



Eight killed, four hurt as fire engulfs 'candle' factory in Ghaziabad  
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PM's visit has boosted the morale of armed forces, says ITBP chief  
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Bottas finishes on top in season-opening Austrian Grand Prix  
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Hip-hop star Kanye West says he will run for President  
 page 12

## NEARBY



Delhi reports 2,244 fresh COVID-19 cases

NEW DELHI

The national capital reported 2,244 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 99,444, said a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Sunday. Also, 63 deaths were reported, pushing the toll to 3,067.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Two slain militants test positive, say J&K police

Srinagar

The J&K police on Sunday said that two militants killed in the Kulgam encounter on Saturday were found to be infected with COVID-19 – the first such case since the police began taking samples from slain militants.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

Central Vista project: DUAC member quits

NEW DELHI

The Centre's proposal to construct a new Parliament building was approved by the Delhi Urban Art Commission last week. The same day a member of the panel put in her papers on "personal grounds", said officials.

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EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 11

## China doubles down on claims on eastern Bhutan boundary

After Thimpu's demarche, Beijing includes 'eastern sectors' to boundary dispute

SUHASINI HAIDAR

NEW DELHI

Days after Bhutan sent China a demarche protesting against Chinese claims to the Sakteng wildlife sanctuary in eastern Bhutan, Beijing has doubled down, including Bhutan's "eastern sectors" to the boundary dispute between the two countries for the first time.

"The boundary between China and Bhutan has never been delimited. There have been disputes over the eastern, central and western sectors for a long time," said the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a statement to the media in Beijing. The MFA was responding to questions about China's attempt last month to stop funding for the Sakteng sanctuary from the UN Development Program's Global Environment Facility (GEF), on the grounds that it was "disputed" territory.

According to written records, there has been no mention of eastern Bhutan, or Trashigang Dzongkhag (district), where Sakteng is based, that borders Arunachal Pradesh, in 24 previous

### Dividing line

A brief overview of the boundary dispute between China and Bhutan

- Bhutan and China have no formal diplomatic relations but have held 24 rounds of boundary talks between 1984 and 2016
- Talks concentrated on north and west Bhutan regions
- Eastern Bhutan not part of the talks so far, say officials
- Sakteng sanctuary is situated close to the border with Arunachal Pradesh
- In June 2020, China attempted to stop UNDP-GEF funding for Sakteng by claiming it was disputed, but was overruled



rounds of boundary negotiations held between the two countries, between 1984 and 2016. So far, the talks have been about three specific areas, including Jakarlung and Pasamlung in the north, and the Chumbi Valley, where Doklam is situated, in west Bhutan.

The negotiations have not been held since the Doklam stand-off between Indian and Chinese troops in 2017. In July 2018, Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Kong Xuyan visited Bhutan and met with the Bhutanese King, Prime Minister and other of-

ficials, but the 25th round of talks has not yet taken place. Sources said the talks could not be held in 2019 due to scheduling difficulties, and the coronavirus pandemic has delayed them further this year.

The Bhutanese government and its Embassy in Delhi declined to comment on the issue.

Bhutan has always maintained a discreet silence on its boundary negotiations with China, and it does not have any formal diplomatic relations with Beijing. The Ministry of External Affairs

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

too declined to comment.

*The Hindu* has learnt that Bhutan had issued a demarche to the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi last month, protesting against the Chinese statement at the Global Environmental Facility meeting that decides on global grants for various projects. The Sakteng sanctuary has in the past, too, received such grants, including in 2018-2019 for a project on preventing soil erosion, without any objection from China.

## U.P. criminal's aide caught, says police gave them info

Agnihotri says his boss got a tip-off over phone about raid

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

A key aide of Vikas Dubey, the main accused in the killing of eight policemen in Kanpur last week, said the wanted criminal had received information about the police raid through a phone call from the local police station.

Daya Shankar Agnihotri was arrested by the police after an alleged encounter in Kalyanpur area of Kanpur early on Sunday, the police said.



On the trail: Policemen stationed near the residence of Vikas Dubey in Kanpur on Sunday. ▪ PTI

then made phone calls to his other associates who reached his house with weapons, said Agnihotri. Though he claimed he did not remember how many people attacked the police team, Agnihotri said there were between 25 and 30 men.

Agnihotri

was shot in the leg during the encounter, was among the men who ambushed the police team on the intervening night of June 2 and 3, the police said. A bounty of ₹1 lakh has been announced for Dubey and ₹25,000 each for the 18 other identified accused persons who are on the run. Two accused, relatives of Dubey, were killed in an alleged encounter hours after the incident.

Talking to media after his arrest, Agnihotri said Dubey had received information about the incoming police team through a call from the local police station. Dubey

pur police station was under the scanner.

Six illegal country-made pistols, 15 bombs, 25 cartridges and bomb-making material were recovered from Dubey's house during a search, said the police.

Kanpur Rural SP B.K. Srivastava said as per the cache

of ammunition found in his residence, Dubey operated in the "mode of a Naxal," and added that he had managed to get several weapon licences issued in the name of his associates.

Mr. Agarwal said Agnihotri was Dubey's "right-hand man" who had been living with him for the past 25 years.

## Four Maoists killed in Odisha's Kandhamal

+ Two women among the deceased

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Bhubaneswar

The Odisha police scored a major success in their anti-Naxal operations when four CPI (Maoist) cadres were gunned down in Kandhamal district on Sunday.

The exchange of fire continued for hours before the Maoists fled the spot with their injured cadres. Among the four deceased, who belonged to Bansadhar-Ghumusura-Nagabali (BGN), two were women cadres.

The police party recovered six sophisticated weapons from the spot along with improvised explosive devices.

Among those seized include three self-loading rifles, one INSAS rifle and several rounds of magazines.

taliated in self defence. There were four casualties on Maoist side. Some of them were injured. Combining operations were going on in the area," said Director-General of Police Abhay.

The exchange of fire continued for hours before the Maoists fled the spot with their injured cadres. Among the four deceased, who belonged to Bansadhar-Ghumusura-Nagabali (BGN), two were women cadres.

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## Nature's fury



Caught in a mudslide: Rescue workers searching for missing people following a landslip at Banglagudde near Mangaluru, Karnataka, on Sunday. Bodies of two children were recovered later. ▪ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT (REPORT ON PAGE 8)

## Former Cong. MLA dies of COVID in Mandoli jail

Second inmate to succumb to infection +

SAURABH TRIVEDI

NEW DELHI

A former Congress MLA serving a 10-year jail term in an anti-Sikh riots case died due to COVID-19 at a hospital here, the second inmate of Mandoli prison to have succumbed to the infection, officials said on Sunday.

Mahender Yadav, 70, was lodged in jail since December 31, 2018. His son and Delhi Congress leader Raghuvendra Yadav alleged that the jail authorities did not take care of his father and did not inform the family about his admission to hospital.

Director General (Prisons) Sandeep Goel said that Yadav complained of uneasiness and heart-related issues on June 26. He was taken to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, from where he was referred to Lok Nayak Hospital

the same day. Later, on his family's request, he was shifted under police guard to a private hospital in Dwarka on June 30.

"We received information that Mahender Yadav expired in Akash hospital on July 4," said Mr. Goel.

Yadav was lodged in jail since December 31, 2018. His son and Delhi Congress leader Raghuvendra Yadav alleged that the jail authorities did not take care of his father and did not inform the family about his admission to hospital.

The jail authorities, however, said they had informed Yadav's family over the phone on June 26 evening, when he was admitted to Lok Nayak Hospital.

## Vaccine trials take 6 to 9 months: WHO Chief Scientist

Soumya Swaminathan says candidate must meet efficacy and safety standards

R. PRASAD

CHENNAI

Days after the Indian Council of Medical Research issued a letter calling for fast-tracking the trial process of Bharat Biotech's COVID-19 vaccine, Chief Scientist at the World Health Organisation Soumya Swaminathan said a vaccine trial usually takes at least six months to complete.



Soumya Swaminathan

"A realistic (but very optimistic) timeline from the start of Phase-1 to the completion of Phase-3 [trials] could be about six to nine months (if all goes exactly according to plan)," Dr. Swaminathan told *The Hindu*, responding to questions via email.

On the specific question of whether Phase-3 trials can

efficacy and safety on a sizeable number of participants. The WHO has published target product profiles for a COVID vaccine [and] immunogenicity data alone would be insufficient for a vaccine use policy. It is possible to have protocols which flow seamlessly from Phase-2 to Phase-3 based on interim analysis of data."

After scientists and experts raised serious concerns over the ICMR's com-

munication, the nodal agency issued a clarification saying the letter was meant only to "cut unnecessary red tape" and "speed up recruitment of participants". Experts globally have been saying it would take at least 12 to 18 months to launch a vaccine for COVID-19.

Bharat Biotech has got an approval to conduct only the Phase-1 and Phase-2 trials.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Students in limbo as UGC yet to decide on final year exams

7 States announce cancellation; others waiting for orders

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

NEW DELHI

Eleven days after the Centre asked the University Grants Commission (UGC) to review its guidelines on final year university examinations, there is still no clarity for many anxious students across the country.

At least seven States have cancelled their college and university examinations – Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal – without waiting for the UGC's fresh guidelines. However, some private universities will continue to conduct online examinations in these States.

### Gujarat cites MHRD

Gujarat Education Minister Bhupendrasinh Chudasama told mediapersons that the Union Human Resource Development Ministry had sent a communication to all States asking them to postpone all exams till further notice, and the State has

nel to recommend a decision.

For Central universities, the UGC decision is still awaited, with Delhi University students scheduled to begin online open book examinations in a week's time, despite multiple difficulties with mock tests.

With COVID-19 cases increasing at the rate of more than 22,000 per day, some students have stepped up a campaign – through letters, social media, and court cases – to cancel examinations and grant degrees on the basis of their performance in internal assessments and previous semester examinations.

The hashtag #NoMoreWaitUGC was trending on Sunday with almost 40,000 tweets. "Students, parents & teachers are not ready to risk lives during COVID-19," tweeted an Andhra Pradesh student's group, using hashtag #StudentsLives Matter.

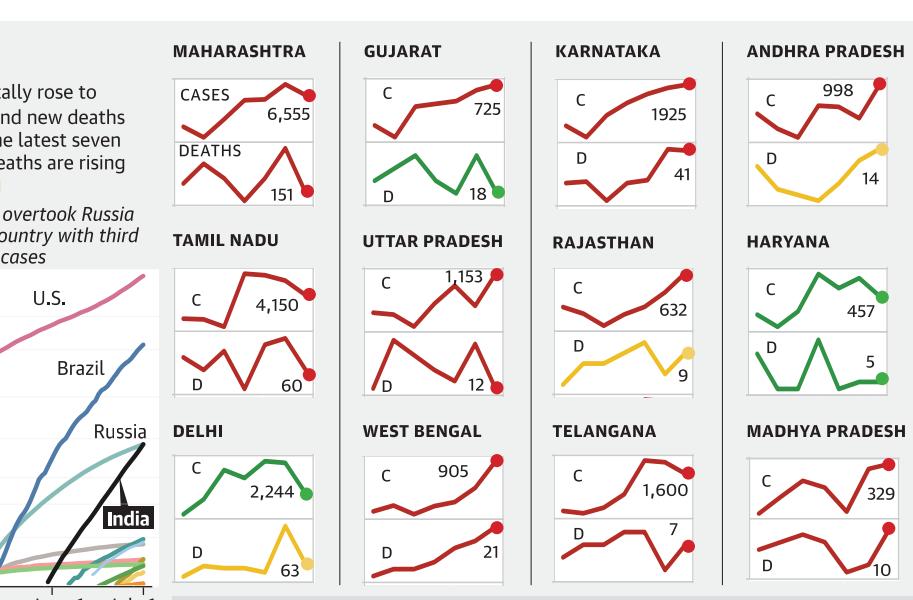
done so. The HRD Ministry did not respond to requests for confirmation on this.

Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister and Higher Education Minister C.N. Ashwathnarayan said the State is waiting for instructions from the HRD Ministry and the UGC.

"After we receive some instructions from them, the state government will make a decision," he told *The Hindu*.

Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, has set up its own pa-

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8



M ND-NDE

NIKHIL M BABU  
HEMAMI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

**A**fter her husband died in 2012, Rita Devi, 36, went to her village in Chapra, Bihar. With opportunities to eke out a living scarce, in 2014 she boarded a train to Delhi with her four children to seek employment as a domestic worker. By March 2020 Ms. Devi was working part-time in five homes, but when the novel coronavirus hit the country and a nationwide lockdown was announced, she suddenly became jobless.

"I came here to earn as there was no work in the village. I never foresaw a situation like this when I left my village," said Ms. Devi, her elder daughter looking on.

The family lives in a one-room house at Devli in south Delhi and has not been able to pay the rent for the past three months. Ms. Devi has borrowed ₹10,000 from a neighbour to tide over the lockdown downturn. "The government should help us," she said.

Ms. Devi's is not a lone case. Many of the dozen-odd domestic workers *The Hindu* interviewed said they have lost their employment due to the virus outbreak and are finding it hard to make ends meet despite borrowing money.

The lack of social security for domestic workers in Delhi has made the blow harder on them. Though States such as Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have welfare boards for domestic workers and many others have unorganised workers' welfare boards, Delhi does not have either. The national capital has also not fixed minimum wages for domestic workers as done by other States such as Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, among others, according to officials.

"Compared to other States, Delhi is worse in terms of laws for welfare of domestic workers. There is a lack of will on the part of the government," said Christian Mary, national coordinator of National Domestic Workers' Movement, which has a presence in more than 16 States, including Delhi. "About 80%-90% domestic workers in Delhi and Mumbai have lost their jobs," she said.

A national policy for domestic workers, which can be a safety net, is still in its draft state



**Domestic workers struggle to make ends meet as employers choose to keep them away even during the 'unlock' phase. The lack of government welfare schemes or one-time monetary assistance has only compounded their woes**

and a Central government Act for welfare of unorganised sector workers is implemented more in the breach across the country, according to experts.

After the lockdown, the Delhi government announced ₹5,000 for registered construction workers and later extended it to drivers of licensed mini and rural public transport. But no such help was provided to domestic workers. A Delhi government spokesperson did not respond to multiple calls and messages seeking comment on their exclusion.

#### Plight of workers

Ms. Devi said that a week ago she finally found some work – of cleaning the outdoor areas of two buildings, but the earnings are less.

"Luckily, my landlord is not pressuring me for rent. But I have to pay him for the pending three months sooner or later," she said. "Earlier we used to get cooked food from the government school in Durga Vihar. Now they have stopped supplying that too."

In west Delhi's Basai Darapur,

Renu, a house help who used to work in four households, hasn't gone to work since March 20; none of them are willing to call her back at the moment. For many such as Ms. Renu, it's been status quo for the last three and a half months.

In Basai Darapur where most men are either rickshaw-pullers or factory workers and the women house helps, many families have left for their native villages after waiting for work for close to three months.

When *The Hindu* visited these shanties in May, seven women were still waiting to be called by their employers. Of the seven, five have since left for their villages, mostly in Uttar Pradesh.

"There was no work. Here in the village, at least there is no stress over how to arrange for the next meal," said Neetu, speaking over the phone from her village near Allahabad.

Ms. Renu and others who decided to stay back are struggling to survive.

A mother of three minor children, Ms. Renu said that she called all of her employers each time lockdown restrictions were

relaxed, but they are yet not ready to let her in again. They're not willing to pay as well, she said. "One of them called and told me to tell her if I needed money. When I did to ask for ₹2,000, she refused saying her husband has been out of work too," she said.

Ms. Renu's husband, who used to work at an eatery in Ghaziabad, is also out of work because the stall owner hasn't reopened yet. "Twice, he has worked at a construction site and earned ₹800 a day because we ran out of money," she said. Ms. Renu said they have stopped buying milk and fruits on a daily basis ever since they felt the monetary pinch.

Meenakshi (25), Ms. Renu's neighbour and the mother of a one-year-old son, said she is going for cleaning work to one house out of the four she earlier used to work at. "I resumed work at this house on July 1. Thank god they called me," she said.

The last three months since the announcement of the lockdown, she had to take a loan of ₹6,000 to be able to take care of her son and old mother. Ms.

Meenakshi has been in the middle of a divorce with her husband since she was three months pregnant.

Another Basai Darapur house help, Simran, 20, said she has also not been called for work since the lockdown began.

In Jasola in south Delhi, 30-year-old Omwati Devi, from Uttar Pradesh, said she was fired by others because she works at a doctor's house.

"In the first week of June, I was working in the kitchen when the person who lives there asked me where else I work apart from his house. I told him I work at the doctor's house. He then told me that his landlord was putting a lot of pressure on him to fire me," said the mother of two children.

"I had worked at his house for two whole months during the lockdown and still he fired me. I have small children and my husband is also out of work. This is wrong," she said.

**Neglect by govt.**  
Though the domestic workers have been hit the most now, the problem is more deep-seated.

The unorganised Workers' Social Security Act was passed by Parliament in 2008 but after 12 years, it is still not applicable in the city as the Delhi government has not formed rules based on the Act to implement it, according to officials.

The Act covers domestic workers and provides formulation of social security schemes for life and disability cover, health and maternity benefits and old age protection by the Central government.

The State governments are mandated under the Act to formulate suitable welfare schemes for unorganised sector workers relating to provident fund, employment injury benefits, housing, education schemes for children, skill upgradation of workers, financial assistance and old age homes.

Explaining the reasons behind the Act not being adopted in Delhi, a senior government official said, "Though the Act was passed in 2008, it was only in 2014-2015 that the Union Ministry of Home Affairs gave the Delhi government the power to execute it. In 2015-16, it was sent

to the Law Department [Delhi government] and kept going back and forth."

#### Change in policy

The Narendra Modi-led NDA government, after coming to power in 2014, started working to codify and simplify 44 existing labour laws into four codes.

One of the codes, The Code on Wages Bill, has been cleared. But the other three codes are yet to be passed by Parliament.

The Code on Social Security, 2019, introduced in the Lok Sabha but not yet passed, will subsume eight laws, including the unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008.

"We are not making rules under the Act [2008] as it will be subsumed by the new code. We are also not registering workers under it," the official said.

But Ms. Mary said it was only an excuse by the Delhi government. "The Act was passed in 2008 and had the Delhi government wanted, it could have registered workers under it and formed welfare boards before the simplification of laws began in 2015. The Delhi Assembly can still pass a separate legislation for welfare of domestic workers like Maharashtra has done, if it wants," she said.

The Delhi government has also not allowed forming of unions for domestic workers and the matter is currently pending in the High Court, according to officials.

"Out of the 16 States we work in, in 12 States we have formed domestic workers' unions. Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Bihar, Jharkhand, among others, have registered domestic workers' unions. It offers better bargaining power and better facilities for domestic workers," said Ms. Mary.

Back in Devli village, clutching a ₹800 mobile phone with a faded keypad, which she had bought three years ago, Ms. Devi said, "I got the saree I'm wearing from the house I was working in last Diwali. But I doubt whether I will get any this year. Every fourth or fifth day, I call them and ask whether I can resume work. Sometimes, if I'm in the neighbourhood, I go and ring the doorbell too. But they are yet to hire me back."

St. Stephen's to drop aptitude test; interviews to go online

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Admissions to St. Stephen's college this year will be based on an applicant's Class 12 board marks and an online interview, according to the college prospectus released on Sunday.

Earlier, admissions would be based on three components, which would also include an aptitude test. Introduced in the academic year 2009-2010, this practice has been dropped on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, the college's admission in-charge Mahesh Gopalan said.

Registrations for admission to the college will begin on July 7 and will go on till July 18. Dates for the release of cut-off lists and interviews will be announced later, the prospectus notes.

The candidates will be judged on three broad criteria, the prospectus states. It includes their academic potential and suitability for the chosen subject, their potential to participate in co-curricular activities and their "general awareness and sense of values" which would examine a candidate's "personal outlook." With regard to the platform for the interview, Mr. Gopalan said that they would take some time to finalise it.

Admissions under the sports category will be overseen by a committee to be set up by the principal. These will be undertaken based on three components, of which 45% weightage would be given to certificates, 40% to marks in Class 12 exams and 15% based on interview, which would also involve sports related questions.

## Artistes challenge DU's decision to scrap ECA quota admissions

Plea said varsity has only included NCC, NSS and sports category while ignoring others

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi University's decision to scrap the extra curricular activities (ECA) category quota for art and culture from the academic year 2020-21 has been challenged before the Delhi High Court by two young artistes seeking admission for undergraduate courses.

The petition, jointly filed by Hritika Aneesh and Gokul C.R., have urged for a direction to the university to not to discontinue admission based on 14 categories of ECA in undergraduate courses.

Till last year Delhi University was admitting students under the category of ECA. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The plea said the university has only included National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme (NSS) and sports category and all other category of extra curricular troupe have been arbitrarily ignored'. The plea stated that the two young artistes have completed their Class XII board examinations and have more than a decade of training in Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam and Kathakali which are recognised traditional art forms practised in the country. They said their career prospects have been jeopardised by the "unilateral and arbitrary" act of the

university system for one year for no fault of theirs, and the same per se violates Article 14 of the Constitution," the petition said.

The plea argued that the two young artistes have completed their Class XII board examinations and have more than a decade of training in Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattam and Kathakali which are recognised traditional art forms practised in the country. They said their career prospects have been jeopardised by the "unilateral and arbitrary" act of the

university.

#### Virtual platforms

They asked for an order to the university to organise the trials of candidates under all ECA category on virtual platforms. "If necessary, to call students after uploading videos of performances in small batches for trials after maintaining social distancing, ensuring COVID-19 guidelines issued by the government," the plea said.

They also asked for the university to carry out decentralised verifications through the colleges to conduct their own trials while maintaining social distancing. The plea said similarly-placed students like them have been undergoing training for many years in their school programmes with the legitimate expectation that they would be able to score certain extra percentage of marks while seeking admission in the university. They said that the university's decision has affected more than 1,000 students.

They also asked for the university to carry out decentralised verifications through the colleges to conduct their own trials while maintaining social distancing. The plea said similarly-placed students like them have been undergoing training for many years in their school programmes with the legitimate expectation that they would be able to score certain extra percentage of marks while seeking admission in the university. They said that the university's decision has affected more than 1,000 students.

Manish Kumar, a final-year BA student at Deen Dayal Upadhyaya College, said: "The screen kept displaying some 'gateway error.' He was among the few to have logged on to the portal half-an-hour in advance. After multiple attempts he was able to download the question paper, but many of his classmates were unable to download it.

The Met department said that the city received 34.8 mm of rainfall till 8.30 a.m. on Sunday. Weather stations at Palam, Lodhi Road, Ridge and Ayanagar re-

## OBE won't work, students say on Day 2 of mock tests

Teachers' group reiterates demand to scrap examinations

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

On the second day of mock tests for the Open Book Examinations (OBE) on Sunday, students at Delhi University continued to face various technical hurdles and called for the scrapping of the planned examinations.



"This is when not everyone even attended the exam," he pointed out. "I don't even have any book... on top of that, I don't know if I should study for this or prepare for entrance exams," he added.

Many students also took to social media to raise their complaints. Final year post-graduate student Shivam Satija from Uttrakhand expressed anxiety over his inability to study as there was no electricity at his house for the last two days and he said that the inverter would soon go out. "Yester-

day's horror show of mock tests has clearly shown that online exams won't work. Why is DU VC so adamant?" he tweeted.

"This was the second day of the mock test and feedback continues to be quite painful and sad," teacher's group Academics for Action and Development said in a statement, adding that it had raised concerns about website crashes, missing question papers and other issues, but no improvement seems to have been made.

The group also said that students approaching common service centres were told that there was no information to provide facilities for OBE. The group also reiterated its demand to scrap the examinations.

In a related development, the DU Teacher's Association president Rajib Ray, speaking on the university's recent decision to spend ₹2 lakh as reimbursement towards visually impaired students, said it would be too late and too less to adequately compensate students.

## JNU V-C asks students to develop Apps

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University M. Jagadesh Kumar on Sunday asked students and faculty of the university to showcase their talent and expertise in developing Apps and contribute to the national cause.

He asked them to brainstorm and come up with ideas by participating in the "AtmaNirbhar Bharat Inno-

vate Challenge" of the Central government to develop Indian Apps.

You are aware how certain Apps, which have recently been banned in India, could have posed a threat to our national security and compromised the user data privacy. This needs an immediate remedial action by developing our own Apps," Mr. Kumar said.

He asked them to seek the support of the university's

Atal Incubation Centre and Jawaharlal Nehru University Foundation for Innovation (AIC-JNUFI), which can provide tech-support and guidance.

The AIC-JNUFI is formed to promote and support start-ups at JNU in various sectors like health, IT, energy/environment, food/agriculture, rural technologies, and other areas, without limiting the scope of activities," Mr. Kumar says.

## More spells of rain likely in the Capital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Heavy overnight showers lashed the Capital on Sunday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Rain lashed the Capital on Sunday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY  
Received 48.6 mm, 38.2 mm, 46.6 mm and 35.2 mm rainfall respectively.

The maximum temperature settled at 34.4 degrees Celsius, which is 2 degrees below normal for the season and the minimum at 22.2 degrees – six degrees cooler than normal.

**Forecast for Monday**  
The Met department has forecast a generally cloudy sky with light rain/thunderstorms for Monday. The maximum and minimum

temperatures are likely to hover between 35 and 23 degrees Celsius.

Generally cloudy sky with light to moderate rain/thunderstorms accompanied with gusty winds (speed 30-40 kmph) is likely to continue on Tuesday as well.

Heavy rain is likely at isolated places also on Wednesday, the Met department said.

Timings  
DELHI

MONDAY, JUL. 06
RISE 05:30 SET 19:23
RISE 20:37 SET 06:17
TUESDAY, JUL. 07
RISE 05:30 SET 19:23
RISE 21:22 SET 07:17
WEDNESDAY, JUL. 08
RISE 05:31 SET 19:23
RISE 22:01 SET 08:16

<b>Delhi Weather</b>	max	min
Delhi City	34	22
Safdarjang	34	22
Palam	35	24

## Delhi Palam Today

**36°C** Uneasy humid day with partly cloudy to cloudy sky. Light rain and thundershower with gusty winds likely at some areas.

## Delhi Palam Tomorrow

**35°C** A cloudy sky. Few spells of rain and thundershower with gusty wind likely at some area.

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## THE HINDU

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# With 2,244 fresh virus cases, Capital's tally touches 99,444

CM visits newly built COVID-19 hospital, says no scarcity in availability of beds

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The Capital reported 2,244 COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 99,444, said a health bulletin issued by the Delhi government on Sunday.

The bulletin also mentioned that 63 deaths have been reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total deaths to 3,067. Of the total cases, 71,339 people have recovered and there are 25,038 active cases. In the past 24 hours, 3,083 people have recovered.

## Govt. on testing

The government said 9,873 RTPCR tests and 13,263 rapid antigen tests have been conducted in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of tests to 6,43,504, which is 33,868 tests per million. The health bulletin stated that 15,564 patients are currently under home isolation while out of the 15,201 available hospital beds, 5,356 are occupied.



People waiting for COVID-19 testing at the GTB Hospital in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ R. V. MOORTHY

HELPLINE NUMBERS	
COMMON HELPLINE	+91-11-23978046
DELHI	— 011-22307145
GAZIABAD	— 0120 4186453
NOIDA	— 8076623612/6396776904
GURUGRAM	— 108 / 0124-2322412 / 9911519296 / 7015523417 / 9654231756

The COVID-19 care centres in the city have 7,869 beds out of which 1,726 are occupied. Out of the 544 beds at dedicated COVID centres, 148 are occupied.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, after visiting the new DRDO-built Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel COVID-19 Hospital here, said there is no scarcity of hospital beds as

## Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
<b>99,444</b>	<b>3,067</b>
New cases in the past 24 hours	New deaths in the past 24 hours
<b>2,244</b>	<b>63</b>

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Paramilitary forces post riots in north-east Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

## 'Citizenship fear' led to violence, says chargesheet

Riots accused cited anti-CAA stir: police

**SAURABH TRIVEDI**  
NEW DELHI

of now. "We have over 15,000 beds out of which 5,300 are occupied. There is a paucity of ICU beds. If there is any spike in COVID cases, these ICU beds are very critical for us," Mr. Kejriwal said. He thanked the Centre on behalf of Delhiites for building the hospital.

"The 1000-bed facility is a much-needed measure at this point of time to ease out the provision of beds to the patients. Even though the number of cases that require hospitalisation has gone down, this facility will prove to be useful for a lot of people who are in urgent need of beds," he added.

Planning, Municipal Corporation of Gurugram and the Forest Department and Pollution Control Board, among others. The complainant, Raman Sharma, alleged that the offences were committed under Haryana Municipal Corporation Act, Haryana Development and Regulations of Urban Areas Act, Environment (Protection) Act, Forest Conservation Act and Prevention of Corruption Act. Mr. Shar-

ma told *The Hindu* that he was working on a mission to "clean up" the city from corruption. He said that FIRs were already ordered in four cases and a decision was likely in two more cases on July 7. He said he had been working on 180 cases of violation of various laws.

Sector 10 SHO Inspector Sanjay Kumar said he received the court order and is working on it.

shop. The police said he was burnt alive and his limbs were missing. The chargesheet also states that the mob had gathered in the area to show "power of Muslims".

One of the accused, Salman, allegedly told the police that he had attended an anti-CAA protest at Brijpuri culvert, where he heard advocate Bhanu Pratap and students of Jamia Millia Islamia address the crowd on the Act. There his friends told him about the "document and citizenship" issue.

The accused have been charged under Section 302 (murder), Section 149 (every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object) and other relevant sections of IPC. The chargesheet also mentions that the anti-CAA protests were organised at seven locations in north-east Delhi and they "polarised and tensed the environment". All 12 accused in the case are in judicial custody. A supplementary chargesheet will be filed as many other accused were involved in rioting outside DRP Convent Public School and Rajdhani Public School. They were also involved in damaging property and killing Dilbar Negi.

## JNU told to allow couple to re-enter hostel

**STAFF REPORTER**

**NEW DELHI** The Delhi High Court has asked Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) to permit a PhD scholar and his spouse, who were denied re-entry after they had gone out for field work just before the lockdown in March, to resume their habitation in the hostel for married students.

Justice Najmi Waziri noted that the university's hostel for married couples is the only home where Deepak Kumar and his spouse had been staying for the past few years.

"Their access to same cannot be denied to them except by due process of law," the High Court said.

"Simply because they had gone out on some fieldwork, they cannot be denied re-entry. They have no other place to go and the petitioner [Mr. Kumar] is unlikely to get an alternate accommodation in a hurry especially in this trying time," Justice Waziri said.

## Court orders FIR against IAS officer for illegal construction

The case pertains to encroachment on land reserved for green belt in notified open space in Gurugram

**ASHOK KUMAR**  
GURUGRAM

The district and sessions court here has ordered registration of an FIR against three dozen senior officials, including an IAS officer, and some companies for illegal construction, encroachment and running commercial activities in a notified open space in Sector 94.

Directing the registration of the FIR in Sector 10A police

station, Sessions Judge M.M. Dhomchak, in his order, said: "Given the facts incorporated in the complaint coupled with the documents, which have been enclosed with the complaint, this court finds that the matter needs to be investigated for which lodging the FIR is sine qua non".

About the six senior officers named in the case, including senior IAS officer, the court said the complainant

did not intend against them, but the probe agency might decide on their prosecution if it was able to gather any evidence against them. The case pertains to encroachment, illegal construction, throwing of garbage and running of commercial activities on land reserved as a green belt in a notified open space in Sector 94. The accused officials in the case belong to the Department of Town and Country

Planning, Municipal Corporation of Gurugram and the Forest Department and Pollution Control Board, among others.

The complainant, Raman Sharma, alleged that the offences were committed under Haryana Municipal Corporation Act, Haryana Development and Regulations of Urban Areas Act, Environment (Protection) Act, Forest Conservation Act and Prevention of Corruption Act. Mr. Shar-

ma told *The Hindu* that he was working on a mission to "clean up" the city from corruption. He said that FIRs were already ordered in four cases and a decision was likely in two more cases on July 7. He said he had been working on 180 cases of violation of various laws.

Sector 10 SHO Inspector Sanjay Kumar said he received the court order and is working on it.

He added that the Congress was doing this on behalf of the people of Delhi to hold the elected representatives responsible for the increasing costs of fuel.

He accused the BJP and AAP for profiteering at the cost of the city residents.

## MCG fined for failing to give details under the RTI Act

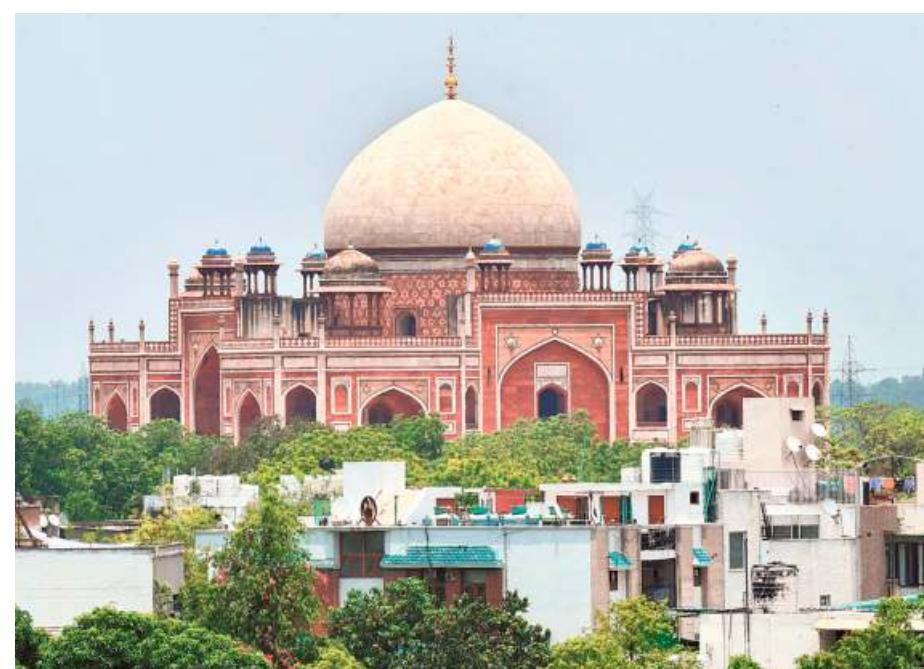
**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
GURUGRAM

The Haryana State Information Commission has imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram for "detiment suffered by the applicant" due to non-supplying of information under the RTI Act.

The panel also issued show-cause notices to the State Public Information Officers and directed them to furnish information to the appellant within a fortnight of the order free-of-cost.

RTI activist P.P. Kapoor had filed an application before the MCG in 2019, seeking detail regarding a firm handling solid waste management. But the SPIOs of the four zones failed to do so.

+ Open today



A view of the Humayun's Tomb. From Monday, the ASI will open all its monuments to visitors, who will have to buy e-tickets, wear masks and maintain social distancing. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

## Survey shows 78% people have started going to work

This was the third study by a non-profit think tank

**STAFF REPORTER**

**NEW DELHI**

In a recent telephonic survey among residents of the National Capital Region (NCR), it was found that about 95% of all respondents wore masks as a precaution against the spread of COVID-19, when they stepped out in the last one week.

Findings from the third round of surveys undertaken by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) relate to trends in social distancing and risk perception among respondents, ways in which households have been effected, access to welfare measures and difficulties in getting back to work and staying safe, the report notes. The survey was car-

ried out in mid-June when the lockdown restrictions were being relaxed but the number of infections in NCR were rising.

**Areas surveyed** Areas surveyed included metropolitan areas of Delhi as well as rural areas in the NCR's districts in Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, the NCAER said.

The survey threw up interesting information about the precautions taken by the respondents when they went outside or after returning home in the last one week. Among rural and urban respondents, a whopping 95.3% said that they wore masks or nose and mouth coverings.

Those who said they

washed their hands with soap were fewer at 65.7% and those who said they maintained a distance of three feet or more were even fewer at 45.4%.

While differences in responses among rural and urban respondents were minor in most cases, the percentage of rural respondents using sanitisers were only 57.1% compared to 75.9% of urban respondents.

Out of those surveyed, 73% respondents had reportedly gone outside in the last week for some purpose or the other. Among activities people had resumed, about 78% people had started going to work, 18% had resumed social activities and 12% were reportedly visiting places of worship.

## Three women swept away in Uttarakhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DEHRADUN

Three women were swept away in the overflowing Kosi river in Uttarakhand's Nainital district on Sunday, with the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) recovering the body of one of the victims, sources said.

Several roads were damaged as water overflowed from rivers and canals in the State that was lashed by heavy rain in the last 24 hours.

The sudden rise in water levels of the Kosi in Khairan swept away three women.

SDRF teams launched search and rescue operations in the area after being informed about the incident by locals, they said.

Despite the river being in spate, a SDRF team recovered one body. The deceased was identified as 30-year-old Kamla Devi.

## 8 killed, four hurt as fire engulfs 'candle' factory in Ghaziabad

Seven of the victims were women; cause of the blaze yet to be ascertained

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

At least eight persons, including seven women, were killed and four others were injured when fire engulfed a 'candle' factory in a village near Modinagar in Ghaziabad district on Sunday afternoon, officials said.

Ram Kishore, Station Fire Officer Modinagar, said two fire tenders were pressed into service to bring the fire under control. "The cause of the fire is being ascertained," he said.

Local sources alleged the factory, run by Nitin Chaudhary, made light firecrackers, particularly sparklers and party poppers used in birthday parties, and was in operation for a long time. Local media reports said explosive material could be seen at the site.



The gutted factory near Modinagar in Ghaziabad district on Sunday. ■ PTI

"It was an illegal unit being run in a building spread over 200 square yards. When it caught fire, there was an explosion and the roof came down. Ten workers were brought out by locals and around 20 people were trapped in the factory. Many of the employees were women who were given raw ma-

terial to make sparklers at home," said a source, requesting anonymity.

Neeraj Jadaun, Superintendent of Police (Rural) told *The Hindu* that it was not a cracker unit. "It was essentially a small unit run from home where sparklers were made. Prima facie it seemed it was an assembling unit,

running with permission, where the cavities of candles were filled with a small amount of explosive material. There was no explosion, as such. The building was under construction and the roof was covered with a plastic sheet, which caught fire. The cause of the fire is being investigated," he said.

### FIR registered

An FIR has been registered against Mr. Chaudhary and police team has been sent to nab him, he added.

Taking note of the incident, U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed the district officials to immediately reach the spot and provide relief to the injured. A compensation of ₹4 lakh each has been announced for the deceased.

## Hooda dares Manohar Lal to contest upcoming by-election

'I am ready to fight against him in the electoral battle'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Leader of the Opposition and former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Sunday said Chief Minister Manohar Lal should himself contest the upcoming bypoll from the Baroda Assembly seat if he was confident of seeking votes on the performance of the ruling BJP-JJP government in the State.

The death of Congress' sitting MLA Krishan Hooda in April has necessitated the bypoll for the Baroda seat in Sonipat district, the date for which is yet to be announced.

"If the State government is confident of its development work, then Chief Minister Manohar Lal should himself contest the Baroda by-election. If he decides to contest the bypoll, I am ready to fight against him in the electoral battle," said Mr. Hooda in



Cong. leader B.S. Hooda

Sonipat.

"Let the Baroda by-elections decide if people are satisfied with the development work and vote on the popularity of the government, instead of 2024," added the former Chief Minister.

Hitting out at the BJP-JJP government, Mr. Hooda said the government has failed to perform and deliver on all fronts and the people were fed-up of its anti-people policies.

"The BJP government increased the debt on the State from ₹60,000 crore to ₹2 lakh crore. Despite this, the BJP did not establish any major university, medical college or large industry in its entire tenure. All sections of society are under distress during the BJP rule," he said.

### 'Govt. covering truth'

"Haryana used to be ahead in development, investment, sports and employment during the Congress government, but is now the State which tops in crime, corruption, unemployment and drugs menace. Irregularities in the purchase of paddy besides alleged scams in mining and liquor sectors are in front of everyone to see. Instead of investigating into allegations of scams, the government went all out to cover the truth," alleged Mr. Hooda.

## Crackdown on gangsters in U.P.

Properties worth crores attached in Gautam Buddha Nagar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

In what could be described as the Vikas Dubey effect, the Gautam Buddha Nagar police have started attaching and demolishing the illegal properties of dreaded gangsters Sunder Bhati, Satveer Bansal, Anil Dujana, and others.

The crackdown on regional mafia began on Saturday following instructions of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a day after eight policemen were gunned down in a Kanpur village in a botched up operation to arrest history-sheeter Vikas Dubey.

The action was taken under Section 14 (1) of the U.P. Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act which allows attachment of illegal properties of gangsters and anti-social elements and

their associates to curb their activities, said Sriparna Ganguly, Additional Commissioner of Police. "The structures that have been illegally built by encroaching government land are being demolished," she told *The Hindu*.

After the Chief Minister's instruction to prepare a list of gangsters active in the State, a list, allegedly prepared by the Special Task Force of Uttar Pradesh, is doing the rounds in social media wherein there are names of 12 'gangsters' from western U.P.

The list includes Sunder Bhati alias Netaji, Anil Dujana, Anil Bhati, Singh Raj Bhati, Sushil alias Moonch, Ankit Gurjar, Amit Kasana, Akash Jat and Udhans Singh.

Akhilesh Kumar, Additional Commissioner (Law and order), Gautam Buddha Nagar, said he was not aware of any such list.

### Land reclaimed

He said, as part of the drive, illegally occupied land of water bodies was reclaimed and fences were demolished. "The drive would continue and illegal properties would be attached," he added.

## Horses for courses



A toy seller waits for customers on a hot and humid summer day near Jammu on Sunday. ■ PTI

## Senior U.P. health official tests positive

He showed influenza-like symptoms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

Deepak Ohri, Chief Medical Officer of Gautam Buddha Nagar, tested positive for COVID-19 late on Saturday, officials said. In his absence, Additional CMO Nepal Singh will officiate. According to health department officials, Dr. Ohri showed influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms after his visit to various containment zones, including JJ Cluster colony, during the week.

Dr. Ohri is one of the two senior officials of the district to be tested positive on Saturday when the district reported 83 fresh cases and five deaths.

Meanwhile, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Sadar) Prasoon Dwivedi and his wife also tested positive on Saturday. Gautam Buddha Nagar has three SDMs, out of

which two have tested positive in the last ten days. Earlier Gunja Singh, SDM (Jewar) and her husband Shailendra Kumar Singh, ADM (City), Ghaziabad, tested positive for COVID-19 on June 28.

"The officials are in isolation and are doing fine. Their office premises have been sanitised and the people who have come in their contact are being tested," said District Magistrate Sudhanshu.

In a related development, 13 inmates of the juvenile home in Buddha Nagar have tested positive during the ongoing mass surveillance drive in the district. According to a health department official, the infected inmates have been sent to Government Institute of Medical Sciences in Greater Noida for treatment.

## Guwahati revises day-old lockdown order

Community spread of disease has made situation in city serious: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Assam government on Sunday revised its day-old order on partial relaxation of total lockdown in Kamrup (Metropolitan) district after the State recorded the biggest single-day spike in COVID-19 positive cases.

Guwahati comprises much of the district under 14-day lockdown since June 29.

Chief Secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna had on Saturday issued an order relaxing certain services. But the window for grocery shops and wholesale dealers was reduced after Guwahati recorded 777 of the 1,202 COVID-19 cases later in the day. The fresh cases took the State's tally to 11,001 with 4,657 of them active and 14 having died.

State Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said community spread has made the situation in Guwahati



A worker carries a sack of potatoes in Guwahati on Sunday.  
■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

"serious". Most of the 2,741 cases recorded in the Kamrup (Metropolitan) district over the past 10 days are from Guwahati.

**'Can't blame States'**  
"We cannot blame other States now as the disease has spread to the community. People with no recent travel history are testing positive. I appeal to the residents to strictly maintain the guidelines lockdown," he said.

He said the situation would be reviewed on Wednesday or Thursday. "People are affected... we will try to maintain a balance between life and economy."

Among those who tested positive on Saturday were about 30 employees of a TV channel and two Raj Bhavan staffers, which made the authorities declare the gubernatorial complex as a containment zone. The Gauhati High Court has also ordered

the cancellation of activities, except urgent matters, in all courts as some lawyers and judges tested positive.

Mr. Sarma named Lithikesh, a post-graduate student from Mysuru at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital, as the State's first plasma donor.

The Minister also said the drug Remdesivir was used on four patients according to protocol.

"Assam is fourth among the States in terms of tests conducted per million people. We have conducted over 4.55 lakh tests and wish to complete 5 lakh soon," he said.

Altogether 39 COVID-19 patients are undergoing treatment at the intensive care units of government-run hospitals, including five medical colleges, since Saturday. Seventeen people are on oxygen and ventilator support.

## Odisha GST collection falls due to slowdown

It registers negative growth of 32.79%

STAFF REPORTER  
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha has registered a negative growth of 32.79% in collection of Goods and Service Tax during the first quarter of current fiscal as the total collection could be around ₹1,560.20 crore against ₹2,321.39 crore collected in the corresponding period of the previous year.

"The GST collection of June 2020 is ₹759.17 crore against the collection of ₹804.49 crore during the corresponding period of last year which dropped by ₹45 crore (-5.6%)," said S. K.

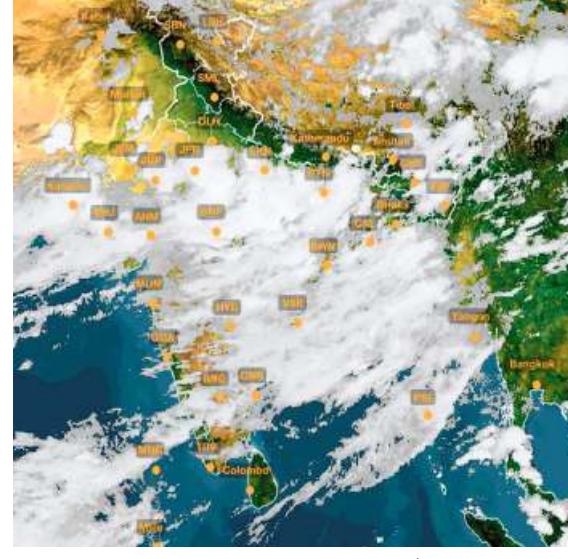
Lohani, Commissioner of Commercial Tax and GST.

Mr. Lohani said the unprecedented slowdown of the State's economy due to COVID-19 and consequent lockdown of non-essential business activities from last week of March to third week of May impacted the revenue collection.

However, due to a number of relaxations granted by GST Council along with regular persuasion and facilitation by the field officers and gradual unlocking, the situation in the month of June resulted in marked improvement, he said.

## WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE &amp; AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.30 HRS)

**Forecast for Monday:** Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand, west Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, coastal Karnataka, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	10.8	31.9	26.2	Kozhikode	12.2	31.0	24.8
Ahmedabad	—	34.8	27.3	Kurnool	1.2	31.0	24.5
Aizawl	—	26.0	18.9	Lucknow	0.4	34.1	26.5
Allahabad	—	34.8	26.9	Madurai	—	37.0	26.6
Bangalore	0.6	27.6	21.0	Mangaluru	—	30.1	23.0
Bhopal	0.9	32.0	24.4	Mumbai	200.8	29.2	24.8
Bhubaneswar	16.4	30.1	26.0	Mysuru	—	29.4	21.1
Chandigarh	46.4	34.4	22.2	New Delhi	34.8	34.4	22.2
Chennai	—	33.0	27.3	Patna	71.8	34.8	25.0
Coimbatore	0.3	31.0	23.0	Port Blair	24.7	30.3	23.7
Dehradoon	94.1	33.0	20.7	Puducherry	—	33.6	26.8
Gangtok	4.1	25.3	17.7	Pune	2.4	27.5	22.3
Goa	49.1	31.6	24.2	Raipur	8.3	33.0	25.2
Guwahati	—	33.6	26.1	Ranchi	0.6	32.0	24.5
Hubballi	—	24.0	22.0	Shillong	0.6	24.0	19.0
Hyderabad	0.2	28.4	—	Shimla	32.4	25.6	13.6
Imphal	13.5	29.8	22.8	Srinagar	—	32.9	14.8
Jaipur	—	38.0	28.6	Thiruvananthapuram	6.1	31.0	25.0
Kochi	2.2	30.2	24.6	Tiruchi	—	35.1	26.5
Kohima	21.6	24.2	17.5	Vijayawada	24.2	32.0	24.4
Kolkata	—	32.3	28.4	Visakhapatnam	9	29.0	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

## Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	CODE
Ahmedabad	21	.26	.21	35...59	—	■■■■■
Bengaluru	—	7	.13	91	—	■■■■■
Chennai	.6	.25	102	58	—	■■■■■
Delhi	8	.17	.35	183	—	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.6	.47	15	12	28	■■■■■
Kolkata	20	.9	.19	77	—	■■■■■
Lucknow	.4	.8	.17	8	26	■■■■■
Mumbai	—	7	.2	10	17	■■■■■
Pune	.5	.10	.64	25	—	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	.9	.48	33	35	60	■■■■■

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
SO<sub>2</sub>: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO<sub>x</sub>: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

PM<sub>2.5</sub> & PM<sub>10</sub>: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m. Ludhiana, Punjab recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 137 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 12

Death toll hits 8,822 as 151 more fatalities were reported on Sunday

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

The upsurge in new COVID-19 cases continued unabated in Maharashtra as the State recorded 6,555 new cases – its second-highest single-day surge till date – to take the total case tally to 2,06,619 on Sunday.

As many as 151 new deaths pushed the total death toll to 8,822. Of the total case tally, though, only 86,040 are active ones, said State Health Department officials.

With 3,658 patients being discharged today, the cumulative recoveries till date has gone up to 1,11,470.

As many as 1,287 new cases were reported on Sunday, taking Mumbai's total case tally to 84,524. However, the number of active cases has come down to 23,732 with 55,884 recoveries till date.

With 69 new deaths being reported, the city's death toll has risen to 4,899.

Pune district reported as many as 31 deaths as its total death toll shot to 872, while 11 fatalities were reported from Aurangabad district in Marathwada region to take its total death count to 294.

State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said that the State's recovery rate stood at 54.08%. The State's case fatality stands at 4.27%.

After Mumbai, Pune district reported another massive spike of more than 800 new cases as its total case tally soared to 28,142 as per State Health department figures. Of these, 13,864 are active cases as per the State



Undeterred: Health workers wearing PPE suits arrive for check-ups at a containment zone in Malvani despite heavy rain on Sunday. ■ PTI

Health Department even though district administration authorities said only 10,467 cases were active.

**Uptick continues in MMR** Along with Mumbai and Pune, the uptick in cases continued relentlessly in all civic bodies in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region.

Thane reported 600 new cases to take the district's total tally to 18,252. With four fatalities reported from the district today, its total death toll has now climbed to 563.

Kalyan-Dombivli reported another record high surge of 596 new cases taking its total case tally to 10,400. Eight new fatalities reported today took its total death toll to

146. Navi Mumbai added 201 fresh cases taking its total case tally to 9,135 with 215 deaths thus far.

Mira-Bhayander and Vasai-Virar recorded massive spikes as well, reporting 309 and 318 new cases respectively to take their total case tallies to 4,169 and 5,536.

Raigad district, too, saw a sharp spike of 115 new cases as its total tally reached 2,682 while Panvel reported a rise of 140 cases to take its total case tally to 3,158.

**Spike in Nashik, Jalgaon** Meanwhile, Jalgaon and Nashik districts – both virus hotbeds – saw big spikes of 210 and 283 cases respectively. Nashik's total case tally stands at 5,216 of whom 2,056 were active while Jalgaon's stand at 4,236 with 1,538 active cases.

Despite the Nashik initially having a higher death count than Jalgaon, the latter has now overtaken it, with Jalgaon's death toll currently at 278 as compared with 225 deaths in Nashik.

"Till date, of a total 11,12,442 laboratory samples, 2,06,619 (18.57%) have been tested positive with nearly 32,000 samples across the State tested today," Dr. Awate said.

He said 6,04,463 persons across the State were in home quarantine and 46,062 were in institutional quarantine facilities.

## PCMC urges citizens to observe 'janata curfew'

Numbers mount in Pimpri-Chinchwad; 1,288 new cases reported in Pune

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

With cases continuing to soar, the Pimpri-Chinchwad civic administration has appealed to people to stay at home by observing a janata curfew on Sundays and Thursdays every week, even as Pune district reported more than 1,288 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, taking the total tally to 28,599.

The Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) commissioner Shrawan Hardikar made this appeal to citizens to check the spread of novel coronavirus in PCMC, which has reported a total of more than 4,700 cases, of whom more than 2,400 are active.

As opposed to the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), which reported steady rise in cases throughout March, April, May and June, the PCMC had managed to check the spread till the end of May.

After unlock started on June 1, the cases have drastically soared in PCMC. Undoubtedly, relaxation on intra-city and inter-district

travel, coupled with people letting their guard down by not taking precautions has aggravated the surge," said a senior PCMC official.

Pimpri-Chinchwad has seen at least 1,500 active cases since the end of May, with an average surge of more than 150 new cases a day in

the past fortnight. As many as 82 people have died so far.

**Mayor tests positive** In another development, eight members of the family of Pune Mayor, Murlidhar Mohol – a senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader – have tested positive. Mr. Mohol had also tweeted on Saturday evening saying he had tested positive.

On Saturday, Datta Sane, a prominent local leader from the NCP and a sitting corporator in the PCMC, had succumbed to the virus.

Till date, at least two BJP MLAs and prominent leaders in the district – one in Pimpri-Chinchwad and one in Pune city – have tested positive along with a number of BJP and Nationalist Congress Party corporators.

**Surge in cases** Pune has been reporting an average daily surge of 1,000 new cases for the last four days.

The district saw a rise 1,288 new cases till Sunday evening. Pune district's death toll has now reached 869 with 16 fatalities reported on Sunday, according to Pune Divisional Commissioner Dr. Deepak Mhaisekar.

Of the total tally of 28,599, there are 11,019 active cases. Pune has reported 16,723 recoveries so far.

Of the active cases, 617 pa-

## Ten Mumbai DCPs transfers scrapped

Should not draw political conclusions from this move: Home Minister

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

In an unprecedented move, the transfers of 10 Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) rank officers in Mumbai were cancelled on Sunday, barely three days after they were notified by the Police Commissioner.

State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh sought to explain that the transfers were cancelled after consultations between the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) and the Home Department, and no political conclusions need to be drawn from the development.

**List announced on July 2**

On July 2, 10 DCPs in the city were transferred. These included: Sangramsingh Nishandar being moved from Zone I to Operations, Dr. Rashmi Karandikar from Port Zone to Cyber, Shahaji Umap from Crime Branch (Detection) to Special Branch I, and Pranaya Ashok from Operations to Zone V.

Last week, both Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) ministers had expressed unhappiness over the haphazard manner in which the lockdown was extended in the State, and further tightened in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. The parties were upset that they were not taken in to confidence before the decision. NCP chief Sharad Pawar had also met Mr. Thackeray on Friday to discuss the situation.

**Late-night meeting**

Later on Sunday, Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh held a meeting with Mr. Thackeray at the latter's residence. Details of the meeting were not available till the time of going to press.

## Goa councillor succumbs to coronavirus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
PANAJI

A 72-year-old councillor of the Mormugao Municipal Council in Goa died due to COVID-19 in the wee hours on Sunday, a State Health Department official said.

Pascoal D'Souza, who did not belong to any political party, tested positive for COVID-19 last month following which he was admitted to Margao-based ESI Hospital, a specially designated facility for COVID-19 patients. He succumbed to the viral infection on Sunday, the official said.

D'Souza represented a ward in Mangor Hill area, which has been declared as a containment zone after more than 200 people there tested positive for the viral infection.

Municipal Council elections in Goa are not fought on party lines.

With the councillor's death, the overall toll in the State has reached seven. Till Saturday, it reported 1,684 COVID-19 cases.

## 'Donate smartphones, laptops to help poor students'

Pune Zilla Parishad's bid to bridge the digital divide for school education gets Supriya Sule's backing&lt;/



## Three messages

At Leh, PM Modi had different messages for India, China, and the world community

**W**ith his visit to Nimu near Leh, which houses the XIV Corps headquarters including the base hospital, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accomplished several objectives. He visited soldiers injured during the Galwan clash of June 15, addressed troops involved in the stand-off with China, and was briefed directly by senior officers involved in operational preparedness who are also conducting military talks with China's People's Liberation Army. In his speech to soldiers at Nimu, he addressed different audiences as well, with the biggest message for the Chinese leadership, where he said that the age of expansionism is over. Calling this the "era of evolution" or development (*Vikasvaad*), Mr. Modi said that the "era of colonial expansion" (*Vistaavaad*) is over. He said that in the past, expansionist forces have done great harm to humanity, and had been "erased or forced to relent". The message to Beijing was this: it must not engage in territorial aggression across its boundaries with countries from Central Asia to the South China Sea, including India, and it must also recall its own anger against imperialism, that so many in the PRC's leadership have decried. Despite the fact that he did not once name China, the message appeared to have hit home, with the Chinese Embassy in Delhi issuing a denial that it had made any expansionist moves. The Prime Minister also addressed other countries that are viewing the growing seriousness of the two-month long stand-off with concern, as he spoke about India's tradition of peace with bravery, indicating that diplomatic options would be exhausted before any action. To his domestic audience, the address signified the government's determination to face the challenge at the Line of Actual Control and to focus on national priorities of infrastructure and economic development. Finally, he addressed the soldiers themselves, as he spoke of the valour of the men who have been engaged in the clashes along the LAC, including the Galwan confrontation in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed.

In all three aspects of the address, the speech must be welcomed, and its unspoken messages should also be studied closely. While the Prime Minister's decision to visit troops near the LAC was well-timed and apt, it also raised the temperature of the India-China engagement, and indicates that military talks for disengagement and the dispersal of the massive mobilisation of troops on both sides, have not made much progress. The contrast in his tone from just two weeks ago, when he reassured the nation that "neither has anyone transgressed, nor is anyone inside Indian territory", indicates that the situation is far more serious than was previously understood. It is to be hoped that the government, which has thus far not given the nation the full picture on what has happened, and what the nation needs to prepare for, will do so now, further clarifying the Prime Minister's core message at Leh.

## Surely, even if slowly

There is an urgent need for a vaccine against COVID-19, but it cannot be hastened into being

**Y**et again, the pandemic has revealed cracks in the conduct of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). A letter by the agency's head, Dr. Balram Bhargava, to doctors last week, preparing to test a vaccine for human trials, appeared to be coercing them into getting a vaccine ready by August 15. After public uproar the agency clarified that its intent was to infuse a sense of urgency given the pandemic and that there were no plans to deviate from the rulebook on vaccine development. However, there was no rationale extended for why the date August 15 cropped up. Given the crisis at hand, regulatory agencies the world over have relaxed rules on drug testing and vaccine trials. While scientific rigour cannot be compromised, there is a move, globally, to allow more leeway to formulations that show some promise, and allow them into the market under medical guidance. This is why drugs such as remdesivir and favipiravir – despite limited evidence of success – have made it to the bedside of patients.

Vaccines are an entirely different game. The basic philosophy of all vaccines involves introducing fragments – in some cases the whole virus, albeit in a weakened form – into healthy volunteers. Therefore, the first checkpoint is that the vaccine candidate should not sicken a healthy person. The second hurdle is that a vaccine must stimulate the immune system just enough to get it to produce protective antibodies. In other words, it must be efficacious and finally, only if all were to go well, it must be tested in several thousand people in real world conditions. And they must be shown, over time, to be better protected than those who were unvaccinated. Each one of these steps cannot in principle be rushed, and each is necessary to ensure that the vaccine can be released for public use. The Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech, the makers of 'Covaxin', has experience and credibility in vaccine manufacture. 'Covaxin' is developed from a strain of SARS-CoV-2 isolated at NIV. However, this only makes it one of hundreds of potential vaccines being tested and the consensus of experts is that no vaccine can be readied for use until next year. This is now largely understood by most and hence the behavioural changes on social distancing and an insistence on wearing masks in public. It is therefore perplexing why the ICMR, with its panoply of eminences, would want to cut corners with a basic premise of research: that science does not progress in a hurry. The pandemic has brought into focus the unavoidable role of uncertainty. New aspects of the disease are being brought to light, sometimes every day. The best strategy, in the midst of such flux, is to maintain absolute transparency, and proceed surely, even if slowly.

# India must not cast anchor in 'Enrica Lexie'

As a good international citizen, the country has accepted the tribunal's award; it must ensure that Italy fully honours it



VIVEK KATJU

**I**taly has achieved its basic objective in the *Enrica Lexie-St. Anthony* matter. All through this sorry saga, it wanted its two marines, Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone, to stand trial for killing two Indian fishermen, Ajesh Pink and Valentine Jelastine, not in India but in Italy. The marines were part of a security contingent on the *Enrica Lexie*, an Italian commercial oil tanker while Pink and Valentine were on the Indian fishing boat, *St. Antony*. The incident took place on February 15, 2012, in India's Contiguous Zone, 20.5 nautical miles off the Kerala coast.

### Present and past

The operative part of the Annex VII arbitral tribunal's decision, made public last week, on July 2, 2020, gave Italy full satisfaction on this crucial point although in a split 3-2 verdict, and on shaky grounds. The tribunal, established by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) under the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), held that the marines were "entitled to immunity in relation to the acts that they committed during the incident of 15 February, 2012, and that India is precluded from exercising its jurisdiction over the Marines". India had opposed Italy's request for an arbitral tribunal but ITLOS ruled in Italy's favour.

ITLOS had asked both countries to "suspend all court proceedings"

and "refrain from initiating new ones" that may "aggravate the dispute" or prevent the implementation of the Arbitral Tribunal's decision. Accordingly, the judicial proceedings against the Italian marines in India were suspended. In May 2016, the Supreme Court of India allowed Girone who was on bail in India to return to Italy pending the decision of the Tribunal; Latorre was already there because of medical reasons.

### The small print

Italy will now continue with the case it had registered against Latorre and Girone. It is highly unlikely though that any Italian court will convict Latorre and Girone for Pink and Valentine's unjustified killing. The reported humanitarian assistance that the Italian authorities gave their families can never be taken as justice for the lives snuffed out by two trigger-happy members of the Italian armed forces who, without any justification, considered the fishing boat to be a pirate skiff.

Only the operative portion of the tribunal's award is available now. The detailed award is being scrutinised by India and Italy for redactions of those portions either country feels are confidential, and therefore cannot be publicly disclosed. Besides, the tribunal's hearing, except for the opening statements of the two countries' agents, was held confidentially. It is unlikely then that Italy would allow facts prejudicial to its version to be made open. The legal points on the jurisdiction of the two countries to try the marines and the immunity issue should become available hopefully somewhat soon. They would enable a full assessment to be made of the reasoning adopted by the majority to reach its conclusions on these



GAVEL/GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

important issues.

The Ministry of External Affairs statement on the award notes "The Tribunal observed that India and Italy had concurrent jurisdiction over the incident and a valid legal basis to institute criminal proceedings against the marines." *Prima facie* then the tribunal should have allowed the case to continue in India for the victims were Indians and the *Enrica Lexie* came voluntarily to India and after investigations a case was lodged against Latorre and Girone. It is noteworthy that the tribunal did not accept Italy's charge that India brought the Italian oil tanker by a ruse to Kochi. Clearly, however, the tribunal majority found a way to ensure that the case should continue in Italy by agreeing with the Italian plea that the marines had immunity for they were state officials.

### A dangerous precedent

India's stand that UNCLOS is not concerned with issues relating to immunity was strong. Immunity of state officials has to be governed by specific multilateral or bilateral treaties or agreements. It should not be tangentially brought in to settle issues of jurisdiction. Besides, even if Italian marines are considered as state officials, they were deployed on an Italian commercial vessel. Italy did so unilaterally without the cover of any multilateral or bilateral arrange-

ment. There is no convention that such persons as the marines in such cases are immune from local criminal jurisdiction; only heads of states, heads of governments and foreign ministers customarily enjoy immunity abroad apart from accredited diplomats who are covered by the Vienna Convention.

Thus, the tribunal's decision on the marines' immunity sets a dangerous precedent. Countries may now be tempted to enact specific laws to give immunity to their military and para-military personnel and others by declaring them state officials and thereafter place them on different kinds of commercial craft and use them for adventurous purposes. This can lead to an increase in tensions generally and especially between inimical states, and more so if there are problems relating to fishermen between contiguous states.

### New Delhi must be focused

India can take satisfaction that the tribunal found that by firing on the *St. Antony*, Italy was guilty of "violating India's freedom and right of navigation". Consequently, it held that "India is entitled to payment of compensation in connection with loss of life, physical harm, material damage to property and moral harm" perpetrated by Italy. Now it is incumbent on the government to ensure that Italy is made to pay fully for the loss of life and the suffering it has caused in this matter. Any lapse on this count will be inexcusable. Considerations of good relations with Italy or with the European Union (EU) which had stood beside Italy throughout this matter should not be allowed to influence these specific negotiations.

The government should also ensure that it closely monitors the case proceedings in the Italian

court against Latorre and Girone. This notwithstanding, as mentioned earlier, that Italy would be inclined to only go through the motions of a fair trial. The government should instruct the Embassy in Rome that a diplomat should always be present during court proceedings. It should not accept Italy's pleas that this would not be possible when confidential information is being presented before the court. If the Italians had gone to the extreme in supporting the marines, India must not show any laxity in securing justice for Pink and Valentine even in an Italian court.

### For executive and judiciary

This is also a time for the executive and judicial branches of the Indian state to introspect on how they handled the whole affair politically, diplomatically and legally. A number of questions arise. Some of these are: Was it prudent to appoint the National Investigation Agency to handle the case after the Supreme Court had ordered for a special court to be set up to try the marines? Should virtually terrorism charges have been levelled against the marines only to be dropped later? Should the Supreme Court not have decided the jurisdiction and immunity issues *ab initio* instead of leaving them open? Should not ways been found to counter Italy causing deliberate delays to thwart the trial from commencing? This is especially important, for it used these delays to build sympathy for the marines in the EU.

As a good international citizen, India has accepted the tribunal's award. Now it must ensure that Italy fully honours it. The matter remains open.

Vivek Katju is a former diplomat

# Re-enfranchise the forgotten voter

There must be the political will to usher in a 'One Nation One Voter ID' to ensure ballot portability



C.R. KESAVAN &  
M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA

**I**n response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has made it possible for senior citizens above the age of 65 to vote by postal ballot, given that they are at greater risk from exposure to the novel coronavirus. Hitherto, this option was available only to disabled citizens and those above 80 years. However, postal ballots may not minimise the risk of infection and it may be better instead to provide separate voting booths for senior citizens.

### Migrants on the margins

Well-thought-out initiatives that facilitate voting and remove obstacles to voters exercising their franchise must be welcomed. We would urge that the same empowering approach be extended to another group which faces enormous difficulties in exercising its franchise: migrant workers.

The novel coronavirus cataclysm and the subsequent national lockdown brought to centre stage the magnitude of internal migration and hardships that migrant workers endure in their quest for

livelihoods. The stark indignity that many of them endured on their long march home suggests that they are perceived as being politically powerless.

Internal migrant workers constitute about 13.9 crore as in the Economic Survey of 2017, that is nearly a third of India's labour force. They travel across India in search of an economic livelihood, in the construction sector, as domestic work, in brick kilns, mines, transportation, security, agriculture, etc. Many never intend to settle down and wish to return to their native villages and towns once their work is completed or the working season ends. Often they toil in exploitative low-wage jobs, lacking identity and proper living conditions, without access to welfare and unable to exercise their voting rights. Migrant workers become quasi-disenfranchised, forgotten voters because they cannot afford to return home on election day to choose their representatives. The callous attitude toward the plight of migrants exhibited by some State governments leads to the conclusion that this group does not constitute a vote bank worthy of attention.

Internal migrant workers do not enrol as voters in their place of employment since they find proof of residence hard to provide. Many are seasonal migrants who would rather vote in their villages if they could afford to return home. Since they do not have a



vote where they work, their concerns are easy to ignore in their host State. Sometimes, they are targeted for allegedly taking jobs away from the local population.

### Task before the ECI

Ensuring that every Indian who is eligible to vote can do so must be a central mission for the ECI. It is a matter of pride that India currently has over 91.05 crore registered voters and in the 2019 general election, a record 67.4%, i.e., 61.36 crore voters, cast their vote.

The ECI would do well to focus attention on the one-third, a substantial 29.68 crore, who did not cast their vote. National Election Study surveys have shown that about 10% of registered voters refrain from voting due to a lack of interest in politics. That leaves approximately 20 crore voters who want to vote but are unable to do so.

Of these there are about three crore Non Resident Indians (NRIs). Only about one lakh NRIs have registered to vote, presumably because voting requires their physical presence in India. Of them,

about 25,000 voted in the 2019 elections. To enable NRIs to exercise their franchise, the government brought in legislation in the previous Lok Sabha to enable voting through authorised proxies. While the legislation lapsed, it is interesting to contrast the concern for NRIs with the lack thereof for poor migrant workers.

### Yes, there is a model

Does our system enable any form of voter portability that can serve as a model for re-enfranchising migrant workers? Yes. Service voters (government employees) posted away from home can vote through the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS). Classified service voters (e.g., military personnel) can do so through their proxies. The ECI has said that it is testing an Aadhaar-linked voter-ID based solution to enable electors to cast their votes digitally from anywhere in the country. It will be some time in the future before this becomes a functional reality. While developing this solution, we must ensure that the linkage with Aadhaar does not result in the exclusion of eligible individuals.

To facilitate voting by migrant workers, the ECI could undertake substantial outreach measures using the network of District Collectors. Migrants should be able to physically vote in their city of work based on the address on their existing voter IDs and duration of their temporary stay. In an

age where banking transactions have gone online seamlessly, it is technologically feasible to record and transfer votes to their respective constituencies without compromising on the credibility of the election process.

The COVID-19 crisis mobilised governments and non-governmental organisations to set up registers and portals to reach out to migrant workers. A 'One Nation One Ration Card' is being ushered in to enable migrant workers and their family members to access Public Distribution System benefits from any fair price shop in the country. Similarly, voting must be viewed not just as a civic duty but as a civic right. We must demonstrate the political will to usher in 'One Nation One Voter ID', to ensure native ballot portability and empower the forgotten migrant voter. Once migrant workers get to exercise their franchise, we expect that we will see a change in how they are treated.

A quote attributed to Thomas Jefferson goes: "We... do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." Ensuring that every Indian voter can participate in elections is imperative to ensure a democratically inclusive India.

C.R. Kesavan is a former member of the Prasar Bharati Board. M.V. Rajeev Gowda is a former Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Congress party's Research Department

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### A vaccine, in August

Like many, one hopes India will be the first to introduce a vaccine for COVID-19, which will be a health milestone, but in a proper manner. Therefore, many are unable to understand why there is such a tearing hurry in India to make a medical miracle happen so quickly at the expense of scientific rigour. 'Covaxin' was approved for human trials only recently. When global scientific institutions are still facing an uphill task in zeroing in on a suitable vaccine, is the ICMR's "shrunken fit" vaccine timeline of almost 41 days realistic (Page 1, "Vaccine deadline meant to 'cut red tape', ICMR clarifies, July 5)? The suspicion is that the ICMR appears to be wanting to give those who matter in India's political set-up a major talking-point in the Independence Day

speech on August 15. Overlooking crucial scientific steps should not result in a product deadlier than the disease. It does not matter who is first.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE,  
Faridabad, Haryana

### MMR vaccination

I write this letter as a consultant haematologist. In managing the pandemic, while we have focused on preventive measures, we are yet to pay adequate attention to enhancing individual immunity that is vital to the recovery of those affected. It is a well-known fact that vaccines hold the key in defeating infectious diseases. Most official guidelines for adult vaccination recommend pneumonia, influenza, Herpes zoster and, more importantly, MMR.

Recently, two leading U.S. immunologists, Dr. Paul Fidel and Dr. Mairi Nozaki, have suggested that the MMR vaccine can reduce the life-threatening lung inflammation associated with COVID-19 infection. In the early phase of COVID-19 infection, there is a window of opportunity for us to boost our immunity which can be achieved with MMR vaccination. There is recent anecdotal evidence that points to the benefits of MMR vaccination as well – seen in children, and South Korea, Madagascar, and the U.S. Navy. This vaccine can be offered to the all-at-risk population in India and booster doses can be recommended for healthcare workers even if they have been immunised in childhood. There should be clinical trials on these lines.

Ds. K. RAGHU,  
Coimbatore

### Private trains

The BJP-led government is quietly, under the cover that the COVID-19 pandemic has given it, passing policy decisions of substantial national import which would otherwise have been subject to public scrutiny, parliamentary discussions and political debate. The latest among these is the involvement of the private sector in the services of Indian Railways. Whether this is desirable is up for debate since in a country like India, the railways are and will remain the common man's means of transportation, and where the priorities are clean, safe and cheap travel. Obviously this government found that these parameters to be beyond its ability to deliver, if you consider the performance of Indian Railways now.

With the private sector coming in, regular rail services are bound to get hit, which would compound passenger woes. With the emphasis on comfort and add-on services like in the airlines, ticket prices are bound to be on the higher side. This would be akin to the misguided thinking that Indian Railways had sometime ago – of competing with airlines. This did not work for the simple reason that airlines and railways have different

classes of passengers as also different reasons for choosing the respective mode of travel. The fare hikes by private trains will also be the excuse for Indian Railways to hike ticket prices, a step which would otherwise attract public and political criticism. Thus the private sector's entry in running trains is a move to make the railways elitist.

S. KAMAT,  
Alto Santa Cruz, Goa

**CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:**  
In a Business page report titled "Zoho Corp. unveils document scanner app" (July 3, 2020) there was an erroneous reference to the app's ability to scan business cards in 17 languages.  
Cricketer Kartik Murai's live chat on Sportstar's Instagram handle was on July 4th. It was erroneously stated as June 4th in a Sports page report headlined "Kartik live!" (July 4, 2020).  
It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant

# The search for unity in a moment of crisis

For this, India must treat all minorities in an even-handed and mature manner



NAJEEB JUNG &amp; PRATEEP K. LAHIRI



"Instances of the police being partisan are seen in the slanted nature of the investigation of cases pertaining to the riots in north-east Delhi." The remains of a shop that was vandalised during the riots, in March. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

It is often believed that a crisis brings out the best in Indians. We have witnessed people selflessly coming to the aid of the affected during natural calamities. Unfortunately, this wasn't the case when the pandemic hit India. First, we failed in dealing adequately with the tremendous distress caused to migrant labourers. Second, we failed to make the fight against COVID-19 a common endeavour, irrespective of caste or community. Instead, sadly, the discourse was communalised, with one community being targeted even though its members were as much victims of the pandemic as were others.

#### Impact of the lockdown

The government proved inept in not anticipating the adverse impact of the lockdown on millions of migrant labourers, who were overnight deprived of their means of livelihood. It failed to foresee, and therefore mitigate, the adverse consequences of its sudden decision. While extensions of the lockdown were rightly preceded by consultations with the State governments, keeping the initiation of the lockdown a secret from all the stakeholders defied logic. In addition to the distress, the fact that this exodus of migrants to their homes would cause the infection to spread to the rural hinterland was not contemplated. Much later, after untold sufferings had been inflicted on the migrants and the Supreme Court had taken cognisance of the problem, the Centre and the States woke up to facilitate the return journeys of the migrants. This too was poorly managed. In hindsight, it is evident that the strategies employed to control the spread of the disease have achieved little success – India today has the third-highest number of COVID-19 cases. As industrialist Rajiv Bajaj wryly quipped, the wrong curve – the GDP curve instead of the pandemic one – has been flattened.

The issue of spread of infection impacted communal harmony. The Tablighi Jamaat was mercilessly

flogged, especially by certain people and sections of the electronic media, in order to profile Muslims adversely. The fact that Tablighi Jamaat is an orthodox sect of Muslims and does not represent the community was ignored. So was the fact that the venue of the March congregation was about 50 metres from the Nizamuddin police station. Further, why no action has still been taken against the head of the Jamaat remains a mystery.

It is not implausible that the focus on the Jamaat was engineered to shift the focus away from the plight of the migrant labourers, who were suffering and even dying. Certain TV channels were so irresponsible that they went to the extent of presenting the murder of two sadhus in Maharashtra as a communal incident even though this wasn't the case.

Unfortunately, even prior to the lockdown, with an ongoing agitation, the atmosphere was fraught with tension. Muslims were aggrieved by the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, that discriminated against Muslim refugees with regard to grant of citizenship, as well as by the plan to prepare a National Register of Citizens (NRC), which was soon followed by the announcement to prepare the National Population Register (NPR). While the protests against the CAA, NRC and NPR were snowballing, the pandemic hit us and was soon followed by the lockdown. The protests had tested both the people's and the administration's patience, particularly because of the

inconvenience caused by blocked roads. Even some of those who believed that the CAA, NRC and NPR were iniquitous were beginning to lose patience. The failure to initiate dialogue with the protesters and the heavy-handedness of the police could well have been a tipping point. If the lockdown had not been imposed, protests on the scale in the U.S. could have happened in India.

While the fight against the pandemic was an opportunity to unite us, sadly, the Tablighi Jamaat issue was used to profile Muslims. This became so overt that it attracted international opprobrium with some West Asian countries and Canada taking action against overseas Indians engaging in Islamophobia. In a TV interview, historian Yuval Noah Harari said it was dangerous to pin the blame for the spread of the virus on Muslim minorities and stressed the need to make the fight against the pandemic a united endeavour.

**India's brand of secularism**  
Profiling any community is alien to India's secular tradition. The long history of heterodoxy in India has contributed to democracy and the brand of secularism and tolerance that is unique to India. Through centuries people have come to India and made it their home. To quote Firaq: "Sar zamiin-e Hind par Aqwama-e Aalam ke Firaq qaafle baste gaye, Hindostan banta gayaa" (Caravans from all over the world settled in this land and shaped India).

The emergence of Vedic religion (Hinduism) dates back to second millennium BCE. Buddhism and Jainism emerged in sixth century BCE. Jews came after the fall of Jerusalem. Early Christians came and settled in the south. They were followed by Parsis and Baha'is, persecuted in their homelands. Muslim Arab traders came and settled soon after the rise of Islam. Then came Muslim conquerors. Emperors like Ashoka and Akbar were exemplars in promoting religious harmony. Inter-religious tolerance, embedded in our life and culture, is reflected throughout our history in the writings of Bulleh Shah, Nanak, Kabir, Rahim, Amir Khusrau, Ravi Das and others. Sufi dargahs are visited by lakhs of non-Muslims. Secularism is based on the pluralist and syncretic character of the society with *Sarva Dharma Sambhava* being the guiding principle. That is the backdrop in which independent India's chosen destiny was to be a non-theocratic state.

Today, we stand at the crossroads with the fundamental values of the Constitution under challenge. Our best universities such as Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Jadavpur University and Aligarh Muslim University are pilloried, and their student leaders harassed. Instances of the police being partisan are seen, for instance, in the slanted nature of the investigations pertaining to the riots in north-east Delhi.

The scourge of COVID-19 is haunting us, the economy is in free fall, our borders are under siege. India has a glorious history of complete unity during crises. If ever there was a time to stand together and be counted as one, this is it. To ensure this, the country must provide even-handed and mature treatment to Dalits, Muslims, Christians and all minorities. This is not appeasement but an accepted form of progressive thought, so that all citizens get an opportunity to progress as equal partners. This is never easy in societies where the size of the cake is not adequate. It takes a large heart and a lot of education for people to appreciate this.

Najeeb Jung is a former Vice Chancellor of the Jamia Millia Islamia and former Lt. Governor of Delhi and Prateep K. Lahiri is a former Revenue Secretary to the Government of India and former Executive Director of the Asian Development Bank, Manila

#### FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

## Re-imagining journalism

The inputs of readers are essential in reworking the contours of journalism for the 21st century



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

Everyone acknowledges that the news industry is in deep crisis. While the prognosis varies and the prescriptions for revival differ, everyone seems to believe that in order to be reinvented, journalism has to be re-imagined.

I follow three academic centres that track the news industry closely: the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford, Columbia Journalism Review (CJR) published by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, and the Nieman Journalism Lab at Harvard University. All of them are tracking the multiple factors that have contributed to the crisis, including digital disruptions, the shrinking advertising market, the trust deficit and the debunking of journalism by the political leadership.

The crisis has also touched some public broadcasting organisations which have a dedicated revenue stream. For instance, BBC is to make 450 staff working on its regional programmes in England redundant as part of cost-cutting measures which will see many well-known local television and radio presenters lose their jobs.

#### A task requiring collective thought

CJR has been organising a series of discussions titled "The Search for Solutions" under its "The Journalism Crisis Project Webinar Series". One of the suggestions that came from the fourth webinar was that "saving" the industry was the wrong model. Heather Chaplin, Founding director, Journalism + Design at The New School, New York, said the industry's best hope is to re-imagine the free press for the 21st century. She said: "The minute that you realise, wait, my job isn't to try to save the thing; my job is to reinvent something new – the possibility space expands exponentially... What does the free press that we want look like, and what conditions need to be in place for it to happen?"

I have been interacting with readers for 400 weeks trying to be an interlocutor between them and the newspaper. What is abundantly clear is that journalism is a public good and should survive for the sake of democracy. As CJR said, "The public needs

journalism, and journalists need to ask where the current model is failing, and how it can be rebuilt." The task of re-imagining journalism cannot be left to journalists and media managers alone. It requires the collective thinking of all stakeholders. Readers, as the *raison d'être* of journalism, are the substantial stakeholders and their inputs are essential in reworking the contours of journalism for the 21st century.

#### Elements of legacy journalism

What are the essential elements of legacy journalism we need to retain and what are the elements that can be altered or even rejected? Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel spelt out 10 elements common to good journalism.

They are: 1) Journalism's first obligation is to the truth; 2) Its first loyalty is to citizens; 3) Its essence is a discipline of verification; 4) Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover; 5) It must serve as an independent monitor of power; 6) It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise; 7) It must strive to keep the significant interesting and relevant; 8) It must keep the news comprehensive and proportional; 9) Its practitioners must be allowed to exercise their personal conscience; and 10) Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news. The business model and revenue streams are inextricably linked with these core elements and the stakeholders have to come up with a compelling reason for abandoning any one of these elements.

#### An important distinction

These key elements also paved way for the crucial distinction in a broadsheet daily like *The Hindu*: the difference between news and views. In the U.S., the current debate is about the idea of objectivity in journalism. Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Wesley Lowery recently wrote an interesting piece in *The New York Times* on the question of objectivity. According to him what most editors call objective journalism "is constructed atop a pyramid of subjective decision-making" and has been defined "almost exclusively by white reporters and their mostly white bosses."

Over the next few weeks, I solicit the opinions of our readers on how to re-imagine journalism by looking beyond the obvious pitfalls such as the impact of post-truth narratives that flow from the top and the economic strain caused by the pandemic.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

## How to counter China

India needs serious economic reforms

ATMAN M. TRIVEDI

The June 15 clash between India and China in the Galwan Valley offers a glimpse of what may lie ahead for India. Despite New Delhi's nuanced diplomacy, China's authoritarian turn at home and assertive behaviour abroad underscore a growing problem. India's China challenge couldn't come at a worse time. While working to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, India finds itself struggling to navigate an economic emergency. Success – and keeping Beijing at bay – will hinge upon completing the transformation begun in 1991.

China's economic opening-up has left India behind, contributing to a military imbalance. In 1987, both countries' nominal GDP were almost five times larger than India's in 2019. Not coincidentally, from rough parity in 1989, China's military spending last year more than tripled India's. India's pronounced economic slump, predating the epidemic, won't help right this equation. The government's near-term attention may be consumed by tending to the swelling ranks of the poor. Limited fiscal and monetary tools, and dried-up private financing, constrain India's options. Heightened vigilance along the LAC demands summoning scarce resources. Defence budgets were already tightening. If India cannot close the economic gap and build military muscle, Beijing may feel emboldened to probe the subcontinent's land and maritime periphery.

#### Slowdown in reforms

The root causes of India's economic woes can be traced to a slowdown in reforms. In 1991, India enacted changes allowing markets to set commodity prices but did not similarly liberalise land, labour and capital. Nearly 30 years after historic reforms, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has the opportunity to launch big, structural change, to eventually resume growth above 8% and keep China at arm's length.

This spring, the government has delivered mixed messages about a revitalised reform agenda. Officials have discussed land and labour changes, while reaffirming an interest in integrating India into global value chains. Several States have tem-

porarily lifted labour restrictions, eliciting concerns about going too far, while others intend to make land acquisition easier. But Delhi's drumbeat of self-reliance could inhibit growth and constrain investment in a more vigorous foreign and defence policy. To be clear, greater self-sufficiency can be salutary. Home-grown manufacturing of critical medicinal ingredients or digital safeguards on citizens' personal data would reduce vulnerabilities. Conversely, imposing protective barriers to build-up local defence industry would hamper acquisitions helping balance Beijing.

In the coming years, India's most important contest with China will likely unfold in C-suites and boardrooms. Right now, China faces intense scrutiny resulting from the pandemic, geopolitical competition, trade wars, and economic coercion. Businesses are revisiting whether or not to diversify suddenly exposed international value chains. India's rivals are staking their claim on regulatory predictability, stable tax policies, and fewer trade obstacles. While India remains outside the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, competitors are wooing companies seeking lower trade barriers. Asian countries are pushing ahead: Vietnam just inked a trade deal with the European Union that threatens to slice into India's exports.

India urgently needs increased exports and investments to provide more well-paying jobs, technology, and know-how. Businesses purchase cost-efficient inputs overseas for use in higher value, manufactured exports. Before committing to long-term, multi-billion investments, companies often want to test India's market through international sales. Liberalisation remains the tried-and-true path to competitiveness. If India can unite its people and rapidly strengthen capabilities, it will likely discover that China is kept more honest. The choices that India makes to recapture consistent, high growth will determine its future. Bold reforms offer the best option to manage Beijing and achieve greater independence on the world stage.

Atman M. Trivedi worked in the U.S. Commerce and State Departments and U.S. Senate on India matters. He is a managing director at Hills & Company, International Consultants



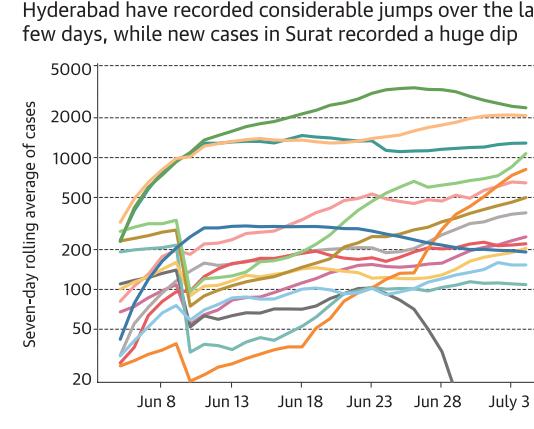
#### DATA POINT

## Viral in CITIES

**URBAN SHARE** The table compares cases/deaths recorded between June 5 and July 4 in selected cities and their share in the cases/deaths recorded across India in this period. These 15 cities (Ahmedabad and Hyderabad did not have data on deaths) accounted for over half of both India's cases/deaths in this period

■ Ahmedabad ■ Aurangabad ■ Bengaluru ■ Chennai ■ Delhi ■ Hyderabad ■ Kalyan ■ Kolkata ■ Mumbai ■ Nashik ■ Navi Mumbai ■ Pune ■ Surat ■ Thane ■ Vasai-Virar

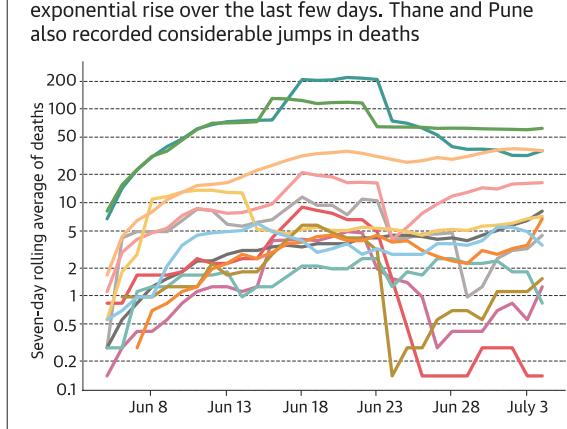
**NEW CASES** The chart depicts the seven-day rolling average of new cases in select cities. Bengaluru and Hyderabad have recorded considerable jumps over the last few days, while new cases in Surat recorded a huge dip



The brunt of COVID-19 has largely been borne by urban centres across India. Initially, Mumbai, Chennai and Delhi accounted for a majority of the cases among cities, but lately, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and suburban areas adjoining Mumbai such as Thane and Kalyan have recorded a significant rise in cases. Bengaluru and Pune also recorded surges in COVID-19 fatalities. By **The Hindu Data Team**

Parameter	
Deaths in India	12,931
Cases in India	4,47,147
Deaths in selected cities	7,414
Cases in selected cities	2,40,372
% of deaths in selected cities	57%
% of cases in selected cities	53%

**NEW DEATHS** The chart depicts the seven-day rolling average of new deaths in select cities. Bengaluru saw an exponential rise over the last few days. Thane and Pune also recorded considerable jumps in deaths



## The Hindu

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 6, 1970

Differences on early poll

The big debate is still continuing behind the scenes in circles close to the Prime Minister on the advantages and disadvantages of an earlier general election – on the evident assumption that the compulsive logic of the Congress split and the follow-up politics of polarisation will sooner or later compel Mrs. Gandhi to go to the polls before 1972. Relying rather heavily on the recent by-election pointers, the protagonists of a mid-term poll in the Prime Minister's camp are maintaining that by the law of averages the Ruling Congress should be able to improve its position in Parliament, if Mrs. Gandhi can relate the policies of her Government more closely to the timing and tactics of a general election. But the antagonists of such a gamble are cautioning against this facile assumption that the outcome of a crucial general election can be decisively influenced by conscious timing or deliberate calculation, let alone by captivating propaganda or slick political manoeuvre.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 6, 1920

Dyer Appreciation Fund

(From an editorial)

When a few days back a writer in Capital blurted out that, if the Government dishonoured General Dyer, the European community in India should raise a fund to compensate him, we were not disposed to think much of it, as the idea was too patently monstrous to gain adherents. In our simplicity we thought even the Anglo Indian would recognise a limit to his defence of crime and injustice on the mere impulsion of kinship with the culprit. We now find that Anglo Indians, apparently not content with all the loud propaganda of their organs in India and their friends in England, have started a "Dyer Appreciation Fund" with the object of presenting General Dyer with a sword of honour and a substantial purse. These Britishers would almost seem to teach the world that it is worthwhile being a butcher of men. The most amazing part of the new move is that the promoters of the Fund expect Indians to subscribe profusely for it. Was ever irony more sharp and bitter than in this appeal for Indian coin to honour a man that treated Indian lives worse than chaff? India, however, has made up her mind and knows what value to place on these croakings. If the insolence of jingoism has no limit, it may have to learn sooner or later, that there is a limit to India's patience.

## FROM PAGE ONE

## China doubles down on boundary claims

"Bhutan has sent a strong message to China," said one source, adding that Bhutan's response was also given through the GEF council meeting where China had raised the issue. At the time, Bhutan had assumed that since the Chinese representative was not a Foreign Ministry official, but a Deputy Director General (DDG) in the Chinese Financial and Monetary Cooperation Division, that the decision to stop the grant, which failed, was not thought through.

According to the GEF Council Chairman's summary released on June 16, of the virtual meeting held on June 2-3, Aparna Subramani, the World Bank official representing Bhutan, as well as India, Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka, had said that "Bhutan totally rejects the claim made by the Council Member of China. Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary is an integral and sovereign

territory of Bhutan and at no point during the boundary discussions between Bhutan and China has it featured as a disputed area".

"Bhutan hoped its response would close the matter," the source added.

According to Bhutanese experts, the claim on Sakteng will open new fronts of negotiation when the next round of boundary talks are held.

"Such claims undermine the boundary talks and wild claims on either side by officials will only exacerbate issues as Bhutan too can lay claims far north," said Tenzing Lamsang, Editor of *The Bhutanese* newspaper in Thimphu, in a series of tweets last week. "Ultimately Bhutan and China need to resolve its boundary disputes or such false claims will come up as a pressure tactic," he added.

(With inputs from Ananth Krishnan)

## Students in limbo as UGC yet to decide on exams

A group of students from the Gujarat Technological University wrote to UGC asking that their exams, which have been postponed, be cancelled and alternative assessment methods approved, so that they can go ahead with future plans. Other GTU students, however, said they were depending on the final year examinations to boost their grades.

In April, a UGC panel headed by Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Haryana R.C. Kuhad had recommended that final year examinations could be held in July, while intermediate semester students could be

graded based on internal assessment or examinations where possible. On June 24, HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank said he had advised UGC to review its earlier guidelines.

## Board exams

Since then, the HRD Ministry has cancelled school board examinations, and postponed medical and engineering entrance examinations. However, the fate of university exams are still undecided, with students looking for a job or applying for further studies left hanging in the limbo.

(With inputs from Tanu Kulkarni in Bengaluru)

## Vaccine trials take 6 to 9 months: Swaminathan

So launching the vaccine for public use before August 15 this year would mean that the Phase-3 trial, which tests the efficacy of the vaccine on a large number of participants and takes the longest time to complete, may have to be skipped or rushed.

In the midst of the pandemic and in the absence of any safe and efficacious vaccine, attempts are being made to accelerate vaccine development.

On whether vaccine development can be rushed through, bypassing certain critical stages of testing, Dr. Swaminathan said: "The pandemic demands unprecedented efforts to develop a vaccine. That is why the WHO and partners launched the ACT [Access to COVID-19 Tools] accelerator to accelerate the development, deployment and delivery of COVID vaccines. While clinical trials need to be performed with scientific rigour and demonstrate efficacy and safety, timelines can be shortened by investing in manufacturing upfront, preparing sites in advance, regulatory harmonisation, collaboration between the different government agencies and anticipating the next steps. Performing trials in areas and among groups with a high risk of infection will also help by accumulating the necessary endpoints in a shorter time."

**Recently approved**  
China has recently approved the use of one of its COVID-19 vaccines, which has completed Phase-1 and Phase-2 trials, to be used exclusively by the military for one year. The vaccine is not currently being made available for public use.

Reiterating the need to conduct a Phase-3 trial before launching the vaccine for public use, Dr. Swaminathan told *The Hindu*:

## 6 of 37 Karnataka fatalities were asymptomatic

14 dead, 998 test positive in A.P.; in Kerala, 22 among 27 infected locally

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala reported 225 new cases of COVID-19 on Sunday, and the cumulative case burden of the State was 5,429. Of the new cases, 51 were due to local transmission, while 174 were imported.

Many districts reported an increase in local transmission and the authorities could not link many of these

## COVID-19

to a particular source.

The situation was acute in Thiruvananthapuram district, where the government declared a triple lockdown.

In Thiruvananthapuram 22 of 27 cases reported on Sunday were acquired by people from the community. Of the 22, there was no epidemiological link for 14. Dis-

ease transmission was steadily on the rise in the urban areas as well as the coastal areas in the capital.

A similar situation existed in urban Ernakulam. The 51 cases of local transmission also included those of seven Defence Security Corps and two CISF jawans in Kannur, two BSF jawans in Thrissur, and two ship crew.

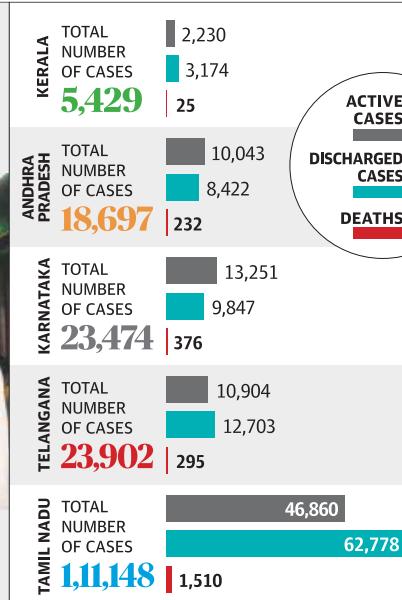
As many as 1,925 new COVID-19 cases and 37 deaths were reported in Karnataka on Sunday. The positive cases were the highest for a single day. With this, the case total for the State stood at 23,474 and COVID-19 deaths at 372. As many as 64% of the total 1,925 positive cases were from Bengaluru Urban. Of the 37 deaths, 16 were from Bengaluru Urban, and 10 from Bidar. The Department of Health and Family Welfare said two deaths each

## In good faith

Places of worship have slowly started opening their doors to the public after taking precautionary measures. The graphs show the spread of COVID-19 in southern States



Fever check: A devotee getting her temperature checked at the Sai Baba temple in Vijayawada on Sunday. ■ K.V.S. GIRI



were reported in Belagavi and Kalaburagi. Davangere, Chikkaballapura, Hassan, Mysuru, Tumakuru, Davangere and Dharwad reported

one death each. The bulletin said six asymptomatic people were among the 37 who

succumbed to COVID-19.

A total of 603 patients were discharged on Sunday. Of 13,251 active cases, 243 were in intensive care.

Fourteen patients died and 998 cases were reported in Andhra Pradesh on Sun-

day. Fatalities and new cases were the highest in a single day. The tally rose to 18,697 and toll to 232, the Health Department said.

The State had over 10,000 active patients. During the last 24 hours, 414 recovered,

taking total recoveries to 8,422 and active cases to 10,043.

Telangana's cases touched 23,902 on Sunday and seven patients succumbed to the disease. The new cases included 1,277 from Greater Hyderabad, 125 from Medchal, and 82 from Rangareddy. Of the total 23,902 cases, 10,904 were active cases, 12,703 were discharged and 295 died.

As many as 4,150 new patients were added to the number of persons who tested positive in Tamil Nadu for COVID-19, taking the total positive cases to 11,151. The total number of deaths due to the infection rose to 1,510 as 60 more deaths were recorded in the State on Sunday. Chennai's new cases number fell, with 1,713 fresh positives while 1,000 people returned home after treatment.

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

## Covaxin trial to kick off in Belagavi soon

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BELAGAVI

Covaxin, the first possible vaccine against COVID-19, will be tested on a team of around 200 healthy volunteers in and around Belagavi in Karnataka.

The clinical trials will be conducted by doctors and staff members of Jeevan Rekha, a multi-speciality hospital here, monitored by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Bharat Biotech International Ltd., the private company that has developed the chemical molecule, doctors at the hospital said.

Jeevan Rekha is one of the 12 hospitals and health centres in the country chosen by the Union government for clinical trials of the vaccine.

## Streets deserted on Sunday lockdown

Bengaluru Police Commissioner calls for making it a people-driven initiative

KARNATAKA BUREAU  
BENGALURU

Streets were deserted and traffic was non-existent in Karnataka as the Sunday lockdown came into force again.

In Bengaluru, police had closed all flyovers and put up barricades on all major roads, disrupting any travel plans. Except a few autorickshaws at Majestic, all forms of public transport were off the road.

Sunday began with violations of the lockdown, but there was almost complete compliance within a few hours.

Small gatherings were also seen at meat shops, a Sunday morning ritual, where the police enforced queues with social distancing. The police shut down the meat



Quiet streets: An empty petrol pump during the Sunday lockdown in Bengaluru. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

shops by mid-morning in most areas.

Only pharmacies and grocery stores were open. While all places of worship remained closed, police officials said people turned up at Sai Baba temples across the city on the occasion of Guru Poornima

ma and were seen offering prayers from the streets, despite the temples being closed.

As hotels remained open for takeaways, food delivery personnel worked through the day. Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao said e-commerce and food delivery partners were the most over-

worked since the breakout of the pandemic and potentially exposed.

Mr. Rao said the Sunday lockdown would continue for the next few weeks and appealed to the people to make it a people-driven initiative.

## Near total in Mysuru

The lockdown in Mysuru city and rural was near total. Similar reports have come from neighbouring Mandya, Kodagu, and Chamarajanagar districts as well.

In Raichur district, more than 300 motorcycles were seized for violating lockdown rules, according to Sri Hari Babu, Additional Superintendent of Police.

The Sunday lockdown received an overwhelming response from the people in Kalyana Karnataka region.



5 held in gutka, ganja smuggling racket in A.P.

VIJAYAWADA  
The Krishna district police in Andhra Pradesh seized a haul of gutka products and about 10 kg of ganja, all worth around ₹70 lakh, besides confiscating five cars and arresting five persons in this connection, Superintendent of Police (SP) M.

Ravindranath Babu said. On a tip-off, a police team intercepted the cars on Bejir Road and seized the gutka packets of different brands, packed in gunny bags, the SP said at a press conference in Nandigama on Sunday.

## 30 kg of gold seized from consulate cargo in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
Customs enforcers on Sunday inspected an air cargo consignment addressed to the Consular General of the United Arab Emirates here and found 30 kg of gold concealed in imported plumbing material. Officials valued the contraband at ₹15 crore. The shipment had arrived at the international airport here five days ago. It was kept unopened pending customs clearance at the air cargo complex. The UAE consulate has denied any knowledge of the smuggling operation.

## Nine-year-old rescued from forest in A.P.

CHITTOOR  
A nine-year-old boy was rescued by the Tavanampalle police from a forest located near Madhavaram village in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday night. A group of shepherds returning home found the boy sitting under a tree all alone and called the police. The police said that despite repeated efforts, the boy could not respond to questions as he showed signs of speech and hearing impairment. They suspect that the boy could have been abandoned by his parents.

## Two children die in landslip in Mangaluru after heavy rain

Three houses also damaged in the rain

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MANGALURU

Two children died in a landslip at Banglaguppe in Gudurupura on the outskirts of the city in Karnataka on Sunday.

The police identified them as Sufwan, 16, and Sahala, 12, who belonged to the same family. According to the police, the landslip occurred at about 2 p.m. following rains, leaving three houses damaged.

**Rescue operation**  
Twenty firemen were sent to the spot. In all, 15 personnel from the State Disaster Response Force, personnel



Rescue mission: The operation being carried out to rescue the two children trapped under debris in Mangaluru. ■ PTI

from the National Disaster Response Force and the city police besides the public were involved in the search and rescue operations that went on till 5 p.m.

"It appears the two children were caught and buried under the rubble as they were fleeing along with other residents," Chief Fire Officer G. Thippeswamy said.

Officer G. Thippeswamy said. A large number of people had gathered at the site. According to an eyewitness, there was commotion as the firemen took out the bodies of the two children. A police officer was heckled as he was trying to make way for the firemen to shift the bodies to the hospital.

Private hospital in Chaderghat on July 2. "They charged me ₹1.15 lakh for one-day treatment. I requested the hospital's administration to reduce the bill considering that I am a COVID frontline worker. But they did not agree," Dr. Sultan said.

She said she opted for private hospital treatment since two of her relatives were already admitted there and her sister, who stayed close by, could attend to all of them when needed.

Based on her video clip, a team of the Chaderghat police visited the hospital for an inquiry. The police, however, said they were yet to receive a complaint from the doctor or her family members.

Dr. Sultan had attended to COVID-19 patients at the hospital till June 18.

After testing positive for the virus, she isolated herself at home for around 14 days.

She got admitted to the

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# Morale of armed forces very high: ITBP chief

'PM's visit has boosted sentiments of troops at border'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The morale of the armed forces is "very high", and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Ladakh last week and his address to troops "have raised the morale of all the forces at the border", Director-General, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), S.S. Deswal, said on Sunday.

"The complete national leadership, political leadership and the forces and jawans... they are dedicated to the nation. They are dedicated to border security and the morale of all forces, be it the Indian Army, Air Force or ITBP, is very high," Mr. Deswal told presspersons on the sidelines of an event to inaugurate a 10,000-bed COVID care centre.

The facility, which will be operated by the ITBP as the nodal agency, was inaugurated by Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal.

Mr. Deswal stated that personnel of the armed forces had sacrificed their lives in the line of duty in the past



In charge: DRDO officials attending a briefing at a COVID-19 facility in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ PTI

and they were ready to do so in the future as well.

The ITBP, which is tasked with guarding the LAC along with the Army, has inducted an additional 30 companies – around 3,000 personnel – to augment numbers during the ongoing standoff at several locations in eastern Ladakh.

#### DRDO hospital

Meanwhile, in the national capital, a 1,000-bed COVID hospital, which includes a 250-bed intensive care unit (ICU) designed and constructed by the Defence Research and Development Or-

ganisation (DRDO) with the Tata Trust, was inaugurated by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Home Minister Amit Shah.

Visited the 1,000 bed Sardar Patel COVID Hospital, which has 250 ICU beds, along with Rajnath Singh. DRDO built it in record time of 12 days with assistance from Home Ministry, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), armed forces and Tata Trust. Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) team will run it and DRDO will maintain," Mr. Shah said on Twitter later.

#### Constant attacks

Almost on a daily basis, the former Congress chief has been attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the India-China face-off, especially over Mr. Modi's statement during the June 19 all-party meet that "none had occupied Indian land or any Indian post".

Though the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) clarified that Mr. Modi's speech only referred to the area where the clashes took place, the Congress leader continued to attack him personally.

# Nitish to kick-start virtual poll campaign on August 7

Over 10 lakh people to be engaged, say JD(U) leaders



Nitish Kumar

nect with the members and leaders.

#### Alliance problems

The buzz in State's political corridor is that ahead of the polls, the Lok Janshakti Party may come out of the NDA alliance to join the Congress, and that the *mahagathbandhan* (grand alliance) partner Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) could be a part of the NDA.

"We'll also hold virtual State-level meetings of party's senior leaders and office bearers at district and regional level on July 16 addressed by senior party leader RCP Singh", said a senior JD(U) leader.

Besides, the JD(U) has also scheduled a series of virtual meetings of its different cells from July 7 to July 15.

The student's wing of the party has already announced to hold 'Tuesday Talk' every Tuesday to con-

# The Beijing-Islamabad equation of the 1960s

Archival material reveals China's strategic planning despite stated positions on Kashmir, other issues

AMIT BARUAH  
NEW DELHI

Two conversations that Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai had in the 1960s with their Pakistani interlocutors reveal the nature of close consultations between Islamabad and Beijing when it came to India.

In comments to a visiting Pakistani Minister, Mao was quoted as saying, "I once said to the former Indian Ambassador [to China], the younger [R.K.] Nehru, that our main enemy is the United States. You are not our enemy. Later, I ordered that Chinese soldiers are not allowed to shoot at the Indian Army. A

#### SLICE FROM THE PAST

Chinese soldier ran to India and told them about it. They thought we would never shoot. They are [were] very happy and went to our rear areas to walk around. We changed our plan. We increased our strength to three-and-a-half divisions, hit them, and then retreated. They weren't expecting that."

R.K. Nehru was India's Ambassador to China from November 1955 to July 1958.

Mao also reveals what it means for a country to be "rich" in his strategic view: "The main thing is that if you can get rich, you will be fine. You will be able to boycott the United States, Britain and India, and you will be fine. You will need to make weapons. Can you make them? Start by repairing them and move up to building them yourself later."

The Chinese leader also asks Pakistani Commerce Minister Wahid Zaman in July 1964 why Pakistan did not fear the Communist Party but the "capitalists" and then proceeds to answer his own question. The conversation is available in the Wilson Center Digital Archive.

I think this is because we have no conflicts of interest and no border disputes. We don't want to encroach on your land. You don't want our Tibet or Xinjiang either. Neither of us wants to exploit and oppress. We are equal and as equals we can be friends," Mao tells Zaman.

"We had good relations with India for several years. Then when we took Tibet back, India got annoyed..."



Mao Zedong

India not only infringed on 90,000 square kilometres of Chinese territory but they want all of Tibet as well... The Indian people are good, but capitalists like [Jawaharlal] Nehru are not good," Mao added.

Zhou on Kashmir

Mao's conversation with Zaman and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai's talks with Bangla peasant leader Maulana Bhashani in November 1963 also shows the depth of discussion between Pakistan and China on Kashmir and other issues.

Zhou takes great pains to emphasise why in public China advocates the route of bilateral talks between India and Pakistan to settle the Kashmir dispute.

"If we were to say that we support self-determination for the people of Kashmir, India would simply suggest self-determination for the people of the Aksai Chin region in Xinjiang; following that, it would raise the issue for Tibet. These are both our territory, why should they have self-determination," he says.

In Zhou's view, India wanted to occupy the Aksai Chin region – namely, "their so-called Ladakh". The Chinese Premier said that while Pakistan wanted China to support the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris "but in fact our actions already go beyond this", a transcript of the November 1963 conversation, also available in the Wilson Center Digital Archive, stated.

Both Mao and Zhou's comments suggest that the top Chinese leadership was far from averse to sending false signals to India or saying something in public to safeguard their national positions – like on Kashmir.

As these two candid conversations reveal, India – yesterday and today – is dealing with a formidable adversary, which can set abstract principles in opposition to concrete measures, and whose foreign policy is guided by domestic compulsions.

# Two slain militants test positive, say J&K police

First such case recorded in the Valley

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

The J&K police on Sunday said that two militants killed in the Kulgama encounter on Saturday were found to be infected with COVID-19 – the first such cases since the police began taking samples from slain militants.

Meanwhile, one CRPF jawan was injured when militants detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) in south Kashmir's Pulwama.

"While carrying out the medico-legal formalities, the samples of the killed terrorists were taken and sent for COVID-19 test. On Sunday, the test reports were received from the Chest Disease Hospital, Srinagar, and both the killed terrorists were confirmed as coronavirus positive," a police spokesman said.

The two militants, one of whom was a non-local while the other is yet to be identified, were killed in a daylong operation in Kulgama. "The bodies of these killed terrorists shall be buried as per COVID-19 protocol at Baramulla," the police spokesman added.

**Isolated graves**

The police said since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure the safety of people from inherent risk of contracting the infection, the burial of the terrorists is carried out at designated places in north and central Kashmir.

Dozens of militants have been buried in far off and less populated hilly areas. No bodies have been handed over to the families for burial in their native places since April.

On April 22, Director General of Police, Dilbag Singh, expressed fears over "Pakistan trying to export coronavirus patients to Jammu & Kashmir".

tweeted when Mr. Modi was on a visit to Ladakh.

The former Congress chief has also been very active in sharing his views on the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He started a series of virtual dialogues with experts from different fields on how to handle the pandemic, including Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee, economist Raghuram Rajan, industrialist

#### NEWS ANALYSIS

ist Rajiv Bajaj among others, and became a part of the Congress' internal group on COVID-19 that is headed by former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

#### No response

Since the March 25 nationwide lockdown, Mr. Gandhi held at least three press conferences to highlight the different aspects of the Modi government's handling of the pandemic.

Yet, when a journalist asked him at a virtual press conference on May 8 that whether he was ready to take over the party's reins again, Mr. Gandhi replied, "Please see my letter from a year ago."

When a journalist asked him at a virtual press conference on May 8 that whether he was ready to take over the party's reins again, Mr. Gandhi replied, "Please see my letter from a year ago."

#### The leadership question

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, backed by other colleagues, again raised the issue on June 23 at a meeting of the Congress Working Committee, but Mr. Gandhi kept quiet.

However, another leader, known to be close to Mr. Gandhi, said the party did not have any other option as "Mr. Gandhi is the most acceptable leader to the workers after his mother".

The delay in settling the leadership question, however, could also be deliberate, as a powerful section, including MPs, is not eager at Mr. Gandhi's return and the party may not risk open dissidence now.

stated objective of the NSCN (IM) for reducing the rate of "payable tax" but the outfit is known to levy 25% 'tax' on a month's income, payable once a year, of every salaried employee in the government or private sector. The group also levies several other 'taxes'.

The NSCN (IM) is not the only organisation that levies such 'taxes'. Reacting to the Governor's letter, almost all the organisations justified their 'taxes' and said it goes

# NSCN (IM) reduces its 'tax' rate to 3%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland or the NSCN (IM) has reduced its 'tax' rate in view of the 'prevailing COVID-19 pandemic crisis'.

The outfit calls itself the National Socialist Council of Nagaland to differentiate from other factions.

The economic crisis induced by the lockdown is the

# Heavy rains cause landslips in Manipur

A CORRESPONDENT  
IMPHAL

Torrential rains in the past few days have triggered massive landslips in Noney and Tamenglong district in Manipur, said official reports. Almost all rivers in the two districts are flowing above the danger mark.

to running the administration of their legitimate governments.

A resistance has been building up in Nagaland against multiple 'taxes'. The Against Corruption and Unabated Taxation, an organisation formed in 2017, has been asking all the extremist groups to come together so that the people get some relief by paying "one tax to one government".

ED to file another case against Sanjay Bhandari

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated the process of registering another money-laundering case against middleman Sanjay Bhandari and others. It is related to an alleged illegal consultancy agreement with Samsung Engineering Co. Limited (SECL) to help the company get a project worth ₹6,744.32 crore in Gujarat. Last month, in the same matter, the CBI booked the accused persons in a corruption case. In June last year, the CBI had booked Mr. Bhandari and others for alleged corruption in the ₹2,895-crore deal for 75 Pilatus aircraft for the IAF.

Prominent citizens flay arrest of scribes in Bengal

KOLKATA

Several civil society organisations and prominent citizens from West Bengal have signed a statement protesting against the arrest of journalists running a YouTube channel "Arambag TV". Sheikh Shafikul Islam, chief executive of the channel, his wife Alima Khatun and another journalist Suraj Ali Khan were arrested on June 29. They were sent to police custody by a district court. Retired Supreme Court Justice Asok K. Ganguly, former State Chief Secretary Ardhendu Sen and Prasad Ranjan Ray are among the signatories.

CMYK



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PIXABAY

■ SUDHIR VARADARAJAN

The whole world is witnessing a paradoxical situation where carnage in some areas is complemented by improvement in others. Most governments across the world resorted to the desperate measure of lockdown to protect lives and buy time to respond to the invisible threat. However, factors such as the time-to-market for a vaccine, and the economic and social costs of lockdown are forcing them to nudge institutions and individuals to learn to live with the virus. A key concern is whether students have learnt from this once-in-a-lifetime experience?

Many students in their final year find themselves in a state of high uncertainty, especially when their admissions or job offers have been cancelled, and the idea of a gap year is not viewed positively. The anxiety of class XII students is also understandable. What about those in between? I have been exchang-

## Lessons from A PANDEMIC

Students and institutions need to acknowledge the value of Living, Innovating and Working (LIWing) within their own specific contexts and transfer this knowledge across domains

ing notes with over 300 engineering students about their experience during the lockdown. As expected, one of the top priorities was academic work, i.e. completing assignments/projects and preparing for exams. Others, in the order of importance, included reading books, coding, online courses and con-

tests, social media and entertainment, household chores and spending time with family.

Not many seemed to realise that they were missing out on an opportunity to gain some invaluable experience in life skills. Even if they did, their conditioning that learning, innovating and working (LIWing) are isolated ac-

tivities that happen in different institutions would have affected the quality of their experience. Let me illustrate this by reflecting on my own experience.

**Integral nature of LIWing**  
In the initial stages of the lockdown, I focused on completing my coursework using online

tools and trying to hold together the nascent incubation ecosystem. Luckily, the course that I was handling – Sociology of Design – was a useful vehicle to explore the situation. In the process of encouraging students to practice ethnography in the context of their homes, we coined words like Coronage and Covidya to make sense of the new situation. On the home front, I started taking ownership of household activities that were outdoor and not in conflict with my work schedule like cleaning the car, watering the plants, preparing tea in the morning, and sprucing up the garden in the evening. I felt I was doing my bit, but this did not seem to help. The increased workload inside the house resulted in frequent flare ups, threatening the social order.

It took a couple of weeks for me to realise the changing context inside the house and that there were tasks where scalability was an issue. For instance, cutting vegetables, kneading

**Academic institutions must seriously consider encouraging students to learn by doing in their contexts as they shift towards online course delivery.**

dough, and the frequency of mopping the floor. Once I started taking up these activities, the situation started to ease and the social order was restored. I realised that my household workload had now increased to three hours a day and that it affected some other priorities, but I was able to repeat the process every day without feeling it as a chore.

As I continued the conversations with students to make sense of the Coronage and my new responsibilities, I noticed that I had to quickly figure out the social (people, relationships and requirements) and physical contexts (where different objects were), translate the requirements into functions like cutting vegetables, understand expectations (cleanliness, quality), discover nuances in the cutting process (depending on the form of the vegetable, the type of knife, cutting board) and deliver the outcomes (size, shape, sequence). I had to improve skills and efficiency in accomplishing some tasks and improvise in a few areas.

In other words, I was learning, innovating and working simultaneously. It is this integral nature of LIWing that was helping me immerse in the context and get a glimpse of household work. It also reinforced the idea that experiencing means LIWing in the context and transferring this ability across domains, which is the essence of design, a few areas.

innovation and leadership.

### Once-in-a-lifetime experience

It is important for us to realise that the Coronage is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It can change interactions in every sphere of human activity – home, work, education, health, time, travel, eating/drinking, shopping – and trigger micro-trends. For instance, it has brought fresh focus on personal health and healthcare systems. It has blurred the boundaries between work and home, weekday and weekend. It has given new benchmarks for a cleaner environment. It has challenged the power imbalance between experts and commons; and messed up predictions of AI/ML models.

Above all, I think it has given us a mirror to reflect and a window of opportunity to explore the unique characteristic of everyday household work, where the integrity of learning, innovating and working still thrives, unlike in the academia and industry. It is time for students and institutions to acknowledge the value of this LIWing environment. Academic institutions must seriously consider encouraging students to learn by doing in their contexts as they shift towards online course delivery. It is only through a deeper appreciation of their local contexts that students can contribute to *atmanirbhara*. This is the new challenge that institutions must gear up to prepare students for LIWing in the Coronage.

The writer is Dean (Design, Innovation & Incubation), Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing, Kancheepuram.

### VALUE ADD

## Relax, breathe, talk it over

How AI-based solutions can help deal with mental health issues faced by students

■ SMARTHVEER SIDANA

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the feeling of fear and anxiety, due to sudden changes in lifestyle, social distancing and increasing uncertainty about the future. According to a survey conducted by The Indian Psychiatry Society, there has been a 20% increase in the number of mental health cases in March alone. And the worst affected in this situation are the students.

Students are facing many challenges such as rescinding of job offers and internships, losing foreign education and research opportunities, increased exposure to domestic violence, and so on.

Mental health issues capture a wide spectrum of people. It is important to provide solutions to all those affected: from those showing early signs of stress or anxiety to others experiencing acute mental illness. Based on discussions with mental health professionals, they fall into four categories:

**Category A:** Unaware that they are going through mental distress and lack clarity on what is normal and what is not

**Category B:** Aware but do not want to accept their mental illness

**Category C:** Accepted they have a problem but don't want to share it with anyone

**Category D:** Actively seek help from mental health professionals to get better.

Interactions with mental health professionals have shown that approximately 70% of Indians facing mental health challenges fall in categories A and B. When it comes to students, almost 80% fall in the same categories.

Currently, existing mental health solutions (webinars, awareness content in form of reports/videos, in-person/telephonic counselling facilities, and chatbot AI) primarily cater to people belonging to categories C and D, and, more importantly, to people in Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities, who have Internet connectivity and awareness. But what about someone in a low-income strata or living in an area with low Internet connectivity, and, understands only their regional language? What about those who are unaware of or do not accept the problem? How do we ensure that the solution solves problems for people across demographics?

**Integrated approach**  
A holistic solution must bring together AI-supported mechanisms, on-ground capacity building by training field workers and consultation mechanisms through telephonic or in-person support, with the key focus area being establishing trust and

taking away the fear of revealing one's identity. Some ways in which students can deal with this difficult phase are by maintaining a proper schedule with time for studies, work, exercise, recreation and rest, consuming a healthy diet and having a proper sleep routine, having frequent conversations with friends and family, and discussing their problems with parents or close ones. However, while these are short-term measures, it is critical to come up with long-term solutions as well. These can include:

**Chatbot AI:** Though meant for students in the C and D categories, it also caters to the needs of people who wants to keep a track of their mental health and mindfulness regularly. If these chatbots are integrated with regular messaging services like WhatsApp, this will ensure wider reach and easier accessibility to the masses.

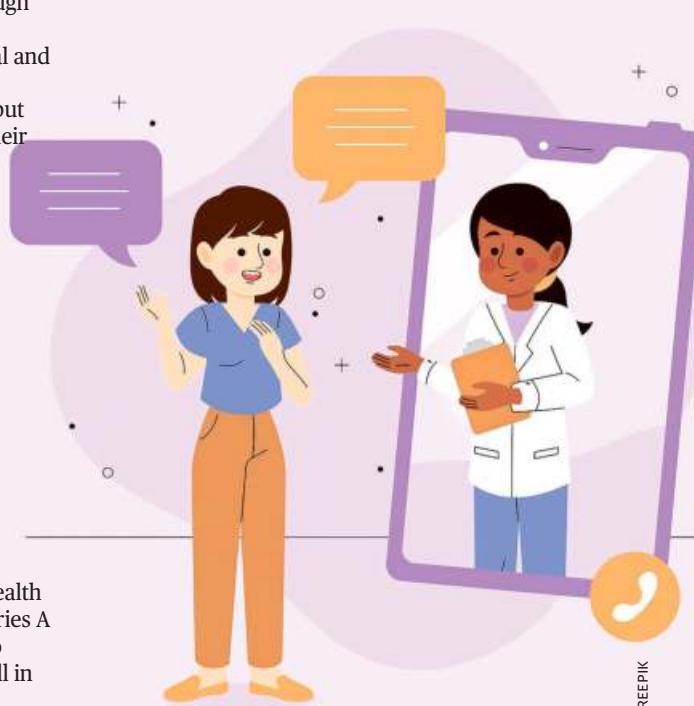
**Counselling Support:** A designated app to

connect people with psychiatrists and counsellors is essential. With the ongoing social distancing, it is important that people do not miss their counselling sessions or feel the absence of support. Along with counselling apps, teleconsultation will help cater to people with little/no Internet connection or even those who are not comfortable with using apps. This designated space should also be designed to protect the patient's identity and give them the confidence to seek help.

**Teacher-capacity building:** Given the lack of availability of counsellors, teachers should be trained to become students' primary psychological support. Teacher capacity can be built by developing curriculum and training them to support their students in times of need, while also spreading. This becomes even more critical when we consider academic institutions in rural areas with little mental health awareness and lack of counselling support.

The need of the hour is to have a holistic approach and create an amalgamation of all three solutions. Students should be offered solutions to reduce their anxiety and support themselves in these difficult times. At the grassroots level, they should spend time by virtually interacting with their peers and stay connected with their family. Most importantly, they should not be afraid to accept that something is bothering them, and be open enough to share it and seek help.

**Disclaimer:** Views are personal and don't represent the views of the writer's organisations.



The writer is IIT Delhi alumnus & Harvard HCONF Scholar (smarthveer@gmail.com)

Do you feel uncertain about a career option? Do you lack the freedom to choose a subject that you want to pursue? Do you feel low on self-confidence? Are you constantly doubting yourself? A Q&A column to assuage your doubts



### OFF THE EDGE

NANDINI RAMAM

My son was born in Puerto Rico, the U.S., and is an OCI card holder studying in class X, CBSE, in India. Apart from academics, he practises music. He wants to pursue his UG and master's in the U.S. Later, he wants to be in investment banking. How much does it cost? What else does he have to do? - Dr. Krishna

Dear Dr. Krishna,  
UG admission is certainly possible, but I don't have a realistic idea on the costs involved, as these are dependent on college, university and the state that he eventually chooses. Your son will need to excel in the SAT and get a good score to begin the process. You could also apply for scholarships, should he have an impressive CV with extraordinary credentials in the academic, extracurricular, hobbies/interest, volunteering and internship space. A good idea is to shortlist colleges and start e-communicating with them to clarify these questions.

I am currently in class XI. I wish to pursue a career in Law. In class XII, I will attend the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) coaching to secure my admission into NLSIU. I am open to pursuing my bachelor's in the U.K., and later want to pursue my master's too from there. What should I do? - Parul Malik

Dear Parul,  
The U.K. follows a system of Uncodified laws known as 'Common Law' (judge made law). There is very little codification in the form of Magna Carta or Bill of Rights. The U.K. also has the most flexible Constitution since it is not written down. India, on the other hand, has codified laws

and our Constitution is the lengthiest in the world. Both countries have their own merits and demerits. It is best if you do your own research and arrive at a decision. Speak to 2-3 people currently in the field who have studied in both India and the U.K., and evaluate their journey. The good news is that you can practice in the U.K. even if you do law from an Indian university and vice versa. Best wishes.

I finished my board exams this year and am looking for career opportunities in Political Science. I studied Humanities. I want to stay in Delhi. Besides Delhi University and Ambedkar University, what are the other options? -- Anchita Dua

Dear Anchita,  
Political Science is available across many colleges in Delhi: Hindu College, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Kiroli Mal College, Ramjas College, Miranda House, Sri Venkateswara College, Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College, Dyal Singh College, and so on. Check online for the cut offs and admission criteria for the colleges you would like to apply to. Post the course, you can consider a career in civil services, politics, law, social service, journalism, political scientist, teaching, and so on. A few years into the course will help you identify what you enjoy, and you could pursue your further education or a career choice from there on. Best wishes.

**Disclaimer:** This column is not a substitute for long-term therapy. It is merely a guiding voice. Some issues may need medical intervention.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. She has worked extensively with students and young adults across a range of issues.  
Send your questions sent to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com The subject line should be: 'Off the edge'.

### SCHOLARSHIP

#### IDFC FIRST Bank MBA Scholarship

IDFC FIRST Bank's scholarship programme aims to help MBA students who require financial support to manage their tuition fees.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Indian students who are enrolled in the first year of full-time MBA programmes at selected educational institutions. Students must have an annual family income of not more than ₹6 lakh.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Selected scholars will be provided with ₹1 lakh per annum for two years of their full-time MBA/PGDM or equivalent programme.

**DEADLINE:** July 31

**APPLICATION:** Online www.b4s.in/edge/IFMS2

#### Toppr Asha Programme

Toppr invites applications for its free online learning-cum-reward programme – Toppr Asha – supported by Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. This provides free learning support to meritorious students belonging to underserved and low-income families.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to classes IX to XII (Science and Commerce) students. They must have a smartphone and be comfortable with taking assessment tests in English. The family's annual income should be ₹3 lakh per annum or less.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Free annual Toppr Advance Pack subscription and rewards worth up to ₹10,000, based on the student's performance in year-end assessment

**DEADLINE:** July 15

**APPLICATION:** Online www.b4s.in/edge/TOS1

#### IIT Kharagpur Centre of Material Science Senior Research Fellowship

IIT Kharagpur invites applications for the Centre of Material Science Senior Research Fellowship 2020. The fellows are required to work on the project titled, "Development of Sodium-Ion Rechargeable Coin Cell Micro-Batteries for Consumer Electronic Devices (RCF)".

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open for candidates who hold an MTech degree in Material Science/Ceramic Technology/Material Science & Engineering with two years of research experience. They must be below 32 years of age.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Up to ₹35,000 per month

**DEADLINE:** July 7, 2020

**APPLICATION MODE:** Online www.b4s.in/edge/TKG9

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

# Learning not lost

A shift from 'the normal' has a significant impact on children with intellectual disabilities, whose lives are largely governed by routine. Here is how they are adapting to staying home

ANASUYA MENON

Sania Antony has been busy the past few weeks, painting on dry twigs and leaves. Though she misses her friends at school, she gets to interact with her teacher over the phone and that keeps her spirits up. Sania is 22 and has intellectual disability. Studying at the vocational unit of Raksha Special School in Kochi, she has not yet grasped the concept of the lockdown. Her mother involves her in household chores, assigning small tasks such as folding clothes or peeling garlic and that keeps her occupied.

## Out of routine

For people with intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders, whose lives are largely governed by routine, the new normal has been especially hard. Not being able to attend their daily therapy – physio, vocational, sensory or language – due to COVID-imposed restrictions, people with special needs have been struggling with managing movement and emotions.

"The comfort and predictability of routine gives those with autism a sense of control," says Merry Barua, founder-director of Action For Autism (AFA), a centre based in Delhi that works for the rights of individuals with autism and their families. "It is not just their routine that is affected now. Even those around them are confined to the house, and this confuses them," she says.

Vocational centres and special schools, however, have taken the challenge head on. Using technology-based interventions, they are reaching out to their students and parents. Chat groups, webinars and



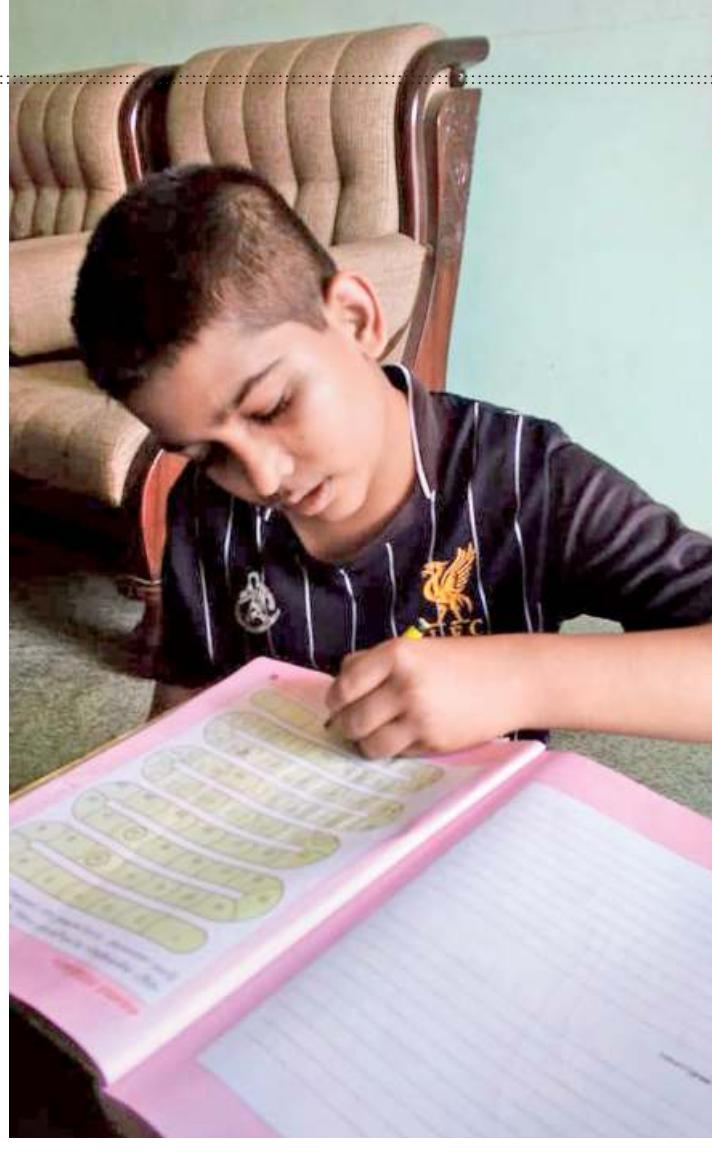
interactive online whiteboards have become the new norm.

## Tech takes

AFA started online classes and Barua says she is surprised at how well the students have taken to it. "However, we advise parents to give their child a visually clear schedule for the day, which would make the situation easier and help them cope better."

Smrithi Special School in Kochi, which caters to children with intellectual disabilities, started online classes much ahead of the Government's call for a lockdown. WhatsApp groups were formed through which teachers gave out activities pertaining to art and craft, so that

**A number of parents would call in during the initial days and report aggressive behaviour by their wards**



parents would not have to think up something new every day. One group would have six to eight students and one teacher.

"When there's a sudden disruption in their routine, they become anxious. A number of parents would call in during the initial days and report aggressive behaviour by their wards," says Padmini Hariharan, the principal of Smrithi. However, as days went by, the teachers drew up a schedule and called the students at a specified time every day. "Each teacher is asked to give a report about the day's work, so we can assess the child's progress," she adds.

Adarsh Rehabilitation School, Purnareeva Technology Solutions and TCS together have launched Parigyan, a 'school at home' initia-

tive, which reaches out to over 500 children in Kochi with cerebral palsy (CP), mental retardation (MR) and various other developmental disorders through live sessions and Jamboard (Google's collaborative digital white board). The programme offers physiotherapy sessions using artificial intelligence and augmented reality-based fine motor therapy, which can be used as rough guides.

The platform, says Robin Tommy, Head, TCS Incubation Rapid Labs, enables continual learning and improvement of cerebral, cognitive and movement capability. "We recreated existing algorithms, customised for children with special needs," says Robin. These tutorials are backed by voice and music to make it interesting.

**Moving online** Children with intellectual disabilities learning at home  
• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



## Parental pressure

In all of these measures, the parent or the caregiver plays a vital role, says Girija Nath Menon, executive secretary of Raksha Society, adding that an orientation session was organised for parents.

"I believe, we just have to rise up to the challenge, whatever it is and over the years, we have grown used to the challenges," says Rajitha Ulles, mother of 29-year-old Indu, who has autism. Indu used to go to her vocational centre before COVID-19 hit, and now helps her mother with household chores. "She misses going to the centre, but I can see that she has adapted well. She has even adjusted well to wearing a mask," says Rajitha.

Another major concern for parents is the specialised treatment their children need. "A sudden stop in physio, sensory integration, and occupational therapies could lead to emotional stress," says Anas K, who is a neurophysiotherapist and managing partner of Moveaze, a physiotherapy and rehabilitation centre in Kozhikode, which has launched online physiotherapy sessions. "Most people with intellectual disability need some kind of therapy and the lack of it can lead to tightening and weakness of the muscles and joint stiffness." Anas also points out that it is not safe to blindly follow a routine from the Internet, as each individual has a specific need. It best to consult with the person's existing therapist.

It is about constantly pushing the boundaries, says special educator Shruti Arora, from Moradabad, who specialises in autism spectrum condition. "It is extremely demanding for most parents as they have to juggle household chores and jobs. How each family adjusts to the situation is different. However, they seem to have settled into a beautiful new routine," she says.

## Q&amp;A

**Is there any home remedy for dry eyes. Or any particular diet?**

There is some anecdotal evidence that deficiency of Vitamins A and D can cause or worsen dry eye symptoms. A diet rich in vitamin A or supplements of these vital nutrients can be useful in relief of symptoms of dry eye. Omega-3 fatty acids are often considered useful in the management of dry eye. Good dietary sources of omega-3 fatty acids include salmon, sardines, herring and cod. Fish oils from these sources are excellent sources of omega-3. Flax seed oil is a good vegetarian source. Since dehydration can also worsen symptoms of dry eyes, intake of sufficient amounts of water every day can also improve dry eye symptoms.

Frequent blinking, limiting use of air conditioners, television, computers and mobile phones and using good quality sunglasses are often sufficient home remedies that can supplement medical treatment of dry eyes. Occasionally certain medications, like blood pressure drugs, anti-depressants, anti-histamines and oral contraceptives can worsen dry eye symptoms. These medications may be altered or modified or dosage adjusted after obtaining the physician's opinion and advice.

**My father is steadily losing his eyesight. He suffers with headaches but refuses to visit a doctor. Could you please guide me?**

It is possible that both declining vision and headache are unrelated symptoms, but he needs to see an eye doctor immediately. It is possible he may have early cataracts or other potentially blinding diseases like glaucoma, age related retinal degeneration or other degenerative conditions causing permanent loss of vision. Most eye diseases, if detected early on have excellent treatment options to prevent progressive vision loss. Rarely, some forms of glaucoma, ocular inflammation, sinusitis affecting the eye may have vision loss associated with headache. Sometimes, it may only be a simple refractive error requiring spectacle correction that may reverse his symptoms. Counselling your father to undergo simple eye tests by a qualified eye doctor is crucial. He can be reassured that a two-hour wait and simple eye examination will save him his sight, forever.

**DR Krishnadas** is Senior Medical Consultant in Glaucoma Services, Aravind Eye Care System, Madurai. Nothing in this column is intended to be, and is not, a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please seek independent advice from a licensed practitioner if you have any questions regarding a medical condition. Email us with your questions at [mp\\_health@thehindu.co.in](mailto:mp_health@thehindu.co.in)



## WELLNESS ON THE SHELF

## Skin care range



Neemli Naturals has launched skin care products with plant ingredient-based formulations. The company says the new range of products that include a face wash, toner, serum, moisturiser, and sunscreen helps to cleanse, tone, hydrate and nourish the skin. According to a press release, the products have been crafted especially for sensitive skin and are suitable to all skin types. The use of natural ingredients has been factored in to give protection against different types of pollutants in the environment. Details at: [Neemlinaturals.com](http://Neemlinaturals.com)

## Three-in-one day cream



Vilvah's just launched day cream promises to give your skin triple benefits. With green tea and acai berry extracts in it, the company claims the high performance cream acts as radiance booster, moisturiser and sun screen. They also say all the ingredients used are natural and ethically sourced or farmed in-house.

Details at [Vilvahstore.com](http://Vilvahstore.com)

## EXERCISE AT HOME

The weighted vest is a handsfree piece of equipment to improve overall performance and fitness

# TOP HEAVY

NISHA VARMA

The weighted vest is a piece of strength-training equipment to be worn over exercise apparel. Generally, it fits over the upper body, and has pockets into which weighted packs, measuring 250 grams each (or more), are inserted. Some vests come with built-in water bottles or phone holders.

The equipment is meant to take your regular workout – whether you are doing a short walk or body-weight exercises like a push-up – to the next level. By adding the load, the vest improves strength of the full body, can have a positive effect on the skeletal structure, improves the cardio vascular system as the heart rate goes up, and provides an interesting challenge and variation to an existing routine.

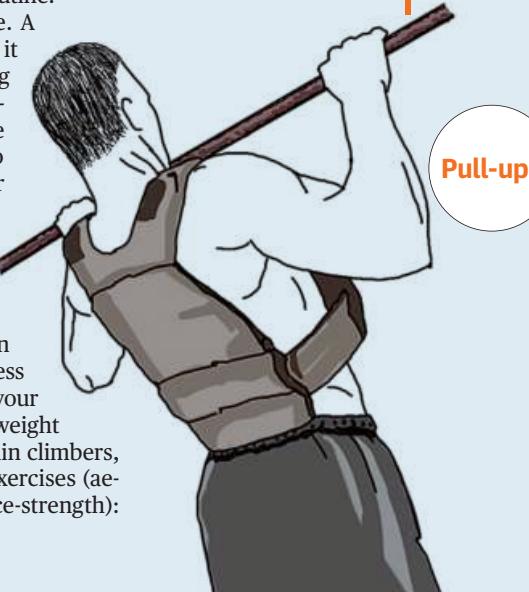
Most come with padding and are washable. A weighted vest should fit snugly – too tight and it can reduce exercise performance by restricting your breath; too loose and you will be uncomfortable with it moving around. Make sure the one you buy has a Velcro strap to adjust it to your proportions. Some vests are contoured for women.

If you have a medical condition, it is best to avoid using the vest. It is not a good idea to run with it, walk long distances, or wear it for a prolonged period.

If you are new to it, begin at 5 kg; if you are an advanced athlete, use weight as per your fitness level and goals. Ideally, load upto 5% to 10% of your bodyweight into the vest. It is best for body-weight workouts: pull-ups, push-ups, planks, mountain climbers, lunges, squats. It also works for plyometric exercises (aerobic exercises that increase speed-endurance-strength): jumps, skips, box jumps and many more.



Squats



Pull-ups

## Workout plan

A 10-minute warmup should include squats or lunges, easy push-ups, jogging on the spot. Then, wear the vest and perform:

**Plank** 1 minute

**Mountain climbers** 1 minute

**Assisted pull-ups or regular pull-ups** 10 reps

**Squats** 20 reps

**Squat jumps** 10 reps

**Lunges** 20 reps

**Plyometric lunges** 10 reps

**Jogging on the spot or around an area** 1 minute

**Box jumps** 10

**Walking or marching on the spot or stationary cycling in an upright position:** 1 minute

Rest for two minutes and repeat thrice. Cool down and stretch. The full routine will take 25 to 30 minutes excluding the warmup and cool down.

Since it is a high intensity workout, ensure your form is correct. Practice the routine with the vest only when you are sure your form without it is correct.

Nisha Varma is an ACSM-certified exercise physiologist.

A monthly column with exercises for a home workout.



Box Jumps



Lunges



Plank

## Ayurvedic lipstick



A herb-enriched Ayurvedic lipstick has been launched by the Ayurvedic beauty brand Just Herbs. This is part of their #MakingMakeupHealthier campaign by crowd sourcing product development. The objective of the campaign was to tell people they must not compromise with what they put on their face. With the help of the company's online

community, 16 shades of the lipstick have been named after sifting through selfies, online reviews and feedback provided by 1,500 women across India who signed up to receive miniature versions of the lipsticks and graded them for various parameters such as pigmentation, glide, texture, and shade. The lipsticks are infused with vata pacifying herbs such Indian kudzu, shatavari, bhringi, guduchi, yasthimadhu, bala and manjistha in a base of ghee and sesame oil that help carry the nutritive benefits of the herbs to the innermost layers of the skin, the company claims.

Available in Just Herbs stores across India and on [JustHerbs.in](http://JustHerbs.in)

# Step into the LIGHT

Photographer Garima Dixit recreates the iconic works of Raja Ravi Varma with wives from the Army fraternity she belongs to

DEEPA ALEXANDER

When you look at Garima Dixit's work, you discover her innate ability to turn photographs into mini-dramas. Whimsical, aesthetic and powered by the play of light, Garima's latest project of recreating renowned colonial artist Raja Ravi Varma's works blurs the line between portraiture and painting, with a little help from the Army fraternity she belongs to.

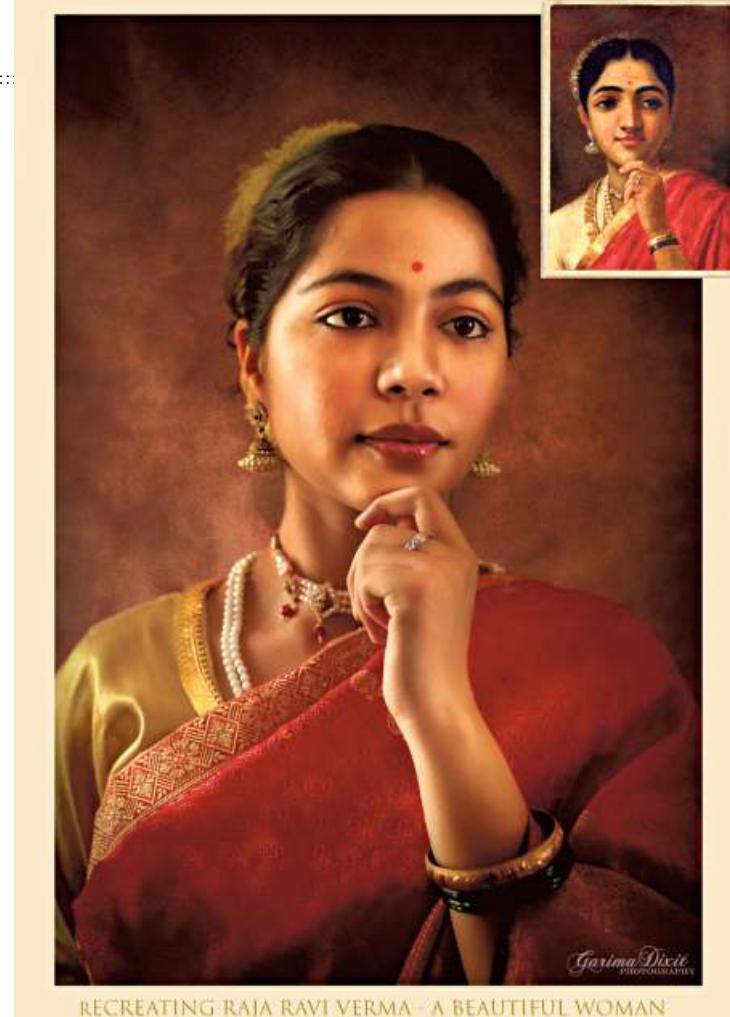
Garima, 38, recently relocated to Pune from Udhampur, a cantonment town in Jammu and Kashmir. In the years she followed the drum, moving across the country with her Army-officer husband, Garima discovered the wondrous world through the lens of her Canon DSLR after she became a mother. "I had post-partum blues and entire months of her growing up went by in a haze. That was when I picked up the camera to document her growth. Her first birthday cake smash image was shared on a mother's group and I began to get offers to photograph children. Photography saved me," says Garima over phone.

## Thoughtful strokes

Garima laughs when she says that living in a town that not many people can point on a map did not deter work offers from pouring in.

"People travelled from Jammu to get their

children photographed. By the time I left Udhampur I had taken pictures of nearly every child in the cantonment. I was learning so much and initially I did it for free," says the self-taught photographer, who used to be a software engineer. "My daughter is my inspiration. In the three years I worked with my Canon 6D Mark II, I read up all I could find on portrait photography



When I visited the Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery, I was drawn to both Ravi Varma and SL Haldankar's famous Glow of Hope and to how women are represented in our culture



tography and even set up a home studio." In 2018, Garima's portraits won international recognition with AFNS (for new-born and maternity photography) and 35Awards.

After her 'My Dad Your Freedome' series portraying the human side of fathers in uniform and their daughters went viral, Garima wandered into the ethereal genius of Raja Ravi Varma while on a visit to the Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery at the Jaganmohan Palace in Mysore.

Ravi Varma's distinct aura of an India gone by, whether mythological, patrician or plebeian, are captured in illuminating detail. Dramatic and with a play of shade and light, his secular and sacred oleographs hit India like a thunderbolt at the turn of the 19th Century when they were mass produced and broke the barriers of caste and class when they were featured in calendars.

Garima achieves much the same by getting everyday people to pose as the subjects of Ravi Varma's paintings. "When I visited the gallery I was drawn to both Ravi Varma and SL Haldankar's famous Glow of Hope and to how women are represented in our culture. The images stayed with me and one evening when I was at a park in Udhampur observing Army and BRO [Border Roads Organisation] wives and daughters I thought why not shoot a series with them as Ravi

Varma's muses. I had no trouble sourcing the saris and the jewellery as defence wives tend to have every type thanks to their travels across the country."

## A painterly quality

Garima decided to recreate eight paintings and says that setting up the shoot took about an hour although the project stretched to a month before the lockdown. "Most of the saris had to be draped in the nauvari fashion. For some shots I used strobe lights. I then choreographed the subject in the same manner as the original."

The photographs are painterly. The light captures the traditional stamp of Ravi Varma and Haldankar amalgamating European technique with Indian sensibility. Some sitters stare into the camera shyly, others look away into the distance, with longing. The luminosity of every pearl in the necklace, the deep ruby of the nagnada chain and the graceful fall off the sari lend old-world charm. While many have re-created these paintings as photographs, where Garima's non-commercial work scores is that she has understood light well and not used professional models.

While her camera and her studio travels with her, putting down roots wherever the Army sends her, Garima says that photographing "people will always be my focus".

## HOMING IN

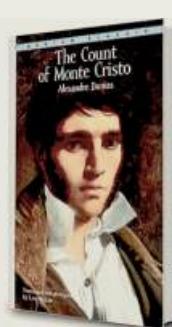


For this week's **Reading List**, Besharam author **Priya Alika Elias** states that her go-to lockdown books are both classic and contemporary reads.

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

## The Count of Monte Cristo, by Alexandre Dumas

Who doesn't know the story of Alexandre Dumas' revenge classic? But when I decided to read the unabridged original this year, I was stunned by just how readable it was. If you have been struggling to read fiction, or find yourself with a low attention span, give this a go. It is the most entertaining thing I have read in as long as I can remember. If the verb 'swashbuckling' was a single book, this would be it.



## Dublin Murder Squad series, by Tana French

Pick any one. Tana French is something of a literary sensation: she draws you into a broody, murderous world where there is very little sunlight. But her detectives are irresistible, and what better contrast could there be to the sweltering heat of an Indian summer?



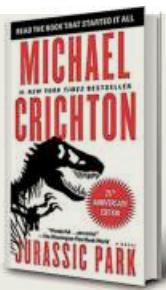
## Death in Mumbai, by Meenal Baghel

The editor of the *Mumbai Mirror* brings her reporting to bear on the strange case of Neeraj Grover: the result is a classic true-crime book, with plenty of Bollywood flavor to round it out.



## Jurassic Park, by Michael Crichton

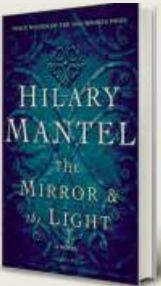
This was an old favourite in high school; I would check out books by Robin Cook, Michael Crichton and Sidney Sheldon because they were written at such a breakneck pace. They were the perfect contrast to serious literature: the equivalent of a bag of chips. But this particular book has also held up surprisingly well: the concept that human beings engineer their own doom through greed feels especially relevant right now.



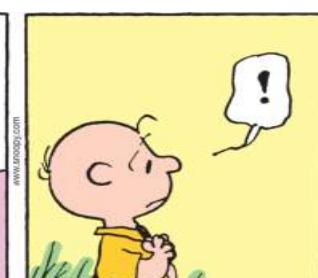
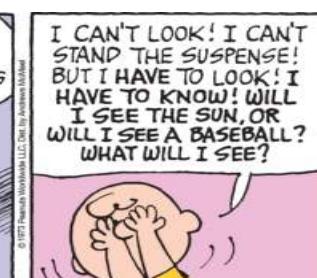
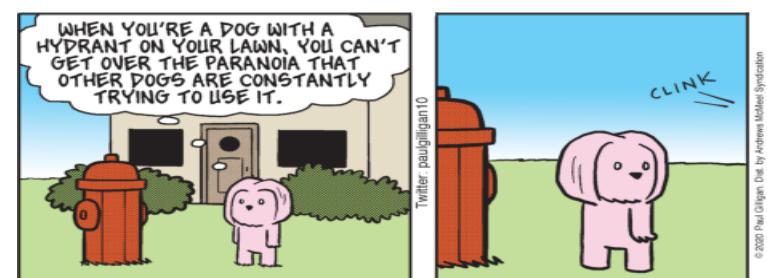
## The Mirror &amp; the Light, by Hilary Mantel

Mantel finishes out her Booker-Prize winning Cromwell trilogy with this book – it's thousands of pages long, and I am nowhere near finished! That is why it is perfect for this seemingly interminable pandemic. Piece by piece, Mantel builds a portrait of one of the most ingenious, politically-skilled men in history.

Every word is meticulously crafted; what a pleasure to give yourself into Mantel's capable hands and know that tomorrow, there will be more.



## POOCH CAFE



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



## TIGER



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



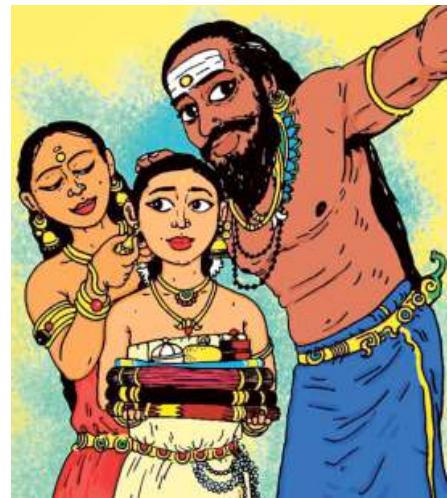
# When a cell phone plays cupid

Artist Rohit Bhasi illustrates characters from Indian epics and places them in contemporary times

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

A beautiful Damayanthi stroking a swan, engrossed in a conversation on her cell phone is how designer Rohit Bhasi visualises the mythological character, in a pen-and-ink drawing inspired from the mural art tradition of India.

"I enjoy imagining mythological characters in a contemporary situation. So while watching people on cell phones, I wondered how our characters from the epics and mythology would have reacted today. Whether it is a lovelorn Shakuntala or a Sita pining away for Rama in Lanka, all of them would have probably used their phones to express their feelings," says Rohit, from Bengaluru, where he works as a designer in a leading MNC. He says that in the famous story of Nala and Damayanthi from *The Mahabharatha*, the swan acts as the go-between in their romance. In a modern-day setting, the swan replaces the phone.



**A fresh spin** Rohit Bhasi's painting shows Sita being welcomed to Lanka by Ravana

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

that are quite used to being with humans or is it a *rakshasa* or a *yaksha* in disguise?"

The media he chooses to doodle, draw, and paint range from paper and canvas to leaves, walls and doors. Rohit's interpretative drawings and paintings in pen and ink, watercolours and acrylics on canvas are posted on his Instagram handle and Facebook under the name indigoranges. "In 2008-2009, I went on a trek. On my way back, I saw a sunset painting the surrounding hills in shades of ochre, red, indigo, purple... It helped me make a decision. I returned and started a blog called indigoranges. Then came the Facebook page and Insta handle," says Rohit.

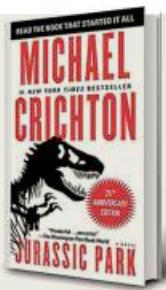
## Large oeuvre

Literature, folk tales and current events also find a place in his oeuvre. The drawings and paintings could be subversive, meditative, philosophical, insightful, political and sharp while his observations that accompany the work open new windows to age-old notions.

His observations on contemporary society are no different. Rohit's lockdown illustrations present varied takes on life that depict scenes of families spending time together, of con men trying to make a fast buck. One strip of eight illustrations is titled 'The Indiranagar Morning (lockdown edition)'. He also expresses his opinion on current events and spaces in his illustrations.

## HOMING IN

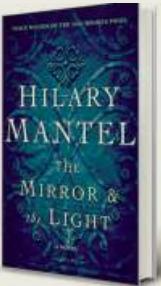
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# Virus case surge sap July 4 celebrations in U.S.

43,000 fresh cases reported; California and Florida see alarming rise; beaches in both coasts remain out of bounds

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
REUTERS  
WASHINGTON/LONDON

A surge in COVID-19 cases sapped the fun out of July 4 celebrations in the United States as the pandemic also accelerated through neighbouring Mexico, the rest of Latin America and South Africa. Even Europe, which has largely been celebrating reopening, saw some setbacks, with authorities placing 200,000 people back under lockdown in Spain after a spike in infections that underlined how easily hard-won progress can be reversed.

The United States remains by far the world's hardest-hit country, logging a further 43,000 cases Saturday that brought its total number of infections to more than 2.8 million, with nearly 130,000 deaths.

The spiralling case load cast a pall over traditional Independence Day celebrations, with beaches closed and the National Mall in Washington, usually crowded with spectators ready for



**Conquering COVID-19:** Retired sergeant Gonzalo Perez, who successfully recovered from COVID-19, gestures while leaving a hospital in Jalisco, Mexico, on Saturday. • AFP

fireworks, near deserted. Mexico's toll crossed 30,000 on Saturday, propelling it past France to become the fifth-hardest-hit country in the world.

#### Brazil's numbers

And Brazil, which has defiantly opened bars and restaurants in Rio de Janeiro,

notched up nearly 40,000 new cases and more than a thousand deaths, keeping it in second place behind the U.S. in the bleak global rankings.

Across the Atlantic, South Africa reported more than 10,000 new infections Saturday, its highest ever daily jump. Africa's most econom-

ically developed country now has the greatest number of cases on the continent.

American beaches that would normally be packed on July 4 are shut on both coasts as California and Florida suffer alarming surges in cases, while bars in States such as Texas and Michigan have had to close on what

should be one of their busiest weekends of the year.

New York's public beaches reopened earlier in the week but locals in the city that was once the global epicentre of the crisis remain wary of a resurgence.

America's former colonial master, Britain, was decidedly more cheerful on Saturday as local pubs reopened for the first time since late March. Finance Minister Rishi Sunak urged Britons to "eat out to help out" – a message that did not appear to sit well with Health Secretary Matt Hancock. "I'm no killjoy," said Hancock. "But the virus can still kill."

The lockdown announcement in Spain's northeastern Catalonia region came after regional officials noted a "sharp rise" in infections around the town of Lerida about 150 km west of Barcelona.

In Australia thousands of residents in high-rise apartments in Melbourne went into lockdown for at least five days as the country recorded its biggest daily increase of

infections in months. "There are many, many vulnerable people who live in these towers," Victoria state Premier Daniel Andrews said.

#### Britain to fund study

Also, Britain is putting £8.4 million pounds (\$10.49 million) into a new study to examine the long-term effects of COVID-19 on patients, the Health Ministry said on Sunday. "As we continue our fight against this global pandemic, we are learning more and more about the impact the disease can have, not only on immediate health, but longer-term physical and mental health too," Mr. Hancock said.

The lockdown announcement in Spain's northeastern Catalonia region came after regional officials noted a "sharp rise" in infections around the town of Lerida about 150 km west of Barcelona.

Lung and blood samples of the patients will be taken and they will also be assessed by advanced imaging, and the findings will be used to develop new forms of personalised treatment.

# Drunk people can't socially distance: British police

Streets see unruly crowds as pubs reopen

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Britain's police said on Sunday that revellers who packed London's Soho district the night pubs finally reopened made it "crystal clear" that drunk people cannot socially distance.

England's hospitality sector sprang back to life after a three-month COVID-19 hiatus on what the media dubbed as either "Super Saturday" or "Independence Day".

Pubs and restaurants were allowed to start seating clients and barbers could get their clippers out for the first time since March.

The head of Britain's police federation said he ended up dealing with "naked men, happy drunks, angry drunks, fights and more angry drunks" while on shift. "What was crystal clear is that drunk people can't/won't socially distance," John Apter told London

Police said his own police department in the southern ci-



People in the Soho area of London on Saturday. • AFP

ty of Southampton "managed to cope". "I know other areas have had issues with officers being assaulted," Mr. Apter said.

A scan of police reports from Saturday night showed a similar level of mischief-making across England. Officers in the southwestern Devon and Cornwall region had logged up nearly 1,000 reports of "drink-related disorder and anti-social behaviour" by late Saturday.

There were also reports of illegal raves in London and the northeast that resulted in mass arrests as well as disorder in the north Midlands.

## ELSEWHERE



**Tokyo Governor wins another term**

TOKYO Yuriko Koike was re-elected Tokyo Governor on Sunday, according to an exit poll released by public broadcaster NHK, after winning over voters with her handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Japanese capital. The victory came on a day when Tokyo confirmed 111 new cases. • REUTERS

#### 156 killed in Ethiopia after singer's murder

ADIS ABABA The number of people killed in protests in Ethiopia following the slaying of a popular singer has jumped to 156 from the initial tally of 80, said a security official on Sunday. The protests were sparked by the assassination of musician Haacaaluu Hundeessaa on Monday night and spread from Addis Ababa to the surrounding Oromia region. • REUTERS

## Kanye West announces White House bid

He would be running against Trump and Biden if he launches a campaign

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

In an American Independence Day surprise, hip-hop musician Kanye West announced that he would run for President of the United States this year. If the 43-year-old Mr. West were to launch a campaign, he would be running against Democrat Joe Biden and the incumbent, U.S. President Donald Trump, with whom he has a friendly relationship. His victory would also mean reality show celebrity Kim Kardashian, who is married to Mr. West, would become First Lady of the United States.

"We must now realise the promise of America by trusting God, uniting our vision and building our future. I am running for President of the United States!" Mr. West wrote on Twitter. Tesla and SpaceX Founder Elon Musk backed Mr. West's announcement, tweeting, "You have my full support!"



A pillow with sketches of U.S. President Donald Trump and rapper Kanye West in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S. • REUTERS

Mr. West has made similar announcements before, as per an NBC report. He had announced at the 2015 MTV Video Music Awards that he would run for office in 2020. Last year again he said he would run for the presidency in 2024, possibly under the name, "Christian Genius Billionaire Kanye West."

Mr. West was the country's highest-paid hip hop musician in 2019, making \$150 million between June 2018 and June 2019 as per Forbes. The magazine had said Mr. West was unhappy with it not giving him billions.

#### A friend of Trump

Mr. West supports Mr. Trump, referring to the President as "his brother" in an April 2018 tweet, in which he also said the two of them shared "dragon energy." Within an hour of posting the tweet, he wrote, "My wife just called me and she

wanted me to make this clear to everyone. I don't agree with everything Trump does. I don't agree 100% with anyone but myself."

Mr. West's visit to the Oval Office in October 2018 to discuss criminal justice reform and African-American employment became a media spectacle. His remarks, delivered in a style similar to Mr. Trump's own, touched on a wide range of topics including mental health, the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery and philosophical references to parallel universes.

While there is no clear information on whether Mr. West has filed campaign papers, he would need to run on a third-party platform or as an independent if he is to follow through on his announcement.

The deadline to run as an independent has not yet passed in many States, Reuters reported.

## Trump repeats vow to defeat 'radical left' in Independence Day speech

Fireworks display held despite Washington Mayor's warning

REUTERS

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday vowed to defeat the "radical left" in an Independence Day speech at the White House that condemned recent protests against monuments to historical figures as attempts to destroy the United States.

Mr. Trump claimed without evidence that 99% of COVID-19 in the United States were "totally harmless." Mr. Trump, who has faced criticism over his handling of the pandemic, said China must be "held accountable" for failing to contain the disease.

**Celebrations and protests**  
The administration held a fireworks display over the National Mall as night fell after Mr. Trump's speech, despite Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser's warnings that the mass spectator event would



A Trump hat being burnt as a mark of protest in Washington. • REUTERS

lie about the past in order to gain power in the present, those that are lying about our history, those who want us to be ashamed of who we are," Mr. Trump said on Saturday. "Their goal is demolition."

Mr. Trump, in his speech, also said the United States would have a vaccine or therapeutic solution to the virus "long before" the end of 2020. Such a success could help the U.S. economy and Mr. Trump's chances of re-election.

On Thursday, a top U.S. health official said he was optimistic the Trump administration's vaccine-acceleration programme Operation Warp Speed will generate a safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19 by year-end.

Apart from fireworks spectators in Washington, activists of different stripes also appeared willing to disregard health warnings.

## 2 rocket attacks target U.S. interests in Iraq

1 fired near Green Zone wounds child

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BAGHDAD

Two rocket attacks targeted American diplomatic and military installations overnight, Iraq's security forces said on Sunday, a little over a week since unprecedented arrests prevented a similar incident.

Irqi troops in late June arrested more than a dozen fighters who were allegedly planning a new attack on Baghdad's Green Zone. Iraqi government officials said

the raid would serve as a "message" to deter future attacks, but early on Sunday, militants made another attempt. One rocket fired at the Green Zone landed near a home, wounding a child, according to the Iraqi military. "At the same time, our forces were able to thwart another attack and seize a Katyusha rocket and launcher that were targeting the Taji base north of Baghdad," where U.S.-led coalition troops are based, it added.

Rescuers were searching for 14 others still missing after floods hit the Kumamoto region on the southwestern island of Kyushu, destroying houses, sweeping away vehicles and causing bridges to collapse. The regional government confirmed 18 peo-



ple had died, while another 16 were declared in a state of "cardio-respiratory arrest" – a term often used in Japan before a doctor officially certifies death.

Fourteen of those feared dead were at a nursing home inundated when local rivers broke their banks. Emergency services rescued 50 people from the facility. Authorities at emergency shelters made evacuees wash their hands, wear masks and maintain social distance to avoid the virus adding to the problems. At a Cabinet-level meeting in Tokyo on the disaster, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged financial support, while warning residents in Kumamoto to brace for more rain.

## COVID-19 claims life of man in famous 9/11 photo

Stephen Cooper, an electrical engineer, died on March 28 at a medical centre in Florida

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DELRAY BEACH

A man photographed fleeing smoke and debris as the south tower of the World Trade Center crumbled just a block away on Sept. 11, 2001, has died from COVID-19, his family said.

The Palm Beach Post reported that Stephen Cooper, an electrical engineer from New York who lived part-time in the Delray Beach, Florida area, died on March 28 at Delray Medical Center due to COVID-19. He was 78.

#### Part of museum

The photo, captured by an Associated Press photographer, was published in newspapers and magazines around the world and is featured at the 9/11 Memorial



**Run to safety:** Stephen Cooper, far left, fleeing smoke and debris as the south tower of the World Trade Center tumbled on September 11, 2001. • AP

he's looking in Time magazine one day and he sees himself and says, 'Oh my God. That's me.' He was amazed. Couldn't believe it."

Ms. Rashes said Cooper was delivering documents near the World Trade Center, unaware of exactly what had happened that morning, when he heard a police officer yell, "You have to run." The photo shows Mr. Cooper, who was 60 at the time, with a manila envelope tucked under his left arm. He and several other men were in a desperate sprint as a wall of debris from the collapsing tower looms behind them. Mr. Cooper ducked to safety into a nearby subway station.

"Every year on 9/11, he would go looking for the magazine and say, 'Look, it's here again,' said Jessica Rashes, Cooper's 27-year-old daughter. "He would bring it to family barbecues, parties,

anywhere he could show it off."

Susan Gould, a long-time friend, said Mr. Cooper was proud of the photo, purchasing multiple copies of Time and handing them out "like a calling card."

She said Mr. Cooper shrank a copy of the photo, laminated it, and kept it in his wallet. "Stephen was a character," Ms. Gould said.

Suzanne Plunkett, the Associated Press photographer who snapped the shot, wrote that she's been in touch with two of the people in the photo, but Mr. Cooper was not among them.

"It is a shame I was never aware of the identity of Mr. Cooper," Ms. Plunkett wrote after his death in an email to The Palm Beach Post.

## ASK US



N. SREE KANTH

**Q.** I had taken a cancer-care policy for my father, who is 61 and retired from government service, from HDFC Life. In the said policy, I am the proposer and the life assured is my father. Here are my queries:

1. Will I be eligible for benefit under Sec 80 D as the policy premium (₹26,000) is paid by me?

2. For claiming the benefit for health insurance taken on behalf of parents, does one need to be the proposer of the policy or will a simple payment receipt suffice?

3. Recently, I read that insurance companies will demand insurable interest of the proposer in the life assured while making any claim. So, is my policy valid, as I am not dependent on my father's pension and as such, I don't have any insurable interest in him?

If so, shall I cancel this policy and take a new one with my father being both the proposer and the life assured?

JAGADEESH K. S.

**A.** Cancer-care policy issued by HDFC Life is a type of life insurance policy and is covered under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act. Deduction is allowed to an individual with respect to life insurance paid for spouse and children of the assessee, subject to a cap of ₹1.50 lakh inclusive of other deductions under Section 80C and further, the premium amount not exceeding 10% of the sum assured. Point-wise reply to your queries: You will not be eligible to claim deduction under Section 80C for the ₹26,000 paid by you for your dependent father's life insurance. Your father may claim it in his Income Tax return once he starts paying from his account.

With respect to the deductions under 80D of the Income Tax Act, an assessee who is an individual or a HUF is eligible for deduction of premium paid up to ₹25,000 for himself and his family and ₹25,000 for his dependant parents. If his/her parents or the assessee himself is a senior citizen then they are eligible for a deduction of premium paid up to ₹50,000 or if there is no medical insurance in the name of the senior citizen, then medical expenses incurred up to ₹50,000 can be claimed as deduction.

There is no restriction under Section 80D of the Income Tax Act to be the proposer of the policy. Direct payment to the insurance company is sufficient to claim the deduction along with proper proof of payment such as a receipt/acknowledgement with respect to health insurance issued by general insurance companies registered with the IRDA.

**Q.** If a government employee invests in the share market, then what are the income tax rate slabs for income earned from such investments (for long term as well as short term)? And, also, which ITR form needs to be filed?

ASHUTOSH

**A.** Income tax arises only on sale of such equity shares purchased from stock market. This is in the form of capital gains/loss, further split into long term and short term. Equity shares that are sold after holding for a period of more than one year are long-term capital gains and if not are short-term capital gains.

Long-term capital gains, as calculated according to the provisions of the Income Tax Act, are taxed at 10% if such gains are above ₹1 lakh, while short-term capital gains (sale value less purchase value) are taxed at 15%.

Further, you may also request your broker for a statement for capital gains in order to ascertain the capital gains/loss and short term and long term nature of such transactions. You will have to file ITR - 2.

(The author is partner, GSS & Associates, Chartered Accountants, Chennai)

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

## LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"Wow, I never thought our car loan would turn out to be such a good savings instrument!"

# Take stock before trading

It takes several years before one can master techniques in stock trading; it cannot be a mere timepass activity



VIDYA BALA

The Yes Bank debacle and the closure of six debt funds in Franklin India may have spooked debt investors. But equity investors remain unstoppable. CDSL data suggest 12 lakh new equity investor accounts were opened in March and April 2020, up 33% from the previous two months.

BSE data showed a significant spurt in the client (individual investor) category turnover compared with a year ago.

New-age online platforms, too, spoke of robust growth in new brokerage account additions with as much as 65% of

them being first-time investors.

The point made by many brokerages – attractive valuations and quality stocks available at good prices – are attracting investors. But, could it be possible for first-time equity investors to discover 'attractive valuation' and 'quality stocks' within two months of their entry into equities? Strange!

I gathered more on social media. Video and learning apps and webinars on how to trade were selling (yes, even paid ones) like hot cakes. Okay, lockdown has forced people to channelise their energy into learning. And, needless to say, it is instant gratification (through trading) that most

want. And then, you hear this: the shocking news of a 20-year-old trader who thought he lost \$7,30,000 in trading. Now, I am not here to tell you that investing is all about the long term and dismiss trading.

In reality, trading in the market is an important activity that is fundamental for price discovery of stocks.

However, stock trading is one of the hardest things you can do and therefore, the most difficult to make money from. So, it is best left to professionals who have honed their practice over years of experience.

What is happening now is probably this – a combination of easy-to-use, free/low-cost trading platforms, plenty of time at home during this lockdown and also, increasing insecurity about keeping a job and

the need to generate other sources of income, could be driving many young Indians towards the seemingly lucrative business of trading. If you are one among them, and thought trading was an easy way to make money, you will do well to know the following.

#### Not a part-time affair

Successful traders seldom do trading part time. These are folks who have left their jobs, after several years of also investing, and pursued trading as a serious activity. Trading is not a hobby because you can lose real money.

It takes several years before one can master techniques in stock trading. First comes the knowledge and then comes the experience. It is good to learn and try techniques with small exposures but you are in for a risk when you try these with

leveraged bets. When I started with equities close to two decades ago, I knew amateur traders who would stick to the cash market, while the more professional traders would use leverage. Leverage, or margin trading, is the act of taking stock market positions worth more than the money you possess. That means you borrow money for the difference.

When such experts use leverage, they do so when the path to profit is very clear to them. They tend to diligently stick to their plan, decide on an optimal position size to minimise risk, assess risk-reward and thereby, the potential loss and make sure their capital is not overexposed.

They make sure their losses in a trade are restricted to 1-2% of capital. Unfortunately, not only the right strategy but also the check of emotions, comes only with time. And that will come provided you are strong enough to stay without getting hurt.

#### Ease of transacting, a trap

With a spate of zero-cost platforms, and easy access to margin, leveraged trades have become easier to access and therefore end up on top of a young trader's list of feats to be achieved. New investors seldom understand that there is no such thing as 'free', and often do not factor in some implicit costs (such as an ask-bid spread). As online platforms also make available plenty of charts, many trade daily, using daily charts. Top traders seldom do that. They like to see how the story of a stock unfolds; they see the bigger pic-

ture. A trader may trade less and make more money looking at slightly longer period charts.

Online brokerage platforms also make available plenty of learning material for you. They equip you so that you make money for them. Watching a few videos and hearing free advice definitely doesn't amount to learning trading. If you ask yourself what technique you really follow for each trade and don't have a proper answer, you are not a trader.

#### Money tucked away

Professional traders have a comfortable kitty they can fall back upon. They would have put away enough money for their life's goals and would already have invested for the long-term and even have some money tucked away in fixed deposits. Some professional traders even set aside an emergency fund as high as one-year's living costs.

For those who wish to make a living as an equity trader, having a significant chunk as capital is necessary.

Otherwise, you cannot think of building wealth. Not having a substantial sum as capital brings in other risks. For example, someone trying to get ₹50,000 a month from a capital of ₹5 lakh would likely push herself to adopt high-risk strategies that can wipe out capital and cause losses. If you think you are still cut out for it, learn slowly and steadily; first master the art of losing less. As the Wild West song goes "you've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em."

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

## COVER NOTE: RIGHT OF DENIAL

## Can you be denied health insurance?

No insurer is obliged to issue or renew a policy, but rules apply

K. NITYA KALYANI

You may have heard that 'insurance is sold, not bought.' This reluctance to buy insurance has a notable exception. Health insurance is much desired and available from general and health insurers. Life insurers can issue benefit, not indemnity, policies covering health.

Yet, just because you want a health insurance policy, it does not mean you will get it. Renewal, too, can be denied.

No insurer is obliged to issue you a health insurance policy. The premium, terms and conditions are also at his discretion. While the underwriting decision on a new policy lies with the insurance company, here is what the regulations say.

Health insurance policies should allow age at entry of at least 65 years. Exceptions include maternity or certain group policies such as student policies. Also excluded are overseas hospitalisation and personal accident policies and pilot products.

(A pilot product, a concept that has come up in the last few years, is a close-ended new insurance policy to explore how to cover risks not covered until now or are exclusions in existing products.)

On age grounds, your in-



No, thank you: Policy renewal can be denied on the basis of fraud or misrepresentation by the insured. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

surer cannot deny you a renewal or because you made a claim in the previous policy years. In other words, once you have a policy, you are entitled to life-long renewal in the normal course.

#### Keep policy valid

It's your responsibility to keep your policy valid through timely renewal. Regulations specify that insurers should condone a gap in renewal of up to 30 days and keep benefits such as waiting period for pre-existing conditions intact. This is a new measure that gives the insured considerable leeway as no gap in coverage was en-

tertained earlier. But remember, any claims that arise during the uncovered period will not be tenable.

If the policy (including a pilot) is withdrawn, at the time of renewal, the insurer has to port you to an alternative available policy subject to portability conditions.

Renewal will not be done in the case of benefit policies where a claim is paid and the policy terminates. Details of when and how the policy will terminate should be explicitly stated in the policy document upfront. Your renewal premium cannot be arbitrarily loaded because of your claims history but only

on group experience basis and that too, disclosed upfront. However, if you are eligible for a cumulative bonus for a claim-free insurance period, that can be cut when there is a claim.

Bonus details should be stated explicitly in the prospectus and the policy document and, if there is a claim, the bonus should be reduced at the same rate at which it has accrued. This also applies to the premium to be charged for the policy.

On renewal, your insurer should not require you to go through a fresh medical examination provided there is no increase in your sum assured. This provision safeguards you against denial of renewal or loading of premium or imposition of any new terms or exclusions.

Renewal can be denied on the basis of fraud, misrepresentation moral hazard or misrepresentation by the insured. Moral hazard has been a serious matter in the past. This hampered the profitable growth of health insurance in India because when such practices are rampant, the majority suffers due to the acts of a few.

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

## TECH TRAIL: PRECIOUS METALS

## Gold set to gain more sheen

B. KRISHNAKUMAR

After being range bound in the first half, precious metals recovered in the second half of June. Comex gold price surged to an eight-year high on June 30, on growing concerns relating to the impact of COVID-19 on the global economy.

Comex gold gained 2.8% to settle at \$1,800.5 an ounce by end June. The price action was relatively muted with the white metal gaining 0.23% to settle at \$18.5 an ounce.

In the domestic market, gold futures at MCX gained 3.5% in June to settle at ₹48,762 per 10 gm. MCX silver futures, however, closed 0.8% lower at ₹50,364 per kg in June.

Comex gold ruled firm and achieved the target of \$1,775-\$1,785 mentioned in the previous post. The breakout past the key resistance at \$1,775-\$1,785 is a sign of strength. The short-term outlook is positive and price is likely to head towards the next target of \$1,835-\$1,840. The uptrend would gather momentum on a close above \$1,810. The positive outlook would be under threat if the price closes below the support level at \$1,710.

Comex silver remained largely range bound in June. A breakout past the short-term resistance in the \$18.9-\$19.1 range is required to reinstate momentum to the up-trend. A breakout past \$19.2 would not only lend such momentum but would also help the price reach the next target of \$19.9-\$20. The trend in Comex silver would turn negative below \$17. A breakout above \$19.2 or a fall below \$17 would set the tone for the next big move.



MCX gold futures ruled firm in June and moved past the target zone of ₹49,100-₹49,800 mentioned last month. The short-term outlook remains positive and the price could head to the immediate target zone of ₹50,700-₹51,000.

A breakout past ₹49,000 would confirm the bullish view and strengthen the case for a move to the earlier-mentioned target. The short-term trend would turn weak if the price dips below ₹46,000 per gm.

MCX silver remained largely range bound in June. That trend is likely to persist in the short term. A breakout past ₹47,100-₹51,000 is likely to trigger the next big move. A breakout above ₹52,000 would lend momentum to the upside and the price could then head to the next target of ₹54,500-₹55,000. A fall below ₹47,100 would have negative implications.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. This is not meant to be trading or investment advice)

## Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure	Interest Rates (%)



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## TV PICKS

**Bundesliga:** SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 11.45 p.m.**Premier League:** Star Sports 1 & SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 12.20 a.m. (Tuesday)**Another bad day for Daruvala**

## SPORTS BUREAU

SPIELBERG

It turned out to be a disappointing weekend for Jehan Daruvala as he finished 16th in the reverse grid race in the FIA Formula 2 championship here on Sunday.

The Indian driver, making his debut, had started sixth in Saturday's race but ended 12th after being hit by Carlin Racing teammate Yuki Tsunoda in the opening lap.

**Gunina triumphs****P.K. AJITH KUMAR**

KOZHIKODE

Valentina Gunina of Russia won the second Grand Prix leg of the FIDE Chess.com Women's Speed Chess on Sunday, defeating Ukraine's Anna Ushenina 7-5 in the final. Katerina Lagno of Russia took the third spot, making short work of Iran's Sarasatad Khademsharieh 9.5-2.5.

In the third Grand Prix leg Koneru Humpy and Dronavalli Harika – will be in the fray.

**Akash is India's 66th GM****K. KEERTHIVASAN**

CHENNAI

G. Akash has become the country's 66th Grand Master. "I am really happy to become a GM even though I was not thinking about it. I know with the process I follow, it was only a matter of time," the 23-year-old from Chennai told The Hindu on Sunday.

Akash got his third GM norm in the National senior chess championship in Majitar (Sikkim) last year, but his ratings fell short of the required Elo rating of 2500. He played another five tournaments to reach that rating.

# Bottas wins drama-filled season opener

Leclerc second after Hamilton is handed a five-second penalty; maiden podium finish for Norris



Lights to flag: Valtteri Bottas led from start to finish at the Austrian GP on Sunday. ■ GETTY IMAGES

**FORMULA ONE****AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
SPIELBERG (AUSTRIA)

Six-time champion Lewis Hamilton, who ended second, was given a five-second penalty and demoted to fourth. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was second while McLaren's Lando Norris claimed his maiden podium.

Hamilton, hit with a pre-race grid penalty that dropped him from second to fifth, had clashed with Red Bull's Alex Albon in the final laps, forcing the latter to spin off the track.

In a race which witnessed

three Safety Car interventions and was run behind closed doors at the Red Bull Ring, the Ferrari-bound Carlos Sainz finished fifth in the second McLaren ahead of Racing Point's Sergio Perez.

Pierre Gasly was seventh for Alpha Tauri and Esteban Ocon eighth on his return to racing with Renault ahead of Antonio Giovinazzi of Alfa Romeo. Sebastian Vettel, the four-time champion in his final season at Ferrari, was 10th. The drivers all wore a

**Fast Facts**

- Bottas has won the season-opener for the second year in a row, the Austrian GP triumph the eighth of his career. Last year he had won the first race held in Australia
- Norris secured his maiden podium finish though he crossed the line fourth. He was handed the third spot after Hamilton was given a five-second penalty for hitting Albon
- In Brazil last year, Hamilton and Albon had a similar collision, resulting in the Briton getting a time penalty and allowing McLaren's Sainz to reach the podium
- It is only the second time a McLaren driver is part of the F1 podium since Australia 2014 (Sainz 2019, Norris 2020)
- Nine retirements in Austria, more than any from the 2019 season [2019: Hockenheimring (Germany) - 6 retirements]

Compiled by S. Dipak Ragav and Anirudh Velamuri

**SHORT TAKES****Buffon owns Serie A mark with 648th appearance**

TURIN Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon set a Serie A

**Examining complaint against Kohli, says BCCI ethics officer**

NEW DELHI BCCI ethics officer D.K. Jain on Sunday said he is examining a conflict of interest complaint against India captain Virat Kohli from Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association life member Sanjeev Gupta. "I have received a complaint. I will examine it and then see if the case is made out or not. If yes, then I have to afford an opportunity to him (Kohli) to respond," said Jain. PTI

record on Saturday with his 648th appearance in Italy's top flight. The Turin derby game against Torino moved the 42-year-old Buffon one ahead of AC Milan great Paolo Maldini, who set the record in 2009. Buffon matched this record on December 18 against Sampdoria. It was Buffon's 915th club match as a professional, extending his record for an Italian player. AP

**de Kock wins CSA's top award**

JOHANNESBURG White-ball skipper Quinton de Kock was named men's Cricketer-of-the-Year at Cricket South Africa's (CSA) annual awards ceremony on Saturday. He also bagged the Test Cricketer-of-the-Year while young opener Laura Wolvaardt took home the women's Cricketer-of-the-Year and ODI Cricketer-of-the-Year awards. Pacer Lungi Ngidi was named ODI and T20 Player-of-the-Year. PTI

**Green light for two Silverstone races**

LONDON Silverstone will be able to host two Formula One Grand Prix in August as new quarantine exemptions for major sporting events in England were announced

by the British government on Sunday. Champions League and Europa League football, international cricket, golf tournaments and the world snooker championships are also among the events that will benefit. AP

**Bayern wins German Cup, completes double**

BERLIN Robert Lewandowski passed the 50-goal mark this season as Bundesliga champion Bayern Munich completed the double with a 4-2 victory over Bayer Leverkusen to win a 20th German Cup on Saturday. PTI

**Atwal rockets into top-20; Wolff takes lead**  
DETROIT Arjun Atwal fired a six-under 66 in the third round of the Rocket Mortgage Classic to end the day at Tied 18th on Saturday. Matthew Wolff (64) was in lead with 19-under. PTI**Ganguly named director of ATK-Mohun Bagan**

COLOMBO Sri Lanka batsman Kusal Mendis was arrested on Sunday after the vehicle he was driving hit and killed a 64-year-old cyclist. Police will investigate whether Mendis was driving under influence. PTI



## Carlsen takes title

**RAKESH RAO**

NEW DELHI

Riding on a brilliantly crafted victory in the first game, Magnus Carlsen kept a fighting Anish Giri at bay to win the second set 2.5-1.5 and claim the title in the \$150,000 Chessable Masters on Saturday.

"Frankly, Anish played better than me in the last three games. I was just lucky to get away," acknowledged Carlsen after the final.

**The result: Final: Set Two: Rapid (Game One):** Magnus Carlsen (Nor) bt Anish Giri (Ned).**(Game Two):** Giri drew with

Magnus Carlsen.

■ FILE PHOTO: RAJEEV BHATT

**Carlsen. (Game Three):** Carlsen drew with Giri. **(Game Four):** Giri drew with Carlsen.

## Everything will be ready by September'

Things on track for u-17 Women's WC: Odisha Sports Secy.

**SPORTS REPORTER**

BENGALURU

Odisha is on track to complete the infrastructure development for the FIFA under-17 Women's World Cup by September, Vishal K. Dev, the State's Sports and Youth Services Commissioner-cum-Secretary, said on Sunday.

The tournament, postponed due to COVID-19, will be held from February 17 to March 7, 2021.

In an Instagram Live chat

with Sportstar, Vishal said the main pitch of the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, which will host eight matches, including a quarterfinal and semifinal, is "ready as per FIFA standards".

"We are preparing three new

football pitches in the city

in order to give a pitch, along

with the related facilities,

to each of the teams that are

housed here. We are con-

fident of getting everything

ready by the end of Septem-

ber," he said.

The Sports Secretary said the State will soon launch the FIFA Women's World Cup legacy programme which will focus on identifying and nurturing young footballers.

With limited funding and sponsorships due to the pandemic, Vishal said the priority has been on developing infrastructure for international sporting events, and making the High Performance Centres functional in their main facilities.

**Winged splendour:** A butterfly with the silver lines from which it draws its English name Hairstreaks. ■ KRUSHNAMEGH KUNTE

pae, they actually care for them and aggressively protect them from other predators and parasitoids, thus creating an enemy-free space for the butterfly's early stages.

The study using X-ray MicroCT technology describes the association between caterpillars of the family Lycaenidae, known as Blues and Hairstreaks, have over millions of years evolved a range of adaptations that have tamed their ferocious ant predators into protectors and providers.

In fact, caterpillars of this family closely associate with ants, becoming strange bedfellows. Not only do ants not eat these caterpillars and pu-

terpillars of the Lilac Silverline *Apharitis lilacinus* butterfly and cocktail ants. This butterfly was rediscovered in India a few years ago after a gap of almost 100 years by a student Nitin Ravikanthachari. This species has an obligate association with a single species of cocktail ant called

of these organs has been poorly understood. This was because these organs get destroyed in traditional methods of dissection and staining. Dipendra Nath Basu, a PhD student under Dr. Kunte turned to X-ray microtomography, or MicroCT to shed light on the functional morphology of the ant-associated organs.

The organs of caterpillars primarily studied by the scientists are called dew patches in some species and nectar glands in others. These organs produce carbohydrate-rich secretions to attract and reward the tending ants. For the most part, these sugary secretions, which ants drink readily, keep the ants interested in tending and protecting the caterpillars.

The secret of how caterpillars tame ants

Researchers in Bengaluru use MicroCT scans to understand how predators turn protectors

**SHIV SAHAY SINGH**

KOLKATA

Scientists from the National Centre of Biological Sciences (NCBS) in Bengaluru have got fascinating insights into the relations of caterpillars and their ant hosts using advanced X-ray MicroCT technology. The intriguing caterpillar-ant associations have been a subject of study for decades.

Butterflies of the family Lycaenidae, known as Blues and Hairstreaks, have over millions of years evolved a range of adaptations that have tamed their ferocious ant predators into protectors and providers.

In fact, caterpillars of this family closely associate with ants, becoming strange bedfellows. Not only do ants not eat these caterpillars and pu-