
**FOR 1.5 L 'OXYCARE' UNITS**

The government on Wednesday approved the procurement of 1.5 lakh units of 'Oxycare' system, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation. **BACK PAGE**

## WHO: NEVER TERMED ANY STRAIN 'INDIAN VARIANT'

The WHO on Wednesday said it did not identify viruses or variants with names of countries they were first reported from. "We refer to them by their scientific names and request all to do the same for consistency," the WHO said after media reports associated the WHO with using the term "Indian variant" for B.1.617 strain that first originated in Maha.

# Covid was preventable, WHO could've sounded alarm sooner: Global panel

ADITI TANDON  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR), which spent the last eight months reviewing evidence of the spread of Covid-19, concluded on Wednesday that the pandemic was preventable and the World Health Organisation could have sounded the Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) alarm sooner.

Documenting what happened and why, the panel

## ONUS ON HIGH-INCOME NATIONS: PANEL

■ High income countries must provide 1bn vax doses to other nations by September 1

■ Adopt a pandemic framework convention within 6 months



■ WTO must convene a meet of major vaccine-producing countries to agree to voluntary licensing and technology transfer

■ WHO to establish a new global system for surveillance

said, "Covid-19 was a preventable disaster. A combination of poor strategic choices, unwillingness to tackle inequalities, and an uncoordinated system created a toxic cocktail which allowed the pandemic to turn into a catastrophic human crisis."

Examining the time the

WHO took to declare Covid-19 a PHEIC on January 30 last year, the panel said, "A PHEIC is the loudest alarm the WHO Director-General can sound. The panel's view is that the outbreak in Wuhan is likely to have met the criteria

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EDIT: COVID HOTSPOTS

## Fauci: India opened up too soon

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

The White House Chief Medical Adviser Anthony Fauci on Wednesday said India was in dire straits because it made the incorrect assumption that it was done with Covid-19 and opened up prematurely.

The leading American infectious disease expert told US senators today that "the reason that India is in such dire straits now is that they had an original surge and

made the incorrect assumption that they were finished with it, and what happened they opened up prematurely and wind up having a surge right now that we're all very well aware of is extremely devastating."

Fauci was addressing the US Senate Health, Education, Labour and Pensions Committee during a hearing on Covid-19 response. Fauci said one of the important things is "don't ever underestimate the situation."



**12 Oppn leaders write to PM Modi, demand free vax**

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

Twelve Opposition leaders, including Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, TMC president Mamata Banerjee and NCP supremo Sharad Pawar, today wrote to PM Narendra Modi, demanding a free, universal mass vaccination campaign across the country. The leaders said the pandemic had assumed unprecedented dimensions of a human catastrophe.

"We have repeatedly in the past drawn your attention, independently and jointly, to the various measures that are absolutely imperative for the Central Government to undertake and implement. Unfortunately, your government has either ignored or refused all these suggestions. This only compounded the situation to reach such an

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

## SC dismisses bail plea of Navlakha

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea of activist Gautam Navlakha, seeking bail in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist link case of Bhima Koregaon in Maharashtra. A Bench of Justices UU Lalit and KM Joseph dismissed the appeal of Navlakha against the Bombay High Court order denying him bail.

Justice Joseph, who pronounced the verdict for the Bench, said the court was dismissing Navlakha's appeal. On March 26, the top court had reserved its verdict on his plea.

On March 3, the SC sought response from the NIA on Navlakha's plea in which he had claimed that the chargesheet was not filed in stipulated time so he was entitled for the bail. The FIR against him was re-registered in January 2020, and he surrendered on April 14 last year. — PTI

## IN BRIEF

### Justice Chandrachud tests Covid positive

NEW DELHI: SC judge Justice DY Chandrachud has tested positive for Covid. With this, the Thursday hearing in the suo motu case over Covid supplies stands deferred. — PTI

### Man donates 300 O2 concentrators for Pb

NEW DELHI: Delhi's Vikramjit Singh Sahney has donated 200 oxygen concentrators for most affected districts of Punjab. This is in addition to the 100 devices donated by him to SGPC. — TNS

### Army base hospital Commandant shifted

NEW DELHI: Major General Vasu Vardhan, Commandant of the Army's base hospital in Delhi, has been shifted to its research and referral hospital, said sources on Wednesday. He is to retire in August. — PTI

## 52 more bodies found floating in UP's Ballia

MUKESH RANJAN  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

Recovery of bodies floating in the Ganga continued for the third day today. After Buxar (Bihar) and Ghazipur (UP), Ballia witnessed similar disturbing scenes today with the local administration claiming to have fished out 52 corpses from the river.

Director General of National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCNG) Rajiv Ranjan Mishra has written to the authorities concerned in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, asking them to initiate immediate measures to check the dumping of corpses into the river.

So far, 52 bodies have been retrieved from the Ganga near Ujiyar, Kulhadia and Bharauli ghats in the Narahi area of Ballia. The process of their "respectful" disposal was underway, a district official said.

In a statement issued on Tuesday night, Ballia District Magistrate Aditi Singh

## ENSURE DISPOSAL AS PER COVID NORMS

■ All unidentified bodies/unclaimed corpses of suspected Covid victims should be disposed of in accordance with the Covid-safety protocol.

National Mission for Clean Ganga

said some decomposed bodies were seen floating under the Ballia-Buxar bridge. She said Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Sadar) Rajesh Yadav and Circle Officer Jagveer Singh Chauhan were probing the matter and that the last rites of the deceased were performed with due respect.

Officials in Ballia district said the possibilities of bodies coming from the Bihar side could not be ruled out. "The distance between the Bharauli and Ujiyar ghats in Ballia and the Mahadev ghat in Buxar is only around 1 km," a

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## No vax, Delhi shuts 125 centres

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

India today witnessed a record Covid-19 deaths at 4,205 with daily cases settling below 4 lakh for the fourth day in a row and active cases declining for the second straight day to 37,04,099. Active cases now make up 15.87 per cent of all infections with a decline of 11,122 cases in the active caseload.

Vaccine shortages continued to trouble states with over 100



vaccination centres declared closed in the national capital which ran out of Covaxin supplies. Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia said close to 125 centres were being shut as Bharat Biotech had told the government it could not provide additional Covaxin supplies.



**INDIA'S NIGHTINGALES** Nurses pose for a picture on International Nurses Day at a Covid care centre in Navi Mumbai on Wednesday. PTI

## Rushing experts to fix Pb ventilators, says Vardhan

VISHAV BHARTI  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

After Punjab's Minister for Medical Education and Research Om Parkash Soni flagged the issue of "faulty" ventilators given by the Centre under the PM Cares Fund, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan today assured the state that a team of experts would be sent to fix the machines.

Most of the 320 ventilators provided by the Centre to the state are non-functional. More than 280 of these are faulty and gathering dust in storerooms of three medical colleges of the state.

"It is my appeal to the Government of India that it should provide high-quality

Over 280 of 320 units given by Centre to the state non-functional

ventilators or provide at least one engineer at each Government Medical College to ensure their functionality. These engineers should have enough spare parts, so that all ventilators are made functional and can serve critically ill patients," said Soni.

Of the 320 ventilators sent by the Centre, 113 were given to Guru Gobind Singh Medical College in Faridkot. Just 23 of these are functional, 90 are not. Of the 109 ventilators in Government Medical College, Amritsar, only 12 are functional.

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## HC seeks ground report on situation in rural Pb, Hry

SAURABH MALIK  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The Punjab and Haryana High Court today made clear its intent to examine Covid intrusion in rural areas by calling for affidavits from secretary-level health authorities in Punjab and Haryana. The Bench also made it clear that the states were required to examine bringing into play a rule that made vaccination mandatory for government employees to make offices fully functional at the earliest.

The Bench left it to the two states and Chandigarh UT to ask corporate houses to join the fight against the pandemic by providing ambulances, oxygen beds, ventila-

## DOCs CAN'T SWITCH OFF PHONES: COURT

■ Bench warned that action would be taken against doctors switching off their phones

■ It said phone operators should give numbers of those providing telemedicine services

tors, CT scan machines, etc., to government hospitals.

As the matter came up for resumed hearing this morning, the Bench of Justice Rajan Gupta and Justice Karamjit Singh asked Punjab A-G Atul Nanda on monitoring the situation in the rural areas. "It is directed that an affidavit be filed by an officer not below the rank of Principal Secretary,

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## Millennium City may use dung to cremate dead

SUMEDHA SHARMA  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

GURUGRAM, MAY 12

Amid rising Covid deaths, environmentalists of Millennium City have urged the Haryana Government to approve the use of cow dung for cremation instead of wood.

Up against the state Urban Local Bodies' reported demand for 20,000 tonnes of wood from the Forest Department, local environmentalists have asked the state government to allow use of cow dung cakes in crematoriums and revoke the decision that permits felling of trees amid

## ENVIRONMENTALISTS PUT FORTH SUGGESTIONS



ASI Rakesh Kumar of Delhi Police assists in last rites of Covid victims. PTI

■ The Gurugram MC has raised a demand for 3,600 tonne wood, followed by Faridabad (2,100 tonne) and Bhiwani (2,000 tonne).

■ Not only environmentalists, but also people residing near cremation grounds have flagged the issue of discomfort due to smoke

the statewide lockdown.

"Times when people are struggling for oxygen, we must understand that every tree should be saved. At 3.6 per cent, Haryana is infamous for its lowest forest cover. Cities like Delhi, Nagpur, Bhopal and Varanasi have already taken the lead by replacing wood with cow dung cakes for cremation. Why are we still sticking to the outdated method?" reads a letter shot to Chief Secretary Vijay Vardhan by Vaishali Rana Chandra and Vivek Kamboj, noted environmentalists.

## OVERCHARGING HOSPITAL TOLD TO REFUND MONEY

■ The Jalandhar administration on Wednesday recommended an FIR under the Epidemic Diseases Act against a private lab for overcharging

■ A private hospital that had 'erroneously' overcharged over 90 patients for RT-PCR test has been told to refund the money

■ The hospital had charged ₹900 for the RT-PCR test while Pb has fixed ₹450 for the same **INSIDE**



## Cybercrooks target patients' kin

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, MAY 12

Taking advantage of the worsening Covid-19 situation, cyber criminals are defrauding people of their hard-earned money by promising them help in securing hospital beds, oxygen, plasma, antiviral injections and medicines. Many criminals have circu-

## KEEPING FRAUDSTERS AT BAY

■ Do not click on suspicious link on the Internet  
■ Be careful while taking hospital and emergency numbers from the Internet  
■ Do not make advance payment without verification  
■ Avoid calls and chats from unknown numbers

lated fake numbers on social media pretending to be employees of hospitals and are taking advance payment for providing various facili-

ties. They have also come up with fake websites, e-commerce platforms, social media accounts and emails, claiming

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## Ready to grant ₹2.5 cr for O<sub>2</sub> plants: MP

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

Rajya Sabha MP Partap Bajwa has sought proposal from the Punjab Government on setting up oxygen plants from his MPLAD funds of Rs 2.5 crore.

In a letter to the Chief Secretary, Bajwa pointed out that in continuation to his proposal to the Chief Minister to allocate funds from his MPLAD funds, he sought to know the proposal to set up oxygen plants at government hospitals in Gurdaspur and Pathankot.

Bajwa said he was willing to allocate Rs 2.5 crore for setting up oxygen plants in Batala, Gurdaspur, Qadian, Dhariwal and Pathankot subject to allocation of 50 per cent cost of the plants by the state government.

## 5 districts cause for concern

58% cases from Ludhiana, Mohali, Jalandhar, Patiala & Bathinda

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

Even as the state continues to battle the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, five districts have emerged as a big worry for the government. These worst-affected districts have reported 1.07 lakh cases and 1407 deaths in the past one month.

The state has reported a total of 1.83 lakh cases and 3,359 deaths in the past one month. Of this, Ludhiana, SAS Nagar, Jalandhar, Patiala and Bathinda districts alone have contributed 58.7 per cent of the total cases and 42 per cent of all deaths.

Among the districts, Ludhiana topped the chart with 36,357 cases and 398 deaths; followed by SAS Nagar with 25,147 cases and 237 deaths;



Jalandhar reported 16,067 cases and 195 deaths; Bathinda 15,455 cases and 279 deaths; Patiala 14,435 cases and 298 deaths.

Even the test positivity rate of these districts is very high.

State's overall positivity rate is 13.7 per cent. Most of the worst-affected districts have the positivity rate close to 20 per cent. The first Covid case and death was reported in March last year. Since then, 4,59,268

### COVID METER

Cases	8,347
Critical	324
Active	79,963
Deaths	197

### WORST-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Ludhiana	1,215	28
Bathinda	874	20
Jalandhar	821	9
Fazilka	723	8
SAS Nagar	713	7

<< A Covid victim being cremated in Patiala. PHOTO: RAJESH SACHAR

## Govt failed to ramp up health infra, says AAP

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) today said the rising cases of Covid-19 in Punjab and the high number of deaths at the Rajindra hospital in Patiala were due to poor health services in the state for which Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh and Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu were responsible.

AAP MLA Kultar Singh Sandhwan said the Captain government had not built a single new government hospital in the past four and a half years and the existing government hospitals lacked resources and medical staff.

He said the outbreak of Covid in Punjab had reached villages and as a result, more than 4.5 lakh cases had been reported in the state and the death toll had risen to 11,000. — TNS

## Ventilators at civil hospital shifted to private facility

FATEHGARH SAHIB, MAY 12

All three ventilators at the Civil Hospital, Fatehgarh Sahib, have been shifted to a private hospital as it has had neither an ICU facility nor trained staff to operate them.

Indus Hospital is the only hospital in the district to have an ICU facility with two ventilators and technical staff. Moreover, as per the understanding between the government and the private hospital, no money would be charged from the patients referred by government doctors, who require the ventilator support.

This submission was made to the Punjab and Haryana High Court by the Senior Medical Officer (SMO), Civil Hospital, Fatehgarh Sahib, in relation to a case filed after *The Tribune* reported there were eight hospitals in the district without a ventilator.

The SMO also mentioned in



### No ICU or trained staff to operate machines

the affidavit that none of the hospitals, PHC and CHC in the district has any facility to operate ventilators. Three specialist doctors (anesthesia) in the district have been attached to Rajindra Hospital, Patiala, where level-3 facility is available for patients. He claimed adequate arrangements were in place in the district for Covid patients and efforts were being made to further improve them. — OC



Congress leaders protest against the shortage of medicines and oxygen in Jalandhar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Ask Centre to help: Minister to MP Shwait

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

Slamming MP Shwait Malik's statement alleging unnecessary delay in setting up oxygen plants in the state, Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu asked him to stop playing blame game, and instead urge the Centre to soon instal oxygen plants in Punjab.

### Asks him to stop blame game over O<sub>2</sub>

Sidhu said there was medical emergency in Punjab and even after repeated appeals of the state government to increase the oxygen quota as Covid cases and case fatality rate was rapidly increasing, the Centre didn't pay any heed to the state's requirement. He said only one plant had been installed at Faridkot.

In spite of repeated reminders and requests made by the state government, two plants — at GMCH Amritsar and Patiala — had yet not been installed by the central government. — TNS



Nearly 3,000 persons, including children, in attendance at a farmers' rally in Abiana Nangal village near Ropar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Covid norms go for a toss at farmers' rally

ROPAR, MAY 12

As many as 3,000 persons, including women and children, attended a farmers' rally at Abiana Nangal village, near here, today, organised to mark 'Sirhind Fateh Divas'.

The rally was addressed by Samyukt Kisan Morcha leaders, including Gurnam Singh Charuni, Gaurav Tikait, Manjit Singh Dhaner and Kulwant Singh Sandhu.

Though the organisers provided sanitisers and masks to

### Several booked under Disaster Mgmt Act

people entering the venue, majority of them didn't bother to wear the mask during the rally, which lasted for six hours.

Organising committee convener Gurnaub Singh Jetewal had already declared that they would hold the rally with nearly 5,000 persons, without seeking any permission. Even the district police kept

avoiding any confrontation and did not take any step to stop the rally, saying the farmers would come there only to hold a symbolic ceremony on the 'Sirhind Fateh Divas'.

Charuni said farmers were ready to make any sacrifice to get the farm laws repealed. The BJP government had already suffered defeat in West Bengal

due to its adamant attitude over demands of farmers, and this scenario would be repeated in the parliamentary elections, he said. Ropar SSP Akhila Chaudhary said Amandeep Singh, Ram Singh, Kulwinder Kumar, Shingara Singh, Jasvir Singh, Pritpal Singh, Master Gurnaub Singh and Mohan Singh had been booked for holding the rally without permission under Sections 188, 269 of the IPC and the Disaster Management Act. — TNS

## Call all-party meet: SAD to CM

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The SAD today requested Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh to call an all-party meeting to discuss the precarious situation in the state amid a spiralling death count due to Covid-19.

SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal said the Congress government should try to take everyone along in the fight against Covid-19 and that an all-party meeting was necessary to ensure all parties worked in synergy with each

### JOINT EFFORT NEEDED

“The government should try to take everyone along in the fight against Covid-19... all parties must work in synergy and assist the government.”

Sukhbir Singh Badal, SAD PRESIDENT

other and assist the government in its efforts.

Sukhbir said it was unfortu-

nate that private hospitals were charging lakhs of rupees from patients and the government was not doing anything to regulate these charges.

He said the government should lower the charges, besides taking strict action against black marketers to ensure lifesaving drugs were available at their market price to patients. He said the state government should also even open international tenders for purchase of Covid vaccines. — TNS



A construction worker in Patiala on Wednesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Labour shortage hits construction sector

AMAN SOOD  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PATIALA, MAY 12

With migrant labourers returning to their home states amid rise in Covid cases, the construction sector has been badly hit while farmers are already expecting labour shortage in the upcoming paddy season.

Government contractor Gurdev Singh said despite pending work at six sites, he had no labour to complete the projects. “For the past four months, my work has been suffering. A majority of the labourers have returned and now I am barely managing with half the labour,” he said, adding that shortage of trained labourer was hitting the work most.

Labourers claimed that many of them returned to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh fearing lockdown. “We are still reluctant to come back to Punjab. The way we had to cycle hundreds of kilometers to our homes last year is still fresh in our mind,” said Pritpal, a UP-based labourer.

However, not only the construction workers but also the

### MIGRANTS WANT 25% IN ADVANCE

Migrants are demanding 25 per cent advance payment through phone-based apps as security. Also, the labour rates have more than doubled from ₹3,200 per acre (in 2019)

farm labour shortage has the farmers worried, as the crucial paddy season begins in June.

Satnam S Behru, chief of consortium of Indian Farmers Association, Satnam S Behru said last year they faced acute shortage in the paddy season and this year seemed no different. “Since paddy needs expert labour, the ones in this trade are demanding advance payments and only willing to come if their ration and stay is taken care of in case of a lockdown,” he said.

“We are hopeful that sufficient rural labour will be available to fill the vacuum created by the unavailability of migrant labourers. Fortunately, migrants engaged with vegetable growers are available in rural areas which will be engaged in the transplantation of paddy also,” said Behru.

## Let Durgiana panel use PUDA land: Asr MP

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

AMRITSAR, MAY 12

The tiff between the Durgiana Mandir managing committee and Punjab Urban Development Authority (PUDA) over a chunk of land adjoining the cremation ground, being used to store wood for last rites of Covid patients, refuses to die down.

PUDA, custodian of the 3-kanal land, has issued a notice to the committee and placed a board on the site prohibiting any trespassing and interference. Now, MP Gurjeet Singh Aujla has approached PUDA minister Sukhinder Singh Sarkaria to get it amicably settled, as the issue pertained to a social cause.

“At a time when there has been a surge in Covid casualties and the whole government machinery is on toes to save lives, the undue scuffle over a piece of land is unfortunate. Adding to the woes, the committee has refused to cre-



A PUDA board on the land adjoining a crematorium in Amritsar.

### SCUFFLE UNFORTUNATE IN COVID TIMES

“In the Covid times, undue scuffle over a piece of land is unfortunate... the committee has refused to cremate unclaimed bodies. I have urged Sarkaria to allow the committee to utilise the land temporarily for the larger good of the public.” Gurjeet Singh Aujla, AMRITSAR MP

mate unclaimed bodies. This could have never been expected in the holy city. In the light of existing circumstances, I have urged Sarkaria to allow the committee to utilise the land temporarily for the larger

good of the public, if possible,” Aujla said.

The committee had raised a boundary over the plot and started shifting the logs of wood meant for the last rites. As per committee officials, this was done to spare the space for

building more pyres keeping in view the rise in the number of deaths due to Covid.

Raising objections, PUDA officials assisted by the police scuttled this move, maintaining that no construction activity could be carried out on the plot.

Committee head Ramesh Sharma said there was never any intention of grabbing the PUDA land. He clarified that the boundary was built with temporary sheets to prevent the ‘sanctity’ of the wood.

“Rest assured, we are ready to pay the cost of the land, but PUDA is not responding to it. In 2019, during kar sewa of a sarovar here, CM Capt Amarinder Singh had announced to give the possession of the land to the committee. Following this, we had held meetings with Sarkaria and the PUDA secretary. Despite submitting our repeated representations, there was no response,” he said.

## ‘It’s duty first’ for overworked medical staff on Covid front

PARVESH SHARMA  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BARNALA, MAY 12

“It’s duty first” for the medical staff ever since the Covid-19 pandemic broke out more than one and a half years ago. Stretched and stressed, doctors and nurses continue to battle it out to save as many lives as possible. The pandemic has brought many hardships for doctors and nurses, especially on personal fronts. Many of them haven’t been able to meet their loved ones and take care of them.

“We have been dealing with the virus for more than a year.



Now we have learnt how not to pass the infection. Before leaving for home all of us get thoroughly sanitised. Once we

reach home, we make sure that none of the things from hospital enter our houses. My schedule so tight that I am not

able to take proper care of my two and a half years old son,” says staff nurse Hardeep Kaur posted at a level-2 isolation

### NURSES HONOURED

To boost the medical staff's morale, Barnala Deputy Commissioner Tej Partap Singh Phoolka on Wednesday interacted with them and honoured nurses at the Civil Hospital. Phoolka said the medical community was the only hope of the country in these difficult times.

<< Nursing students observe International Nurses Day in Jalandhar. PHOTO: MALKIAT SINGH

facility in Mehla Kalan.

Another staff nurse, Navjot Kaur, working at a level-2 isolation centre in Sohla Pat-

ti says often we find ourselves working beyond our mandatory six hours. “Many a time, we have to assume the role of counselors. The spirit to save lives has beaten all odds. At the end of day, patients’ smiles and their blessings count the most,” says Parjeet Kaur, another nurse.

Staff nurses Charanjeet Kaur and Gurdeep Kaur, who are working at the Civil Hospital, Barnala, say while nurses working with Covid patients are at risk, others like them working in general wards, too, have been putting their lives at risk.



# Shortage of Covid drugs hits treatment in Bathinda, Mansa

SAMEER SINGH  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BATHINDA, MAY 12

The acute shortage of enoxaparin injection has been reported at chemist shops in Bathinda and Mansa districts following increased demand in the market recently.

Majority of the drugstores have already run out of it and wholesale dealers said they have not been getting regular supply of the drug for the past 10-12 days. Notably, the drug is administered to moderate-to-critical Covid-19 patients to prevent blood clotting. Besides, dexamethasone, a steroid given to Covid patients, is in short supply. This steroid is quite effective in the treatment of Covid patients and has in the past helped reduce mortality rate.

Families of the patients rued that medicine was the basic thing to treat any disease and

## MANY 'HOARDING' MEDICINES

■ Chemists have run out of enoxaparin injection usually administered to moderate-to-critical Covid-19 patients to prevent blood clotting

■ Besides, dexamethasone, a steroid quite effective in the treatment of Covid patients, is in short supply

■ A senior IMA executive committee member says



since there is a sudden surge in demand for these drugs, there is a possibility that people must be hoarding and black marketing it

arranging only beds and oxygen alone would not save lives.

A senior IMA executive committee member and doctor at a private hospital in Bathinda said: "There is acute shortage of enoxaparin in the market for the past two weeks. As a result, treatment of Covid patients is getting compromised. After exhausting their stock of the medicine, many hospitals are

finding it difficult to treat patients. Doctors in some hospitals have started prescribing alternative tablets, which are not as effective. Since there is sudden surge in demand for enoxaparin, there is a possibility that people must be hoarding and black marketing it."

Many wholesale medicine dealers in the city said they had not been getting the regular

supply of the drug and they had no option but to tell chemists to stop placing orders for it. They added that the supply of dexamethasone was also hit hard and with no stock left, many of them had to cancel several orders.

Dr Atin Gupta of another private hospital said: "There is shortage of the medicines, but we have to manage with available resources and make optimum use of them to save as many patients as we can."

Drug inspector Ramandeep Gupta said: "Following sudden increase in demand, these drugs are in short supply and it is well within the knowledge of the government. There is not much medicine manufacturing in Punjab. States where these drugs are manufactured will give priority for their own people for obvious reasons." Health Minister Balbir Sidhu did not respond to calls and messages.

# Found overcharging for tests, Jal hospital told to refund amount

Administration recommends FIR against pvt lab

AJAY JOSHI  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

JALANDHAR, MAY 12

Two days after *The Tribune* did a sting operation on overcharging by private labs and hospitals for conducting RT-PCR tests, the district administration on Wednesday recommended the Commissioner of Police to register an FIR under the Epidemic Diseases Act against a private lab for overcharging. In the inquiry report submitted by the Civil Surgeon, the lab was found guilty.

A private hospital had also "erroneously" overcharged Rs 150-450 from over 90 patients for the RT-PCR test. Deputy Commissioner Ghanashayam Thori directed the hospital to refund the excess money to all the patients.

In addition, the hospital management has also assured the district administration of

## 90 PATIENTS FLEECE

“Over 90 patients were overcharged for the test. The administration has asked the hospital to display government rates for Covid-related services so that people are aware of the government rates.

Ghanashayam Thori, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

## The Tribune IMPACT

strictly adhering to the guidelines fixed by the state government with regard to fee being charged for various services.

In its probe, the administration found that Tagore Hospital had charged Rs 900 for Covid-19 tests whereas the state government has fixed Rs 450 for the same. The DC had marked an inquiry to Public Grievance Officer (PGO) Randeep Singh

Gill, who summoned the management for further probe.

"Over 90 patients were overcharged for the test, who will receive a refund. The administration has also asked the hospital management to display government rates for RT-PCR tests and other Covid-19 related services so that people are aware about the government rates," the DC added.

In another case, the administration has written to the police for legal action against Atulya Labs, which prima facie was found to be overcharging for RT-PCR tests. The PGO said some other discrepancies were noted like no separate room for vaccination and lack of biomedical waste disposal mechanism. The DC said keeping in view the second instance of overcharging, the administration would seek cancellation of the lab's franchise.

# In 18+ group, 59 turn up for jab in 3 days

ABOHAR, MAY 12

As many as 723 new Covid cases were reported today in the district, but the vaccination drive was almost negligible here. Only 59 construction workers turned up in the past three days as the Health Department started vaccination for the 18-44 age group.

Deeksha Babbar, Nodal Officer for vaccination, and Luxmi Rani, Postpartum Unit (PPU) in charge, said a camp was organised at a brick kiln in Killianwali village, in the presence of Labour Department representatives, but construction workers showed reluctance for vaccination, despite counselling.

On the other hand, people over 45 years and senior citizens had to return empty-handed as no vaccine was available, social activists said.

Advocate Himanshu Mehta (42) was among the four patients, who succumbed to infection today in Abohar.—OC

# Need more vaccines, medical oxygen: A-G

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The Centre today assured Punjab of "necessary steps" after the state told the Punjab and Haryana High Court that 71 of the 82 life support systems it received died out within half an hour of use.

Appearing before the Bench of Justice Rajan Gupta and Justice Karamjit Singh, Punjab Advocate-General Atul Nanda also flagged shortage of vaccines and oxygen containers.

As the case came up for resumed hearing, Nanda submitted that 82 ventilators were supplied to the State of Punjab under the PM's Health Yojana. Out of the total, 71 were faulty. "Without attributing any motive otherwise in these times, I beseech my friend representing the Union of India (Additional Solicitor-General of India Satya Pal Jain) to look into it. This has to be rectified," he said.

Jain submitted that the matter regarding faulty ventilators would be examined immediately and necessary steps taken at the earliest to rectify the fault, if any. Nanda said 24 containers



for carrying oxygen were available with them. However, the state raised the demand for more. "If six containers are arranged at the earliest, it will ease out the situation in Punjab somewhat," Nanda submitted.

The Bench was also told that about 85,000 vials of Remdesivir had been supplied, whereas demand for 37,000 more was still pending. He further submitted that the state needed about 4 lakh vials of Covishield immediately.

Punjab's request for supply of six more containers, release of pending quantity of Remdesivir and vaccine would be looked into.—TNS

# Panel formed to take care of 'Covid-orphaned' kids in F'kot

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

FARIDKOT, MAY 12

The district administration has constituted the Child Welfare Committee for those who lose parents during the pandemic and whose parents are undergoing treatment, but there is no one to take care of children at home.

For immediate rehabilitation of children, particularly those of migrant labourers, a helpline has been started under the command of the District Child Security and Welfare Officer, in accordance with the Juvenile Justice Act. The orphans will be sent to the

## Hospitals to share info with Child Welfare Committee: DC

Radha Krishan Dham, a child care institute in the town.

This adoption agency, being run by some voluntary organisations in the town, has given over 70 'abandoned' children in adoption, under the Juvenile Justice Act, in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development, in the past two years.

The Child Welfare Committee has been constituted after the Union Ministry of Women

and Child Development had written to the state governments, asking them to direct all district magistrates to ensure immediate rehabilitation of 'Covid-orphaned' children.

"After the parents die, or when they undergo treatment, children are put in a vulnerable situation, due to which they can be manipulated, resulting in child labour or trafficking," said DC Vimal Setia, adding that the measure would ensure that children's interests are protected. "The information about such cases can be sent by hospitals to the Child Welfare Committee for further follow-up," he said.

# Ex-MLA starts free food service

BATHINDA, MAY 12

Former SAD legislator Sarup Singla has started free food service for Covid patients and their families. As part of the service, a helpline has been established and food packets are delivered at hospitals and houses of patients. He said one must rise above politics

in this hour of crisis and contribute in whatever way one can to help patients.

He said, "The cases and deaths are increasing at a rapid rate, but the government has failed to help people. Those who want to avail of the service can contact on 9056396244 and 9056696244."—TNS

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## Govt. of Haryana

# Adopt safety measures to stay safe from Covid -19

Sh. Manohar Lal, Chief Minister, Haryana

## Follow these suggestions while taking care of home isolated Corona Patients

Caregiver should wear a triple layer medical mask

Immediately change mask if it's wet or dirty

Discard the mask after use properly in a dustbin with lid

Avoid touching own face, nose or mouth

Clean hands properly after coming in contact with patient

Wash hands before and after preparing the food

Use disposable gloves while taking care of patient

Perform hand hygiene before and after removing gloves

Do not share utensils, food, drinks, towel, bed sheet and dishes etc. used by the patient

Do not touch anything used by patient

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**I Sunita Rani w/o Sh. Mahesh Kumar** Jindia, r/o # 156, Sector 40-A, Chandigarh declare that after marriage I have changed my name from Sunita Rani to Sunita Jindia. All concerned please note. (CL21013245)

**I, Sardar Kaur w/o S. Nirmal Singh** r/o 1702/4, Bahera Road, Near Sai Market, Patiala, have changed my name to Surinder Kaur. (CL21013172)

**I, Rajwinder Kaur Alias Raj Kaur** w/o Pargat Singh r/o Sadar Wala Road Street No. 3, Baba Bidhi Chand Nagar Sri Muktsar Sahib declare that these both names are of me and known me as these both names. (CL21013244)

**I, Mukesh Singh No. JC-431235F** Rank resident at Village Jhela Amda Gurdaspur, PO Rattangarh, Tehsil & District Pathankot State Punjab declare that in my service record my son's name has been wrongly mentioned as Kartik Singh. But correct name is Kartik. (CL21013295)

**I, Veena Bhardwaj, wife of Late Sri Satish Bhardwaj**, residing at B-1349, Dayalpur, Karnal- 132001, have changed my name from Veena Bhardwaj to Kavita Bhardwaj. (CL21013312)

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## 4 more ministers want Sidhu suspended

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

In yet another attempt to quell dissent within the Punjab Congress, four more Cabinet Ministers, namely Gurpreet Kangar, Balbir Singh Sidhu, Bharat Bhushan Ashu and Vijay Inder Singla, have demanded suspension, if not expulsion, of Navjot Singh Sidhu as his acts amounted to "open rebellion" against the party.

Minister Kangar, who was present in a meeting held a few days ago at the residence of minister Sukhjinder Randhawa, distanced himself from the meeting. He said he had gone there for some work. Only two days ago, three other ministers — Brahm Mohindra, Sunder Sham Arora and Sadhu Singh Dharamsot — had urged the party high command to take strict disciplinary action against Sidhu for

Say his acts amount to open 'rebellion' against party



Balbir Singh Sidhu



Vijay Inder Singla

## DULLO QUESTIONS TIMING OF DALIT MLAS' MEET

Rajya Sabha MP Shamsher Singh Dullo on Wednesday questioned the timing of a meeting by Dalit MLAs over the non-implementation of government schemes. "For the past four and a half years, Dalit leaders didn't question the Chief Minister over the issues of the community and now they suddenly raked up the issue when reports of a Cabinet reshuffle or changing the PPCC president are surfacing," he said.

anti-party activities.

Minister Vijay Inder Singla said the disciplinary committee of the party should take action

against the MPs, ministers and MLAs who speak against the leadership.

Political circles in the party viewed it as an attempt by

the Chief Minister's camp to create a split among the ministers and MLAs who were "inching" towards Sidhu or were forming a front against the Chief Minister over sacrilege and other issues. The Chief Minister's camp and those opposed to it are trying to ensure that more MLAs speak in their favour.

Incidentally, the PPCC statement has not taken note of the ministers, MPs and MLAs who are not only regrouping to exert pressure on the Chief Minister for speedy action in sacrilege and police firing cases but have also held meetings with Navjot Singh Sidhu. The Congress high command had also failed to take note of disciplinary action demanded by the Cabinet and the PPCC president against MPs Partap Bajwa and Shamsher Singh Dullo, who had chose to target the Chief Minister after last year's hooch

tragedy in the state.

MP Partap Bajwa has already said the Chief Minister should call a meeting of the CLP and listen to the views of MLAs on the emotive subject.

"Instead of targeting Sidhu and creating divisions among ministers and MLAs, the seven ministers who are targeting Sidhu should prevail upon the Chief Minister to full the poll promises and correct the narrative against the party," said a senior party MLA.

Meanwhile, amid efforts by the CM camp to quell dissidence, at least five — MLAs Gurkirat Kotli, Sukhpal Bhullar, Navtej Cheema, GP Singh and Inderbir Bolaria — and at least three ministers — Tript Bajwa, Sukhbinder Sarkaria and Balbir Sidhu — are learnt to have held a meeting in the evening in favour of the Chief Minister.

## Ex-Cabinet Minister Inderjit Singh Zira dies

FEROZEPUR, MAY 12

Senior Congress leader and former Cabinet Minister Inderjit Singh Zira (63), died here today, following prolonged illness. He was cremated with full state honours at his native village, Basti Buta Wali, in Zira, around 35 km from the district headquarters. He is survived by his wife and two sons, Kulbir Singh Zira, sitting MLA from Zira, and Inderjit, a veteran politician of the region.

His mortal remains were consigned to flames in the presence of Cabinet ministers Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa and Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria. Several MLAs, including Parmininder Singh Pinki, Davinder

Singh Ghubaya and Dr Harjot Kamal were also present. A contingent drawn from the Punjab Police fired several shots into the air as a mark of respect to the departed soul. Hardial Singh Mann, DIG, Guralp Singh Chahal, DC, and Amit Gupta, SDM, were also present.

Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh condoled with the bereaved family. As per the information, Inderjit was

undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Mohali, but he could not survive.

Inderjit was two-time MLA from Zira. He was a close aide of Akali stalwart Jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra, but he had resigned from the Cabinet in 1999. — OC



## Two bank officials fired upon, robbed of ₹45 lakh in Fazilka

FAZILKA, MAY 12

Two unidentified motorcycle-borne miscreants allegedly opened fire on two private bank officials in a car on the Jalalabad-Muktsar road and robbed them of Rs 45 lakh today.

Sources said Gurpratap Singh, deputy manager and Lovepreet Singh, assistant manager, Kotak Mahindra Bank, were shifting the amount from the Muktsar branch to Jalalabad.

When they reached near Jalalabad town, the miscreants opened fire on them.



The car in which the bank money was being transferred.

One of the bullets hit the front window screen of the car but the officials had a narrow escape.

According to eyewitnesses, the motorcycle did not carry any registration number. The sources said the police were investigating why the cash was being transferred in a private car instead of the security van. The officials carrying the cash were without firearms.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Fazilka, Deepak Hilori said they would crack the case soon. Police teams have been dispatched to different locations and nakas have been set up to nab the culprits. — OC

## ASI arrested for rape, dismissed

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BATHINDA, MAY 12

An Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) has been arrested for allegedly raping a woman in Bathinda.

The woman alleged ASI Gurwinder Singh, posted with the CIA-1 wing of the Bathinda police, sexually exploited her after implicating her son in an NDPS case.

## Women's commission seeks report from SSP

She alleged the ASI registered a case against her 20-year-old son, a resident of Bath village, under the NDPS Act, and then pressured her into a physical relationship. The police took the woman to the Civil Hospital where her medical was done and statement recorded.

Bathinda SSP Bhupinderjit Singh Virk said as soon as he got information in this regard, he told the SHO to register a case and probe the matter. The ASI has been dismissed from service.

The Punjab State Women Commission has sought a status report by May 17 from the Senior Superintendent of Police, Bathinda, regarding the case.



Vegetables thrown on the road in protest against the government guidelines in Sangrur. TRIBUNE PHOTO

## Upset over curbs, vegetable sellers dump stock on road

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SANGRUR, MAY 12

Fed up with the inadequate timings for selling vegetables, vendors today threw vegetables on the Sangrur-Patiala road in Bhawanigarh and also blocked the road for some time.

They have announced intensifying their agitation if the government didn't allow them to sell vegetables throughout the day.

"Liquor vends are allowed to remain open all day, but we are allowed to open our

## Block Sangrur-Patiala road in Bhawanigarh to lodge protest

shops from 5 am to 9 am and 4 pm to 6 pm. The police are harassing us and they also thrashed some vegetable sellers," alleged Kartar Singh, a seller.

Balwinder Singh, another protester, said: "We are already under huge debt, while the latest decision to allow us to sell vegetables only for few hours

has aggravated our problems. We purchase vegetables every morning and if we are not able to sell them all within 24 hours, they become stale and as a result rot."

Bhawanigarh SHO Gurdeep Singh Sandhu said they were only implementing the guidelines issued by the government. "We have conveyed the resentment of vegetable sellers to officials concerned and they may be allowed to meet senior officers on Thursday," he added.

## App to check illegal mining

FAZILKA, MAY 12

The state government has launched 'Punjab Mining App' in a bid to check the illegal mining in the area, particularly along the border belt.

According to a communiqué released by Fazilka Deputy Commissioner Arvind Pal Singh Sandhu, the complainant can upload their complaints on the app which would directly reach the DC, SSP and Executive Officer-cum-District Mining Officer for taking action. — OC

## Missing 'saroops' case hearing on May 28

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

AMRITSAR, MAY 12

The Sikh Gurdwara Judicial Commission has fixed May 28 as the next date for hearing of the petition filed by the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar), demanding action against the disappearance of 328 'saroops' of Guru Granth Sahib from the possession of the SGPC.

The petitioners — Iman Singh Mann, Jaskaran

Singh Kahansinghwal, Harbir Singh Sandhu, Amrik Singh Nangal and other members of the SAD (Amritsar) — on Sunday visited the commission office.

Sandhu said the petition could not be heard as one of the members of the commission was not present. The staff members, too, were on leave after they were declared Covid-19 positive.

## State surpasses procurement target

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

On the second last day of the procurement season, wheat purchase in the state crossed the target of 130 lakh metric tonnes today. The state government has urged the Centre to end the procurement operations on May 13.

With the government agencies and private traders procuring 1,11,410 metric tonnes of wheat in Punjab on 33rd day of procurement, the progressive procurement till date is 131.184 lakh metric tonnes. — TNS



Labourers shift wheat bags amid rain in Amritsar. VISHAL KUMAR

## NCC directorate gets 6,300 new vacancies

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The central government has allotted 6,300 additional vacancies for junior division NCC cadets in schools in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh under the fully self-financing scheme.

The long-awaited move is a part of the expansion plan for the NCC under which the government had approved an additional one lakh vacancies for out-of-turn

allotment to private or quasi-government schools which agree to bear all the training expenses. Institutes having at least 500 students on their roll can be allotted one company strength of around 150 cadets without any cost to the exchequer.

The move comes in the wake of the demand from numerous schools who could not introduce NCC due to limited vacancies. — TNS

## IAS probationers meet Chief Secy

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

Chief Secretary Vini Mahajan on Wednesday held an introductory meeting with four 2020-batch Indian Administrative Services (IAS) probationary officers of the Punjab cadre here.

The probationary officers, including Ojasvi Alankar from Haryana; Harjinder Singh and Chandrajyoti Singh, both from Punjab; and Nikas Kumar from Rajasthan; were briefed about the ongoing plans and projects of the state government. — TNS

## Teachers oppose move to use welfare funds for new colleges

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

LUDHIANA, MAY 12

A day after the DPI (Colleges), Department of Higher Education, Punjab, ordered eight government colleges to transfer funds for starting new colleges in the state, teachers and student unions have raised their voice against it.

The principals of eight government colleges have been asked if they have more than Rs 5 lakh available in funds, and if so, these be transferred to the account of the Higher Education Development Fund of DPI (Colleges) as money is required for starting new colleges in the state.

The order has been issued to SCD Government College and Government College for Girls in Ludhiana, Government College, Ropar, Government Rajindra College, Bathinda, Government Mohindra College, Patiala, Government Ranbir College Sangrur, Government College, Naya Nangal, and Government Brijindra College, Faridkot.

President of the Punjab

**UNWISE DECISION**  
“The department wants ₹40 lakh from eight colleges by issuing this order. Can't the government arrange an amount of just ₹40 lakh on its own?”  
Jaipal Singh, RETD PROFESSOR

**NOTHING WRONG IN IT**  
“It is not really an issue. We can use the funds of one college for the other. The money is to be used on a returnable basis. There is nothing wrong in it.”  
Paramjit Singh, DPI (COLLEGES), PUNJAB

Government Colleges Teachers' Association, Prof Barjinder Singh Tohra, criticised the order. "It is a good move to open new colleges in the state but we condemn the order issued to government colleges to transfer Rs 5 lakh from their funds for the new colleges. It is totally wrong. The funds collected by any college can be used only for students and for the development of the institute, and not for any other purpose as per the norms."

Prof (retd) Jaipal Singh, former president of the union, said, "Not even a single penny should be taken from the funds collected by any government college. The department concerned wants Rs 40

lakh from eight colleges by issuing this order. Can't the government arrange an amount of just Rs 40 lakh on its own?"

Gagandeep Singh of the Punjab Students' Federation said, "We oppose the order. The Parents-Teachers' Association (PTA) and other funds which are collected from students should be used only for their welfare. When people pay huge taxes, the government should use the amount for new colleges."

DPI (Colleges), Punjab, Paramjit Singh said there was no issue at all. "We can use the funds of one college for the other. The money is to be used on a returnable basis. There is nothing wrong in it."

## Moga Mayor's election today

MOGA, MAY 12

Elections to the posts of Mayor, Senior Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Moga Municipal Corporation will be held on Thursday.

The first meeting of the newly-elected councillors and their swearing-in ceremony will also be held before the elections.

The term of the newly-elected MC would be five

## Cong has 20 seats, SAD 15 in 50-member House

years from the date of the first meeting of the corporation. The Department of Local Government, with the approval of the state Election Commission, will publish the names of elected office-bearers and members in the Punjab State Gazette after the meeting.

It may be mentioned that the ruling Congress got 20 of 50 wards. The SAD got 15 seats, Independents 10, AAP 4 and BJP got just one. However, local Congress MLA Dr Harjot Kamal has claimed to have gained majority in the MC with the support of nine Independents. He said the Mayor would be elected from amongst the Congress councillors — TNS





Health officials conduct a door-to-door survey at a Rewari village on Wednesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

# 45 villages in Jhajjar, Rewari turn hotspots

Health teams despatched to worst-hit areas | Tracing on

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

JHAJJAR, MAY 12

The Covid spread in rural areas has put the administration in Jhajjar and Rewari on toes. As many as 45 villages in both districts been declared as hotspots.

Of these, 27 villages are in Jhajjar and 18 in Rewari district. The active cases in these districts are more than 20 and many other residents are suffering from Covid-like symptoms.

Several deaths have been reported in the villages in the past week, forcing the district authorities to come into action mode to control the situation. A plan is being chalked out to isolate the infected persons.

In Jhajjar district, Dubaldhan, Chhuchhakvaas, Machhrauli, Patauda, Silani, Kharar, Rohad, Dighal, Dujana, Dulhera, Badli, Gubhana, Dadri Toa, Chhara, Mandothi, Kheri Jassaur, Ladrawan, Aasuda, Nuna Majra, Sankhol, Jassuar Kheri, Matan, Nilothi, Saray Aurangabad and Barahi villages have been declared as Covid hotspots.

In Rewari district, Nandha,

<b>12,490</b>	
<b>FRESH CASES</b>	
<b>165 DEATHS</b>	
<b>IN 24 HOURS</b>	
<b>ACTIVE CASES</b>	<b>1,07,058</b>
<b>WORST-AFFECTED DISTRICTS</b>	
<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>+VE</b>
Gurugram	2,747
Faridabad	1,237
Hisar	977

## NEXT STEP: 'THIKRI PEHRAS' IN VILLAGES

Chandigarh: Amid spike in Covid cases in rural areas, the state government has once again decided to resort to 'thikri pehras' (community policing) so as to keep a vigil on the movement of people in and out of villages and containing the spread of the virus. An official spokesperson said an order in this connection had been issued from the Chief Secretary's office to all DCs.

Mayan, Balwadi, Nimoth, Bolni, Gudiyani, Jainabad, Lilodh, Gokulgarh, Jatusana, Bhadavaas, Luhana, Bawwa, Bhakli, Katopur, Jhaal, Gidokhar and Teent are the villages where a spurt in Covid cases has been recorded.

Jhajjar DC Jitender Dahiya said, "Covid patients need to be isolated hence we have decided to establish quarantine centres in the 27 hotspot villages of the district. Officers of the Panchayat Department have been directed to make arrangements of hand sanitiser, bed, food, steamer and potable water in these centres."

He said the Civil Surgeon

# Nodal officers appointed in M'garh to check virus spread

RAVINDER SAINI

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MAHENDRAGARH, MAY 12

The district administration has appointed nodal officers at the village level to make villagers understand the seriousness of the pandemic and enforce Covid protocols in villages.

They have been living in denial mode, refusing to believe that Covid is on their doorstep even though 38 people died of Covid from May 1 to 11 in the district.

Deputy Commissioner Ajay Kumar said, "Gram sachivs, patwaris and health workers have been appointed as nodal officers, who will remain in touch with community and public health centres."

The officers will also be required to help health officials in collecting samples.

In all, 7,423 cases were reported in the district in the past 11 days. A majority of the cases were from villages.

## The Tribune IMPACT

Gram sachivs, patwaris and health workers have been appointed as nodal officers who will remain in touch with community and public health centres.

Ajay Kumar, MAHENDRAGARH DC

The worst-hit being Ganiyar, Pathera, Bhushan Kalan, Dhani Maliayan, Koriavaas, Ateli, Dublana, Agihar, Atali, Khanpur, Khairali, Silarpur, Guda, Dhanauda, Khudana, Buchavaas, Majra and Mahlhabas.

Many people with Covid-like symptoms died at home. In spite of this, door-to-door survey and testing are yet to start, say sources.

The district administration

has directed the Block Development and Panchayat Officers (BDPOs) to rope in healthy youths to ensure that people comply with Covid protocols in their villages.

They would not only stop gatherings at "chaupals" and other public places in villages, but also encourage villagers to get themselves tested if they developed Covid-like symptoms such as dry cough, fever, headache and body ache.

The DC said, "Isolation centres equipped with five to ten beds are being set up in villages, where the number of cases is high. The centres will be established in government schools or dharmshalas. Buildings near private schools can also be used for the purpose."

He added 21 micro-containment zones had been set up in the district to check the spread of Covid.

# Set up isolation centres in 2 days, CM tells DCs

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

In view of the recent surge in Covid cases in villages, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has directed Deputy Commissioner to set up isolation centres in 50 or more villages (if hotspots) in each district in a couple of days and subsequently submit the action-taken report to the office of Director General, Development and Panchayats.

Khattar said Chief Executive Officers of zila parishads would be the nodal officers, while District Development Panchayat Officers (DDPOs) and Block Development Officers (BDPOs) would help the DCs in setting up the isolation centres.

Gram sachivs and members of village committees

## O2 QUOTA INCREASED

Of the 363 NGOs that have registered for home supply of oxygen cylinders, the registration of 332 has been approved. The state's oxygen quota has been increased from 156 MT to 282 MT.

ML Khattar, CM

constituted by the BDPOs would supervise the centre daily. Nodal officers would be required to report to the state headquarters every day.

Schools, panchayat ghars or community centres may be converted into isolation centres.

## DGP: 67 black marketeers held in 18 days

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The Haryana Police have arrested 67 persons for the black marketing of oxygen cylinders and Remdesivir injections in the past 18 days across the state.

Since April 23, a total of 33 FIRs were registered while 409 oxygen cylinders and 130 Remdesivir vials were recovered from the accused.

DGP Manoj Yadava on Wednesday said police teams had conducted raids following inputs on the helpline numbers and arrested those indulging in the black marketing of oxygen and Remdesivir, which was in high demand for the Covid treatment.

People can inform the police about the black marketing of oxygen cylinders and Remdesivir on 7087089947 and toll-free number 1800-180-1314, the DGP added. — TNS

# With 500 O2 beds, Hisar school to open doors to Covid patients

DEEPPENDER DESWAL

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

HISAR, MAY 12

Om Prakash Jindal Modern School in Hisar is being converted into a 500-bed Covid hospital in view of rising cases. The work on the temporary facility, which will get an uninterrupted oxygen supply from an adjoining Jindal Steel unit, is under way on a war footing.

All beds at the hospital will have oxygen support.

Deputy Commissioner Priyanka Soni said the hospital was likely to become operational by May 16, ahead of the May 18 deadline fixed by the state government.

"Over 80 per cent work on the project has been completed. Besides four blocks for



A classroom in Hisar's Om Prakash Jindal Modern School has been converted into a Covid ward. TRIBUNE PHOTO

admission, the centre will have an OPD, pharmacy unit and a store," said the DC.

With 647 deaths so far, Hisar district has recorded the highest number of fatalities, leaving behind Gurugram and Faridabad, which have recorded 612 and 598

deaths, respectively.

Vinod Mehta, Principal Media Adviser to the CM, said the CM had visited Hisar on April 27 to finalise a Covid centre at the school. "The facility will get piped oxygen from the Jindal Steel plant located close to the school," he added.

# Sirsa dera head shifted to PGIMS

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

ROHTAK, MAY 12

Sirsa-based Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh Insan, who is undergoing imprisonment at the Sunaria jail in Rohtak district, was shifted to the PGIMS this evening after he complained of dizziness.

The jailed dera head, who has been convicted and sentenced for the rape of two of his women disciples and murder of journalist Ram Chander Chhatrapati, was taken to the PGIMS under tight police security.

District police spokesperson Sunny Laura confirmed that the dera chief had been taken from the jail to the hospital. — TNS

**EX-SERVICEMEN CONTRIBUTORY HEALTH SCHEME (ECHS)**

1. ECHS Cell, Stn HQ Yol Cantt invites applications to engage for the following posts on contractual basis:-

Sr. No.	Post	Place of employment	No of Vac	Res for ESM	Open Quota
a)	OICECHS	Yol Cantt	01	100%	-
b)	Med Offrs	Yol Cantt	02	60%	40%
c)	Med Offrs	Dehragopipur	02	60%	40%
d)	Safaiwala	Dehragopipur	01	70%	30%

2. For Terms and conditions, application form and remuneration kindly visit our website [www.echs.gov.in](http://www.echs.gov.in). For details please contact Stn HQ (ECHS Cell) Yol Cantt at Tele No. 01892-235674, Army- 6091 and Email on [echsvol@gmail.com](mailto:echsvol@gmail.com). Also approach concerned Polyclinic for details. Last date of receipt of application at Stn HQ Yol Cantt is 10 June 2021 and screening/selection will be conducted on 15 June 2021 at Stn HQ, Yol Cantt. Candidates will bring original certificate/degree and two photo copies of all documents of testimonial/experience, as applicable and two pp size photographs at the time of interview.

**JOINT ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION**

(For the State of Goa and Union Territories)

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Udyog Vihar/Phase IV, Sector-18, Gurugram (Haryana) 122015  
Ph. No. 0124-4684705 Email: [secy.jercuts@gov.in](mailto:secy.jercuts@gov.in) Website: [www.jercuts.gov.in](http://www.jercuts.gov.in)

**PUBLIC NOTICE** Dated : 12/05/2021

Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (for the State of Goa & Union Territories) invites suggestions/comments/inputs/objections from Public/Stakeholders/Consumers/Consumers Organizations on the proposed amendments in JERC (Electricity Supply Code), 2018. The existing clauses and proposed amendments in tabular form are available on the Commission's website [www.jercuts.gov.in](http://www.jercuts.gov.in) for convenience and can be downloaded.

Notice is hereby given inviting Suggestions/Comments on the Draft Regulations, to be sent by registered post addressed to- The Secretary, JERC (For the State of Goa & UTs) 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Udyog Vihar Phase IV, Sector 18, Gurugram, Haryana - 122015 or through e-mail at [mail id - secy.jercuts@gov.in](mailto:secy.jercuts@gov.in) latest by 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2021.

The Commission shall notify the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for the State of Goa and Union Territories (Electricity Supply Code) (Second Amendment), Regulations 2021 after considering all the comments received from Public/Stakeholders/Consumers/Consumer Organizations.

(Rakesh Kumar)  
Secretary

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, AMRITSAR**

LOCAL GOVT. DEPTT. PUNJAB

**E-TENDER NOTICE (CIVIL WORKS)**

NIT No. 16/2021 (Re-Call)

No. S.E.(C)/148 Dated: 12.05.2021

The Municipal Corporation, Amritsar invites tenders on Online Two bid system from eligible bidders for development works.

Description	Last Date of Submission	Opening of Technical Bid	Opening of Financial Bid
Last Date of submission of tenders for Co-Op L/C Societies for the work up to Rs. 60.00 Lacs	27.05.2021 up to 12:00 Noon	27.05.2021 at 05:00 p.m.	As decided by the Administration after Evaluation of Technical Bids

- EMD: 2% of Estimated Amount for Frims/Agencies/General Contractors etc.
- For further specification, Terms & Conditions, kindly visit: <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in>
- Name of work/Corrigendum/Addendum and Amendment shall be published in the above said website only.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Civil),  
Municipal Corporation, Amritsar.

DPR/Pb/4504

No. S.E. (O&M)/NIT-32/CE/WS/g Dt.: 12.05.2021

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, JALANDHAR**  
LOCAL GOVT. DEPTT. PUNJAB

**NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS (O&M Br.)**  
(Website: [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in))

E-tender No. MCJ/OM/2021-22/08

Municipal Corporation, Jalandhar invites a-tenders on Two Bid System for the O&M Branch works mentioned at [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in). Time to time instructions issued by Govt./CVO will be followed for bidding as well as execution of works. All the bidders should comply with the latest instructions issued vide notification No. 5/82/2018-21g4/1892 dt. 02.08.18.

**16 Works related to O&M Branch**  
**03 Works related to General Store**

SCHEDULE OF TENDERS FOR CO-OP L/C SOCIETIES	Last date & time for online Submission of E-bids
Bid Start from 14.05.2021, 14:00 Onwards	07.06.2021 up to 14:00 hours Date & time of opening of Eligibility/ Tech. Bid 08.06.2021 at 12:00 noon

SCHEDULE OF BALANCE TENDERS FOR GENERAL CONTRACTORS	Date & time of opening of Eligibility/ Tech. Bid
Bid Start from 10.06.2021, 14:00 Onwards	18.06.2021 at 14:00 hours

Other terms & conditions can be seen at E-tender website [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in)

Sd/- Er. Satinder Kumar,  
Superintending Engineer (O&M Br.)  
09646046223

DPR/Pb/4505

**IIM Rohtak**

Indian Institute of Management Rohtak  
Management City, Southern By Pass, NH 10,  
Sunaria, Rohtak, Haryana - 124 010

Invites applications for admission to its

**FIVE YEAR INTEGRATED PROGRAMME IN LAW (Batch 2021-26) - BBA LL.B.**

Five-Year Integrated Programme in Law (IPL) at IIM Rohtak is for students after class XII who aim at gaining an in-depth knowledge of business management with intricate details of law and governance. It is an interdisciplinary program that has combined courses of management studies and law.

**Total Programme Fee: ₹ 30,00,000/-**  
(Hostel and mess facility may be provided on payment basis)

**Eligibility Criteria**  
Minimum 60% in Standard X / SSC and Standard XII / HSC or equivalent examinations (55% for reserved category as per GOI norms)  
Maximum 20 years of age as on July 31, 2021  
Reservation will be applicable as per GOI norms after meeting the minimum eligibility criteria  
Selection on the basis of CLAT Examination, Online Personal Interview, and Past Academics

**Online Registration: March 16, 2021 - May 31, 2021**  
For more details please visit: [www.iimrohtak.ac.in](http://www.iimrohtak.ac.in)  
**OR** reach out to IPL Admission Office, IIM Rohtak;  
E-mail: [ipladmission@iimrohtak.ac.in](mailto:ipladmission@iimrohtak.ac.in)  
Contact: 01262 - 228505 / 70820 01619

**TENDER NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS**

Online tenders on percentage basis (above or below or at par the DNIT amount) for the below mentioned works are invited from the eligible contractors as per eligibility criteria of the SBD.

Sr. No.	Name of the Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money
1.	Development of commercial pocket in IT City, S.A.S Nagar (Civil & Public Health Works).	₹ 1810.03 Lac	₹ 23.11 Lac
2.	Construction of trench in green belts and under road crossing for providing 11KV connectivity to various commercial pockets of Aerocity, S.A.S Nagar	₹ 1286.70 Lac	₹ 17.87 Lac

**Tender Processing Fee (Appx.) : For works at Sr. No. 1 & 2 : ₹ 5900/-**  
**Period of Completion : For work at Sr. No. 1 : 8 months & for work at Sr. No. 2 : 6 months**

S. No.	Online availability of tender for bidding	Last date & time for submission of online bids	Date & time of opening of tenders in O/o S.E. (C-1) GMADA, Room No. 445, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, PUDA Bhawan, Sector 62, SAS Nagar
1&2	From 13.5.2021 3:00 PM To 2.6.2021 3:00 PM	2.6.2021 3:00 PM	3.6.2021 3:00 PM

Pre bid meeting in O/o S.E. (C-1) GMADA, SAS Nagar

**For work at Sr. No. 1 : On 20-05-2021 at 12 Noon**  
**For work at Sr. No. 2 : On 21-05-2021 at 12 Noon**

1. For detailed terms and conditions refer to our website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
2. For any clarification / difficulty regarding e-tendering process contact 0172-2970263, 2970284.

Divisional Engineer (C-1)  
**GREATER MOHALI AREA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
PUDA Bhawan, Sector - 62, S.A.S Nagar

**PRINCIPAL, HORTICULTURE TRAINING INSTITUTE, UCHANI (KARNAL)**

130 Mile Stone From Delhi, G.T. Road Uchani (Karnal) — 132001

Email: [phtihort-hry@nic.in](mailto:phtihort-hry@nic.in)

Ph. No. 0184-2265484

**NOTICE**

Principal, Horticulture Training Institute, Uchani (Karnal) invites E-Tenders from the reputed caterers/firms for Mess Tender (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and Tea) on the premises of HTI, Uchani (Karnal). The bidders/firms have to deposit tender fee **Rs. 1000/-** & Electronic Fee **Rs. 1000/-** per bidder/firm. The interested bidder/Firms can visit the website [www.hortharyana.gov.in](http://www.hortharyana.gov.in) during 1st date of tender & last date of submission of documents.

Sr. No.	Item	Date	Extended Date	Time
1.	Tender start date	26 March, 2021	26 March, 2021	09:00 a.m.
2.	Last date for online bid submission	10 May, 2021	24 May, 2021	05:00 p.m.
3.	Opening of Technical Bid document	11 May, 2021	25 May, 2021	Before noon
4.	Opening of Financial Bid	11 May, 2021	25 May, 2021	After noon

The detailed terms & conditions specified in the tender document would be available on e-tender portal that is [etenders.hry.nic.in](http://etenders.hry.nic.in) and on the Department of Horticulture website that is on dated **26 March, 2021 till 24 May, 2021**. The last date for the submission of the e-tender is **24 May, 2021 up to 05:00 p.m.** Principal, HTI, Uchani (Karnal) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/- Principal,  
Horticulture Training Institute,  
Uchani (Karnal).

**SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, ELECTRICAL CIRCLE, CHANDIGARH**

5TH FLOOR, U.T. SECRETARIAT SECTOR 9-D, CHANDIGARH - 160009

TELEPHONE No. 0172 2740193

**VACANCY CIRCULAR**

The Electrical Wing of the Engineering Department, Union Territory Chandigarh intends to fill up the following vacant posts of Junior Draftsman, Draftsman, Head Draftsman and Circle Head Draftsman in the pay scale of Rs. 10300-34800 + 3200 Grade Pay. Rs. 10300-34800 + 4600 Grade Pay, Rs. 10300-34800 + Rs. 5000 Grade Pay and Rs. 10300-34800 + 5400 Grade Pay by deputation in terms of the following criteria for each post as laid down in the notified recruitment rules dated 05.03.2002, for a period of one year which can be extended for a period of three years or till such time the eligible officials in the feeder cadre attains their eligibility for promotion to the aforementioned posts or the same are filled up by direct recruitment whichever is earlier:

(A) 1. **Name & Number of Post (5) Junior Draftsman**  
2. Pay Scale: Rs. 10300 - 34800 + 3200 GP  
3. **Educational Qualification**  
**ESSENTIAL:**  
1. Matric pass of a recognized Board/ University or equivalent.  
2. I.T.I. Draftsmanship diploma of at least two years duration in the relevant trade (to be indicated at the time of recruitment).  
3. 2 years experience in the trade.  
4. Knowledge or operating computer is must.

(B) 1. **Name & No. of Post (2) Draftsman**  
2. Pay Scale: Rs. 10300 - 34800 + 4600 GP  
3. **Educational Qualification**  
**ESSENTIAL EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION**  
1. Matric pass of a recognized Board/ University or equivalent.  
2. I.T.I. Draftsmanship Diploma of at least two years duration in the trade of Electrical/Mechanical.  
3. 5 years experience in the trade.  
4. Knowledge or operating computer is must.

-2-

(C) 1. **Name & No. of Post (2) Head Draftsman**  
2. Pay Scale: Rs. 10300 - 34800 + 5000 GP

(D) 1. **Name & No. of Post (1) Circle Head Draftsman**  
2. Pay Scale: Rs. 10300 - 34800 + 5400 GP

**ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPUTATION:**  
Employees of the Central Govt./ State Govts. Of Punjab and Haryana and U.T. of Chandigarh Admn. Holding analogous or similar posts on regular basis (Period of deputation shall ordinarily not exceed 3 years)

The eligible Employees holding analogous posts may submit their applications through proper channel, alongwith their bio-data, ACR summary for the last five years with a certificate that no departmental proceedings or vigilance case or any other embezzlement case is pending against the eligible employees.

PLACE: CHANDIGARH. Superintending Engineer,  
DATED: \_\_\_\_\_ Electrical Circle, 5th Floor, U.T. Secretariat,  
Union Territory, Chandigarh.



# The Tribune

ESTABLISHED IN 1881

## Covid hotspots

Make worst-hit districts self-reliant in testing, treatment

**D**URING the second wave, Covid-19 has spread its tentacles in every nook and cranny of the country, with 533 districts (73 per cent) out of 734 reporting a test positivity rate of more than 10 per cent. There are more than 30 such districts each in five states — Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Bihar. In 16 other states, 10-30 districts each are reporting at least 10 per cent positivity. The Centre has told the respective states to undertake strict containment measures in these districts. It's a no-brainer that the best way to prevent residents from thronging neighbouring districts or states for testing and treatment is to ensure adequate facilities in their own backyard. The worst-affected places need to be made self-reliant in Covid care so that the movement of people can be restricted for breaking the chain of transmission. Otherwise, the situation will also deteriorate in the districts which have a low positivity rate as of now, putting greater strain on the already overstretched healthcare set-up.

Amid the surge in rural areas, the Centre's decision to 'rationalise' RT-PCR tests and increase RAT (Rapid Antigen Tests) testing is questionable. Though the RAT is cheaper and easier to perform, and provides quick results, it is far less accurate than RT-PCR. According to studies, antigen tests correctly identify Covid-19 infection in over 70 per cent of the people with symptoms and in around 60% of those who are asymptomatic. In contrast, the lab test has an accuracy rate of 90-100 per cent.

Relaxing the Health Ministry's norm of 70 per cent RT-PCR and 30 per cent RAT would lead to a sharp rise in the number of false negatives. A significant proportion of Covid-infected people, who will go by misleading test reports, won't self-isolate themselves and would end up spreading infection. The way forward for the authorities is to ramp up RT-PCR testing infrastructure at the earliest. If it's a toss-up between accuracy and speed, the former must be preferred. This is not the time to cut corners. The tried-and-tested drill has to be conducted across the board without fail.

## Snap out of denial mode

Haryana villages must form self-help groups like Bhiwani's Barwa

**H**ARYANA is going through a dismal phase as coronavirus ravages the state, penetrating into the hinterland. It is now among the top states that account for the highest Covid-19 fatalities and active cases in the country. Sadly, despite people dropping dead like flies in almost every neighbourhood, many rural folk are yet to wake up to the reality of the havoc the contagion is wreaking. The war-like efforts on to combat the disease stand negated if the villagers remain in denial. The village elders need to impress upon their folks the importance of following the scientific way — Covid-appropriate protocol — to rein in the pandemic. Seeking prompt medical aid in case of symptoms is essential to saving lives.

It is unfortunate that numerous villages, and even towns, in the state are, instead, putting their faith in *havan* to ward off the virus and cleanse the air. It holds little water and would boomerang with a super-spread of the disease, much like the Kumbh Mela *mahants'* belief that the pathogen would be washed down the Ganga. *The Tribune* has highlighted the sorry plight of Mahendragarh and Rohtak villages. This mulish attitude, steeped in irrationality, is also perhaps the main contributor to Haryana's other bleak statistic: the state has reported the highest wastage of Covid vaccine.

However, giving hope in this gloomy scenario is Barwa village of Bhiwani that stands out as an oasis. Its exemplary response to the Covid outbreak has put paid to the justification of people having had to resort to *havan* in view of the acute shortage of healthcare facilities. Jolted by death and disease, and with little help coming by from the authorities, Barwa villagers recently formed a 'Corona Sahayata Samiti' to assist those down with Covid symptoms. It enlisted four medical practitioners to monitor the ill patients. Though a modest effort, it does bring about awareness. It also sets the ball rolling for the requisite paraphernalia, including moving the authorities to provide aid to the needy and send vaccines. Such self-help groups at the village level can shape an effective and coordinated way of dealing with the dire situation.

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Intemperance and intolerance serve no one, and hatred guarantees failure. — Edward Brooke

### ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

## The Tribune.

LAHORE, FRIDAY, MAY 13, 1921

### PROSPECTIVE LEGISLATION.

THE Hon'ble Mian Fazl-i-Hussain and the Hon'ble Lala Harkishen Lal, Ministers in the Punjab, have, in the course of an interview given recently to a representative of the "Civil and Military Gazette," stated that they have been contemplating the introduction of certain Bills calculated to improve sanitation, education, development of municipalities and small towns and the grant of powers to the rural people to settle petty litigation and generally manage local affairs. These ministers have been in office long enough to be able to formulate certain proposals that are likely to give some measure of satisfaction to the people that the Reforms are not a "delusion". Moreover, the ministers, who are selected from among the best men representing the popular view, have, to justify their selection, to give proof of their efforts to introduce reforms on popular lines. Ministers in Bengal, United Provinces and Bombay have already taken steps to introduce popular changes in their respective departments, and it is satisfactory to note that Punjab does not lag behind in this matter. In Bengal, at any rate, the ministers have been freely consulting other popular leaders and holding conferences to decide what particular reforms or changes are necessary and practicable. We hope that the Punjab ministers will be equally solicitous in the matter and will tour in the provinces to consult the people and study their wants on the spot so that they may be in a better position to formulate changes and introduce them in the best and most practical form possible. It appears that the Hon'ble Mian Fazl-i-Hussain intends introducing five bills relating to panchayats, improvement of towns, municipalities and district boards. The Panchayat Act will probably be drafted on the lines of the Bengal Act and give judicial and administrative powers of a limited nature to the local people.

# Sectarian strife in Pakistan

Deobandi and Bareilvi alignments a challenge to governance and peace



G PARTHASARATHY

CHANCELLOR, JAMMU CENTRAL UNIVERSITY & FORMER HIGH COMMISSIONER TO PAKISTAN

**T**HE two major schools of Islam, which emerged in the 19th century in the territories of present-day India, have traditionally been described as Deobandi and Bareilvi. The sects emerged from the efforts of many Muslim clerics and thinkers who fled from Delhi following their persecution by the British after the Mughal rule ended. Deobandi practices were widely adopted in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and by virtually all Pashtuns in Afghanistan. The Deobandis thus established a firm foothold amongst the Pashtun population in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. Most importantly, while the Bareilvis remained content with their influence in the sub-continent, the Deobandis reached out to people in the Arabian peninsula in the 19th century. This was an initiative that has paid rich dividends through Saudi financial backing of Deobandi organisations.

The most far-reaching decision by India's Deobandi leaders was to make common cause with the secular ideals of India, while supporting the struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi for India's independence. The main centre for study and learning of the Deobandi school of Islam was and remains the Darul Uloom, located at Deoband in UP. While sections of the Bareilvi leadership initially shared the views of their Deobandi compatriots, those mainly living in Pakistan, eventually chose to support the Partition. On November 3, 2009, Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, a group of Deobandi scholars, dedicated to the welfare of Muslims in India, met at Deoband and condemned suicide bombings and attacks targeting innocent civilians. This



**DIVIDED:** Tensions have led to the establishment of militant organisations like the Tehriq-e-Labaik that preach religious intolerance. REUTERS

Thanks to the FATF and actions by the US and its allies, Pakistan is being squeezed to end support to such groups.

amounted to direct criticism of Pakistan's propensity to use terrorism as an instrument of state policy.

The Bareilvi population in Pakistan's Punjab province soon found that it had little political space to operate in. The military extended support to groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and the Afghan Taliban that worked jointly with the military establishment. While the JeM organised the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001, the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack was masterminded by the LeT. Moreover, the ISI midwived the close relations of these groups with the Taliban in Afghanistan. The Bareilvis were soon finding that despite their influence and political support in Pakistani Punjab, they were losing political relevance in Pakistan. Ever since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Pashtuns, who are predominantly Deobandi, dominated the attention and patronage of the ISI, and, indeed, in the world. The Taliban also have what they believe to be Deobandi credentials and collaborate closely with Wahhabi-oriented groups like the LeT and the JeM.

Pashtun Deobandis in Pakistan's northwest and in southern Afghanistan became natural allies of

Gen Zia-ul-Haq, after he overthrew and hanged ex-PM Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. General Zia brought in a new phase of 'Islamisation' of politics and developed close relations with radical Islamic elements in Pakistan, most notably the Jamaat-e-Islami in Punjab and Sind, and the Pashtun Deobandis in the north. The Soviet Union then made the folly of invading Afghanistan, enabling the US to join Pakistan in waging a Saudi-backed, Deobandi-oriented jihad against the Soviet forces. Wahhabi-oriented organisations in Pakistan joined this jihad. The ISI developed links with the Jamaat-e-Islami in J&K and used this Deobandi-oriented force to facilitate its jihad in J&K.

Given Bareilvi practices of virtually worshipping the Prophet, Saudi Arabia treats them as heretics. According to Najam Sethi, the Editor of Pakistan's *Friday Times*, the Bareilvis in Pakistan, and particularly in the majority Punjab province, have responded to critics by actions 'borne of the religious passion to defend and uphold the Prophet of Islam, from blasphemy by Muslims and non-Muslims alike, at home and abroad'. This led to the establishment of a politically oriented, militant organisation called the Tehriq-e-Labaik, which soon swept across

towns and villages, preaching religious intolerance in Pakistan's military-dominated Punjab.

The first victim was a Punjabi Hindu woman, Asia Noreen, popularly known as Asia Bibi, who was convicted and sentenced to death for allegedly making blasphemous comments. She was arbitrarily handed the death sentence by hanging — a verdict that was overturned by the Supreme Court in 2011. She, thereafter, immediately fled to Canada.

The Tehriq-e-Labaik attained notoriety, when one of its members, a security guard, assassinated the Governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, for supporting Asia Bibi. The guard was treated like a revolutionary hero by the outfit. It now has substantial political clout in the Punjab province. It virtually brought Punjab to a standstill during recent demonstrations to demand the expulsion of the French ambassador, because of alleged disrespect shown in France to the Prophet. Thanks to the threats of sanctions by the Financial Action Task Force and strong actions by the US and its European allies, Pakistan is being squeezed to end support to such groups. Pakistan is also realising that faith alone cannot hold a nation together, especially in the face of sectarian differences. Neither the Tehriq-e-Taliban, which is now waging a low-intensity conflict within Pakistan, or even the Taliban leadership in Afghanistan has ever recognised the Durand Line as an international border.

India has done well to establish a back channel for talks with Pakistan's military. A major result has been the signing of an agreement for a ceasefire across the LoC in J&K. Pakistan's mercurial PM, Imran Khan, meanwhile, has rejected a proposal to import Indian agricultural products, which he had initiated and approved earlier. He certainly does not enjoy global popularity. The world has noted that it was General Bajwa who first met Crown Prince Salman in Saudi Arabia, before the Crown Prince gave an audience to Imran Khan last week. US President Biden is yet to meet or speak to Imran Khan.

# The bliss in yielding & letting it be

SANJEEV TRIKHA

**L**IFE, said to be the most beautiful gift of God, is like a relay race. Its beauty lies in the manner in which the runners run it. The handing over of the baton at the right time and still being in and enjoying the race plays a crucial role in making it seem like heaven.

Looking back and sailing through my childhood, youth and the present stage, a very soothing and pleasant transition cajoles the heart and soul and oozes out the beauty for which life is known.

As kids, our reins were in the hands of parents who guided our behaviour and navigated us through the ups and downs of life. We remain thankful to

them for effectively moulding and crafting our character.

Then came the stage where we subtly found the steering wheel of life in our own hands. Making our own decisions independently, choosing the desired paths and setting up our targets nurtured a sense of pride in us and in the hearts and minds of our parents, too, as such powers stood effortlessly transferred by them in the right way at the appropriate time.

The race of life is on with batons blissfully getting handed over smoothly. The lockdown provided us all with an opportunity to live together with the children working from home. During this time, I found the baton once again getting transferred to the next generation.

Suddenly, I experience that what I have to wear, eat, when to sleep and wake up is decided by the kids. It is a hearty and out-of-the-world feeling when my daughter despotically decides the volume of salt and sugar intake in my food and when my daughter-in-law scolds me for skipping my fish oil capsules and vitamin D doses, and the son decides the code and portfolio of my bar and barbecue. However, everything does not go as per my taste, yet getting dictated this way brews and breeds heavenly satisfaction and contentment.

Recently, I visited a doctor for the treatment of a minor skin ailment. On his enquiring about the recent changes in routine, I proudly told him that I am now being navigated by the next generation. The kids monitor

the salt and sugar intake, my morning walk schedule, my wardrobe, and I blissfully yield to such diktats.

The doctor at once concluded that the ailment was only due to this yielding. He advised me to get back to the old ways and tell children not to interfere in my affairs. He seemed to pity me. Dwelling in the ecstatic divine pleasures of such yielding, I had to say to him candidly that I would prefer living with the ailment than clinging to the baton and losing the charm of the race called life.

I will now have to stop as my one-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter has noticed my slippers and is dictating me to get into them without any delay. Needed or not, I have to follow the command. Blessed are those who have to yield this way.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### India's image dented

Reference to 'Covid corpses on Ganga'; locals fear that these bodies will be washed down further and can be eaten by stray dogs which may further spread the virus. Locals believe that the bodies were dumped in the river because cremation sites were overwhelmed or because relatives could not afford wood for funeral pyres. Experts say that the floating bodies are proof of the undercounted Covid-19 deaths in the country. With these horrific scenes, India has lost its credibility.

BHAGWAN THADANI, MUMBAI

#### Bodies in Ganga

Apropos of 'Covid corpses on Ganga', it is not known which state these bodies belong to. Both states (UP and Bihar) are facing scathing criticism for their inability to handle the Covid crisis. The situation is all the more pathetic in rural areas, where in the absence of adequate medical facilities, patients are left at the mercy of quacks, resulting in an upsurge in the death rate. History seems to be repeating itself as the Ganga was also swollen with bodies during the Spanish flu in 1918. Famous Hindi writer and poet Suryakant Tripathi Nirala

mentioned about this catastrophe in his writings.

BALBIR SINGH KAKKAR, JALANDHAR

#### Go for Army officers

The practice of foisting IPS officers in senior positions in the CRPF, BSF, ITBP must be dispensed with. Lateral entry of battle-hardened Army short service Captain-rank officers should be done at the battalion level of the paramilitary forces, along with dedicated recruitment at the entry level of the right material. These young officers can then grow with the organisation, and rise on merit. Senior positions being reserved for IPS officers, who are adept at civilian policing, but have little or no exposure to counter-insurgency is self-defeating and bad for the morale of the troops.

RI SINGH, BY MAIL

#### Misplaced priorities

Reference to 'Covid blows up in Yogi's face' and 'Covid corpses on Ganga'; we are seeing the harrowing consequences of the manner of handling and coping with this health crisis by the powers in India. Symbolism bestows our day-to-day living with a grammar of meaningful existence. The symbolism of a dip in the Ganga wash-

es our ills and sins led to the Kumbh Mela even in these times. Political avarice led to the panchayat elections, and elections in five states. Will the corpses found floating on the Ganga, melting grills in crematoriums and the long wait at funeral grounds teach us the necessary lessons?

LALIT MOHAN SHARMA, DHARAMSALA

#### Check overpricing

'Pandemic vultures' draws the attention of the common man on the issue of medical oxygen being sold on the black market by anti-social elements in connivance with certain higher-ups. This is a matter of deep concern. An equal concern is e-commerce sites selling oximeters 10 times the price two months ago. Government agencies should keep an eye on such vultures as well. Does selling at higher prices, with the payment of GST, make it legal?

ANEEP KUMAR, NAYA NANGAL

#### Congress dilemma

With the recent news of delaying the election of Congress president, it seems that the grand old party is still not serious about its public image. It is clearly showing in the results that the responsibility of the main opposition

party is not fulfilled by the Congress. Even many senior leaders across various like-minded political parties are worrying about the situation of the party. The need for strong opposition parties is important in the current political scenario, where the BJP is dominant in Parliament. Sonia Gandhi has to introspect on these defeats as early as possible and hand over the presidency of the party to a leader with a clean and strong public image.

JATINDER MASOON, LUDHIANA

#### Chinese bio-warfare

Refer to 'Dig out the Covid truth'; the whole world needs to be united on the issue to corner China to tell the truth about the Wuhan lab fiasco that is at the centre of the controversy for leaking the virus by omission or commission. Deaths have devastated families all over the world. Businesses have been ruined and there is no let-down in the fury of the virus as yet. The world has to learn to shed its dependency on Chinese goods and be self-sufficient to teach it a lesson and force it to learn to respect humanity and the value of lives getting lost to the Covid-19 virus.

BRIJ B GOYAL, LUDHIANA



# IPR waiver best bet to boost vaccine output



SUSHMA RAMACHANDRAN  
SENIOR FINANCIAL JOURNALIST

THE US decision to support the proposal made by India and South Africa for waiver of intellectual property rights (IPR) protection for vaccine production has been unexpected and a dramatic fillip to the initiative. Significant roadblocks still stand in the way of implementing the idea as other rich countries like those in the European Union need to be convinced about it. But there is no doubt the surprising, though very welcome decision by the Biden administration, will help sway even those strongly opposed to it. The move indicates that the new US regime is taking a radically different approach to global policies. It has always staunchly opposed any dilution of IPR on any ground at multilateral fora in the past. American interests will still be paramount, but it is bowing to public opinion which says that the international pandemic needs to be dealt with by global cooperation rather than insularity.

The decision to support the waiver at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) came on the heels of the other welcome announcement that it would help India to overcome its Covid crisis by humanitarian aid and by allowing the export of vac-

cine-related products. It must not be forgotten, however, that the decision to aid India came only after the US had managed to fully vaccinate one-third of its population and is thus in a good position to vanquish the virus — a lesson learnt for India which tried to be a model global citizen by exporting vaccines, but in a reckless manner without taking its own needs into account. Even now, the US is sitting on stockpiles of surplus vaccines without any sign of exporting them to countries facing shortages.

The waiver by itself must be viewed as a long-term gain for India as well as other developing countries. It will not solve the immediate emergency facing this country in terms of dire shortages of hospital beds, oxygen, medicines and even vaccines. It will also not give an impetus to the medium-term requirement of enhancing healthcare infrastructure. The initiative, in case it ultimately succeeds, will bear fruit only by next year at the earliest. Negotiations at the WTO typically take months due to the mandatory consensus needed from all 164 member countries. The other considerable obstacle is the pressure bound to be put by the powerful global pharmaceutical industry on Western governments to stall the move. It is already arguing this could stifle innovation and prevent companies from reaping the benefits from investments made in research and development.

In the case of Covid vaccines, however, most of the financing has come from governments concerned and not from the private sector pharma indus-



**BREAKING NEW GROUND:** American interests remain paramount but the Biden administration realises that the pandemic can be dealt with better by global cooperation rather than insularity. REUTERS

try itself. Billions of dollars were poured into Operation Warp Speed by the US while Germany and the UK also provided unprecedented financial support so that a Covid vaccine was produced in the amazingly rapid time of less than a year by Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson and Johnson and AstraZeneca. At the end of the day, the pharma companies cannot say that public funding should not lead to public good. Corporate profits in the global drug industry have already skyrocketed over the past year and stock values of these companies have risen exponentially. Great noise has been made over the dip in share prices recently after the US decided to sup-

port the IPR waiver, but little over the steep rise in the past year.

Yet it will still take considerable negotiating skills to bring about the needed consensus at the WTO. At this stage, one must recall the pioneering efforts of previous negotiators who enabled this country to become a leader of the South in ensuring IPR does not curb access to affordable drugs in poorer countries. Both Manmohan Singh and Pranab Mukherjee were involved in the original multilateral trade negotiations that led to the creation of the WTO as well as the IPR regime now in force. Indian negotiators ensured for many years that this country stayed out of the product patents regime and

maintained the system of process patents right up to 2005 when Indian laws had perforce to be brought in line with WTO regulations. The clause allowing compulsory licensing in case of public health crises was incorporated in TRIPS (trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights), largely due to India's efforts.

One must also not forget the role of the then Commerce Minister Murasoli Maran at the Doha ministerial conference in 2001. It was his aggressive advocacy that led to the WTO recognising the seriousness of public health problems of poor countries. It acknowledged that TRIPS should not hinder countries from taking meas-

ures to protect public health not only by issuing compulsory licences to local firms, but also by allowing imports by countries with inadequate manufacturing capacities. The terminology was that imports could be used for dealing with HIV/AIDs, malaria, tuberculosis and “other epidemics”, a phrase which resonates darkly today.

The current initiative is for a waiver of IPR on a global basis, rather than by individual countries, in a bid to prevent delay in increasing vaccine production. There will still be some wait even after the decision is taken, to enable technology transfer and ultimate ramping up of output. It is here India should have a clear advantage over other countries owing to its large unutilised vaccine production capacity. There are as many as 24 vaccine manufacturers and even other pharma companies are capable of making various types of vaccines, including the much-vaunted mRNA vaccines that require storage in extremely cold conditions. The good news is that hyper-cold temperatures are no longer needed and several vaccines can be stored in a way that will make them viable for use in developing countries like India.

The process of negotiations for ensuring the IPR waiver is finally concluded will be long and tedious. It should thus not be cited as a victory of any kind for this government, even if the US has decided to lend its weight to the proposal. The tendency to be triumphal on such issues needs to be resisted by the government right now as the country is in a sombre mood, having become the calamitous epicentre of the global pandemic.

## Vaccination, precautions can help rein in Covid



JAGAT RAM  
DIRECTOR, PGI



RAKESH KOCHHAR  
PROF, GASTRO DEPT

The ICMR has issued guidelines for treatment of mild, moderate and severe cases. These clearly define that mild patients can be treated in home isolation, and that when oxygen levels drop below 94%, patients need consultation of a doctor. The use of different modes of supplementing oxygen and drugs like Remdesivir are clearly laid out. If these guidelines are followed strictly, our limited resources can be utilised optimally and patient outcomes can improve.

INDIA is in the throes of a rampaging second wave of Covid-19. Currently, India accounts for nearly half of the daily cases across the world and one-fourth of the deaths. Corresponding to these figures is the grim fact that test positivity is around 20%, with some states recording over 30%. The second wave is far more intense than the first one, when the maximum single-day caseload was slightly over 97,000.

Other countries have also had multiple waves since the onset of the pandemic in January 2020. The US has had three waves, in April and July 2020, and January 2021 with the third being the most deadly; England has had three waves in April and October-November 2020 and January 2021 with the third wave being the most severe. A century ago, the Spanish flu, caused by the H1N1 influenza-A virus had four waves, with the second wave the most deadly. Though not studied at the time of the Spanish flu, the deadly second wave was attributed to variants of the H1N1 virus.

Viruses constantly change due to changes in their genetic structure resulting in mutations and variants that carry the risk of increased transmission, increased severity or poor response to vaccination. The US CDC has classified these variants as Variant of Interest, Variant of Concern (VOC), and Variant of High Consequence. Some of these variants are: B.1.1.7 (US), B.1.351 (South Africa), P1 (Brazil), and B.1.427 and B.1.429 (California). The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortium found “a new double mutant variant” which carried features from two worrisome lineages; the variants first identified in California and those discovered in South Africa and Brazil. This new variant, B.1.617, has



**UPSURGE:** Guidelines for treating Covid have to be followed to ensure cases come down. PTI

been declared a VOC recently by the US and the UK and has three further subtypes. In India, different variants are predominant in different regions and states, the UK variant in Punjab, double variant in Maharashtra and Karnataka, and the South African variant in Telangana. Scientists say that the recent surge can partly be explained by the emergence of new variants. A recent ICMR study has shown that the Indian variant led to increased severity of infection as compared to B.1, the first dominant variant of the virus, in animal experiments.

There has been an apprehension that mutants may lead to lack of efficacy of vaccines, but so far, the available vaccines are effective against the commonly encountered mutations. However, there is a need to closely monitor the emergence of new variants by genomic studies to pre-empt their consequences.

We have to treat the infected patients with concerted efforts, and secondly, prevent the disease and

break the transmission by vaccinating 60-70% of our population.

The ICMR recently issued guidelines for treatment of mild, moderate and severe cases. These clearly define that mild patients can be treated in home isolation, and that when oxygen levels drop below 94%, patients need consultation of a doctor. The use of different modes of supplementing oxygen and drugs like Remdesivir are clearly laid out. If these guidelines are followed strictly, our limited resources can be utilised optimally and patient outcomes can improve. Currently, there is lack of understanding among some medical personnel about the right indications of using different drugs and even tests and CT scans. There is a need to disseminate the treatment protocol widely, especially among doctors in smaller hospitals. At the same time, it needs to be reiterated that people should not panic or hoard drugs and oxygen at home.

Apart from Covid-appropriate behaviour (mask, social distancing, hygiene) the most effective way of preventing Covid-19 is the vaccine. The Spanish flu had continued to torment the world as there was no effective treatment or a vaccine. Today, we have a number of vaccines, with all being 80-95% efficacious. India has already vaccinated over 17 crore individuals with 3 crore getting both the doses. Experience from across the world has shown that large-scale vaccination is the only way to open business, economy and travel. While 2.3% of India's population has been fully vaccinated till the first week of May, the corresponding figures for full vaccination in Israel, the UK and the US are 56%, 33% and 24%. A recent article from Israel in *The Lancet* has shown that two doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine provided more than 95% protection against Covid-19 infection, hospitalisation and death. It is the effect of vaccination only that cities in the US, UK, Israel and many European countries are reverting back to normal life. Vaccine certificate or “vaccine passport” is required to travel in many countries now.

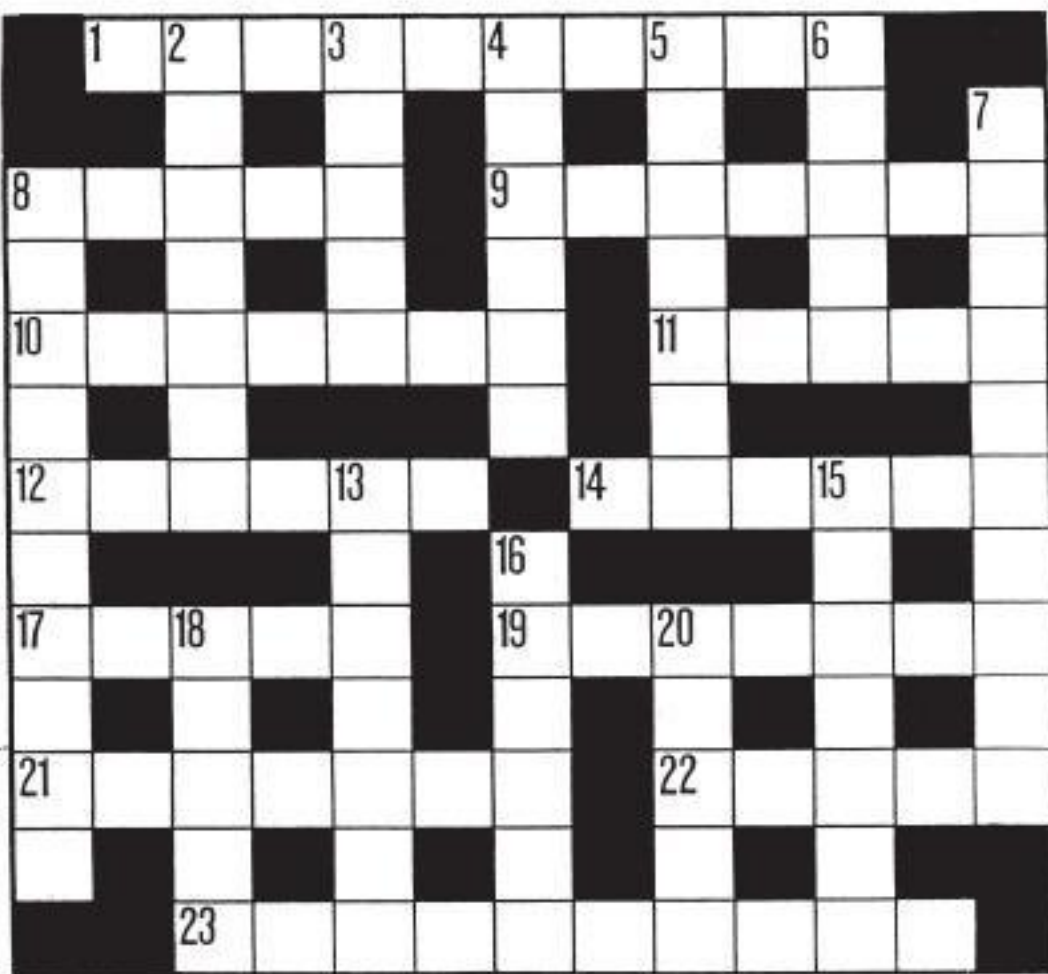
Around 90 crore of India's adult population is eligible for vaccination in the third phase, and if we aim to vaccinate even half of them, it will take till the end of the year with 40 lakh vaccinations being done each day. It is important to realise that effective protection after vaccination starts at least two weeks after the second dose. However, there is a tendency among some people to lower their guard after the first dose itself (Peltzman effect), which can not only cause them to get infected but also make them inadvertently transmit it to others if they are asymptomatic. Another issue plaguing

many people was the reluctance to get the vaccine. To allay vaccine hesitancy, we should generate local data on adverse effects. We have to cut vaccine wastage as well by using the last drop in the vial.

We hope the second wave will flatten soon, with statistical modelling predicting a peak in mid-May. However, there will still remain the prospect of a third wave till enough herd immunity is generated with enough vaccination. For that, we have to rely on preventing person-to-person transmission by enforcing social distancing and using masks. It has been proven now that the virus is transmitted by droplets as well as through aerosols. The latter mechanism calls for precautions to be taken even when indoors. A cloth mask of two or more layers should be used and it should cover the mouth and nose snugly. The US Centre for Disease Control in its Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (February 19, 2021) has shown that double masking is superior to a single mask. A cloth mask over a surgical mask protected to nearly 90%. It must also be emphasised that cloth masks have to be washed regularly, and surgical or N95 masks be disposed of after every use; and a loose handkerchief and a bandana are poor substitutes for masks. Some studies even suggest that masks might reduce the severity of infection by decreasing the inoculum load.

We, therefore, need to reinvigorate ourselves in our fight against the virus. People should follow Covid-appropriate norms strictly and go for the vaccine when their turn comes. This will also help reduce the magnitude of the postulated third wave in the coming months.

### QUICK CROSSWORD



#### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

**Across:** 1 Despot, 4 Abroad, 9 Parvenu, 10 Gleam, 11 Cabal, 12 Dossier, 13 Go up in smoke, 18 Indulge, 20 Swine, 22 Brass, 23 Thus far, 24 Redden, 25 Betray.  
**Down:** 1 Depict, 2 Scrub, 3 Overlap, 5 Bogus, 6 Obelisk, 7 Demure, 8 Sudden death, 14 Old hand, 15 Misrule, 16 Timber, 17 Nearly, 19 Lisle, 21 Infer.

#### ACROSS

- Bring under control (4,2,4)
- Pass into disuse (5)
- Loud rumbling noise (7)
- Sparkle (7)
- Sediment in liquid (5)
- Formal address (6)
- A game bird (6)
- High eagle's nest (5)
- Transient (7)
- Abnormally large (7)
- Start of an era (5)
- In a vulnerable position (3,2,1,4)

#### DOWN

- Inform (7)
- Occurrence (5)
- Disposition (6)
- Into parts (7)
- Clever expedient (5)
- Distance deterring familiarity (4,6)
- Lawmaker (10)
- Live in mutual tolerance (7)
- Unvarying (7)
- Malice (6)
- Percentage (5)
- Bombard with artillery (5)

### SU DO KU

		8	7		4	6	
		6				1	
4			9		3		5
	7		4		8		6
	9					1	
	2		6		1		4
1			3		9		7
		2				9	
		9	5		6	8	

EASY

### CALENDAR

#### MAY 13, 2021, THURSDAY

■ Vikrami Samvat	2078
■ Shaka Samvat	1943
■ Vaisakh Shaka	23
■ Vaisakh Parvishte	31
■ Hijari	1442
■ Shukla Paksha Tithi	2,
■ Atiganda Yoga up to 12.50 am	
■ Rohini Nakshatra	
■ Moon in Taurus sign	

#### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

8	4	3	5	1	9	7	6	2
7	5	9	3	2	6	8	1	4
6	1	2	7	8	4	5	3	9
3	8	1	4	6	5	9	2	7
9	6	5	8	7	2	1	4	3
2	7	4	9	3	1	6	8	5
1	9	6	2	5	3	4	7	8
5	2	7	6	4	8	3	9	1
4	3	8	1	9	7	2	5	6

### FORECAST

SUNSET: THURSDAY 19:08 HRS  
SUNRISE: FRIDAY 05:30 HRS



CITY	MAX	MIN	
Chandigarh	31	22	
New Delhi	36	24	
Amritsar	30	22	
Bathinda	35	24	
Jalandhar	30	22	
Ludhiana	31	20	
Bhiwani	35	23	
Hisar	36	23	
Sirsa	36	21	
Dharamsala	25	14	
Manali	19	09	
Shimla	22	12	
Srinagar	20	12	
Jammu	34	22	
Kargil	11	05	
Leh	06	01	
Dehradun	31	18	
Mussoorie	16	12	

TEMPERATURE IN °C



# Amid curfew curbs, land sharks level hill slopes in upper D’sala

JCB machines being used; deodar trees, properties under threat

LALIT MOHAN

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DHARAMSALA, MAY 12

Taking advantage of the Covid restrictions, land sharks have started levelling hill slopes in upper Dharamsala to pave the way for commercial properties.

On the McLeodganj-Dharamkot road, several green deodar trees as well as public and private properties in the area are facing threat due to the levelling of a hill slop with the help of JCB machines.

Mohan Lal, a local resident, said due to unscientific excavation in the area, many deodar trees were likely to fall and perish in the monsoon. Besides, the threat of landslides had also increased.

Locals say miscreants often indulge in earth excavation on the McLeodganj-Dharamkot road just before the monsoon so that green trees fall during landslides. Otherwise, there is a ban on the felling of green deodar trees in the state. Recently, the Himachal High court had also banned the cutting of trees in the state.

Environmentalists said they had brought the issue



A hill being levelled along the McLeodganj-Dharamkot road on Wednesday. PHOTO: KAMALJEET

## ACTION ASSURED

- Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Prajapati said action would be taken if anyone was found levelling hill slopes in violation of rules and regulations.
- Amid the Covid surge, tourist activities have come to a halt in the area. Most hoteliers have shut their establishments and laid off staff.
- However, the lockdown has provided an opportunity to some miscreants to carry out the nefarious activity as the authorities seem to have turned a blind eye to the matter.

of extensive damage to hills along the McLeodganj-Dharamkot road to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra, Forest Department and the Dharamsala Municipal Corporation authorities, but no action had been taken so far.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Prajapati said action would be taken if anyone was found levelling hill slopes in violation of rules and regulations.

Upper Dharamsala region that comprises Dharamkot, McLeodganj and Bhagunag has been infamous for the levelling of hills and illegal felling of deodar trees. Following the orders of the Himachal High court, 150 hotels had lost their power connections due to the violation of building laws in 2019.

Amid the Covid surge, tourist activities have come to a halt in the area. Most hoteliers have shut their establishments and laid off staff. However, the lockdown has provided an opportunity to some miscreants to carry out the nefarious activity as the authorities seem to have turned a blind eye to the matter.

# Police dig up trenches to thwart unauthorised entry to BBN area

AMBIKA SHARMA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SOLAN, MAY 12

The local police today dug up 11 escape routes at the borders with Haryana and Punjab to prevent the unauthorised entry of industrial workers and construction labourers to the Baddi-Barotiwala-Nalagarh (BBN) industrial area.

“Since a large number of migrant industrial workers and labourers have unauthorisedly in the BBN area, 11 escape routes were dug up today,” said Rohit Malpani, SP, Baddi.

The police used eight earth movers along various riverbeds, which serve as escape routes, to dig deep trenches to deter movement.

The problem is more pronounced along the Baddi-Barotiwala area as industrial workers from Uttar Pradesh,



An earth mover at work at the border in the Baddi-Barotiwala belt.

Bihar, Haryana, Punjab, etc. use this route to enter. The

escape routes along Nalagarh borders are less used.

# Free treatment for Himcare beneficiaries

SHIMLA, MAY 12

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said that in the wake of increase in number of Covid patients, the state government has decided to provide free treatment to the beneficiaries of Himcare and Ayushman Bharat Scheme in registered private hospitals

designated as Covid hospitals.

He was presiding over a meeting with the officers and members of Covid Management Committees here today. He said 4.16 lakh families had been registered under Ayushman Bharat and 5.13 lakh families under State sponsored Himcare scheme. He

said that all these families would now be eligible for the free treatment of Covid-19. Thakur said the state government has decided to prioritise sections of the society for getting vaccinated keeping in view their nature of duty.

He said that drivers and conductors of HRTC buses,

drivers and conductors of private trucks and buses, fuel pump operators, PDS depot holders, teachers on Covid duty, banks and finances service staff, staff of Food and Civil Supplies, chemists and Lok Mitra kendras operators would be provided Covid vaccine on priority. — TNS

## 4,977 new cases, 66 deaths in state

SHIMLA, MAY 12

As many as 4,977 Covid cases were reported in the state today, taking the tally to 145,736. Besides, 66 persons died of the virus.

Fifteen deaths were recorded in Kangra, 12 in Hamirpur, 10 in Mandi, nine in Solan, seven in Shimla, five each in Una and Sirmaur and one each in Kullu, Chamba and Bilaspur. Kangra was the worst hit with 1,419 cases, followed by Mandi 1,167, and Solan 408. — TNS

## COVID METER

DISTRICT-WISE COUNT		
DISTRICT	+VE	DEATHS
Una	9,451	145
Solan	17,466	182
Kangra	30,729	566
Chamba	6,758	79
Hamirpur	10,203	129
Sirmaur	11,082	109
Mandi	20,557	242
Bilaspur	8,905	38
Shimla	19,147	421
Kullu	6,975	105
Kinnaur	2,214	26
Lahaul & Spiti	2,249	13
Total	145,736	2,055

# Decision to end quarantine for healthcare workers opposed

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, MAY 12

The government’s decision to end quarantine period after Covid duties for healthcare workers has not gone down well with the medical fraternity.

Expressing displeasure over the decision, the Himachal Medical Officers Association (HMOA) has asked the government to withdraw the decision within three days or the healthcare workers will report to work sporting black ribbons to register their protest.

Until now, the healthcare workers were quarantined for 10 days after their Covid duties. “Keeping in view that the vaccination for healthcare workers started in January and most of the healthcare workers have been adequately vaccinated, the protocol of quarantining them has been done away with,” said a government spokesperson here today.

Calling it an insensitive decision towards healthcare workers who have



The Himachal Medical Officers Association said the facility should continue as healthcare workers faced high viral load.

## WORKERS’ FAMILIES AT RISK

“While the healthcare workers have been vaccinated, their families haven’t been. Won’t their lives be endangered if the healthcare workers go straight home after their Covid duties?”

— Pushpender Verma, SECY, HIMACHAL MEDICAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

been fighting the pandemic tirelessly for over a year now, HMOA secretary Pushpender Verma said

the facility must continue as healthcare workers work in high viral load during their Covid duties.

# 73 lakh doses ordered, state to get only 1 lakh in May

Supply rationalised due to huge demand in country: Minister

LALIT MOHAN

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DHARAMSALA, MAY 12

The state is unlikely to get Covid-19 vaccine doses in near future for the mass vaccination of the 18 years and above age group. Sources said that the state government had placed an order for 73 lakh doses but was likely to get just one lakh doses this month.

Minister for Health Rajiv Saizal, who was here today, also admitted that the state would get just one lakh doses of the vaccine in the first phase this month. He said that the government had placed an order for 73 lakh doses but since there was a huge demand for the vaccine from all over the country, the manufacturing companies had rationalised supply. “Himachal is getting one lakh doses in the first phase and I hope that the supply will pick up in the coming months,” he

## NO SHORTAGE FOR SECOND DOSE: SAIZAL

“For the 45 years and above age group, the state has enough quota of vaccine. There is no shortage of vaccine for people who are to get the second dose.”

Rajiv Saizal, HEALTH MINISTER

added.

The sources said that the vaccination drive for 45 years and above going on in government hospitals for the past couple of months has slowed down. At some places in Kangra, people were complaining about not getting the second dose in time. Earlier, the district was getting 11,000 doses every day for the 45 years and above age group. However, the supply dropped to 6,000 doses per day due to which the second dose schedule of many people was getting delayed.

The minister said that for the 45 years and above age group, the state has enough quota of vaccine. “There is no shortage of vaccine for people who are to get the

second dose,” he added.

CMO, Kangra, Dr GD Gupta said that there was some shortage of doses at the weekend. However, the supply had been streamlined and people shall get the second dose in time. He added that the change in the schedule of vaccine by health experts was creating confusion among people. Earlier, the second dose was given after 45 days while as per the new guidelines, it was now being given after eight to 12 weeks.

Meanwhile, the state government has allowed private hospitals to hold the vaccination drive. Some private hospitals have placed orders for the vaccine but none of them is likely to get it soon.

## Paror hospital to be functional soon

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PALAMPUR, MAY 12

Rajiv Saizal Health Minister today said that said 250-bed Covid care makeshift hospital at Paror, 10 km from here, would be functional from May 15, while 100-bed Covid facility in Rajiv Gandhi Ayurveda College at Paprola was already operational. Besides, the administration had also hired the services of eight private hospitals in Kangra to admit Covid patients.

The health minister was talking to media persons at Paror this afternoon after visiting Radha Swami Satsang Complex where a makeshift hospital was coming up. He said to reduce the burden on the TMC and Covid Care Hospital, Dharamsala, the administration had planned to open Covid hospitals in sub divisions of the district also.

He said there was no shortage of beds in the hospitals at present, though shortage of ICU beds in the district was a matter of concern. In the next few days more ICU beds would be added to the hospital network in the district.

# No anaesthetist at Rampur hospital catering to 4 dists

Expectant mothers being referred to KNH, Shimla

SUBHASH RAJTA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, MAY 12

Non-Covid health services in Shimla hospitals are being affected due to the rapid spread of the pandemic. The Civil Hospital at Rampur, which caters to the people of four districts, is without an anaesthetist. The lone anaesthetist has been sent on deputation to the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital (DDUH), which is packed to capacity with Covid patients.

“Three doctors have been sent to the DDU Hospital on deputation — one each from the medicine, surgery and anaesthesia departments. We have enough doctors of medicine and surgeons but no anaesthetist at present,” said Dr Suneel Sharma, Medical Superintendent of the Civil Hospital.

In the absence of an anaesthetist, the hospital will not be

## NO SURGERIES CAN BE PERFORMED

■ The lone anaesthetist has been sent on deputation to the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital (DDUH), which is packed to capacity with Covid patients.

■ In the absence of an anaesthetist, the hospital will not be able to perform surgeries, neither emergency nor elective.

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Sources said the hospital had started referring expectant mothers to the Kamla Nehru Hospital (KNH), Shimla. It takes more than four hours to reach Shimla. Besides, referrals will put additional burden on the already burdened KNH, which deals with all gynaecology and delivery cases of the city and from peripheral

# Landslip blocks Mandi-Kullu NH

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KULLU, MAY 12

The Mandi-Kullu national highway was blocked for traffic due to a landslide close to 7 Mile near Mandi on Tuesday night. While the road was restored by the NH wing in the morning but due to intermittent landslides, it was blocked again by the afternoon. Mandi ASP Ashish Sharma said the road was restored later by 4 pm.

The movement of vehicles was diverted via an alternate route through Katola-Kandi-Bajaura. There is not much movement on the highway due to Covid curfew, but still some vehicles were stuck. The ASP said police personnel had been deployed on both sides of the obstructed route.

Hills were cut for four-laning work at the spot where the landslide occurred. Construction work on the Mandi-Kullu highway has been in progress for some years now, which is a cause of frequent landslides between Mandi and Kullu. Environmental-



A traffic jam on the Chandigarh-Manali highway in Mandi.

## TRAFFIC DIVERTED VIA ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

■ The movement of vehicles was diverted via an alternate route through Katola-Kandi-Bajaura.

■ Police personnel had been deployed on both sides of the obstructed route.

■ Hills were cut for four-laning work at the spot where the landslide occurred.

■ Environmentalists said tampering with the fragile ecology of the hills would lead to such disasters.

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The highway is a major connection between Mandi and Manali and it is strategically important as it further connects to border areas of Ladakh through the Manali-Leh highway. The alternate road

through Kandi is a narrow single-lane road which often witnesses jams when the traffic is diverted through this road. Residents here said the government should prioritise the construction of road through Bhubu tunnel and the road through Kandi-Katola to Mandi should also be widened.



# ADC ‘flogs’ people, admn seeks report

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12**  
A senior official in the Baramulla district administration drew condemnation on Wednesday after a video of him appeared online in which he is purportedly seen hitting people with a stick, including women, shouting at them and shoving them around to enforce the Covid lockdown.

The official, Baramulla Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Mohammad Ahsan Mir, apologised after the video went viral. He, however, said, “I feel until we do something extraordinary, people will not understand.”

The Kashmir divisional administration later sought a factual report from the Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla, about the incident. “I am directed to request you to kindly send the factual report viz a viz the context of the situation and the content of the video to this office as soon as possible,” Qazi Sarwar, the Additional Commissioner in the Divisional Commission-

## VIDEO GOES VIRAL

In a viral video, Baramulla Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Ahsan Mir is seen screaming at and flogging an elderly woman while asking her to go back. He is then seen hitting a man twice, kicking him around before pushing him away with a stick.

## WHAT HE SAYS

“I feel until we do something extraordinary, people will not understand.”  
**Mohammad Ahsan Mir, BARAMULLA ADC.**

er’s office, said in a letter to the Baramulla DC.

In the video, the official is purportedly seen screaming at and flogging an elderly woman while asking her to go back. He is then seen hitting a man twice, kicking him around before pushing him away with a stick. He is also seen raising the stick at another woman and then flogging another person. — PTI

# Day after Eid rush, curfew-like restrictions across Valley

**SRINAGAR, MAY 12**  
A day after several areas in Kashmir witnessed a huge rush of people ahead of Eid festival, curfew-like restrictions were imposed in the Valley on Wednesday to contain an alarming surge in Covid cases in the Union Territory, officials said.

Security forces have sealed vital roads and erected barricades at many places in the city and other district headquarters to stop unnecessary movement of people.

Markets are shut and public transport is off the roads. Movement of only those engaged in essential services and in cases of emergencies is being allowed. The officials said restrictions were tightened on Wednesday in the wake of crowds gathering at several places in the city and many other areas of the Valley for Eid shopping.

Massive traffic jams were witnessed on Tuesday in sev-



A health worker collects a swab sample for Covid test at a vegetable and fruit market in Jammu on Wednesday. PTI

## J&K logs 4,509 fresh cases, 65 deaths

- J&K on Wednesday recorded 4,509 fresh Covid cases, taking the tally to 2,29,407, while 65 deaths in the past 24 hours pushed the toll to 2,912
- In Ladakh, 135 fresh cases appeared, taking the tally to 15,564, while 130 more people recovered.
- The active cases are 51,542 in J&K and 1,452 in Ladakh

eral parts of the city, including Lal Chowk, with people thronging the markets.

On April 29, the Jammu and Kashmir administration imposed a curfew in 11 districts in a bid to tackle the surge in cases, which was subsequently extended to all 20 districts the next day.

The curfew, which was supposed to end at 7 am on May

3, was extended in the twin capitals of Jammu and Srinagar, besides Budgam and Baramulla till May 6.

Meanwhile, J&K recorded 4,509 fresh Covid cases, taking the tally to 2,29,407, while 65 deaths in the past 24 hours pushed the toll 2,912 in the Union Territory, officials said.

The number of active cases has reached 51,542 in the UT,

while 1,74,953 patients have recovered so far.

In Ladakh, 135 fresh cases appeared, taking the tally to 15,564, while 130 more people recovered. The active cases in the Union Territory have now risen to 1,452, including 1,212 in Leh district and 240 in Kargil district. A total of 157 people have died due to Covid in Ladakh so far. — PTI

## Rushing...

Government Medical College, Patiala, has 98 ventilators. Even though it fixed 48 of these, anesthetists are not using them as they have little faith in the repaired machines. In the past, a similar complaint was raised by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. Over 1,000 ventilators provided to Rajasthan under the PM Cares Fund faced a technical snag.

(With inputs from Anirudh Gupta in Ferozepur)

## CRPF man hailed for rescuing accident victim

**JAMMU, MAY 12**

A CRPF man carried a critically injured accident victim on his back from a 50-metre gorge along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, officials said on Wednesday. His feat was lauded after Army’s Jammu-based White Knight Corps shared pictures on social media.

Naresh Kumar, a resident of Kathua district, was on his way to Srinagar from Jammu when his vehicle lost control and rolled down a deep gorge before landing in the Bichleri Nallah (stream) near Banihal in Ramban district on Tuesday, officials said.

CRPF spokesperson Shivnandan Singh said a quick reaction team of F/187 Battalion launched a rescue operation on noticing the accident near Wagan village and shifted the critically injured civilian to an Army unit.

“CRPF constable Virendra Singh rescued Naresh Kumar ‘Kathua, carrying him on his back from Bichleri river after the victim’s vehicle fell into a gorge near Wagan on NH-44 and helped him get timely first aid by an Army doctor, thus saving a precious life,” White Knight Corps, the official twitter account of 16 Corps, said. — PTI

## ArmyChief reviews security along LoC

**JAMMU, MAY 12**

Army chief General MM Naravane visited forward areas of the Jammu division and reviewed security situation along the LoC during his two-day visit to the region, a defence spokesperson said.

General Naravane arrived at the headquarters of the Nagrota-based 16-corps (White Knight Corps) on Tuesday and visited the forward areas including Aknoor, Rajouri and Naushera in the Jammu region, the spokesman said.

At the headquarters, Gen Naravane was briefed by Lt Gen Suchendra Kumar, GoC, White Knight Corps, regarding the security situation, operational preparedness, etc. — PTI

# Covid pandemic was preventable, says global panel



A worker prepares a bed at an oxygen centre in Gurugram on Wednesday. PTI

to be declared a PHEIC by the time of the first meeting of the emergency committee on January 22, 2020.”

The PHEIC was declared eight days later on January 30. The panel found weak links at every point in the chain of preparedness and response and said the preparation was inconsistent and underfunded and the alert system was too slow and too meek.

‘Global political leadership was absent...The escalation of the pandemic could have been prevented but the declaration of PHEIC did not lead to an urgent, coordinated, worldwide response. It was not until the number of Covid-19 cases increased dramatically that governments took seri-

ous action to prevent transmission. February was a lost month of opportunity to contain the outbreak,” said the committee the WHO convened last May to report on

the lessons learnt from Covid.

For the future, the committee called upon the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and WHO to convene a meeting of major vaccine-produc-

ing countries and manufacturers to agree to voluntary licensing and technology transfer for Covid vaccines.

“If actions do not occur within three months, a

waiver of intellectual property rights under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights should come into force immediately,” the panel said backing patent waivers for affordable vaccine access.

It also urged high income countries to provide to the 92 low and middle income countries at least one billion vaccine doses no later than September 1 and more than two billion doses by mid-2022 and called upon the G-7 to urgently commit to providing 60 per cent of the \$19 billion required for global efforts in 2021 for vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics, and strengthening of health systems.

**केन्द्रीय आयुर्वेद अनुसंधान संस्थान, पटियाला**  
CENTRAL AYURVEDA RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
Moti Bagh Road, Opposite Govt. Ayurvedic College, Patiala-147001  
E-mail: niapri-patiala@gov.in, Ph. 0175-2212393, 2228361

Advertisement No. 2/2021  
Limited Tender Notice

Central Ayurveda Research Institute, Moti Bagh Road, Patiala invites the Limited Tender for Vehicle for conducting the survey of Villages, health examination and distribution of medicines in ‘Reproductive and Child Health Care Project’ under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan. Last date for submission of tender is 28.05.2021 upto 3.00 PM. For terms & conditions and other details please visit the council’s website [www.ccras.nic.in](http://www.ccras.nic.in) and see ‘Tenders’.

Director (Institute)

**PUNJAB WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE NO. PWSSD/MOGA/2021/06 Dated: 12.05.2021**  
**[www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in)**

On behalf of the Chief Executive Officer, Punjab Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Chandigarh, Executive Engineer, Punjab Water Supply and Sewerage Division, Moga invites bids from eligible bidders for the works detailed below.

Sr. No.	Name of Work
1.	DNIT for De-silting of P.T. Sewer at various places by super sucker machine and CCTV camera including disposal of silt up to 5 km. at Kotkapura, Distt. Faridkot.

Last date and time for online submission of bid shall be : 03.06.2021, 4:30 p.m. For detailed terms and conditions refer to website [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in) Corrigendum will be published on department’s website only.

Sd/- **Executive Engineer,**  
**Pb. W/S & Sew. Division, Moga.**

DPR/Pb/4502

**HARYANA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(A Government of Haryana Undertaking)  
**Bays No 59-62, Sector 2, Panchkula.**  
**Phone: 0172-2567945**

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)**  
**Tender Enquiry No.: 177/Tend/COR/2020-21/3/4-A**

Online Tender of Medical consumables for a period of Six Months procurement of Logistics for Corona virus, Haryana of “Group C” and documents can be downloaded from 12-05-2021 onwards on e-procurement portal [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

**For Managing Director HMSCL, Panchkula**

PRDH/2222/11/54/2022/2918/31/4

**ਪੰਜਾਬ ਮੰਡੀ ਬੋਰਡ**  
**<http://eproc.punjab.gov.in>**  
**ਈ-ਟੈਂਡਰਿੰਗ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਨੰਬਰ: 13, ਮਿਤੀ: 11.05.2021**  
**Secure Online Submission of Tenders**

ਵਰਕ ਕੋਡ ਨੰ.	ਕੰਮ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ	ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ਨ ਲਾਗਤ ਬਿਆਨਾ ਰਕਮ ਟੈਂਡਰ ਵਾਰਮ ਫੀਸ	ਬਿੱਡ ਵਾਲਜ਼ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਆਖਰੀ ਮਿਤੀ ਤਕਨੀਕੀ ਬਿੱਡ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਣ ਦੀ ਮਿਤੀ
ਅਸਰਾਹਿ 042	ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰੀ ਹਲਕਾ ਰਾਜਸਾਮੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਲਿੰਕ ਸਲਾਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਉਸਾਰੀ ਕਰਨੀ (ਅੰਡਰ ਬੈਲੰਡਰੀ ਪੀ. ਸਕੀਮ), ਮਾਰਕੀਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ, ਰੋਗਾਵਾਂ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਣ: 6 ਮਹੀਨੇ	ਰੁ. 8963000/- ਰੁ. 179000/- ਰੁ. 5000/-	ਮਿਤੀ 25.05.2021, ਸ਼ਾਮ 04.00 ਵਜੇ ਮਿਤੀ 26.05.2021, ਸਵੇਰੇ 11.00 ਵਜੇ

**ਨੋਟ:-**

- ਕੋਰੀਡਮ ਕੋਵਲ ਵੈੱਬਸਾਈਟ ‘ਤੇ ਹੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ।
- ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੀ.ਸੀ. ਦੀ ਲਾਗਤ ਘੱਟ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ, ਇਹ ਟੈਂਡਰ ਕੋਵਲ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫਰਮਾਂ/ਸਥਾਵਾਂ/ਠੇਕੇਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਗੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਹਾਇਰ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਪਲਾਟ ਜਾਂ ਰੋਡ ਵਰਕ) ਅਧੀਨ ਯੋਗ Enlistment ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

**ਬਰਾਬਰ:-**

- ਜੀ.ਐਸ.ਟੀ. ਦੀ ਕਟੌਤੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਹਦਾਇਤਾਂ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।
- ਜੇਕਰ ਟੈਂਡਰ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਛੁੱਟੀ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਟੈਂਡਰ ਅਗਲੇ ਕੰਮ-ਕਾਜ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਖੋਲ੍ਹੇ ਜਾਣਗੇ।

DI-2632 **ਸਹੀ:- ਕਾਰਜਕਾਰੀ ਇੰਜੀਨੀਅਰ (ਸ), ਪੰਜਾਬ ਮੰਡੀ ਬੋਰਡ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।**

# GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA

## TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK/NOTICE/TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1.	PWD(B & R) CHANDIGARH	CONSTRUCTION OF HARYANA GOVT. HOUSES PLOT NO. 1501 TO 1512 (12 NOS.) 1 KANAL IN SECTOR 39-B, CHANDIGARH.	CLOSING DATE 31.05.2021	597.95 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2618279 pwd-eeed-chandigarh@hry.nic.in
2.	HEALTH DEPARTMENT HISAR	SUPPLY OF HOME ISOLATION KIT AND COVID MEDICINE AND CONSUMABLE	11.05.2021 17.05.2021	EMD 20000/-	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9034259320 dhs.cshsr@hry.nic.in
3.	PWD (B&R) PANCHKULA	RE-INVITING OF TENDER FOR THE WORK OF ROAD SAFETY FURNITURE & THERMO PLASTIC PAINT ON LINK ROAD UPPER BHOOD TO BHOJ RAJPURA WITH LINK ROAD TURON IN PANCHKULA DISTRICT. + 1 OTHER WORK	12.05.2021 31.05.2021	41.84 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2920477 pwd-eeep-panchkula@hry.nic.in
4.	IRRIGATION NARNAUL	PROVIDING CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR CARRYING OUT SURVEY, DESIGNING, WORKING DRAWINGS, DETAILED ESTIMATES WITH BOQ FOR THE WORK OF CONSTRUCTING OF CHECK DAM IN HILLY AREA OF VILLAGE- MUSNOTA IN NANGAL CHOUDHARY AREA.	CLOSING DATE 17.05.2021	3 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01282251214 xen-wsnt.irr@gov.in
5.	HEALTH DEPARTMENT HISAR	MEDICINES, DRUGS, & VARIOUS MEDICAL ITEMS	12.05.2021 17.05.2021	2.50 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0129-2415623 dhs.csftbd@hry.nic.in
6.	PANCHAYATI RAJ, PALWAL.	RE-TENDER FOR 2 NO. WORKS CONST. OF PHYTORID TECHNOLOGY BASED STP CAPACITY 75 KLD AT VILLAGE TAPPA & BILOCHPUR BLOCK HASANPUR DISTRICT PALWAL	13.05.2021 24.05.2021	69.04 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	7988410870 prexeeng.pwl@gmail.com
7.	PANCHAYATI RAJ, PALWAL.	COST. OF 14 NO. ANGANWARI CENTRES IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF DISTRICT PALWAL.	17.05.2021 31.05.2021	1.22 CRORE	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	7988410870 prexeeng.pwl@gmail.com
8.	CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT, HARYANA	COMPREHENSIVE INSURANCE OF STATE HELICOPTER, VT-HRY.	10.05.2021 31.05.2021	NA	<a href="http://www.haraviation.gov.in">www.haraviation.gov.in</a>	0172-2709386 CAVATION@HRY.NIC.IN
9.	IRRIGATION KURUKSHETRA	INSTALLATION OF 02 NOS. 10 CS. VT PUMP AND 01 NO. 05 CS. VT PUMP AT RD 52500/R OF SIRSA BRANCH TO PROTECT THE ABADI AND AGRICULTURE LAND OF VILLAGE BARTHAL, KHWAJA AHMEDPUR, SIDHPUR AND ANJANTHALI ETC. IN W.S. MECH. KURUKSHETRA.	12.05.2021 17.05.2021	49.67 LACS	<a href="http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in">www.etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01744-239164 xenwsdivnkr@gmail.com
10.	IRRIGATION ROHTAK	INTERNAL CLEARANCE OF JASSIA LINK DRAIN FROM RD 0 TO 61500+ 13 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 19.05.2021	28.15 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9896410404 xenwsdnrtk@gmail.com

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)**

PRDAH-11/2022/200/291211/31/4

# GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA

## TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/ CORP/AUTH	NAME OF WORK/NOTICE/TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD/CORP/AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, BARARA	CONSTRUCTION OF STREET WITH DRINN TYPE II FROM HO NIRAJ SAINI TO HO OMPARKASH SAINI IN WARD NO 03 MC BARARA + 10 OTHER WORKS	12.05.2021 24.05.2021	102.19 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01731-286600 secy.mcbarara@gmail.com
2	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, INDRI	PROVIDE AND FIXING OF RCC SLAB ABOVE DRAIN FROM DIWAN CHOWK TO ANAJ MANDI ROAD WARD NO 11 + 18 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 18.05.2021	2.14 LACS	<a href="http://etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9467726650 secymc.indri@gmail.com
3	DHBVN	INSURANCE OF MOVABLE STOCK INVENTORY ON BEHALF OF DHBVN	10.05.2021 31.05.2021	31349.54 LACS	<a href="http://www.dhbvn.org.in">www.dhbvn.org.in</a>	8607009109 dgmstock@dhbvn.org.in
4	DHBVN	SUPPLY OF MATERIAL ERECTION TESTING COMMISSIONING OF 2 NO 33 KV SUBSTATIONS SECTOR 7 HSIIDC BAWAL AND DHAWANA	11.05.2021 02.06.2021	10.15 CRORE	<a href="http://www.dhbvn.org.in">www.dhbvn.org.in</a>	0166223216 cepdc@dhbvn.org.in
5	HPGCL	WORK OF ARC OF HIRING OF COMPRESSOR MACHINE FOR TRANSFER OF EXCESS FLY ASH FROM ONE BULKDER TO ANOTHER EMPTY BULKER AT SILO AREA IN RGTPP, KHEDAR	26.04.2021 17.05.2021	3.26 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9355008412 xencmd1.rgtp@hpgcl.org.in
6	HPGCL	WORK OF ANNUAL CIVIL WORKS MAINTENANCE OF OUTSIDE AREA OF MULTI-STOREY RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AT RGTPP, HISAR	26.04.2021 20.05.2021	28.60 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9315164619 xencmd2.rgtp@hpgcl.org.in
7	DHBVN	SUPPLY OF MATERAIL & ERECTION FOR AUGMENTATION OF 20 NO. EXISTING 33 KV S/STNS. NAMELY DHANI KAHAN SINGH,	13.05.2021 04.06.2021	17 CRORE	<a href="http://www.dhbvn.org.in">www.dhbvn.org.in</a>	0166223216 cepdc@dhbvn.org.in
8	UHBVN	EXTENSION OF SWITCH HOUSE BUILDING AT 33 KV S/STN. KIRIMICH	CLOSING DATE 19.05.2021	7.06 LACS	<a href="http://www.uhbvn.org.in">www.uhbvn.org.in</a>	9356063248 xenciviluhbvnpanchkula@gmail.com
9	HVPNL	PAINTING OF UNGALVANIZED TOWERS OF 66KV PINJORE PANCHKULA SEC-32 LINE. (NIT NO. 15/2021-22/XEN/TS/PKL DATED 10.05.2021)	10.05.2021 20.05.2021	6.09 LACS	<a href="http://www.hvnpn.org.in">www.hvnpn.org.in</a>	01722583789 pro@hvnpn.org.in
10	HVPNL	REPAIRING OF CONTROL ROOM BUILDING, PROVIDING FLOOR TILES, TILE TERRACING AND REPLACEMENT OF OLD DAMAGED DOORS AND WINDOWS AT 132KV SUB-STATION MATANHAIL (NIT NO. 10/2021-22/XEN/TS/PLK DATED 10.05.2021)	10.05.2021 24.05.2021	6.84 LACS	<a href="http://www.hvnpn.org.in">www.hvnpn.org.in</a>	01722583789 pro@hvnpn.org.in
11	HVPNL	1. PROVIDING AND FIXING OF INTERLOCKING PAVER BLOCK IN PARKING SHED AT 220KV SUBSTATION, MADANPUR, PANCHKULA FY - 2020-21. 2. THE WORK OF REPAIRING OF FLOOR IN CONTROL ROOM BUILDING AT 220 KV S/STN., MADANPUR PANCHKULA FY 2020-21. (NIT NO. 16/2021-22/XEN/TS/PLK DATED 11.05.2021)	11.05.2021 18.05.2021	3.06 LACS	<a href="http://www.hvnpn.org.in">www.hvnpn.org.in</a>	01722583789 pro@hvnpn.org.in
12	HVPNL	WORK FOR PAINTING ON CONTROL ROOM BUILDING AT 132 KV SUB STN DABLAN 132 KV SUB STN DHAMTAN 132 KV SUB STN DHANORI AND 132 KV SUB STN GARHI FOR THE YEAR 2021-22 UNDER XEN TS DIVISION JIND. (NIT-05/TSJ/2021-22)	07.05.2021 17.05.2021	2.50 LACS	<a href="http://www.hvnpn.org.in">www.hvnpn.org.in</a>	01722583789 pro@hvnpn.org.in
13	HVPNL	RAISING OF HEIGHT OF 66KV D/C RAIWALI-RAIPUR RANI LINE AT TOWER LOCATION NO. 26 DUE TO LAPSE OF EXCESS EARTH NEAR TOWER FOUNDATION. (NIT NO. 17/2021-22/XEN/TS/PLK DATED 12.05.2021)	12.05.2021 24.05.2021	1.84 LACS	<a href="http://www.hvnpn.org.in">www.hvnpn.org.in</a>	01722583789 pro@hvnpn.org.in

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PRDH/13/2022/260/29111/31/4





## GLOBE TROT



**STIR AT PLAY:** Students perform a play, opposing corruption and the government's plan to hike taxes in Cali, Colombia. AP/PTI

**Napoleon's shirt worn in exile, his letter up on display**  
**WATERLOO (BELGIUM):** A shirt worn by Napoleon during his exile on the island of Saint Helena in the south Atlantic and a letter he wrote to improve his English have gone on display at a museum in Belgium ahead of an auction later this year in Britain. A silk scarf he wore around his head on the windswept British outpost is also on display. REUTERS

**Indian, PIO charged under Official Secrets Act in S'pore**  
**WELLINGTON:** A 22-year old Indian national, Damandeep Singh, and a Singaporean person of Indian origin (PIO), Kalayarasan Karuppayya (44), have been charged by a court here under the Official Secrets Act for unauthorised communication about an apartment inspection. Karuppayya is an estate executive with the Housing and Development Board. He allegedly leaked information on HDB's impending inspections of a flat at Kim Tian Road. PTI

## Deuba-led NC to stake claim in Nepal

**KATHMANDU, MAY 12** The main Opposition party, Nepali Congress (NC), has decided to stake a claim for the prime minister's post. It is engaged in hectic parleys with other parties to conclude a deal ahead of Thursday's deadline issued by the President to political parties to form a new government as the one headed by KP Sharma Oli lost a crucial trust vote.

### Political parties busy with number game

The decision to form a new government was taken after the office-bearers of the Nepali Congress (NC) met on Tuesday under the leadership of party president Sher Bahadur Deuba. On Tuesday, Deuba held a meeting with the Opposition leaders and discussed ways to form a new government under his leadership. The meeting was attended by CPN-Maoist Centre chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and Janata Samajwadi Party (JSP-N) second president Upendra Yadav. Prachanda indicated that his party would support Deuba. — PTI

# Israel kills Hamas commander

## Palestinians fire hundreds of rockets; over 56 killed in Gaza

**GAZA/JERUSALEM, MAY 12** Israel said it killed 16 members of the Hamas armed wing in Gaza in a barrage on Wednesday and Palestinian militants rained rockets into Israel as Washington said it would send an envoy to try to calm their most intense hostilities in years. At least 56 people have been killed in Gaza since violence escalated on Monday, according to the enclave's health ministry. Six people have been killed in Israel, medical officials said. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the brigade commander for Gaza City was among senior members of the Islamist militant group who had been killed. "This is just the beginning. We'll hit them like they've never dreamed possible," he said. Hamas confirmed the death of the commander and of "other leaders and holy warriors" in a statement. Its leader Ismail Haniyeh added: "The confrontation with the enemy is open-ended." Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz said Israel would continue with strike. — Reuters



A Palestinian man walks past the remains of a building destroyed in Israeli air strikes; and (below) demonstrators raise slogans during a procession in Gaza on Wednesday. REUTERS

### JUST THE BEGINNING, SAYS ISRAELI PM

- Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu said, "This is just the beginning. We'll hit them like they've never dreamed possible."
- US Secretary of State Antony Blinken says a senior aide would be sent to urge Israelis and Palestinians to seek calm.
- Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin supports Israel's move.



## Ahmadinejad in race for Iran presidency

**TEHRAN, MAY 12** Iran's former hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad registered on Wednesday to run again for the Islamic Republic's presidency, raising the possibility that the populist leader who rapidly advanced Tehran's nuclear programme to challenge the West could return to the country's top civilian post. Ahmadinejad's attempt to run again in 2017 disregarded the words of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who had warned the firebrand, Holocaust-questioning politician his standing for office would be a "polarised situation" that would be "harmful for the county." This time, however, Khamenei seemingly isn't directly challenging the candidacy of the 64-year-old former Tehran mayor, who joins a wide-open election to replace the relatively moderate President Hassan Rouhani. A council Khamenei oversees ultimately will determine if Ahmadinejad and other hopefuls can run in the June 18 poll. Ahmadinejad previously served two four-year terms from 2005 to 2013. — Agencies

# US deaths hit lowest level in 10 months

**WASHINGTON, MAY 12** Covid-19 deaths in the US have tumbled to an average of around 600 per day — the lowest level in 10 months — with the number of lives lost dropping to single digits in well over half the states and hitting zero on some days. Confirmed infections, meanwhile, have fallen to about 38,000 day on average, their lowest mark since mid-September. While that is still a cause for concern, they have plummeted 85 per cent



from a peak of more than a quarter-million cases per day

in early January. The last time deaths were this low was early July, nearly a year ago. Covid deaths in the U.S. topped out in mid-January at an average of more than 3,400 a day, just a month into the biggest vaccination drive in the nation's history. Kansas reported no new deaths from Friday through Monday. In Massachusetts, the Boston Herald put a huge zero on Wednesday's front page under the headline

"First time in nearly a year state has no new coronavirus deaths." Dr. Amesh Adalja, an infectious disease specialist at Johns Hopkins University, said that vaccinations have been crucial even as the nation struggles to reach herd immunity. "The primary objective is to deny this virus the ability to kill at the rate that it could, and that has been achieved," he said. "We have in in effect tamed the virus," he added. — Agencies

## Krishna Menon remembered

**LONDON, MAY 12** The 125th birth anniversary of VK Krishna Menon has been celebrated here, recalling India's ex-defence minister's contributions to the independence movement. The event was held virtually and was hosted by Nehru Centre London in association with the VK Krishna Menon Institute. People forget Menon's role in independence movement, said Dr Cyriac Maprayil, Director of the V K Krishna Menon Institute. — PTI

# China defends Quad warning to B'desh

**BEIJING, MAY 12** China on Wednesday accused the Quad of being an "exclusive clique" against Beijing as it defended its Bangladesh Ambassador's warning to Dhaka against joining the US-led alliance, saying the envoy had made the country's position "clear" on the issue. China's Ambassador in Dhaka Li Jiming China on Monday warned Bangladesh against joining the four-nation group comprising the

### Gifts 5 lakh doses of vaccine to Dhaka

Bangladesh has received 5,00,000 doses of China's Sinopharm vaccine as a gift to continue its vaccination drive, which was halted due to the shortage of AstraZeneca jabs.

US, Australia, Japan and India, saying that Dhaka's participation in the anti-Beijing "club" would result in "substantial damage" to bilateral relations.

The provocative remarks by the Ambassador was described as "very unfortunate" and "aggressive" by Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said, "We believe it is an exclusive clique against China and trying to rally countries around China to work against China. So I believe you understand our position very clearly." — PTI

# BUSINESS

USD \$	EURO €	POUND £	JPY ¥	YUAN 元	CAD C\$	AUD A\$	SGD S\$	HKD HK\$
₹73.42	₹88.98	₹103.69	₹0.67	₹11.40	₹60.77	₹57.30	₹55.25	₹9.45

**BSE**  
471.01  
48,690.80

**NSE**  
154.25  
14,696.50

**GOLD**  
₹45,720  
Mumbai (MCX)

**SILVER**  
₹71,500  
Mumbai (MCX)

# IIP enters positive territory after two mths, grows 22.4% in March

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12** Industrial production growth entered positive territory after a gap of two months with a record 22.4% rise in March this year, mainly due to the low-base effect and good show by manufacturing, mining and power sectors. The manufacturing sector — which constitutes 77.63% of the index of industrial production (IIP) — grew by 25.8% in March 2021, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Wednesday. The mining sector output too grew 6.1% in March, while power generation increased by 22.5%.



**INFLATION EASES TO 4.29% IN APRIL**

- Retail inflation slowed to 4.29% in April from 5.52% in March, mainly due to easing food prices, government data showed on Wednesday
- Inflation in the food basket was 2.02% in April, down from 4.87% in the preceding month

MANUFACTURING SECTOR GROWS BY 25.8%		
■ The manufacturing sector — which constitutes 77.63% of the index of industrial production (IIP) — grew by 25.8% in March 2021, as per the data released by the NSO today	■ The mining sector output too grew 6.1% in March, while power generation increased by 22.5%	■ Industrial production had plunged 18.7% in March last year following the Covid outbreak and remained in the negative zone till August 2020

tember. The IIP had grown by 4.5% in October. In November 2020, the factory output fell 1.6%, and it again entered the positive territory by growing 2.2% in December 2020. The IIP had recorded a contraction

of 0.9% in January and 3.4% in February this year. The government had imposed a lockdown to contain the spread of Covid infections on March 25, 2020. With the gradual relaxation of restrictions, there

has been a relative improvement in the economic activities by varying degrees and in data reporting, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation had said in a statement issued in November. — PTI

## Cadila arm to sell animal health biz for ₹2,921 crore

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12** Cadila Healthcare on Wednesday said its wholly-owned subsidiary Zydus Animal Health and Investment has entered into definitive pacts for sale of its animal healthcare established markets undertaking to Multiples Alternate Asset Management-led consortium for Rs 2,921 crore. The consortium, including Canada Pension Plan Investment Board and RARE Enterprises, has agreed to purchase the undertaking through an special purpose vehicle controlled by them, in the name of Zenex Animal Health India, Cadila Healthcare said in a statement. Animal Healthcare Established Markets Undertaking (Zydus AH) is focused on India and certain other countries, it added. Zydus AH employs around 700 people and has one manufacturing facility in Haridwar, it added. — PTI

# ₹18,100-crore PLI scheme to promote ACC battery mfg

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

### AIMS 50 GW STORAGE

- The proposal aims to achieve manufacturing of 50 GW of battery storage
- The policy aims to make manufacturers globally competitive, boost exports, achieve economies of scale and produce cutting-edge products
- ACCs can store electric energy either as electrochemical or as chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as and when required

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12** The government on Wednesday gave its nod to a scheme of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) worth Rs 18,100 crore for manufacturing of battery storage equipment with an aim to attract investment worth Rs 45,000 crore in the sector. The Scheme — 'National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage' — is expected to facilitate and achieve manufacturing capacity of 50 GW of ACC and 5 GWh of "Niche" ACC. ACCs are the new generation of advanced storage technologies that can store electric energy either as electrochemical or as chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as and when required. All the demand of the ACCs is currently being

met through imports in India, said Union Minister Prakash Javadekar, while briefing media after the meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage will reduce import dependence, he added. "The decision will pro-

mote Make in India initiative, open up possibilities for startups, create jobs, benefit various sectors such as railways, shipping and help India become self-reliant," the minister said. The consumer electronics, electric vehicles, advanced electricity grids, solar rooftop etc. which are major battery consuming sectors are expected to achieve robust growth in the coming years. It is expected the dominant battery technologies will control some of the world's largest growth sectors. Javadekar said, ACC battery storage manufacturers would be selected through a transparent bidding process. The manufacturing facility would have to be commissioned within two years and the incentive would be disbursed thereafter over a period of five years, he added.

## Passenger vehicle sales dip 10% in Apr

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12** Passenger vehicle wholesales in India declined by 10% to 2,61,633 units last month as compared to March this year, as Covid-led restrictions across various states impacted demand, auto industry body SIAM said on Wednesday. Passenger vehicle sales in March 2021 stood at 2,90,939 units. "As expected, the Covid wave has impacted the sales of vehicles in April. Sales of

**TWO-WHEELER DISPATCHES DOWN 33%**

- Passenger vehicle wholesales declined by 10% to 2,61,633 units in April as compared to 2,90,939 in March this year
- Vehicle sales across categories declined by 30% to 12,70,458 units last month as against 18,19,682 units in March

passenger vehicles fell by about 10.07%, compared to March 2021, due to various restrictions in states which

have been experiencing a surge in Covid cases," SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon said. — PTI

# 12,930 companies shut down operations in FY21

**VIJAY C ROY**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE  
**CHANDIGARH, MAY 12** Amid the Covid pandemic and lockdowns that significantly disrupted economic activities since March last year, as many as 1,107 companies closed their operations voluntarily in the financial year 2020-21 in the northern region. However, in 2019-20 fiscal, 3,380 companies had wound up their operations. According to data released

STATE/UT	FIRMS CLOSED		FIRMS FUNCTIONAL
	2019-20	2020-21	As on March 31, 2021
Haryana	2,246	436	43,965
Punjab	591	315	18,922
Himachal	191	192	4,177
Chandigarh	352	164	7,561

by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), the maximum number of companies that ceased to exist were in Haryana (436), followed by Punjab (315) and

Himachal Pradesh (192). In Chandigarh, 164 companies closed their operations. The companies shut down their businesses voluntarily and not due to any

penal action. While some of them have been delisted by the MCA for not filing annual returns and balance sheets, others wound up their operations voluntarily as either they incurred huge losses or were unable to commence operations within the stipulated time amid the pandemic. A majority of the delisted companies was from the services sector that includes hospitality, tour

and travel, immigration, security services and BPO, followed by manufacturing. The Companies Act provides for deletion of names of firms from the Registrar of Companies if they don't commence operations within a year of incorporation or those which have not filed their annual return or balance sheet for two consecutive years. Across the country, nearly 12,930 companies shut down operations in the last fiscal.



# Last qualifier cancelled, Saina, Srikanth Tokyo dream over

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12** London Olympics bronze-medal winner Saina Nehwal's hopes of making it to the Tokyo Olympics, already fading away in recent weeks, virtually ended after the last qualifying event, the Singapore Open, was cancelled today.

Tournament organisers Singapore Badminton Association (SBA) and the Badminton World Federation (BWF) jointly agreed to cancel the tournament, which was scheduled for June 1-6. This was the last tourna-

ment offering Race To Tokyo ranking points before the Olympics qualifying deadline ends on June 15.

"In the interests of all players, tournament personnel and the local community's health and safety, the event has been cancelled. BWF can confirm the tournament will not be rescheduled," BWF said in a statement. "All attempts were made by the organisers and BWF to provide a safe tournament environment for all participants. However, rising Covid-19



The top-16 players on the Race to Tokyo rankings would qualify automatically for the Olympics. Currently, Saina Nehwal is at the 22nd spot among the women. FILE

cases globally led to complex challenges in managing inbound travel."

**No point**  
The chances of Saina and leading male player

Kidambi Srikanth qualifying for the Olympics depended on the Singapore Open after the Malaysian Open (May 25 to 30) was postponed five days ago. After the postponement of the Malaysian Open, Badminton Association of India (BAI) had reached out to BWF, seeking clarity on the qualification scenario.

With Singapore suspending all flights from India, it was unlikely that the Indian players could be able to participate in the Singapore Open.

The top-16 players on the Race to Tokyo rankings would qualify automatically for the Olympics. Currently, Saina is at the 22nd spot among the women and Srikanth at the 20th place in the men's list.

The Indian badminton players who have already made the cut for the Olympics through the Race to Tokyo rankings include PV Sindhu (No. 7), B Sai Praneeth (No. 14) and the men's doubles team of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (No. 8). — TNS

## BRIEFLY

**PUNE**  
**Mary Kom, Lovlina get first dose of Covid-19 vaccine**  
Olympics-bound Indian women boxers MC Mary Kom and Lovlina Borgohain were given the first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine here today. Both Mary Kom and Lovlina are training at the Army Sports Institute here. Simranjit Kaur, also bound for Tokyo, will train here too but after completing the Covid-19 post-recovery isolation.

**MUMBAI**  
**Kohli and Anushka raise ₹11 crore for Covid relief**  
Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli and his actor wife Anushka Sharma have raised nearly Rs 11 crore in their fund-raising campaign to support Covid-19 relief work in India. The couple put in a share of Rs 2 crore and the funds raised through the campaign will be donated to Act Grants to aid Covid-19 relief.

**NEW DELHI**  
**Former India pacer RP Singh loses father to Covid-19**  
Former India cricketer RP Singh lost his father to Covid-19 today. The 35-year-old left-arm pacer from Uttar Pradesh informed about the death of his father Shiv Prasad Singh on Twitter. RP Singh represented India in 14 Tests, 58 ODIs and 10 T20Is before retiring in 2018.

**NYON**  
**UEFA appoints investigators for Super League rebels case**  
UEFA today appointed in-house investigators for disciplinary cases against European Super League organisers Real Madrid, Juventus and Barcelona.

**LIVERPOOL**  
**Netherlands' van Dijk out of European Championship**  
Netherlands defender Virgil van Dijk ruled himself out of the European Championship today, saying he wanted to complete his rehabilitation from a serious knee injury. AGENCIES

**TODAY ON TV**

**EPL**

**ASTON VILLA VS EVERTON 10:30PM**

**MAN UNITED VS LIVERPOOL**

**00:45AM (FRIDAY)**

**STAR SPORTS**

# Need to be up and running: Chopra

I've blanked out Covid news, am desperate to compete, says India's top javelin thrower

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

**NEW DELHI, MAY 12** Neeraj Chopra tried to stay positive during today's interaction with media. Even then, he could not hide his real self, showing that despite the impressive muscle mass on the outside, the javelin ace is human, after all.

Chopra, among the select few Indians who have an outside chance to make the podium in the Tokyo Olympics, said he has cut himself from the outside world to focus on this training as news of deaths and rising number of Covid-19 cases could have a lasting effect on his mindset.

"I have stopped reading newspapers or watching TV because all we get to see is that so many people are Corona-positive or so many people have died due to it. These things do affect us so I have stopped watching news," Chopra said today.

"Even if I talk to family I get to know that someone in the extended family has died. These things do affect us and so I am staying away from all of this to keep my



Neeraj Chopra's preparations for the Olympics have been hampered due to travel restrictions. FILE

focus on training," the Indian Army Subedar added.

The javelin ace said he and his teammates are trying hard to focus on training amidst the latest surge in the Covid-19 cases.

"I am not the only one who is getting affected. It is the same for everyone. Coronavirus has spread all

over our country and we have to stay positive and prepare well for the Games," the 23-year-old said. "It is very difficult (under the circumstances) but I am trying to keep focus and train well."

"We are also trying to help people around us, those who need help. As athletes

we have to continue our training and we are trying to stay focussed," he added.

**2-year break**  
Other than the gloom all across, Chopra is also worried about getting some international exposure before heading to Tokyo for the Olympics as he has not

competed in an international event for over two years now.

An elbow injury followed by surgery ended his season in 2019 and the Covid-19 outbreak washed away all the competitions in 2020, the only exception being the ACNE League meeting in Potchefstroom, South Africa, in January 2020. It was here that he qualified for the Tokyo Olympics with a throw of 87.86 metres.

Needless to say, he is itching to compete again.

"My training is going well but I feel the need to compete again. AFI, SAI, TOPS... All are trying hard to get us a few competitions. I am desperate because I have not competed internationally for over two years now," Chopra said.

"I need that exposure as due to injury I did not compete in 2019, and 2020 and now 2021 got wasted because of the pandemic. As an athlete, I feel competitions are as important as trainings. There are talks that we may go to Sweden. If we get a few competitions before the Olympics, then it will be of great help," he added.

# Dravid learnt from Aus, created good system in India: Chappell

**SYDNEY, MAY 12** Australian batting great Greg Chappell — also a former India coach — believes that India cricket has benefited immensely from Rahul Dravid learning from the Australian system and implementing the lessons in India.

Dravid, who heads the National Cricket Academy, has worked extensively with India's emerging cricketers at the India A and Under-19 level. Several players mentored by him have gone on to play for India.

Chappell said Dravid

picked Australian brains to create a good domestic structure which has served as a feeder for India's national team.

Chappell added India and England have overtaken Australia in recognising young talent and providing them a platform to succeed.

"India have got their act together and that's largely because Rahul Dravid has picked our brains, seen what we're doing and replicated it in India and with their much larger (population) base," Chappell told

Cricket Australia's website.

Chappell said that talented young Australian players might find their careers at crossroads because of the domestic structure.

"Historically, we've been one of the best at developing young players and keeping them in the system, but I think that's changed in the last couple of years," he said. "I'm seeing a bunch of young players with great potential who are in limbo. That's unacceptable. We cannot afford to lose one player."

The 72-year-old feels Aus-

tralia is no more the best at identifying talent.

"I think we've already lost our position as the best at identifying talent and bringing it though. I think England are doing it better than us now and India are doing it better than us," the former India coach said.

Earlier this year, Australia were defeated at home in the Border Gavaskar Trophy by a second-string Indian team which was plagued by injuries to its key players and also missing skipper Virat Kohli, who was on a

paternity leave.

Chappell feels the victory showcased India's highly effective player development system. "When you look at the Indian team that played in the Brisbane Test that had three or four fresh players, and everyone said, 'This is India's second XI' — (but) those guys had played for India A," said Chappell. "And in all sorts of different conditions, not just in India. So when they get picked, they're not tyros at all, they're quite hardened international cricketers." — TNS, agencies

# Barca miss another chance to go top

**MADRID, MAY 12** Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman stared in disbelief from the bench. Lionel Messi walked with his head down near midfield. Defender Clement Lenglet batted the ball away with his hands in frustration after being called for a foul. It was another frustrating night for Barcelona in the Spanish league.

Barcelona missed yet another chance to reach the top after blowing a two-goal lead in a 3-3 draw at Levante on Tuesday. Barcelona were up 2-0 and 3-2 but couldn't hold on, despite knowing that a win would have put the team provisionally ahead of Atletico Madrid. There will be two rounds remaining after the midweek matches. "We have to wait and see what happens in the other games, but this was a huge step backward for us," Koeman said. "I don't know how to explain what happened. We played without intensity in the second half. To concede three goals in 45 minutes, it's just



Lionel Messi and Frenkie de Jong look dejected after Levante's third goal. REUTERS

LA LIGA STANDINGS					
Team	P	W	D	L	Pt
A Madrid	35	23	8	4	77
Barcelona	36	23	7	6	76
R Madrid	35	22	9	4	75
Sevilla	35	22	5	8	71
Sociedad	35	15	11	9	56
*Read under Team, Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Points					

too much for this team."

**Messi's 29th**  
Messi, in what could be his last season with Barcelona, opened the scoring in the 25th minute with his league-leading 29th goal. — AP/PTI

# Serena suffers shockloss in 1,000th match

**ROME, MAY 12** Serena Williams, playing the 1,000th Tour-level match of her glittering career, suffered a shock 7-6(6) 7-5 defeat by Argentina's Nadia Podoroska in the Italian Open second round today.

Playing her first competitive match in nearly three months, the 23-time Grand Slam champion twice came back from a break down but struggled on her first serve.

It was the American's 149th defeat in her 1,000 career WTA matches.

World No. 2 Naomi Osaka also crashed out, losing 7-6(2) 6-2 to American Jessica Pegula. — Reuters

**Serena Williams reacts during her Round 2 match against Nadia Podoroska. REUTERS**

# City rule, making it 3 out of 4

**MANCHESTER, MAY 12** Locked out of their stadium for a year due to the pandemic, Manchester City fans couldn't resist gathering outside, waiting for the moment they'd be crowned champions for the third time in four seasons. It was a result not inside their stadium but a few miles across Manchester at their fiercest rivals and nearest Premier League challengers that confirmed the title was reclaimed. Manchester United losing 1-2 to Leicester left City with an unassailable 10-point lead with three games remaining.

United started the century dominating English football, but now City are the force with five titles in 10 seasons and the biggest spenders on transfers and salaries.

While United fans gather outside Old Trafford in protest, at City they come to celebrate the 13 years of investment from Abu Dhabi that has transformed the fortunes of a club that was playing in the third tier until 1999 and won two English titles in the previous century, in 1937 and 1968. Within

Man City underscore dominance as rivals Man United lose to Leicester



Manchester City fans celebrate winning the Premier League outside the Etihad Stadium in Manchester. REUTERS

minutes of the final whistle blowing at Old Trafford, a "Champions" banner was unfurled over the entrance to the City's Etihad Stadium. Soon, fans were setting off blue flares and parading small replica Premier League trophies. They will finally be allowed back into the stadium — up to 10,000 of them — to see City collect the real trophy after the final game of the season on May 23.

City could complete the treble by winning the Champions League final. — AP/PTI

**GREAT NUMBERS**  
Manchester City have conceded the fewest goals in the league — 26 — thanks to the resurgence in form of John Stones forming a centre back partnership with Ruben Dias, who joined ahead of the season for €68 million. They have also scored the most goals — 72 — even without playing with a recognised striker. Instead 16 players have scored, more than any other team, with a dozen goals provided by midfielder Ilkay Gundogan, who has been given more freedom to attack.

# Table tennis stalwart Chandrasekhar dies due to Covid-19

3-time national champ became a top coach after botched operation ended his career

**CHENNAI, MAY 12** Former India table tennis player V Chandrasekhar died at a private hospital here today due to Covid-related complications. Chandra, who was 64, is survived by his wife and a son. Chandra, a three-time national champion, had reached the semifinals at the Commonwealth Games in 1982 and was also a successful coach.

His playing career was cut short in 1984 following a botched knee surgery at a Chennai hospital, which led to him losing mobility, speech and vision. He fought back to recover and served the game as a coach. He also fought a legal battle against the hospital and got a verdict in his favour.

Chandra was a gold medalist in BA (Economics) and Law at the time of his career-ending surgery. Subsequently, sheer willpower helped Chandra return to 70-80% of normal mobility and he decided to focus on coaching.

Chandra last appeared in the Indore Nationals in 1983, losing to the eventual champion Kamlesh Mehta, whom he had beaten the previous year.

Mehta today remembered Chandra as a very amiable

**Former hockey umpire Sodhi dies**  
**NEW DELHI:** Former hockey umpire and technical official Ravinder Singh Sodhi died here today due to coronavirus-related complications. He was 66. Sodhi had officiated in several top domestic hockey events, and also at the 1988 Indira Gandhi International Hockey Gold Cup in Lucknow.

character. "He was friendly on and off the court. It was he who made topspin popular in India. He learned the skills at (Ichiro) Ogimura's academy in Japan," said Mehta.

"I spoke to him on the day he got admitted to the hospital (May 8). But who would have thought he would leave us all so soon," Mehta added.

Current Indian player G Sathiyan and former national champions S Raman and MS Mythili were among Chandra's trainees. "Completely shocked and indeed a very personal loss to me and my family... Playing with him for almost 14 years. From 1998 till 2012 I was with him. He let me play in my style. He was the one who always helped. He nurtured me," Sathiyan wrote on social media. — PTI

**Punjab Mandi Board**  
**email:- pmbxencjal@punjab.gov.in**  
**Notice Inviting Online Bids**  
**Tender Notice No. 18 (2021) Dt. 10.05.2021**  
Executive Engineer(C), Punjab Mandi Board, Jalandhar invites tenders from eligible bidders enlisted with Punjab Mandi Board for (1) Special Repair & Painting of Office Building Market Committee Mehatpur Distt Jalandhar (2) Havey Patch work on various Link Road under Market Committee Goraya, Nurmehal, Bilga, Shahkot & Lohian Khass. For detail Terms & Conditions of Notice inviting Bids, refer to Website: <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
Corrigendum if any will only be issued on website.  
**Sd/- Executive Engineer(C), Punjab Mandi Board, Jalandhar.**

DPR/Pb/4489

**PUNJAB WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE No. 7 DATED 11-05-2021**  
On behalf of the Chief Executive Officer, PWSSB, Chandigarh, Executive Engineer, PWSS Divn. No. 2, Patiala invites bids from eligible bidders for the works detailed below:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Cost of document (Rs.)	Period of completion	App. Cost
1.	O & M of Sewer lines in Samana for the year 2021-22 (01.07.2021 to 31.03.2022)	93,500/-	100/-	9 Months	Lump Sum
2.	O & M of Water Supply in Samana for the year 2021-22 (01.07.2021 to 31.03.2022)	95,500/-	100/-	9 Months	Lump Sum

Closing Date and Time : upto 01-06-2021 at 5:00 PM  
Date and Time of opening Technical Bid : 02-06-2021 at 03:00 PM  
For details logon to : <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
**Sd/- Executive Engineer, Punjab W/S & Sew. Divn. No. 2, Patiala. 0175-2200737**

DPR/Pb/4500

**PUNJAB WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE No. 8 DATED 11.05.2021**  
On behalf of the Chief Executive Officer, PWSSB, Chandigarh, Executive Engineer, PWSS Divn. 02, Patiala re-invites bids from eligible bidders for the works detailed below:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Cost of Document (Rs.)	Period of Completion	App. Cost
1.	Survey, Soil testing, design supply & construction, installation & Commissioning of STP of 3.00 MLD Capacity at Amlah O&M for a period of 60 months after complete stabilization period of 3 months or more and all other works contingent thereto.	7,00,000/-	1000 + 5000/-	12 Months	Lump Sum

Closing Date and Time : 24.05.2021 up to 05:00 P.M.  
Date and time of opening Technical Bid : 25.05.2021 at 03.00 P.M.  
For details logon to : <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
**Sd/- Executive Engineer, Punjab W/S & Sew. Divn. No. 2, Patiala. 0175-2200737**

DPR/Pb/4506

**DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATS DEPARTMENT, HARYANA**  
**No. 50822 Dated: 07.05.2021**  
**E-auction advertisement for selection of agency for organizing cattle fairs in Haryana**  
E-auction for selection of agency for organizing cattle fairs in Haryana shall be conducted on 28.05.2021. Interested bidders may view and download copy of e-auction notice and detailed terms & conditions from <http://haryanadp.gov.in>, <http://harpanchayats.gov.in> and <http://eauction.gov.in>.  
**Brief details are as under:**

Duration of Contract	Reserve auction price	Earnest Money Deposit
2 years (extendable up to 1 year) from the date of signing of contract	9 Crores (Annually)	45 Lakhs

**Sd/- Director General, Development & Panchayats Department, Haryana, Chandigarh.**

PRDH/1028/11/12/2022/2916/31/4



# Govt employees with medical degree can practise: Centre

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

Keeping in view a massive surge in Covid-19 infection in the country, the Centre has allowed its employees with recognised medical qualification to undertake practice and offer teleconsultation.

Issuing an order in this regard, the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) said such practice is to be undertaken “during spare time and on a purely charitable basis”.

Referring to a 57-year-old order of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, the order said the DoPT had been receiving “queries/requests from Central government servants for providing teleconsultation services during the current pandemic”.

“In view of the unprecedented rise in the numbers of Covid-19 cases and to utilise the in-house capabilities available in the government to contain the spread of the virus and to provide relief to the public, it has been decided that Central government employees holding recognised qualifications in any system of medicine require no permission from the HoDs concerned to undertake practice/provide teleconsultation,” the DoPT order read.



## CAN PROVIDE TELECONSULTATION

“In view of the rise in the numbers of Covid cases, it has been decided that Central government employees holding recognised qualifications in any system of medicine require no permission from the HoDs concerned to undertake practice/provide teleconsultation. DoPT order

nised qualifications in any system of medicine require no permission from the Head of Departments (HoDs) concerned to undertake practice/provide teleconsultation,” the DoPT order read.

# Govt nod to purchase 1.5L units of DRDO-developed Oxycare

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

The government on Wednesday approved the procurement of 1.5 lakh units of Oxycare system, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), for Rs 322.5 crore from the PM Cares Fund to help in the treatment of Covid-19 patients.

Oxycare delivers supplemental oxygen based on the O2 levels in patient and prevents the person from sinking into a state of hypoxia which can be fatal.

This system was developed by the Defence Bio-Engineering & Electro Medical Laboratory, Bengaluru, for soldiers posted at extreme high-altitude areas. The system is indigenously developed for operation in field conditions and is robust. It can be effectively used to treat Covid-19 patients.

Two variants of the system have been configured. The basic version consists of a 10-litre oxygen cylinder, a pressure regulator-cum-flow controller, a humidifier and a nasal cannula. The oxygen flow is regulated manually based on the O2 readings of



INS Tarkash arrives in Mumbai carrying 2 cryogenic tankers with 20 MT liquid medical O2 each. PTI

## ABOUT THE DEVICE

The Oxycare system optimises the consumption of oxygen and effectively increases the endurance of portable oxygen cylinder

## WARSHIP ARRIVES WITH O2

Navy warship, INS Tarkash, carrying two liquid medical oxygen filled cryogenic containers and 230 Oxygen cylinders arrived at Mumbai port on Wednesday

person. In the second configuration, the oxygen cylinder is equipped with electronic controls which automatically regulate the oxygen flow through a low-pressure regulator.

The device optimises the consumption of oxygen and effectively increases the endurance of portable oxygen cylinder. The value for initiating flow of oxygen

from the system can be adjusted by the health staff. The system also provides suitable audio warning for various failure scenarios including low values. A mask is integrated with the systems for efficient use.

These systems can be used at homes, quarantine centres, Covid care centres and hospitals. The DRDO has trans-

ferred the technology to multiple industries in India which will be producing the Oxycare systems, the Ministry of Defence said.

Meanwhile, Indian Navy warship, INS Tarkash, carrying two Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) filled cryogenic containers and 230 Oxygen cylinders arrived at Mumbai port today. — TNS/PTI

## BRIEFLY

### Delhi airport T2 to be shut from May 17 midnight

**New Delhi:** The second wave of Covid-19 has taken a huge toll on the domestic aviation sector as the operator of the IGI Airport here DIAL has informed that it has decided to shut flight operations from Terminal-2 (T2) from intervening night of May 17-18 with significant reduction in the passenger traffic. Officials in the DIAL said from May 17 midnight all flights would be handled at the T3 terminal only, which used to be operated from T2. Currently, the Delhi airport was handling around 325 flights per day, they said, while adding that before the pandemic, it used to handle around 1,500 flights daily. TNS

### US Customs imposes ban on cow dung cakes

**New Delhi:** The US Customs made an announcement for Indian passengers barring the transportation of cow dung in any shape or form. The announcement was made after the leftover baggage of an Indian passenger was found to be containing cow dung cakes which were then destroyed by the US Customs. US agents found two cow dung patties in a suitcase left behind after an Air India flight in April. TNS

### ASI sites, museums to remain closed till May 31

**Kolkata:** The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) on Wednesday said all Centrally protected monuments, sites and museums under ASI shall continue to remain closed till May 31 or until further orders. This has been decided in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, ASI said in an order on Wednesday. TNS

## Sikh bodies object to DSGMC accepting ₹2 cr from Bachchan

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

Two separate Sikh political parties in New Delhi have objected to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) accepting a donation of Rs 2 crore from actor Amitabh Bachchan for the Covid facility created at Rakab Ganj Sahib Gurdwara.

The Shiromani Akali Dal, Delhi, headed by Paramjit Singh Sarna, and the Jag Aasra Guru Ott party led by Manjit Singh GK have, in separate statements,

accused Bachchan of being involved in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and said accepting money from him was wrong. Sarna said, “Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh should sack the DSGMC chief MS Sirsa.”

Manjit Singh GK not only objected to the DSGMC taking Rs 2 crore from Bachchan, but also said, “If my party is voted to power in the DSGMC polls, I would repay the Rs 2 crore taken from Bachchan.” — TNS

## PM, Shah laud nursing staff

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised nursing staff on the International Nurses Day on Wednesday, saying their sense of duty, compassion and commitment towards a healthy India is exemplary.

International Nurses Day is observed to mark the birth anniversary of founder of modern nursing Florence Nightingale. In a tweet, Modi said, “International Nurses Day is a day to express gratitude to the hardworking nursing staff, who is at the forefront of fighting Covid-19. Their

## FRONTLINE WARRIORS

“International Nurses Day is a day to express gratitude to the hardworking nursing staff, who is at the forefront of fighting Covid-19.

Narendra Modi, PM

sense of duty, compassion and commitment towards a healthy India is exemplary.”

Home minister Amit Shah lauded nursing professionals on the International Nurses Day on Wednesday, saying

they are working relentlessly to serve mankind.

“I express my sincere gratitude towards all the nurses, the saviours of humanity on this #InternationalNursesDay.” “Being the frontline warriors, our nurses are working relentlessly to serve mankind. We salute our nursing staff for their selfless care, devotion and commitment,” Shah said on his official Twitter account.

International Nurses Day is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of founder of modern nursing Florence Nightingale. — PTI

## WHO team visits ITBP's Covid centre; stress counsellors deployed

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

A team of the World Health Organisation (WHO), India, has visited the ITBP-run 500-bed Sardar Patel Covid Care Centre (SPCCC), as the paramilitary has deputed stress counsellors for patients recovering with oxygen support.

Officials in the ITBP said on their visit to the centre that the WHO team members led by Dr Vishesh praised the efforts being made at the SPCCC by doctors, paramedic and stress counsellors of the force.

“The WHO team also interacted with the healthcare and frontline workers at the centre and witnessed the entire operation of the facility, including treatment protocols, patients’ case sheet and administrative setup,” said a senior officer deputed there, while adding that the visiting experts were briefed by Dr Prashant Mishra, the Chief Medical Officer of the ITBP.

At present, there are more than 350 patients admitted to the centre who are being treated on “uninterrupted” oxygen support. A team of at least 30 stress counsellors has been deployed to soothe the frayed nerves of the inmates and their attendants, the officials said.

Donning white PPE or per-

## TRAINED AT NIMHANS

“The ITBP is probably the only force that has stress counsellors in its ranks. They have been trained at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru. ITBP officer

sonal protection suits with “stress counsellors” scribbled on them these professionals take rounds of the facility and interact with the patients in the morning hours.

“The ITBP is probably the only force that has stress counsellors in its ranks. They have been trained at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru,” a senior officer of the border guarding force said.

During regular times, the stress counsellors interact with the troops but now they have been deputed at the SPCCC to help in reducing the anxiety of patients and their attendants, he added.

“Some old or weak patients have been allowed to have attendants at the centre. The counsellors talk to them about everything” the officer said.



ITBP personnel and health workers at the Sardar Patel Covid centre. PTI FILE

## China, India spar over hike in prices of medical supplies

NEW DELHI, MAY 12

Beijing and New Delhi are now sparring over the hike in prices of medical devices as well as cargo flight rates as Indian entrepreneurs scramble to get urgently needed supplies from China.

India’s envoy in Hong Kong Priyanka Chauhan has said price instability of products in China and transport disruptions had affected India’s attempt to deal with the second Covid wave.

“Our expectation is that the supply chain should remain open and product prices should remain stable,” she said in an interview.

Taking Beijing’s side, state-owned media house Global Times said Chinese oxygen

## Reports say demand from India has led to doubling of prices

concentrator suppliers are “upset and saddened by price-gouging of anti-virus devices such as theirs” in the Indian market.

“Many Chinese producers have exported oxygen making items to India at below-market prices by working extra shifts for timely delivery, even during the recent May Day holiday, to ensure the much-needed goods are delivered to those who badly need them,” complained the Global Times.

Government-to-govern-

ment ties between India and China have been frosty. During a conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last month, S Jaishankar walked around a Chinese offer to offer aid. Instead, he wanted Beijing to address the supply disruptions for commercially sourced oxygen concentrators and other medical supplies from China.

Reports say the demand from India has led to the doubling of prices as well as high cargo rates. “Even if there is a little bit of supply demand pressure, there has to be some stability and predictability to product prices. And there has to be a sense of governmental level support and efforts,” said Chauhan. — TNS

## Mamata offers land to vaccine manufacturers

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, MAY 12

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday proposed making available land and other support in the state “for any manufacturing/franchisee operation for authentic Covid vaccine”.

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister requested the Prime Minister to consider the proposition.

Pointing out that production of Covid-19 vaccine in the country was extremely “inadequate and insignificant” Banerjee urged Modi to import vaccines from foreign manufacturers.

## Bengal Governor to visit Assam camps to meet BJP evacuees

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, MAY 12

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar will be visiting Assam to meet BJP supporters from West Bengal who fled to the neighbouring state fearing attack by alleged workers of the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC).

“Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar will be visiting Ranpagli and Srirampur camps in Assam where due to post-poll retributive violence some people from WB had taken refuge for safety. The Governor will be reaching Ranpagli by BSF helicopter,” stated a tweet posted from the official twitter han-



## Dhankhar will go to Assam tomorrow

dle of Dhankhar.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier tweeted about “300 to 400 BJP karyakartas crossing

over to Dhubri in Assam with their families after confronted with brazen persecution & violence”. “We’re giving shelter & food. Didi must stop this ugly dance of demonocracy,” Sarma, who was then health minister of the outgoing Assam Government, wrote in the tweet.

The Governor will be going to Assam on Friday from Cooch Behar in West Bengal. In Cooch Behar he would visit Mathabhanga, Sitalkuchi, Sikai and Din-hata and meet people affected by post-poll violence.

Dhankhar’s programme in Cooch Behar includes an interaction with the media at the Circuit House there.

## IS global syndicate with affiliated groups: India

UNITED NATIONS, MAY 12

India has told the UN Security Council that the Islamic State is not just another regional terrorist outfit but a global syndicate with affiliated groups across the world, including in the country’s neighbourhood.

Deputy Permanent Representative — Political Coordinator R Ravindra said on Monday that the only accountability for acts of ter-

ror and strong measures against states that support terrorism can strengthen the credibility of the global fight against the scourge.

“The ISIL has carried out inhuman atrocities against the people of Iraq. Victims of ISIL’s horrific crimes also included 39 Indian nationals,” he said at the Security Council briefing on Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh/ISIL. — PTI

## Over 3,700 acres of shamlat land sold in Mohali villages

FROM PAGE 1

he doesn’t officially own any land. In Seonkh village, the accused persons, including Sham Lal, in one case played fraud with the government over the distribution of 700 acres of shamlat land among farmers on the orders of the Punjab and Haryana High Court. They allegedly gave away more than 100 acres to fake persons and later sold it off. These influential persons from across the state possibly have strong connections at the top level of the state government, said sources.

“The scam has exposed unscrupulous revenue officials, property dealers along with big fish involved in manipulating revenue records to make huge profits,” said DGP, Vigilance, BK Uppal.

Summons are being issued to owners in both villages, and the government is likely to get the land vacated, say officials.

Vigilance DSP Iqbal Singh, who has been investigating the matter for almost two years, said records since the 1990s had been scrutinised. It was found that the accused, especially property dealer Sham Lal, started transferring shamlat land in fake as well as real names. Later on, the land was sold multiple times. His driver Hans Raj was one of the sellers.

The DSP said Sham Lal had two bank accounts in the driver’s name. The buyer deposited money in the driver’s account. Sham Lal withdrew it through signed blank cheques obtained from the driver. Records showed the driver sold 103 acres.

“We have summoned the present owners. It is suspected some of the property owners may be fake or properties could be benami,” said the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP).

In connivance with revenue officials, the original documents under which transfer of land was executed were destroyed, said the officials.

## Court seeks ground...

FROM PAGE 1

Health,” the Bench ordered. Haryana A-G Baldev Raj Mahajan submitted that senior officer had been deputed in every district to monitor the situation in the villages. “This court, however, needs a detailed report on the work done at the ground level... by an officer not below the rank of Additional Chief Secretary,

Health,” the Bench said.

Speaking for the Bench, Justice Gupta said nodal agencies in all districts could monitor ambulance facilities provided by private operators. Additional Solicitor-General of India Satya Pal Jain submitted that pursuant to the HC orders, the Centre had increased oxygen supply to Punjab from 227 MT to 247 MT and to Haryana from 267 MT to 307 MT.

## 52 more bodies...

FROM PAGE 1

senior district official said.

Meanwhile, in a directive to the authorities concerned in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the NMCG has asked them to immediately check the dumping of bodies into the Ganga or its tributaries.

“All unidentified

bodies/unclaimed corpses of suspected Covid victims should be disposed of properly in accordance with the Covid-safety protocol,” the NMCG DG said. “Take necessary action to address the issue at the earliest and submit an action taken report to the NMCG in 14 days,” the DG said.

## Cybercrooks...

FROM PAGE 1

to be medical equipment dealers/health workers. ASP (Cyber Crime) Narvir Singh Rathore said the “thugs” sought payment through UPI. The cyber crime branch has asked people not to make any donations without proper verification, do not open camera in case of video call from an unknown number and take police help in case of threat or blackmail.

## 12 Oppn...

FROM PAGE 1

apocalyptic human tragedy,” they said. The leaders urged the PM to procure vaccines from all available sources; begin a free, mass vaccination drive; spend budgetary allocation of Rs 35,000 crore on vaccines and suspend Central Vista construction and use the money for oxygen and vaccines.