



India lifts export ban on anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine

page 10



Efforts on to resolve LAC situation at earliest: MEA

page 9



PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

In new high, State records 152 deaths

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI/PUNE

Maharashtra reported a new single-day high of 3,607 COVID-19 cases and 152 deaths on Thursday, as the State's tally of cases surged to 97,648 and death toll to 3,590.

However, as per Health Department figures, only 47,968 cases are active. As many as 1,561 patients were discharged on Thursday, taking the total number of recoveries to 46,078.

State Surveillance Officer Pradeep Awate said the State's recovery rate had increased to 47.2%, but the case fatality rate had climbed to 3.7%.

Mumbai too clocked the highest number of fatalities, for the second day in a row, with 97 more deaths pushing its toll to 1,954. The city also recorded 1,418 new COVID-19 cases, taking its tally to 54,085.

Of the 97 patients who succumbed, 63 were men and 34 were women, and nearly 65 had comorbidities that made their recovery difficult. Civic health officials clarified that 43 of the deaths were from last week and were being updated now. From 3.2% in the end of May, the city's case fatality rate has now jumped to 3.6%.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 10

FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 4 PAGES

## Slum population most at risk, says ICMR

India overtakes U.K. with fourth highest COVID-19 tally in world

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

times higher in urban areas and 1.89 times higher in urban slums. The infection fatality rate is very low at 0.08%," ICMR Director General Balram Bhargava said at a press meet.

The sero-surveillance study, conducted in 83 districts covering 28,595 households and 26,400 individuals by the ICMR along with other agencies in May, also reveals that 0.73% of the population surveyed showed evidence of past exposure to SARS-CoV-2.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

India on Thursday overtook the United Kingdom to become the country with the fourth highest incidence of COVID-19. With a spike of 11,000 new cases, the tally rose to 2,97,928, which includes, 142,715 active cases. The death toll rose to 8,497, a jump of 392 from the previous day. According to the country-wise tally maintained by Johns Hopkins University, the total cases in the U.K. stood at 2,92,854.

## Cong. rushes to guard its flock in Rajasthan

MLAs in resort ahead of RS polls

MOHAMMED IQBAL  
SANDEEP PHUKAN  
JAIPUR / NEW DELHI

The ruling Congress in Rajasthan on Thursday shifted all its MLAs and Independent legislators supporting the government, to a private resort on the outskirts of Jaipur ahead of the June 19 Rajya Sabha elections.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot alleged that the BJP was making "lucrative offers" of crores of rupees to the Congress legislators to change sides.

With the first signs of trouble in Rajasthan on Wednesday, the Congress sent party observer Randeep Surjewala and All India Congress Committee Rajasthan in-charge Avinash Pande to Jaipur by a special flight to interact with the MLAs.

Mr. Gehlot convened a meeting at the luxury resort in the evening, as the ruling party charged the BJP with attempts to destabilise the State government. The MLAs were asked to stay put at the resort till the polling day for Rajya Sabha elections, but party insiders claimed that there would be no restrictions on their movement.

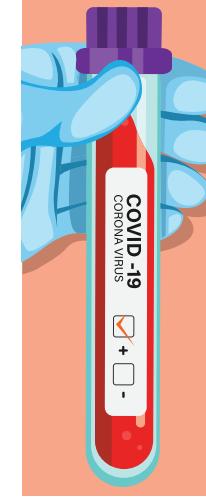
"What the BJP is doing is a mockery of democracy. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, they are plotting the fall of governments in the Opposition-ruled States. After Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, they have turned their attention to Rajasthan," Mr. Pande said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Rainwater fishing



Timely trap: With the monsoon arriving in Andhra Pradesh, people from tribal villages fishing in rainwater gushing from the Eastern Ghats at Kasipatnam in Visakhapatnam district. ■ K.R. DEEPAK



### Measuring the impact

In May, ICMR conducted a serological survey across 83 districts, chosen based on zero, low, medium and high COVID-19 case incidence. Excerpts from the survey:

- 0.73% of the population in these districts had evidence of past exposure to SARS-CoV-2
- Risk in urban areas was 1.09 times higher than in rural areas. It was 1.89 times higher in urban slums
- Infection fatality rate was very low at 0.08%
- Lockdown/containment was found successful in keeping the disease spread slow

## Economic recovery path still uncertain: CEA

'It could be delayed till next year'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Economic growth this year will depend on when recovery begins, as it is now uncertain whether that will happen in the second half of the year or be delayed to the next financial year, Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian said.

"At the beginning of this financial year, in April when we were in the first few weeks of the lockdown, we had estimated growth to be at 1.5-2% this year, and that was conditioned on a V-shaped recovery in the second half of the year," he

told mediapersons on Thursday.

"What is uncertain now is whether that recovery will happen in the second half of the year or will it happen next year. Actual growth, therefore, will really depend critically on when the recovery happens."

His comments came a day after global ratings agencies S&P and Fitch forecast a contraction of 5% in the economy this year, although they predicted a sharp recovery to record 8.5% 9.5% growth next year.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## State urges Centre to restart local trains

Revise norms barring activities in containment zones for 28 days, says Tope

STAFF REPORTER

MUMBAI

Restart Mumbai's local trains and revisit the norms for containment zones that bar activities in these zones for as long as 28 days, the Maharashtra government urged the Centre on Thursday.

In a video-conference with Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan, the State's Health Minister Rajesh Tope conveyed these pleas, stressing on the importance of trains to help those engaged in essential services commute safely.

Enforcing restrictions for 28 days in containment

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has already been corresponding with the Centre on the issue.

"A number of employees from essential service sector are working against the novel coronavirus, such as those working for the municipal corporations, police, hospital employees and others. It is important to restart the local train service for them," Mr. Tope told the Health Minister on the need to restart the city's life line.

Enforcing restrictions for 28 days in containment zones, where neither movement of people nor economic activity is allowed, is taking a toll on the police too, Mr. Tope said.

"All activities in containment zone are kept closed for 28 days from the day of identifying the last patient.

Police deployment has to be made to ensure that this is strictly followed. It is required to give the large police personnel deployed for this work a breather and also divert the force to other places," said Mr. Tope, urging the Centre to slash the period to

14 days instead. Currently, there are 3,897 containment zones in the State.

### 500 more ICU beds

The State health minister also said that 500 more ICU beds will be made available in Mumbai within a week and around 200-300 doctors from different districts will be coming to the city to provide services. "These 500 beds will be available at Seven Hills, St. George hospitals," he said, underlining that the State's recovery rate is around 50%.

## Tata Memorial Hospital opens up window of hope for elective cancer surgeries

Study shows positive outcomes in 494 patients operated between March and April

JYOTI SHELAR

MUMBAI

At a time when elective cancer surgeries are being cancelled and postponed globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic, doctors from the Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH) in Mumbai have helped open up a window of great hope for such surgeries.

A path-breaking paper from these doctors reveals positive outcomes in 494 patients operated in a five-week period between March and April – with zero mortality and no complications seen in those who underwent the knife. This paves the way for other cancer care centres to continue elective procedures with necessary precautions and a careful selection of patients.

Published in the scientific journal *Annals of Surgery* on Thursday, the paper states that 85% of the 494 procedures were major and supra major in patients suffering from advanced stages of cancers. Of these, six

patients tested positive for COVID-19 during the post-operative period.

"These six patients also had advanced cancers, but none of them required escalated treatment or intensive care due to the infection," said TMH deputy director Dr. Shailesh V. Shrikhande, co-author of the paper.

Patients who were operated in the first three weeks were not tested for COVID-19 but their detailed history was taken to analyse the possibility of them carrying the infection.

However, later on, all patients were tested before the surgery and were operated after their reports returned negative.

"We cannot ignore the fact that COVID-19 tests have only 70% accuracy. We have treated each patient as someone who has the infection and took the necessary precautions," Dr. Shrikhande said.

Nearly 60% of patients coming to the TMH are from out of Mumbai and

We have treated each patient as someone who has the infection and took the necessary precautions

DR. SHAILESH V. SHRIKHANDE

Co-author of the paper

tive team.

The patients who were operated were in the age group of 27 to 85 years, and 64 patients were above 60 years. The rate of complications did not vary in the patients with advanced age, the study stated.

Not offering surgeries to cancer patients will cause more deaths than the risks arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, experts pointed out, and this study reinforces that necessary surgeries need not be deferred due to the novel coronavirus.

They said that these findings from the COVID-19 hot-spot of the country will result in "development of guidelines for continuation of elective major cancer surgery in a world that may well have to learn to live with COVID-19".

These results support the continuation of elective major cancer surgery in regions with COVID-19 trends similar to that of India," said Dr. Rajendra Badwe, director of the Tata Memorial Centre.

## +'Need urgent steps to decongest big cities'

Nitin Gadkari suggests shifting leather cluster from Dharavi to Thane district

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

India needs urgent steps to decongest its big cities like Mumbai, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday, stressing that the worst kind of living conditions in places like Dharavi, Asia's largest slum, can be improved by sprucing up infrastructure elsewhere, and relocating some businesses.

"What type of a problem are we facing now in Mumbai... It is surrounded by the sea from three sides and

there's nowhere to expand. I met the leather industry from Dharavi yesterday who have an annual turnover of ₹4.5 lakh crore of which ₹85,000 crore is from the domestic market," said Mr. Gadkari, the Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping, as well as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

"I suggested to them we can shift the leather cluster from Dharavi to Thane district, help people shift out of Dharavi into better housing

options. That can improve the situation in Dharavi as well," he pointed out.

"People are already fed up... Wipro chairman Azim Premji was talking about people requiring two and a half hours to get to work and another two and a half hours to come back," Mr. Gadkari said after unveiling a report on 'Jobs, Growth and Sustainability: A New Social Contract for India's Post-COVID-19 Economic Recovery' produced by the Council on Energy, Environment and

Water and the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.

The government is working to complete a Mumbai-Delhi expressway in three years that will make it possible for cars and trucks to traverse the distance in 12 hours and 26 hours, respectively, he said. Many businesses can relocate to places along the corridor that can offer a better quality of life, the minister said.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 2

## IIT-Madras top institution in govt. ranking

IISc, Bengaluru is second and IIT-Delhi third in NIRF released by HRD Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, is the country's best in the field of higher education, according to the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) released on Thursday. The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, stands at the second place, followed by IIT-Delhi.

Under the universities category, the IISc topped the list, followed by Jawaharlal Nehru University and Banaras Hindu University. While Delhi University has dropped out of the top 10, all the best colleges are affiliated to it: Miranda House got the first rank in the colleges category, followed by Lady Shri Ram College for Women and Hindu College.

**'A subjective parameter'**  
These rankings come a day after the QS World University Rankings showed that India's best – including the IISc and most IITs – have slipped in the global lists. This is due to the high weightage given to the perception parameter in most international rankings, Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank said at the

### Top institutes

Seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Banaras Hindu University (BHU) were ranked as the top 10 educational institutions of 2020 in the overall category by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)

Rank	Institution	State
1	IIT, Madras	T.N.
2	IISc	Karnataka
3	IIT, Delhi	Delhi
4	IIT, Bombay	Maharashtra
5	IIT, Kharagpur	W.B.
6	IIT, Kanpur	U.P.
7	IIT, Guwahati	Assam
8	JNU	Delhi
9	IIT, Roorkee	Uttarakhand
10	BHU	U.P.

# Mumbai Police expands segway fleet to secure seafaces

Of batch of 50, Home Minister inaugurates 15 electric scooters; five deployed at Nariman Point, 10 at Worli

**GAUTAM S. MENGLE**

MUMBAI

The Mumbai Police on Thursday expanded its fleet of segways to patrol seafaces and promenades in the city, as part of its efforts to ensure safety and security at tourist spots. The move comes just days after a picture of people descending in hordes at Marine Drive as soon as the lockdown was eased, went viral on social media.

#### Self-balancing

State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh inaugurated the first 15 of the 50 segways, self-balancing electric scooters equipped to carry one person, at Marine Drive.

Mr. Deshmukh said, "While the deployment will begin with 10 segways at Worli, and five at Nariman Point, we eventually plan to deploy these latest self-balancing electric scooters at Bandra, Juhu and Versova too. The Home Ministry is keen on the modernisation of Maharashtra's police force



**On the fast lane:** Police personnel ride the new segways which were inaugurated at Nariman Point on Thursday. The electric scooters will be used to patrol promenades. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

and wants them to be equipped with technology on a par with global policing standards."

Police personnel manning the segways will be provided with face masks and

equipped with public address systems. "Apart from ensuring safety and security in these times of the COVID-19 pandemic, they will also monitor adherence to social distancing norms.

Drones will provide additional complementary cover to the police personnel on segways," Mr. Deshmukh said.

Segways were first added to the police's fleet of vehicles on an experimental basis

in 2017, with two segways being pressed into service. Subsequently, the number was increased to nine, with five segways deployed at Marine Drive and four at Worli.

#### Extending help

Mr. Deshmukh expressed his condolences to the families of 35 police personnel who have lost their lives to COVID-19 in the State so far. He said, "No compensation can make up for what the loss of life means to their families. We want to only offer a small token of the State's appreciation on behalf of the citizenry through ex-gratia. We are also providing help to the personnel who test positive and are creating specialised facilities for their care."

Senior police officers including Mumbai Police Commissioner Parambir Singh, Joint Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Vinoy Kumar Choubey and Additional Commissioner of Police (south region) Nishith Misra, were present.

# Nashik Police give 3,300 fitness bands to personnel

'We can stay two steps ahead of the virus': Akshay Kumar

**TANVI DESHPANDE**

MUMBAI

Nashik Police recently distributed 3,300 fitness bands to its personnel to monitor their health in wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Several police personnel from Nashik district had tested positive for COVID-19. There have also been three deaths from the district. The bands were distributed to monitor their symptoms for fever as well as their overall well-being. The bands, manufactured by a private company, were donated by actor Akshay Kumar and a city-based cancer

centre. The fitness parameters of officers will be monitored at a control room in the police headquarters and if anyone

has fever for more than 24 hours, necessary steps will be taken.

Speaking at an online press conference on Thursday, Nashik Commissioner of Police Vishwas Nangre-Patil said, "Sometimes, our staff work for 12 hours at a stretch. Their health is very important. These bands will help us detect their fever, blood pressure, and sleep pattern. We have fed the details of 2,900 staffers so far.

These vitals will be monitored regularly."

Mr. Patil has also set some goals and targets for the police personnel. Those over 50 years old have been asked to walk 5,000 steps a day, while for the under 50s this has been increased to 10,000 steps a day. There is also a reward for best performers, he said.

Speaking on the occasion, actor Akshay Kumar said, "It is important to safeguard the health of those who are safeguarding us. I hope with this technology, we can stay two steps ahead of the virus."

## 'Need urgent steps to decongest big cities'

Nitin Gadkari suggests shifting leather cluster from Dharavi to Thane district

**STAFF REPORTER**

MUMBAI

India must take urgent steps to decongest its big cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi and Kolkata, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday, stressing that the worst kind of living conditions in places like Dharavi can be improved by sprucing up infrastructure elsewhere and relocating some businesses.

"What type of a problem are we facing now in Mumbai... It is surrounded by the sea from three sides and there's nowhere to expand. I met the leather industry from Dharavi yesterday who have an annual turnover of ₹1.45 lakh crore of which ₹85,000 crore is from the domestic market," said Mr. Gadkari, the Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping, as well as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

#### 'Provide better housing'

"I suggested to them we can shift the leather cluster from Dharavi to Thane district, help people shift out of Dharavi into better housing options. That can improve the situation in Dharavi as well," he pointed out, stressing there is immense pressure on cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru that need decongestion.

"People are already fed up... Wipro chairman Azim Premji was talking about people requiring two and a half hours to get to work and another two and a half hours

## 'Stagger office timings in Mumbai'

Urban planner on tackling post-COVID-19 challenges

**TANVI DESHPANDE**  
MUMBAI

Mumbai needs to seriously consider staggered timings of offices and the city can't really restart unless the suburban trains start functioning, urban planner Pankaj Joshi said on Thursday while speaking about the city's post-COVID-19 challenges.

Implementing staggered timings will require cooperation from corporates, and many offices have already been moving away from South Mumbai, Mr. Joshi pointed out at an online chat hosted by city-based organisation Gateway House on 'Post-COVID

Mumbai: Governance, Planning and Realignment.'

"We (Mumbai) still have not been able to get a hang of the (COVID-19) situation. We need to invest in our public health infrastructure. Fever clinics being held right now need to be held all year round," he said. "Delhi has had mobile clinics for a while now. The public health and disaster management infrastructure being augmented for Mumbai right now seems temporary," Mr. Joshi added.

"In Mumbai, we see crowding every day at public toilets. We need to

construct a toilet for every home, and if not that, for every two to three houses at least," Mr. Joshi said.

Nitai Mehta, managing trustee of Praja Foundation, highlighted the need for devolution of powers in the city's administration.

"We need to involve public representatives, NGOs and local people who know ground realities on issues such as migrants' issues. Each State needs to look implementation of Nagar Raj Bill. Imagine a Mayor of Mumbai as powerful as the CM. It has happened in New York," Mr. Mehta said.

to come back," Mr. Gadkari said, after unveiling a report on 'Jobs, Growth and Sustainability: A New Social Contract for India's Post-COVID-19 Economic Recovery.'

**'Improving infrastructure'** The government, he said, is working to complete a Mumbai-Delhi expressway in three years that will make it possible for a car to cover the distance in twelve hours, and trucks would take 26 hours. Many businesses can use the improved infrastructure and relocate to places

along the corridor that can offer a better quality of life.

The crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic is a good opportunity to rethink cities and slums, said Naushad Forbes, former president of the Confederation of Indian Industry and co-chairman of Forbes Marshall, who was also present at the launch of the report co-produced by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) and the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP).

"Our cities have slums

and very affluent housing, we don't have graded options in between the two. We need to redevelop and decongest our cities," Mr. Forbes said, recalling a recent conversation he had with Abhijit Banerjee (Nobel prize winner for Economics).

#### Enhance FSI: Forbes

"The FSI (Floor Space Index) norms in our cities are the lowest in any major country. If we enhance the FSI by a factor of five to 10, the quality of life will improve," Mr. Forbes said.

**GAREEMA BANGAD**

MUMBAI

A five year-old boy fell into an open drain in Ghatkopar (East) while playing near his house on Thursday. Despite day-long search operations, he was not found till late in the evening.

Hussain Shaikh fell into a drain near his house at Savitribai Phule Nagar, around 12 p.m. on Thursday. Police and Fire Brigade were informed and they started search operations by 12.23 p.m. The area's NCP corporator Rakhi Jadhav said, "People have built their houses literally above the drains in the area. The boy was playing just next to his house and fell into the drain. His moth-

er jumped after him and managed to grab him, but due to the flow of water and the slippery surface, he slipped from her hands."

Former corporator Praveen Chheda said that a wall was supposed to be constructed around the drains in 2015, but it never began.

"The tender to construct this wall was passed in 2015 and it has still not been constructed," he said.

Assistant Municipal Commissioner of N ward (Ghatkopar, Vikhroli) Ajitkumar Ambi said, "The project was started in some areas, but it was opposed by the locals."

"The search was called off at around 6.45 p.m.," Ms. Jadhav said.



**All-out efforts:** Fire brigade personnel and the flood response team search for the boy who fell into a drain at Savitribai Phule Nagar in Ghatkopar on Thursday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Monsoon likely to hit city in 48 hours

Orange alert issued for Mumbai, Thane, Palghar and Raigad for Sunday

**TANVI DESHPANDE**

MUMBAI

The southwest monsoon arrived in parts of south and coastal Maharashtra on Thursday and is likely to advance into Mumbai in the next two days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said.

Rain lashed Harnai in south Konkan, central Maharashtra, Marathwada and Goa on Thursday. The IMD said conditions are becoming favourable for the monsoon to further advance into more parts of central Arabian Sea and Maharashtra, including Mumbai, in the next 48 hours. Rain also hit parts of the coastal Sindhudurg district, which shares its border with Goa, including Amboli, Vengurla and other neighbouring areas from 11 a.m. on Thursday, another IMD official said.

IMD also expects en-



**Soldiering on:** A woman walks back home with shopping bags amid the pouring rain, in Thane on Thursday. ■ VIBHAV BIRWATKAR

hanced rainfall over the west coast owing to a low pressure area over the Bay of Bengal with cyclonic circulation, which is likely to move northwestwards.

Vasai recorded 5 cm rain on Thursday, while Lonavala recorded 4 cm rainfall. IMD has forecast thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds for Mumbai, Thane, Palghar and Raigad on Friday.

The IMD has issued an orange alert (heavy to very heavy rain) for these four districts for Sunday.

(With PTI inputs)

## Police drop lost woman, infant back home

Woman left house in Ahmednagar after a domestic quarrel, landed in Nhava Sheva

**RAINA ASSAINAR**

NAVI MUMBAI

The Nhava Sheva police recently played guardian angels to a woman who left home in Ahmednagar with her four-month-old infant after a domestic spat, intending to go to her uncle's place in PUNE.

On June 1, following the spat, Sheetal Raju Khandare (22), took a lift from a truck driver, who dropped her off at Chakan as he had to take a detour from there to Mumbai. Ms. Khandare then requested another truck driver to drop her off at PUNE. The driver instead dropped her at Nhava Sheva as he had to go to JNPT.

Ms. Khandare began to wander in the area and soon had street dogs chasing her. She began to run, and accidentally spotted a police station, which she initially thought was someone's house. "She had a fight with her husband and she had left home with her daughter along with their belongings.

through to her sister in Ahmednagar.

"The sister was not well-to-do, and worked at a brick kiln. She said there was no way she could reach Nhava Sheva and requested that Ms. Khandare not be admitted anywhere due to the pandemic. She requested us to drop Ms. Khandare at her house," said Ms. Jadhav.

On June 4, after obtaining special permission from Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone II, Ashok Dudhe, Ms. Gaikwad, along with constable Niles Bhosale drove to Ahmednagar. She was handed over to her sister at the Supa police station in the city. "After a few days, she contacted us to let us know that her mother and brother have agreed to come to Ahmednagar and that differences with her husband have been sorted," Ms. Gaikwad said. Mr. Jadhav now plans to send a report on the incident to the police commissioner, commanding the police's good deed.

On reaching here, we first contacted her uncle in PUNE at the police station with a woman constable," said assistant police inspector Jyoti Gaikwad from the Nhava Sheva police station.

On June 3, there was a cyclone and since the police station had a tin roof, the police officials shifted her and her baby into the police vehicle. On the same day, the police tried contacting her brother and mother at Washim tehsil but due to the cyclone, neither of them were reachable. Finally, they got

stayed in the women's room at the police station with a woman constable," said assistant police inspector Jyoti Gaikwad from the Nhava Sheva police station.

The next day, the police officials took her to various 'mahlia ashrams' which denied her entry due to the fear of COVID-19. "We had conducted her medical screening, and still, the ashrams denied her entry. She

denied her entry. Finally, they got

stayed in the women's room at the police station with a woman constable," said assistant police inspector Jyoti Gaikwad from the Nhava Sheva police station.

The next day, the police officials took her to various 'mahlia ashrams' which denied her entry due to the fear of COVID-19. "We had conducted her medical screening, and still, the ashrams denied her entry. She

Timings	
MUMBAI	
FRIDAY, JUN. 12	
RISE 06:01	SET 19:17
RISE 00:10	SET 11:53
SATURDAY, JUN. 13	
RISE 06:01	SET 19:17
RISE 00:47	SET 12:42
SUNDAY, JUN. 14	
RISE 06:01	SET 19:17
RISE 01:22	SET 13:31

Mumbai Weather	
max	min
Mumbai Airport	34 26
Pune	33 24
Mumbai City	

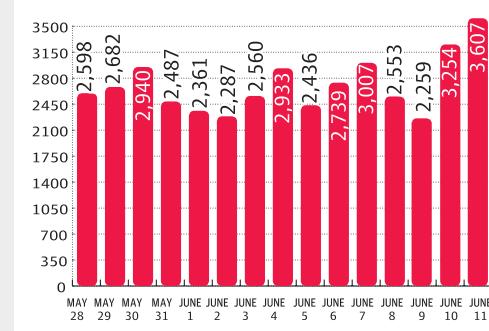
## Maharashtra COVID-19 tracker

TOTAL CASES	NEW CASES	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERED	DEATHS
97,648	3,607	47,968	46,078	3,590

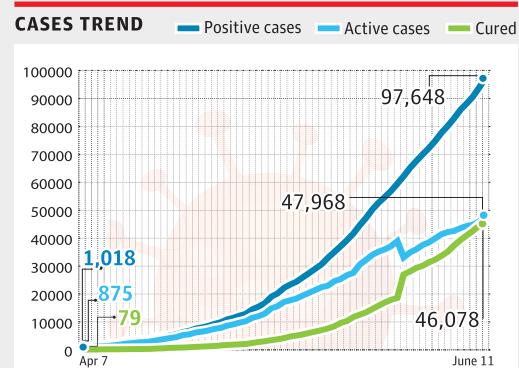
## DISTRICTS AFFECTED: 35

DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS	DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Mumbai	54,085	1,954	Hingoli	224	0
Thane	15,679	398	Sangli	195	4
Pune	10,882	447	Nanded	186	9
Aurangabad	2,306	123	Yavatmal	170	2
Nashik	1,746	100	Latur	152	6
Palghar	1,842	47	Osmanabad	140	3
Raigad	1,636	58	Sindhudurg	145	0
Solapur	1,578	120	Buldhana	103	3
Jalgaon	1,366	120	Parbhani	80	3
Akola	927	40	Gondia	68	0
Nagpur	919	12	Beed	66	2
Satara	701	27	Gadchiroli	45	1
Kolhapur	675	8	Chandrapur	46	0
Ratnagiri	381	15	Nandurbar	45	4
Dhule	341	25	Bhandara	46	0
Anmavati	310	20	Wardha	14	1
Jalna	225	6	Washim	20	2
Ahmednagar	224	9			

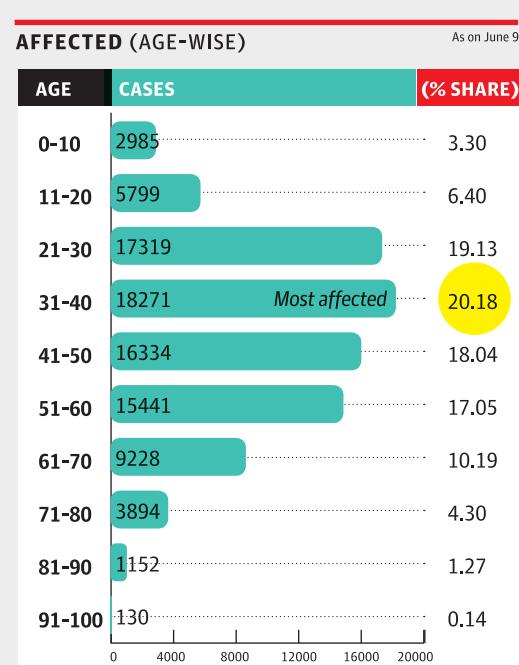
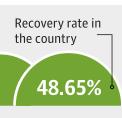
## POSITIVE CASES OVER LAST 15 DAYS



1,418 (39.31%) of Thursday's cases are from Mumbai



47.18% is the State recovery rate



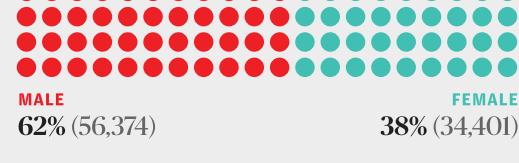
## QUARANTINE NUMBERS

5,73,606 | 28,066



Home quarantine

Institutional quarantine



70% of deaths due to co-morbidities



## CITY-WISE HELPLINE NUMBERS

Mumbai city: 022 22664232	Palghar: 02525 297474
Mumbai suburbs: 022 26556799 / 26556806	Raigad: 02141 222118
Thane: 022 25301740	Ratnagiri: 02352 226248
	Sindhudurg: 02362 228847

Source: Public Health Department, Maharashtra, BMC

## City records highest deaths once again

With 97 more fatalities, Mumbai's death toll is now 1,954; 1,418 new cases take total tally to 54,085

JYOTI SHELAR  
TANVI DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Mumbai clocked 97 deaths for the second day in a row on Thursday, pushing its death toll to 1,954. The city also recorded 1,418 new COVID-19 cases, taking its total cases to 54,085.

Of the 97 patients who succumbed, 63 were men and 34 were women and nearly 65 had comorbidities that made their recovery difficult. Civic health officials clarified that 43 of the deaths were from last week and were being updated now.

## Fatality rate jumps

From 3.2% in the end of May, the city's case-fatality rate has now jumped to 3.6%. The number of fatalities has rapidly increased in June with an average of 61 deaths daily. The city has lost 675 lives in just 11 days of this month. The surge in fatalities has been a cause of concern, and doctors have mainly attributed it to the lack of immediate access to critical care beds. Over the last several days, 99% of the city's intensive care unit beds have been full.

Officials said the number of new positive cases have hit plateau and the difference between the active cases and discharges is narrowing quickly. As of Thursday, the city had a total of 27,915 active cases and



Daily routine: Public health nurses at Pila Bungalow primary health centre in Dharavi on Thursday. They conduct door-to-door health check-ups. ■ PRASHANT NAKWAE

KISHORI PEDNEKAR  
Mumbai Mayor

24,209 recovered patients. Mumbai's average daily growth rate of cases now stands at 2.82%.

## 20 new cases in Dharavi

Dharavi, meanwhile, reported 20 new cases on Thursday, pushing the area's tally to 1,984. However, of these, only 914 cases are active. Two more deaths have been recorded in the slum cluster, taking its death toll to 75. G North ward, in which the area lies, has the highest number of cases at 3,618.

Two other city wards also crossed the 3,000-mark on Thursday – E (Byculla) and F

North (Matunga and Wadala). There are now five city wards with over 3,000 cases each. R North ward (Dahisar) is growing the fastest when it comes to case growth rate, at 6%. It is followed by P North ward at 5.6%.

Morgues to be cleared

Meanwhile, after media reports of bodies of COVID-19 patients lying in KEM Hospital's morgue surfaced, Mayor Kishori Pednekar said, "There are only seven bodies in the morgue that are there since relatives have not come forward. Only one has been kept for three weeks while the rest are recent."

She said the Municipal Commissioner has assured her he will take up the matter with the Police Commissioner since it is up to the police to dispose these bodies.

## Unani practitioner is eighth doctor in city to succumb

JYOTI SHELAR  
MUMBAI

A 45-year-old Unani practitioner who consulted at an emergency clinic at Malad railway station succumbed to COVID-19 early this week. Dr. Shaukat Ali, a resident of Malwani, is the eighth doctor in the city to die of the infection.

While Malad has emerged as a hotspot of the infection over the last few weeks, the doctor also travelled every day in a BEST bus meant for essential workers from his home to the station and was treating railway staff and labourers working on the tracks. He could have likely picked up the infection through one of these sources.

Dr. Ali first complained of mild breathlessness on June 4 and went for a check-up. His tests for typhoid returned positive. On June 6, his condition deteriorated and he became more breathless. "He went to S.K. Patil Hospital where they were only admitting patients who had tested positive for COVID-19. Then, he went to

M.W. Desai Hospital where doctors checked his oxygen saturation. Since it was 96%, they did not admit him and suggested that he go to the Covid Care Centre at NESCO, Goregaon," Dr. Ravindra Nigam, a family friend, said.

"Since he did not have a test report, he decided to go back to a local clinic in Malwani where an X-ray was done. It showed that his lungs were foggy and it looked like a classic case of COVID-19," Dr. Nigam said, adding that by end of the day, his oxygen levels had dropped below 50% and his cough had spots of blood.

No ventilator beds

"We rushed him to the Shatabdi Hospital in Kandivali around 10.30 pm. They admitted him but did not have a ventilator. Meanwhile, I called seven hospitals but none had a vacant ventilator bed. It was only at 2 a.m. that a patient was shifted and he was put on ventilator support," said Dr. Nigam. He eventually succumbed on the night of June 8 and his reports came positive after that.

NMNC records highest surge for second day in a row

RAINA ASSAINAR  
NAVI MUMBAI

For the second consecutive day, the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMNC) on Thursday reported its highest-single day surge in COVID-19 cases.

With 195 new cases, Navi Mumbai's total case tally is now 3,414. Of these new cases, 114 patients are male while 81 are female.

NMNC also reported six deaths on Thursday, bringing the death toll to 107.

Navi Mumbai also reported 83 recoveries, bringing the total number of recoveries to 1,998. There are currently 1,309 active patients in the city and the recovery rate stands at 59%, while the mortality rate is 3%.

Meanwhile Panvel Municipal Corporation (PMC) reported 44 cases on Thursday, taking its tally to 861. With 55 more patients being discharged, the total recoveries are now 596. The PMC now has 229 active cases with recovery rate of 69% and mortality rate is 2.28%.

## Country's first public-private COVID-19 hospital inaugurated

Wipro's facility at Hinjewadi IT park set up within 40 days

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday inaugurated the country's first COVID-19 hospital under public-private partnership by Wipro in Hinjewadi IT park.

Last month, the IT major had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the State to repurpose one of its campuses into a 504-bed intermediary care COVID-19 hospital.

"This first public-private project in the country is being dedicated to people. This is an extremely satisfying moment not only for Pune but also the whole of Maharashtra," Mr. Thackeray said in his inauguration address, delivered over a video conference.

The hospital, spread over 1.8 lakh sq.ft. of the company's campus, has 18 ventilators and is equipped with an intensive care unit (ICU) and other medical facilities. Wipro will also be providing two ambulances.

"The MoU was signed on May 5 and Wipro handed over the facility to the State government in less than a

month and a half. This hospital is a testament to Wipro's speed, efficacy and quality of work in the social arena as well," said the CM, while thanking Rishad Premji, chairman, Wipro Limited.

Mr. Thackeray also said that when the State began its fight against COVID-19 two months ago, its health infrastructure was inadequate. "Today Maharashtra has created facilities in a big way. Initially, we had just two laboratories for testing samples. Now, that number is between 80 to 85, and will soon reach 100. There was a big question on the availability of PPE kits, N-95 masks and ventilators. Today, we have 2.3 lakh PPE kits and 4.2 lakh N-95 masks," he said, adding that the State has 1,484 COVID-19 centres and 2.5 lakh beds.

Mr. Thackeray said the

state government was creating jumbo facilities across big cities to combat the pandemic. "While we talk a lot about China's infrastructure, we [the State government] too have set up India's first field hospital with 1,000 beds in Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) in just 15 days. Another facility is coming up nearby. A jumbo centre has started functioning at Goregaon as well and another one is coming up in Navi Mumbai," he said.

Speaking more about the Wipro hospital, Ayush Prasad, CEO, Pune zilla parishad, told *The Hindu* that a team of multidisciplinary doctors drawn from medical colleges across the State would be working here.

"We are trying to do something akin to the Kerala model. The focus in this state-of-the-art hospital will be on nursing care and ensuring early treatment of those with co-morbidities. Given the hospital's sprawling facility, it will be much easier to maintain requisite distancing norms and prevent cross-transmission of the virus," Mr. Prasad said.

## FILM REVIEW

# A quiet but telling portrait of a half-widow

Praveen Morschhale's *Widow of Silence* contrasts the visual beauty of the Kashmir Valley with the conflicts, evoking a feeling of angst in 'normalcy'

KENNETH ROSARIO

In the last one year, Kashmir has witnessed the world's longest-ever Internet blackout ever imposed by a democracy. The life in the Valley has been shrouded in enigma, with reports emerging of human rights violations, chronicled in the rather rare news articles, photographs or documentaries. Although Praveen Morschhale's *Widow of Silence*, was filmed and screened at international film festivals like Busan and Rotterdam, much before the abrogation of Article 370, it puts a pertinent face to what ordinary lives in the Valley would look like today, caught in the crossfire of perpetual State and military surveillance, bureaucracy and resistance movements, and has been for decades. There is, therefore, an inherent appeal to the film, which arises of sheer curiosity of the subject, the desire to witness and connect beyond headlines and editorials.

In Morschhale's film, Kashmir is often referred to as *jannat* (paradise), most often by a taxi driver, who ferries locals from their village to the town centre of Pulwama. The film, rife with long-shots and sweeping landscape images, captures Kashmiris against the vast, dry and imposing terrain they inhabit, slowly demonstrating how their lives are anything but paradisaical. The narrative contrasts the visual beauty of the Valley with the conflicts, evoking a feeling of discomfort in 'nor-

## Widow of Silence

**DIRECTOR:** Praveen Morschhale  
**CAST:** Shilpi Marwaha, Noorjahan, Zaba Banoo, Ajay Chourey, Bilal

**STORYLINE:** A half-widow in Pulwama tries to get the death certificate of her missing husband

malcy'. For the most part, Morschhale abstains from theatrics and drama, and maintains a restrained tone of 'ordinary lives', while unambiguously establishing the conflict of Aasiya (Shilpi Marwaha), a half-widow.

We, as the audience, are well-aware of Aasiya's story during the course of the film – that the Indian military picked him up in 2010 for interrogation and he never returned. Commonly known as a 'half-widow', Aasiya is one of the many women in the Valley, who is awaiting the formal recognition from the Indian government that her spouse is dead, so she can move on, emotionally and financially. Aasiya is seeking neither compensation nor revenge, but the rightful inheritance of her husband. Aasiya is left with an ageing and non-responsive mother-in-law and a teenage daughter, Inaya, who questions the veracity of her father's abduction and his character. Despite this painful background, the film is most impactful when demonstrating the mundane activities of its protagonists and the people of the Valley, where death and uncertainty are constant companions. The film is

contained to daylight, where the flood of sunlight and brightness works as a fascinating antithesis to the darkness of Aasiya's life, amplifying her woes even more.

It's the sporadic attempt at drama that appears staged and inorganic, like Inaya's classmates hurling paper balls at her and mocking her for a missing father. The dialogues in these parts are clunky and performance. While Marwaha is restrained and in full control of her character, the other actors – like the one playing her colleague at the nursing home where she works in or the lecherous registrar – deliver lines in a stunted and memorised fashion. Although, it must be noted that they are non-professional local actors. The everyday details like cut-off phone lines, news of Uri attacks on the radio and constant checking of identity cards ("They value our papers more than us," says the taxi driver), add more drama than the attempt. Although not urgent in its telling, *Widow of Silence* has a quiet perspective, a deeply political one. The sympathies clearly lie with the Kashmiri locals but the idea of the 'other' is occupied by the military, bureaucracy and militants, maintaining a fragile balance. There is no talk of nationalism or historic wrong, but much-needed documentation of common lives, deep in the Valley, where men are taken away from homes, never to return.

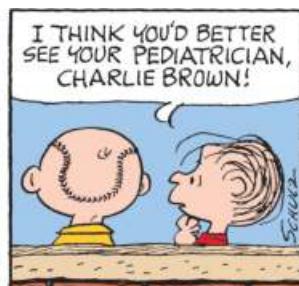
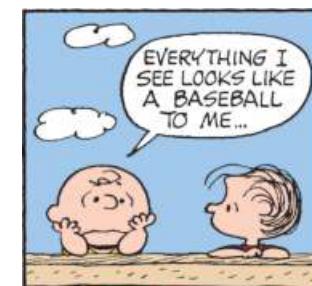


**Kashmir calling:** The film is most impactful when demonstrating the mundane activities of its protagonists. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## POOCH CAFE



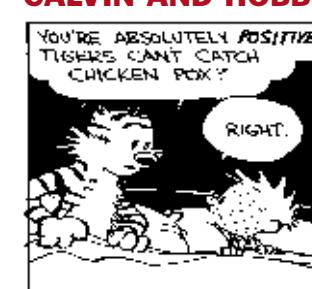
## PEANUTS



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



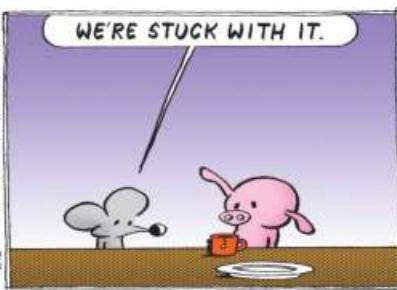
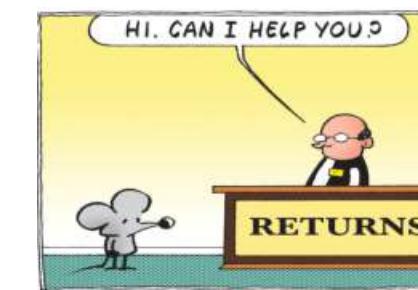
## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## TIGER



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



even the most obscure bookstore an opportunity to find its voice and be heard. At the moment, we do not have the numbers to be taken seriously. Collectively, we will have more bargaining power," says Fernandes.

### A network of help

The bookstores registered with the IBAI will also extend help to each other, says Fernandes. "For example, there are small bookstores and publishers in Kolkata who lost so much stock post Amphan. We will step in to fulfil any order they have so they do not lose customers."

IBAI hopes to have an online bookstore fed by independent shops. "You can order a book online and the store closest to you sends it." This has been an ongoing topic of WhatsApp chats for a few years now, but it really did not translate into anything concrete, says Kapur, laughing.

"But lockdown gave us the time to hone the discussions to what we are and want to be. So we can actually proceed with plans instead of it all being in the air," she says. All they want is a policy that is fair to independent bookstores, says Kapur. What excites her is the possibility that IBAI will facilitate small stores sharing best practices and resources, and, at some point, maybe an online presence. IBAI will also start compiling a directory of independent book stores in the country. And Kapur hopes, "We should be able to lobby for policy changes."

While Malhotra is not a part of IBAI yet, she says the way ahead is to see "ourselves as a community, that is collective and collaborative rather than competitive. We realise we're in this together," she says.

To register with IBAI as an independent bookstore, visit [Indiebookshops.in](http://Indiebookshops.in). On Instagram, Facebook, Twitter @bookshopsindia With inputs from Sunalini Mathew



■ PANKAJA SRINIVASAN

# Bookworms fight back

The Independent Bookshops Association of India hopes to give struggling bookstore owners a platform where they can consolidate, find their voice, and be heard



IBAI could be a viable alternative to Amazon and other European countries that have a law where retailers are not allowed to give more than a certain percentage of discount. "The booksellers and

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

the government's association is strong as is the law that was laid down in the early 1980s. Whether you buy a book online or offline, the discount is the same."

"We hope IBAI will give

# BJP hits back, says Pawar giving wrong info on foreign varsities

Oxford and Cambridge universities are holding examinations online, says Tawde

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

The Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday attacked Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar, alleging that Mr. Pawar was purposely misleading people with wrong information about foreign universities such as Oxford and Cambridge cancelling their examinations.

"These universities are holding examinations online. Even IIT Delhi is set to conduct online exams. Our education pattern is different from that of foreign countries. We have the final paper of 100 marks, and therefore, not holding the exams would go against the merit of students," BJP leader and former higher and technical education minister Vinod Tawde said.

The BJP's reaction comes a day after Mr. Pawar snubbed Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari over his in-



NCP chief Sharad Pawar meets Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai. ■ FILE PHOTO

terference in the State government's decision to not conduct the final year university examinations.

Mr. Tawde referred to the NCP chief's statement at a press conference in Ratnagiri's Dapoli town on Wednesday, where Higher and Technical Education minister Uday Samant was present.

A number of well-known universities in India, foreign universities like Oxford, and many private universities have cancelled examina-

tions. If private universities too are taking a similar decision, then I do not think any such decision taken by the State government is wrong. Honourable Governor may have more knowledge in this subject and that's why he must be saying differently," Mr. Pawar had said.

Mr. Tawde said he does not believe that the NCP chief was misinformed about Oxford University. "It is intriguing to know what purpose Mr. Pawar wants to serve by

giving wrong information and safeguarding a minister at fault," he said.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has already announced that the final year examinations will not be conducted owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and has even offered an option of appearing for the exams in October to those who may want to improve their grades.

For others, average marks or grades of last seven semesters will be given as final score. The State has been saying that holding the examinations for a few lakh students by maintaining physical distancing will not be possible and students could be exposed to the threat of the virus.

Mr. Koshyari, along with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad is against the decision, with the Governor hinting that it is his domain to take the final call.

have recently requested the CM to convene a meeting. "However, no decision has been taken so far," the source said. Eight members of the Upper House retired on June 6, while two others are set to retire on June 15 and 16. Two NCP members, whose term also ended on June 6, had quit to join the BJP last year.

However, the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government is yet to take a decision on finalising the names.

A senior Congress leader said, "It has already been decided during the formation

of the MVA government that each of the three parties will get four members each. But the Sena is now asking for five seats, which we will not agree at any cost."

The Congress leader expressed hope that the meeting to finalise the names of the members will be held soon although Mr. Thackeray is busy in handling the COVID-19 situation in the State and providing relief to the people from coastal parts affected by cyclone Nisarga. "Finalising the names of the Governor appointees is very important. The Cabinet needs to make recom-

mendation to the Governor soon," he said.

Meanwhile, Congress min-

isters in the State held a

meeting to discuss the prob-

able candidates to be nomi-

nated to the Council.

"The other issues dis-

cussed were development

works in the constituencies

of Congress MLAs and ap-

pointments to the State

boards and corporations," a

party minister said. Con-

gress ministers had also met

on Wednesday to discuss the

policy decisions of depart-

ments, held by the party mi-

nisters, being taken without

taking them into confidence.

## Farmer leader Raju Shetti may get berth in Council

"I will announce my decision very soon," he said

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

A confidential meeting between Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and minister Jayant Patil and Swabhiman Paksha chief Raju Shetti has triggered speculation of Mr. Shetti being offered a seat in the Legislative Council from the Governor's quota, with the NCP's backing.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Shetti confirmed the development and said while his followers are eager to see him as an MLC in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, he is yet to formally announce his decision.

"Mr. Patil met me in Shiroli [in Kolhapur] a couple of

days ago and told me that

NCP chief Sharad Pawar was

keen on having me as part of the MVA government. I have relayed this to my party leaders and workers. While they are of the opinion that I accept, I will announce my decision very soon," the farmer leader said.

Sources said Mr. Shetti is likely to announce his decision on Friday.

Meanwhile, Congress min-

isters in the State held a

meeting to discuss the prob-

able candidates to be nomi-

nated to the Council.

"The other issues dis-

cussed were development

works in the constituencies

of Congress MLAs and ap-

pointments to the State

boards and corporations," a

party minister said. Con-

gress ministers had also met

on Wednesday to discuss the

policy decisions of depart-

ments, held by the party mi-

nisters, being taken without

taking them into confidence.



Raju Shetti

margin of 1.77 lakh votes.

However, since Mr. Shetti severed ties with the BJP-led NDA in August 2017, he had been a vociferous critic of the Narendra Modi and the Devendra Fadnavis governments at the Centre and in the State.

Before the 2019 parliamentary elections, Mr. Shetti had cast his lot with Mr. Pawar's NCP instead.

But the new alliance proved costly with Mr. Shetti's seemingly sure grip on Hattanangale undercut by the Shiv Sena's youthful Dhairya Sheel Mane, who defeated him to snare the vital constituency in Kolhapur.

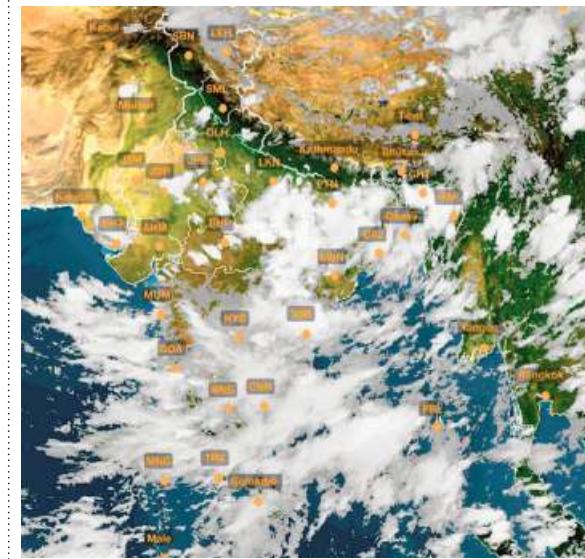
According to Swabhiman Paksha sources, the party had a kind of quid pro quo arrangement with the NCP, who had secured Mr. Shetti's support before the Lok Sabha polls.

"After he was defeated in the general elections, we had hoped that the NCP would compensate Mr. Shetti by helping to send him to the Rajya Sabha given his experience as an MP, but that unfortunately did not happen," said a senior Swabhiman Paksha leader, requesting anonymity.

He further said Mr. Shetti's acceptance of the NCP's new 'offer' would only stand to benefit the party and help strengthen its base in western Maharashtra – a fact acknowledged by Mr. Shetti himself.

### WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

**Forecast for Friday:** Heavy/heavy rainfall likely at a few/isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, central Maharashtra, Marathwada, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalseema, Yanam, interior Karnataka and Kerala

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	1.3...	34.6...	26.7	Kozhikode	30.1...	31.6...	23.6
Ahmedabad	33...	36.8...	23.8	Kurnool	1.3...	...	24.5
Aizawl	19...	27.2...	19.8	Lucknow	...	39.1...	29.5
Allahabad	40.9...	30.3	—	Madurai	...	38.2...	27.0
Bengaluru	1...	27.6...	21.5	Mangaluru	68.2...	29.5...	22.4
Bhopal	38.5...	25.4	—	Mumbai	1.1...	33.7...	26.0
Bhubaneswar	9.9...	31.8...	25.9	Mysuru	1...	30...	21.0
Chandigarh	39.4...	25.8	—	New Delhi	0.4...	40...	27.4
Chennai	1.6...	33.2...	26.9	Patna	—	35.6...	29.2
Coimbatore	0.2...	31.8...	22.4	Port Blair	—	31.2...	26.2
Dehradun	35.1...	23.4	—	Puducherry	0.4...	34.4...	27.1
Gangtok	0.2...	25.6...	16.3	Pune	—	33.1...	22.7
Goa	45.9...	28.0...	22.9	Raipur	—	38.8...	26.5
Guwahati	—	35.4...	25.8	Ranchi	17.6...	33.4...	24.0
Hubballi	—	27.0...	22.0	Shillong	—	23...	—
Hyderabad	46.4...	28.4...	23.0	Shimla	1.4...	30.3...	20.1
Imphal	0.9...	29.7...	22.8	Srinagar	—	27.0...	12.8
Jaipur	—	40.8...	29.1	Thiruvananthapuram	6.9...	30.2...	24.6
Kochi	5.4...	30.4...	24.4	Tiruchi	—	34.9...	27.6
Kohima	7.8...	24.2...	16.0	Vijayawada	23...	—	24.5
Kolkata	2.4...	31.6...	27.7	Visakhapatnam	40.7...	—	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	22	27	.30	.32	.65	■■■	In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Mandi
Bengaluru	12	39	.36	.36	.45	■■■	Gobindgarh, Punjab
Chennai	3	29	106	.67	—	■■■	Quality index (AQI) score of 204 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Howrah, West Bengal recorded a healthy AQI score of 199
Delhi	2	42	.47	.235	.229	■■■	
Hyderabad	16	22	.14	.55	.67	■■■	
Kolkata	7	.7	.17	.24	—	■■■	
Lucknow	3	26	.60	.247	—	■■■	
Mumbai	35	17	.13	.17	.62	■■■	
Pune	14	5	.46	.17	.17	■■■	
Visakhapatnam	—	.70	.33	.79	.97	■■■	

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>2</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.



## Back from the brink

The mistrust on both sides of the LAC can be overcome with better communication

An agreement reached between India and China on June 6 for a partial disengagement of troops from some of the points of stand-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is a step in the right direction. It is, however, just the first step. Both sides face what is likely to be a long road ahead to restore the status quo ante prior to China's multiple incursions that began one month ago. On June 9, Indian Army sources presented a measured appraisal of what had been agreed to at the Corps Commander-level talks, as well as of the challenges that remain. Both sides identified five locations of conflict in the western sector in Ladakh – a separate ongoing stand-off in Naku La in Sikkim was not on the agenda. The five spots include Patrolling Points 14, 15 and 17, Chushul, and the north bank of Pangong Lake. A broad plan has been agreed to hold a series of talks at lower ranks of Colonel, Brigadier, and Major General at four of those points in the coming week to take forward the disengagement process. There, however, appear to be serious differences on Pangong Lake, which may require another round of higher level talks at the Corps Commander level. Chinese troops have dug in at the Finger 4 area on the lake's northern bank, and still remain present on India's side of the LAC, which runs at Finger 8. The Fingers 1 to 8, running from west to east, refer to mountain spurs on the north bank. By erecting tents, China has unilaterally changed the status quo.

India has made clear it will accept nothing less than restoring the status quo ante, and will not dilute its build-up in the area until and unless China draws down the artillery, bombers, rocket forces, air defence radars and jammers that it has amassed behind the frontlines on its side of the LAC. The demands made at ground-level talks suggest China's moves may, in part, be motivated by its insecurities at India's recent improvements in infrastructure on the Indian side of the LAC, which have helped reduce the enormous asymmetry that China has enjoyed, and now wants to preserve. India has correctly made clear it will not stop construction activity on its side of the LAC, which it is entirely entitled to. One important takeaway from the June 6 talks that could have a long-lasting impact is a proposal that the Corps Commanders have formal meetings once or twice a year for better interaction between the two armies at a higher level. If there is one thing that the recent tensions have made clear, it is the urgent need for better communication to address the strategic mistrust that prevails on both sides of the LAC. China's actions over the past month, have, unfortunately, only deepened it. Ill-advised posturing at the top political levels of the Indian leadership with threats last year to reclaim Aksai Chin didn't help either. Both sides must now look ahead at what can be done, with lessons from the mistakes of the recent past.

## A better rate

The rise in the recovery rate is cause for cheer, but it gives no room for complacency

Focusing on the positives in a bleak scenario is sometimes useful in avoiding fatigue from a prolonged campaign. That the total number of discharged people with COVID-19, from the time the first ever case was recorded in India, has exceeded the number of active cases is definitely a milestone. As of Thursday, a total of 1,46,716 people have recovered, while the number of active cases was 1,42,697. The steady increase in the number of people discharged is to be expected, especially given that the disease is now known to have a case fatality rate that is just about 2.8%. At that figure, the rate of recoveries has no other way to go but steadily upwards, unless there is gross mismanagement of the health system. Nevertheless, for the warriors on the front lines, and for the people who run the health system in the country, this is one metric that is a direct measure of the success of their interventions. However, it must be remembered that the Indian government revised its discharge policy, as have some other nations. No longer does a patient have to test negative twice over an interval of 24 hours; any patient who does not show any symptom over three days is allowed to go home now. And patients who were on critical care require only one negative test to be discharged. Discharge is likely to be followed up with home isolation for a period of seven days or two weeks, with restrictions on movement outside the home.

While the natural path of this curve is upwards, any slackening here will have disastrous consequences. The focus on health care must not be lost at any point in the continuum of fighting this epidemic, especially at a time when the number of people testing positive for COVID-19 in the country is rising steadily. The threat of this epidemic reaching a peak and overwhelming stretched health-care resources and facilities is clear and present; in some States it is possibly already happening. In this scenario, a proper triage at the first instance, to distinguish people with mild symptoms or none, from sick patients, is essential to ensure that the health system remains responsive to the really sick, and helps them recover. Providing adequate facilities and easy access to emergency care services are important in the COVID Care Centres and COVID Health Centres, and adequate monitoring of home quarantined people, possibly in association with local bodies and voluntary organisations, is essential. Everything the government does here on must be to allow the recovery rate reach its natural proportion of the total number of cases, and to keep the case fatality rate down.

# The Gandhis, Mandelas and Kings of today

Across the world, people are speaking up against racism, classism and callous elitism



GOPALKRISHNA GANDHI

We cannot celebrate Mahatma Gandhi today nor Nelson Mandela nor Martin Luther King Jr. without inviting their immediate and stern reprimand.

All three would say, each a bit differently from the other: 'If you are gathered to celebrate us, stop right here. If you are gathered to think with us, then listen. Not to us or to those who speak in our names but to your consciences, for that is all we did. We did look back to our heroes and heroines, we did celebrate their anniversaries, but only in order to look more clearly at the world around us and into the future that beckoned. India is a free country today, the colonised world is gone. South Africa's sharp, bruising chains of apartheid iron have snapped. The U.S., with its Civil Rights Act in place, has made slavery a thing of the disreputable past. It has gone on to elect a distinguished President, Barack Obama, from among people who did not, until very recently, even have the right to ride in a bus on a seat of their choice. But are you – Indians, South Africans, Americans – a happy and contented people?'

They would ask us this question in anxiety and in pain. We know the answer.

### The gluttony of a civilisation

India, South Africa, the U.S., and the whole world are in the grip of the vicious virus that goes by the name of COVID-19 but are in reality in the grip of the gluttony of a ci-

vilisation that is disengaging the earth of its resources and is hunting down the earth's life forms to gratify its craving for commercial profit. There is a wild animal market in every city and town and, more significant than that, within each of us who are not among the poor, in the shape of a callous disregard of life and the sanctity of due proportion.

The 'crown' of the novel coronavirus microbe is not different either in its human origins nor its inhuman effect from the giant plumes that rose over the embers at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Its victims are like those of the bomb: innocent human beings, invariably poor and marginalised.

Blaming China's opacity or Nature's insentient actions shifts our own guilt for the wilful deprivations of the human species' powerful segments. Nature is not taking it out on us. It has caught our hegemons destroying what we are meant to respect, to nurture. Zoo-otic pandemics are modern powerhouses' most diabolic, if unintended, creation, after our fabrications of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the propensity of nation states to practise custodial torture. Albert Lutuli's and Mandela's South Africa has signed and ratified without any objections or reservations the United Nations Convention Against Torture. Abraham Lincoln's and Martin Luther King Jr.'s U.S. has done so with reservations. Rabindranath Tagore's and Gandhi's India has signed but has not ratified the Convention Against Torture. What would those two men have had to say about this? Is something about torture more valuable to a state than its outright abolition?

George Floyd's dying words, "I can't breathe", rival Martin Luther King Jr.'s living words, "I have a dream". That Floyd's words were



uttered when the world was breathing through masks, inhaling with fear, expiring in despair has given us a chilling picture of the human origins of the crisis that we have brought upon ourselves.

### A long walk home

Gandhi was thrown out of a train on the night of June 7 in 1893, in Pietermaritzburg. That train journey changed the course of colonial history. Trains have captured India's headlines today – only very differently. Not by someone being thrown out of one of them but by millions bundling themselves into them. They are all migrant workers, exactly as Gandhi himself was in South Africa, except that he was a lawyer with a solid income and in a different country. These migrant workers were locked out of livelihoods and of ways of travel in their own country but in a far distant part of it when a lockdown was imposed to contain the spread of the virus. While for the upper class of society lockdown meant staying home, watching films, baking, eating, doing stationary exercises and staying one metre away from one another, for these millions it meant the sudden disappearance of wages or work, of every security and, ironically, because they were now obliged to stay cooped up in their tiny dwellings, it also meant overcrowding, inhaling others' exhalations for hours together. So they moved on foot, no matter how far they had to go, just to get back home. And for

the reason that they were breaking the lockdown rules, they were pushed back. Until it dawned on those who mattered that these fellow human beings had to get home to stay home. And trains were deployed. Too few for too many, they saw the opposite of social distancing. I believe the Railways when they say that as many as 80 migrant workers who died on these trains died not due to infection or starvation. I want to believe that, for I trust the Railways and the government to speak the truth. But even the Railways do not say these persons did not die.

We are thinking of heroes today. May I speak of a little heroine? The indefatigable documenter of rural livelihoods in India, P. Sainath, and his colleagues Pushpa Usendrakade, Purusottam Thakur and Kamlesh Painkra tell us: Jamlo Madikam was a 12-year-old from the tribal Muria community of Chhattisgarh who went with others of her village to Telangana to work on chilli farms. When the lockdown was announced she was told her work had stopped and she might as well leave. So, with others the little one walked. Over three days and 140 kilometres she walked and when she was just 60 kilometres from her village and could walk no more, collapsed and died. The virus did not kill her. She was thrown out of no train. But she was thrown out of opportunity, pushed out of life. No government, no politician, no employer but the whole lot of India's consumerist population, we, did that.

Will post-COVID-19, the world return to the profligate misuse of its natural inheritance? Will it learn any lessons from the deaths of thousands? If the way in which the upper classes are hailing relaxations of the lockdown is any indication, the old story seems set to

be back. After all only those dying and meant to die, die.

### Rays of hope

And yet we must not on this day let hope down. Rajmohan Gandhi has reminded us of Li Wenliang, the Wuhan doctor who first sounded the world about the virus that he had found in patients and then himself succumbed to. Li had been pilloried for having started a rumour and disrupted social order. He is now receiving honours. "I think there should be more than one voice in a healthy society," Li said before dying.

There are Lis among Indian, African and American doctors, nurses, lab assistants, police and guards and there are many who are speaking up not only against racism but against what Sainath has described as classism, a new form of callous elitism. Protesters in the U.S. and in England and Australia and elsewhere saying 'I can't breathe' are not doing so in Gandhi's or Mandela's or King's name. But they are doing exactly what Gandhi, Mandela and King were doing. They are, in fact, Gandhi, Mandela and King. Together with Li and Floyd and Jamlo they are saying we are with them. We are them.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi is a former administrator, diplomat and governor. This is the edited text of a speech made online by him on June 7 for a commemoration of June 7, 1893 when Mohandas K. Gandhi was expelled from the train at Pietermaritzburg station. Two others who spoke with the writer were Ndileka Mandela, head of the Thembekile Mandela Foundation, and Clayton Carson, History Professor and Director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Institute, Stanford University. David Gengan, Chairman of the Pietermaritzburg Gandhi Memorial Committee, which hosted the programme, moderated it.

## A case for quiet diplomacy

A public debate would have hindered the resolution of past stand-offs with China



ANANTH KRISHNAN

On June 9, sources in the Indian Army said Indian and Chinese troops began a partial disengagement from some of the stand-off points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, which has seen tensions since early May. That was the first official confirmation that there were ongoing multiple stand-offs along the LAC.

The government has come under fire from the Opposition for its silence on the month-long stand-offs. "The Chinese have walked in and taken our territory in Ladakh," Congress leader Rahul Gandhi tweeted on June 10. "Meanwhile, the PM is absolutely silent and has vanished from the scene."

**Strategy in dealing with China**  
The picture that emerged on June 9 indicated we are at the beginning of the process to resolve the situation, and not at the end. Both sides have agreed on a broad plan to defuse four of the five points of discord. The situation at the fifth, Pangong Lake (in photo), remains uncertain, as also in Galwan valley and north Sikkim. At Pangong Tso, the Chinese have entrenched their positions with tents and remain on India's side of the LAC. There is a major point of difference which

will not be easy to resolve.

The pattern of resolution of past stand-offs underlines the key role played by quiet diplomacy in unlocking complicated stand-off situations. Both the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) governments have followed an approach that has coupled quiet diplomacy with a strong military posture, while at the same time allowing the adversary a way out. This has been the broad strategy in dealing with challenges from China across the LAC. And this strategy has generally worked.

Consider 2013, when Chinese troops pitched tents on India's side of the LAC on the Depsang plains, similar to Pangong Tso. The UPA government was under fire, both for being weak on China and for its reticence. Former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon recently explained how the stand-off was resolved. While the government was being publicly attacked for doing nothing, it had privately conveyed to China that if the stand-off didn't end, an upcoming visit by Premier Li Keqiang would be off. If that demand had been made public at the time, China would have only dug in its heels, even if the government may have won the headlines of the day.

"The key to arriving at a successful outcome," Mr. Menon wrote in *Choices: Inside the Making of India's Foreign Policy*, "was keeping public rhetoric calm and steady, displaying strength, and giving the adversary a way out, which was our preferred solution."

The NDA government adopted a



similar strategy during the 2014 stand-off at Chumar, which coincided with President Xi Jinping's visit to India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi then was criticised by the Opposition for sitting on a swing with Mr. Xi in Gujarat while Chinese troops had crossed the LAC. Mr. Xi's visit went ahead, while India quietly but forcefully stopped the Chinese road-building and deployed 2,500 soldiers, outnumbering the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The PLA withdrew, and as then Northern Army Commander Lt. Gen. D.S. Hooda (retd) explained recently, both sides disengaged and followed a moratorium into patrolling into contested areas, which was observed for many months thereafter.

If the government had publicly

announced in 2014 it was following a moratorium on patrolling up to India's LAC to ease tensions, there would have likely been an uproar, just as there was in 2013 after Depsang. Then, Mr. Modi, who was the Gujarat Chief Minister, slammed the government, asking at the time: "What are the reasons we have pulled back from our own land?" Ultimately, in both cases, the objective was achieved. China, faced with firm resistance, was prevented from changing the sta-

tus quo.

In 2017, the government came under particularly intense fire because it stayed studiously silent through a 72-day stand-off at Doklam, amid a barrage of threats from Beijing. Indian troops crossed over into Bhutan to stop a Chinese road construction on territory India sees as Bhutanese but China claims. By extending the road, India argued, China was unilaterally altering the India-Bhutan-China trijunction. Beijing demanded an unconditional withdrawal. When both finally disengaged, neither divulged the terms. It would later emerge that the deal struck involved India withdrawing first. China then stopped construction, and the status quo at the face-off site was restored.

Politics over border stand-offs is not new. One only needs to go back to the intense public debates in the early 1960s. The Opposition and the media are certainly right to hold the government to account. Indeed, neither the Opposition nor the media would be doing its job if they weren't. As Mr. Modi's comments from 2014 remind us, this is par for the course. And if questions weren't being asked last month, perhaps we may still be in the dark.

**Coming to terms with reality**  
The tensions on the LAC are neither the first nor likely to be the last. With every incident, they are, however, getting increasingly politicised in an environment where there is a 24/7 demand on social media for information – and un-

precedented capacity for disinformation. Rather than wish away this reality – and adopt a stand that it is above questioning – the government needs to come to terms with it. First, it needs to keep the Opposition informed, which it is clear it hasn't. Second, it needs to proactively engage with the media, even if that may be through low-key engagement as was the case on June 9, that does not escalate into a public war of words. The media cannot be muzzled. India, after all, is not China. So it is in the government's own interests to ensure what's reported is well-informed, and not speculative or exaggerated.

At the same time, expectations of having a public debate about the intricacies of every border stand-off – or for the Prime Minister to weigh in even while negotiations are ongoing – need to be tempered. This will only risk inflaming tensions, and reduce the wiggle room for both sides to find an off-ramp. The broader objective shouldn't get lost in political debates. That objective is to ensure India's security interests remain protected – and that the status quo on India's borders isn't changed by force. Past incidents have shown that quiet diplomacy, coupled with strong military resolve that deters any Chinese misadventures, has been more effective than public sabre-rattling, even if we may be inhabiting a media environment that misconstrues loudness as strength, and silence as weakness.

ananth.krishnan@thehindu.co.in

## 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.

### Following guidelines

Despite the worrying rise in COVID-19 cases across the country, especially in the metros including Delhi, the general public doesn't seem to care much ("COVID-19 turns India's urban blight", June 11). We don't seem to realise the gravity of the situation despite being given daily updates on the number of cases and deaths. Many people don't wear face masks or even wash their hands frequently, and physical distancing is a dream in public places. It's not enough for the public to

only follow government instructions under a lockdown. Now is the time we need to be more vigilant than ever. It is incumbent on us to follow guidelines even under 'unlock' because this is a matter of life and death.

S.K. GUPTA,  
New Delhi

**Resolving differences**  
It's a good sign that India and China have reached an agreement on the tensions along the LAC ("China reaches accord with India on LAC spat", June 11). At a time when the world is

grappling with a pandemic and a global economic crisis, it is unfortunate that India and China are engaged in a border dispute. It is crucial that they solve it as quickly as possible and get back to the business of fighting COVID-19. The hope is that the stand-off will also end in Pangong Lake and Naku La. It is appropriate that India has made it clear that the ongoing infrastructure development on the Indian side of the LAC will not stop.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,  
Hyderabad

### Running risks

Performance-enhancing drugs have no place in any sport at any level. If an athlete is detected using a banned substance in an international sports meet, it not only tarnishes the image of the country but also casts a cloud of suspicion on fellow athletes who trained and won fairly ("Ugly run", June 11). At the same time, the possibility of coaches and trainers getting players to take performance-enhancing drugs cannot be ruled out. It is prudent to catch substance-abusing athletes

at an early stage of their career by testing at the district and State levels, much before they enter the international stage.

A. VENKATASUBRAMANIAN  
Tiruchi

**Systemic change**  
George Floyd's killing at the hands of police officer Derek Chauvin was just the latest in a series of attacks against African-Americans in the U.S. ("Policing the police is not enough", June 11). Years of misconduct and brutality by the local police led to many protests in the past, too, and there

was much talk of police reform. But Floyd's death only reaffirms the fact that police reform has completely failed there. And it has failed because this is systemic violence which cannot be tackled with mere cosmetic changes. Clearly reformation is not the answer. What the U.S. needs now is to re-imagine the paradigm of policing.

R. SIVAKUMAR,  
Chennai  
MORE LETTERS ONLINE:  
www.thehindu.com/opinion/letters/



# Is work from home feasible in the long run?

PARLEY

It may bring more flexibility for some, while exacerbating the existing divides for others

*The COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdowns have made work from home an imperative for several industries. Having said that, some job profiles lend themselves to working from outside the office more than others do. In a conversation moderated by K. Bharat Kumar, Ashwini Deshpande and Ramkumar Ramamoorthy discuss whether work from home is likely to become a constant even in a post-COVID future. Edited excerpts:*

**Prof. Deshpande, you have said that the bigger question is how long the pandemic itself would take to exit our lives. Where do you see this going?**

**Ashwini Deshpande (AD):** At least for the next two years, as we go through the cycle of lockdowns and containment, we will go in and out of work from home. What will happen once this is completely behind us? It's a little bit hard to speculate, but yes, the possibility that some kinds of work can be done from home is now here to stay.

**Ramkumar Ramamoorthy (RR):** While much of the focus seems to be on work from home, it's actually work from anywhere. In the last 12-18 months, for example, I have worked from the office, from home, from hotels, coffee shops, a hospital, beaches, marriage halls, moving cars and airplanes. We will get to a mode where people could potentially work from anywhere based on the job that they do at a given point in time. But, this is not new; this has been in vogue in the IT industry for many years.

[Speaking of the automobile industry] until recently cars were sold only through distributors with physical stores. When MG Motor launched the Hector brand in India, they attempted to sell cars largely online. Hyundai is attempting this. With uneven distribution of skills across the world, this phenomenon has been gaining momentum for the last few years. COVID-19 will accelerate and catalyse it further.

**AD:** A lot of the services are difficult to deliver from remote. Teaching, to

a certain extent, can be done remotely. But it's just not of the same quality as teaching inside the classroom. A lot of other services are not actually conducive to being delivered remotely. I don't think that the traditional workplace is going to completely die out. It might undergo certain kinds of transformation. Maybe [there won't be] thousands of people working in one building.

**Post-COVID, would work from home aggravate the divides already present today – like gender, migrant vs. native, etc.?**

**AD:** If a family has only one computer, who is going to get priority to use that computer? It's highly probable that the man would get priority. [Work from home] will certainly worsen the gender divide; it will also worsen the older-versus-younger divide because youth unemployment is an issue and if that one computer in the household is going to be going to be monopolised by the father, then others are not going to be able to use it.

Third is the notion of Internet connectivity. We know that that's heavily differentiated by where you live, rural-urban location, which State of India you belong to, the neighbourhood, etc. The other part of the story is the combination with all kinds of household and domestic needs. And here, unless there's a major change in social norms in the coming two years, women who are more responsible for delivering domestic work are going to be that much more hard pressed to combine it with workplace responsibilities.

As regards migrants, if there was enough work available in localities where they resided, not everybody would need to migrate. So, I think that there is the much larger issue of availability of jobs and the matching of the supply with the demand for workers. Certain States are more able to provide better quality jobs than other States. And if workers are not going to be able to migrate, it affects the overall distribution.

**So, industry could be guilty of aggravating such divides...**



**RR:** Unlike the prior waves of technology, which were largely monolithic, digital technologies today are democratising the way people use them. They create a platform for greater diversity and inclusion, with greater mobile and bandwidth penetration, more smart boards coming into classrooms and in rural areas. The question is, are we using it for greater inclusion or will we end up creating a deeper wedge in society? We have a great opportunity to become more inclusive. The government has a role to play. Some good steps have been taken, including last-mile connectivity taken to the villages through BharatNet. The implementation of some of these backbones could be very patchy across different States. At least in rural south India, they've made some meaningful investments in technology.

Companies also have a very important role to play. If you take the Cognizant example, we have about 2,00,000 employees in India with about 20,000 in tier-two locations such as Coimbatore and Mangaluru. About 38-39% of our India workforce comprises women but in our tier-two locations women constitute about 50% of the workforce. We have employees who volunteer to teach in schools in the hinterland of India. Our employees or their spouses who are in the U.S. actually teach English, Math and the basics of computing to students in villages over Skype. I do agree that we need to do this at scale. And we need to institutionalise some of these.

**A home is not a happy place for everyone. It can also be a centre of abuse**

ASHWINI DESHPANDE  
Academic

**AD:** So far, the tone of this conversation is implicitly assuming that work from home is a really good idea; that it's something to hold on to and transmit to the future. I want to put a little bit of a question mark on that. Other than social divides, there are other dimensions to this problem also. There is something to be said for actual human-to-human contact. Yesterday, I was at a seminar online. Normally, a seminar would have tea/coffee breaks, we talk to each other, we bounce ideas off each other. [Part of] the joy of attending a seminar is [with respect to] the social angle. Work from home eliminates that almost completely. That's a very big negative.

The second part is that the home is not always a very happy place for everybody. Homes can also be centres of abuse. That's the elephant in the room that we never talk about, because we always focus on safety outside the home. For many women and children, the home is the most unsafe place. And by forcing people to be inside the home, we are really forcing them to be inside with their abuser. The pandemic has actually brought about this phenomenon which the UN Women has called a shadow pandemic.

Third, in education, one of the things that a college environment does is that it erases the socio-eco-

nomic differences between the students when they come into the classroom; with online classes, we actually get a little glimpse of their homes, and suddenly the class divide becomes apparent.

**Would it be too idealistic to expect industry to move to where the migrants are? It could be factories, R&D centres or labs moving to the hinterland...**

**AD:** If that could happen, that might not be a bad thing. I've spoken against the problem, now let me say something in favour of it. All this time, because women would drop out of the job market either completely or would negotiate with their employers to have a more flexible arrangement, women were stigmatised for doing that, because it was seen as an insufficient commitment to their work.

Also, just as there can be discrimination within the home, there can be discrimination even at the workplace. Some people might say, 'it's better for me to work from home, because now I don't have to face the daily insults that I used to face earlier in office.'

But I think on balance, human beings are social creatures. A lot of the work we do in the university is just, you know, sitting in the coffee house bouncing ideas, talking to each other, learning from each other. In education, a lot of the learning happens outside the classroom. Online teaching closes that channel completely.

**RR:** The real big topic is about greater flexibility. Sometimes, we tend to get a little binary and look at some of these structural shifts or changes in an 'either-or' mode, instead of an 'and' mode. The physical spaces won't go away completely; we will see the proportion of office as a space and its usage undergo a change. But it's too early to call out what the ratios would be. It will still be a physical-digital world. Multiple models will emerge. In some respects, we are shorting human imagination here. 'Hoteling' is a concept many large corporates have started, where people can dynamically book a seat, a cafeteria slot or a meeting room and use it as you do it with a concierge. Co-working spaces

may emerge in interior places too. Some of these could potentially start creating satellite or small office-home office kind of an environment. Maybe it's a big opportunity for realtors to start thinking about an entire block or an entire floor just being created for co-working. There could be all kinds of hub-and-spoke workplace models that could come up. This could be clusters based on a given industry.

In education, could we not have a common lab in every district or town just as we have a common library; wherein students can perhaps go home on short vacation, still use the labs locally? There are certainly going to be challenges; not everybody has a well-defined home office; there's a big difference between corporate-grade Net bandwidth and home grid bandwidth.

**If more work from home happens, would the perks enjoyed by employees actually come down?**

**AD:** Flexibility and insecurity are two sides of the same coin. So what can be seen as flexibility in a good context can equally lead to vulnerability and insecurity in another context. For industrial workers, the changes in labour laws are completely in the direction of removing any protection for minimum wages or fixed hours of work... things that protect workers in terms of overtime work, etc. If employers say we will give you security, but also flexibility, that, of course, is great.

**RR:** Progressive employers will always lead the way and ensure they are employment-friendly. In India, about 92 million people are going to enter the workforce between 2020 and 2030. In the next 10 years, we need to ensure that the employment climate in the country is good for this to happen. And if we don't create that framework, that could have far-reaching consequences. When the Prime Minister announced the ₹20 lakh crore relief package, he also spoke about making structural reforms in the country in four key areas: land, law, labour and liquidity. Labour is one area that needs a lot of attention. It's a little too early for us to discuss the impact on perks in the medium to long term.



Ashwini Deshpande  
teaches at the  
Ashoka University



Ramkumar  
Ramamoorthy  
is Chairman and  
Managing Director  
of Cognizant India



Scan the QR code to  
listen to the full  
conversation online

## At their infotaining best

By mimicking WWE and reality TV, news shows challenge the credulity of viewers

VAISHNA ROY

A recent TV news clip of a journalist reporting from the midst of a cyclone shows him buffeted by strong winds and swept off sideways at one point, as a prime voiceover asks viewers to note how powerful the storm is. It's a dramatic moment, but somewhat spoilt by the fact that the camera unwittingly catches another person just behind the reporter, walking normally, clearly unaffected by the gale.

A cyclone is a cyclone, its strength measurable, its effect obvious, its damage assessed after it passes over. So why did the TV reporter feel the need to enact a fake drama to "show" viewers the strength of the winds?

### An eyewitness account

At its inception, the chief thrill of television was that it provided an "eyewitness" account of events happening far away, making news authentic, intimate, and real-time.

In a strange volte face, television today is increasingly taking away the authenticity of the eyewitness account by adding artifice, as if it were not 'news' it deals with any longer but creative narratives, the domain of entertainment.

When a skirmish breaks out on the borders, TV studios become war rooms and anchors wear military fatigues. They recreate the surface of the moon to report space missions. They pretend to report while wading in flood waters while held aloft on someone's shoulders. They smudge eye makeup to suggest tearfulness.

Television has turned the idea of reporting about events on its head by itself becoming a participant, a bit player in the political, medical or weather drama unfolding on screen. The reportage is no longer about the incident alone, but also about itself, as actor-director-producer. When news is recast as 'performance', the borders between truth and fiction get more and more blurred.

The phenomenon has been spawned by what Professor Jean M. Twenge called the era's "narcissism epidemic", which has made the news anchor more important than the news. Acquiring popstar status means the anchor now markets himself or herself and, as a subset of that,

markets the news as well. Thus, even cyclones have to be 'packaged' and sold.

The parallel between TV news and WWE wrestling is unmistakable. In a WWE match, the wrestlers enact elaborate spectacles of blood, gore and broken limbs but the whole thing is fake, scripted to the last detail. French philosopher Roland Barthes wrote: "The function of the wrestler is not to win; it is to go exactly through the motions which are expected of him." Similarly one might say of anchors today that presenting news is no longer their job – their function is playacting. Their carefully orchestrated performances are meant to provoke suitable responses of anger, revenge or sentiment from viewers. If WWE was built on the premise of entertainment masquerading as sport, what we have today is entertainment masquerading as news.

### Following a script

A rocket launch or the introduction of a Rs. 2,000 note can no longer simply be reported but must be scripted into a show with the anchor in a metallic faux spacesuit or waving a magnifying glass at a giant currency note, contortions that don't necessarily present more information for the viewer but certainly produce spectacle. What former BBC chief John Birt spoke of as a weakness of television, the "bias against understanding", because its inherent format – show rather than tell – prevents it from properly establishing context or deep-diving into background, has been exacerbated by television now smudging facts and fantasy into one messy thing called infotainment. It is, as Barthes said of WWE, a "spectacle of excess".

It is no coincidence that the two most visible formats on Indian television today are reality TV and news programmes, both of which titillate by claiming to be a ringside view of real life but are, in fact, aggressive showbiz. By mimicking reality TV, news shows challenge the credulity of viewers and implicate them in the make-believe, thus succeeding in neutralising all content.

—

vaishna.roy@thehindu.co.in

markets the news as well. Thus, even cyclones have to be 'packaged' and sold.

The parallel between TV news and WWE wrestling is unmistakable. In a WWE match, the wrestlers enact elaborate spectacles of blood, gore and broken limbs but the whole thing is fake, scripted to the last detail. French philosopher Roland Barthes wrote: "The function of the wrestler is not to win; it is to go exactly through the motions which are expected of him." Similarly one might say of anchors today that presenting news is no longer their job – their function is playacting. Their carefully orchestrated performances are meant to provoke suitable responses of anger, revenge or sentiment from viewers. If WWE was built on the premise of entertainment masquerading as sport, what we have today is entertainment masquerading as news.

### Following a script

A rocket launch or the introduction of a Rs. 2,000 note can no longer simply be reported but must be scripted into a show with the anchor in a metallic faux spacesuit or waving a magnifying glass at a giant currency note, contortions that don't necessarily present more information for the viewer but certainly produce spectacle. What former BBC chief John Birt spoke of as a weakness of television, the "bias against understanding", because its inherent format – show rather than tell – prevents it from properly establishing context or deep-diving into background, has been exacerbated by television now smudging facts and fantasy into one messy thing called infotainment. It is, as Barthes said of WWE, a "spectacle of excess".

It is no coincidence that the two most visible formats on Indian television today are reality TV and news programmes, both of which titillate by claiming to be a ringside view of real life but are, in fact, aggressive showbiz. By mimicking reality TV, news shows challenge the credulity of viewers and implicate them in the make-believe, thus succeeding in neutralising all content.

—

vaishna.roy@thehindu.co.in

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

The clock strikes 12. Everyone else is asleep as I gingerly switch on the wi-fi to start my work for the day... night.

I'm watching a 'first-night-first-show' of a film for the first time. Jyotika's *Ponmagal Vandhal* has been uploaded on Amazon Prime, making it among the first mainstream Tamil films to be released directly on an OTT platform instead of theatres. There are more such films to follow – with Amitabh Bachchan's *Gulabo Sitabo* and Keerthy Suresh's *Penguin* lined up – even as OTT players fight it out for the rights of new films.

That the COVID-19 pandemic has changed all our lives is a given. It has also drastically changed the way audiences and review-

ers consume their films. Even just a few months back, early morning shows were the in-thing for the

out of the leading star and songs from the movie would be blared from a loudspeaker, even as fans dance and make merry. Tea shops outside the theatres would make a killing, and the chances of you spotting a member of the crew or the director of the film inside the cinema hall are pretty high.

I have a strict schedule whenever there's an early morning show. I'd sleep early the previous night. I'd set multiple alarms, and once they all go beeping, I'd wake up and trudge sleepily towards my bike

—

Srinivasa Ramanujam writes on films for The Hindu

## The first-night-first-show experience

Will film viewing in cinema halls be the same ever again?

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

The clock strikes 12. Everyone else is asleep as I gingerly switch on the wi-fi to start my work for the day... night.

I'm watching a 'first-night-first-show' of a film for the first time. Jyotika's *Ponmagal Vandhal* has been uploaded on Amazon Prime, making it among the first mainstream Tamil films to be released directly on an OTT platform instead of theatres. There are more such films to follow – with Amitabh Bachchan's *Gulabo Sitabo* and Keerthy Suresh's *Penguin* lined up – even as OTT players fight it out for the rights of new films.

That the COVID-19 pandemic has changed all our lives is a given. It has also drastically changed the way audiences and review-

ers consume their films. Even just a few months back, early morning shows were the in-thing for the

—

Srinivasa Ramanujam writes on films for The Hindu

NOTEBOOK

## The first-night-first-show experience

Will film viewing in cinema halls be the same ever again?

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

The clock strikes 12. Everyone else is asleep as I gingerly switch on the wi-fi to start my work for the day... night.

I'm watching a 'first-night-first-show' of a film for the first time. Jyotika's *Ponmagal Vandhal* has been uploaded on Amazon Prime, making it among the first mainstream Tamil films to be released directly on an OTT platform instead of theatres. There are more such films to follow – with Amitabh Bachchan's *Gulabo Sitabo* and Keerthy Suresh's *Penguin* lined up – even as OTT players fight it out for the rights of new films.

That the COVID-19 pandemic has changed all our lives is a given. It has also drastically changed the way audiences and review-

ers consume their films. Even just a few months back, early morning shows were the in-thing for the

—

Srinivasa Ramanujam writes on films for The Hindu

NOTEBOOK

## FROM PAGE ONE

## Slum population most at risk, says ICMR

The sero-surveillance study has two parts. The primary task of estimating the fraction of people who have been infected in general population has been completed and the second objective of estimating the infected population in containment zones of hotspot cities is in the process of completion.

Speaking about the growing number of cases in Delhi, the question of community transmission in the national capital, and country-wide death reports compiled based on State data, Joint Secretary in the Health Ministry Lav Agarwal said: "If we get caught in grammar and let go of field action we will suffer. Also if the States take a day or two more in conducting 'death audit' and a change in num-

bers arises due to it, then, in next 2-3 days numbers are accounted for."

## Maharashtra review

Meanwhile, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan, along with senior health officials, held a meeting with Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope and noted that all 36 districts of the State were COVID-19-affected.

Dr. Vardhan noted that the increase in number of containment zones in the State needed immediate attention. "Vulnerability mapping of densely populated areas should be done for effective containment strategy to be put in place. Also, rise in case fatality rate should be looked into along with tests done per million population," he said.

## Cong. rushes to guard its flock in Rajasthan

Earlier, Mr. Gehlot said the Rajya Sabha polls had been "deliberately delayed" for two months to facilitate the "poaching operations" of BJP in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

"What is the difference in the COVID-19 situation then and now? This politics by indulging in horse-trading will not succeed. They have violated all norms of democracy," he said.

**BJP challenge**  
State BJP president Satish Poonia challenged the Congress to prove its allegation of the party was trying to poach the ruling party's MLAs and Independents.

"The Congress should set its own house in order. Just nine days before elections, they are forced to hole up in their legislators. Instead of blaming the BJP, they should resolve their internal differences," he said in a statement.

A senior Congress leader clearly hinted at an internal divide when he told *The Hindu* that "the present crisis was a manufactured one that aimed at projecting

some as saviours of the party".

For the three Rajya Sabha seats from the State falling vacant, the Congress has nominated K.C. Venugopal and Neeraj Dangi, while the BJP has fielded its State unit vice-president and former Minister Rajendra Gehlot and former MP Onkar Singh Lakhawat. AICC general secretary Mr. Venugopal, who earlier represented the Alappuzha Lok Sabha constituency in Kerala, had opted out of contesting the 2019 general elections because of his organisational responsibilities.

Mr. Dangi, a former Youth Congress State president, is considered a confidant of Mr. Gehlot. He had unsuccessfully contested three Assembly elections in the past.

**Easily win**  
With its tally of 107 MLAs in the 200-member House and the support of Rashtriya Lok Dal and Independents, the ruling Congress can easily win two of the Rajya Sabha seats as 51st preference votes are required to elect an MP.

## Economic recovery path still uncertain: CEA

The CEA refused to put specific numbers on the Centre's own growth expectation for this year, only saying that the Finance Ministry is working with a "large range" of estimates, adding that "very low" growth and a possible decline in output are part of the baseline assumptions. Both Fitch and S&P maintained India's sovereign credit rating at the lowest investment grade, while Moody's had also downgraded it to the same grade last week.

**'Merited better rating'**  
Mr. Subramanian insisted that India's fundamentals merited a better rating, noting that the country's willingness and ability to pay back its loans are gold standard, especially as most debt is in domestic currency. With regard to debt monetisation, he said the pros and cons of all options are being evaluated and kept

under consideration.

The CEA welcomed the agencies' positive response to reforms announced in the stimulus package, especially in agriculture, saying that these would be critical for higher growth prospects next year.

**Investment grade**  
The investment grade rating paves the way to move forward on the budget proposal for listing government bonds in international sovereign bond indices. In the long term, this could lead to the ability to raise \$60 billion or more from these markets, he said.

With regard to the privatisation policy announced in the Atmanirbhar package, he clarified that banking would be categorised as a strategic sector. This means that between one to four public sector banks will remain, while the rest will be merged or privatised.

## IIT-Madras top institution in government ranking

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.

With regard to medical education, All India Institute of Medical Sciences stands first, followed by Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Christian Medical College, Vellore. The pharmacy category was topped by Jamia Hamdard University, while the newly introduced dental category had the Maulana Azad Insti-

ture of Dental Sciences in the first place.

Overall, 3,771 institutions registered in the ranking framework this year, which is a 20% increase in comparison to last year. All parameters are normalised to keep them size and age-independent so as to ensure that larger and older institutions do not get any undue advantage.</

# Time to make bold decisions, says Modi

PM reiterates call for self-reliant India, says COVID-19 pandemic must be turned into an opportunity

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday reiterated his call for using the current crisis to make Indian self-reliant. He said it was time to make bold decisions and investments to set up a globally competitive domestic supply chain, and not have a conservative approach.

Speaking at the annual plenary of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) via videoconferencing, he said it was time to "pull the Indian economy out of the 'command and control' mode and



take it to a 'plug and play' mode."

While the nation was putting up a brave front, along with the entire world, in the current COVID-19 crisis, it was also facing challenges due to disasters such as locust attacks, hailstorms, oil well fire, series of mini earthquakes and cyclones. but

such difficult times have made India more resolute.

#### Turning point'

"...Every countryman is also now filled with the resolve that this adversity is to be converted into an opportunity, we have to make it a big turning point for the country. What is this turning

point? Self Reliant India," he said.

Self-reliance had been an aspiration of every Indian for years. But still it had remained just a wish, he added.

#### Minimise dependence'

"Self-reliant India campaign simply means that India should minimise its dependence on other countries. How can things, which the country is forced to import, be made in the country and how can India become an exporter of such goods. We have to work fast

in this direction," said Mr. Modi.

There was need to change the trend of buying the same goods, which were made by small businesses, handicrafts makers and self-help groups within India, from abroad. "This is the time to recognise the opportunity, to test ourselves and to move towards newer heights. If this is the biggest crisis, then we need to take big learnings from it and take full advantage of it. I assure you that the government is fully committed to this," the PM added.

# Efforts on to resolve LAC situation at earliest: MEA

'India, China maintaining military, diplomatic engagements'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A day after China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) announced that India and China had reached an accord on the tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Thursday said the two sides were committed to resolving the situation "at the earliest" in an effort to ease tensions between their troops at several points.

Referring to Saturday's military talks, MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said that the "meeting [of Corps Commanders] was in continuation of the diplomatic and military engagements which both sides have maintained to address the situation in areas along the India-China border."

"It was agreed that an early resolution of the situation would be in keeping with the guidance of the leaders," he said.

MEA spokesperson Hua Chunying, echoing a statement issued the day before, said on Thursday, "Diplomatic [and] military channels [on] the two sides are properly handling relevant issues with effective communication, have reached consensus and based on that consensus both are taking actions to ease the situation."

The remarks in New Delhi



Anurag Srivastava

and Beijing came a day after military commanders at the Major General level on both sides met at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh in one of a series of talks planned between them aimed at resolving the stand-off at five identified "conflict points": Patrolling Points 14, 15 and 17 (at Galwan), the North bank of Pangong Tso and Chushul.

**Partial disengagement'** Indian government sources have said that they have been able to effect a "partial disengagement" at some of these points, which includes a reduction or "de-induction" of some forces on both sides.

However, at its weekly briefing, the MEA did not confirm these details officially, and said only that the two sides were engaged in resolving the situation "at the earliest".

While both sides are engaged in ground level military talks to resolve the tensions, defence sources confirmed that there has been troop mobilisation in various sectors of the LAC beyond Ladakh in Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh over the last one month.

As reported earlier, China had mobilised troops closer to the border in Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh in addition to the ingress into areas patrolled by India, apart from a major build-up of infrastructure and equipment on their side of the LAC.

The Indian Army too had moved additional troops forward in all these locations as a precaution, the sources said.

However, the sources clarified that the build-up of troops on both sides preceded the talks at the Corps Commander level. After that there had been partial disengagement, the sources stated.

# Centre refuses to brief parties on key issues'

Jairam Ramesh hits back at Prasad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Thursday said the Opposition was forced to ask questions on sensitive international disputes on social media because the government refused to brief the political parties on issues of national interest and had failed to take them into confidence.

Mr. Ramesh compared Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence to first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who, when demanded by the Opposition, convened a Parliament session to discuss the Indo-China war of 1962.

"China attacked India in two phases starting Oct 20, 1962. Vajpayee and others wrote to Nehru demanding Parliament be convened. Nehru readily accepted and listened to blistering criticism of his policies. Now we have Maunendra Modi. Not even a briefing to former PMs/pol party leaders!" he tweeted.

Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had chided former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday for raising questions on international affairs via social media. In response to Mr. Prasad's prescription, Mr. Ramesh said, "Questions are being asked on social media because the government has not briefed former PMs, former De-

fence Ministers, leaders of political parties. These could be in-camera briefings. The reality is that the Chinese are sitting on 50-60 sq kms of strategic Indian territory in Ladakh and at least senior political leaders should be taken into confidence," he told *The Hindu*.

#### Virtual Parliament

He said it was a shame that a country that called itself an IT superpower had failed to convene a session of virtual Parliament when Parliaments of over 30 countries had met online.

"There is no excuse for not having at least virtual sessions of standing committees. In fact, the committees can easily have physical meets too, because although each committee has 31 members or thereabouts less than 50 per cent attend anyway," he said.

Mr. Ramesh heads the Parliamentary Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

Jairam Ramesh



Jairam Ramesh

# India reiterates civilisational and cultural ties with Nepal

Our partnership has expanded in the recent years: MEA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

As Nepal prepared to vote on Saturday for a new map amid the Kalapani territorial dispute, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Thursday reiterated India's civilisational ties with Nepal.

The Ministry's official spokesperson, Anurag Srivastava, refused to respond to Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's comments condemning Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's remarks warning Nepal of long-term consequences of its assertive policies.

"We have already made our position clear... India deeply values its civilisational, cultural and friendly relations with Nepal. Our multi-faceted bilateral partnership has expanded and diversified in the recent years with increased focus and enhanced Government of India's assistance for humanitarian, development and connectivity projects in



Nepal Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli with Narendra Modi. ■ FILE PHOTO

Department of State, was a document produced for the domestic audience. He said other countries did not have the right to criticise India on religious freedom.

The Indian official also hit out at Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's social media posts, offering help to the poor Indian households facing economic distress because of the COVID-19 pandemic. "I am ready to offer help and share our successful cash transfer programme," he had said. Mr. Srivastava pointed to the alleged corruption cases against Pakistan's leaders and said the country was better known for cash transfer to banks abroad.

"We all have known about their debt problem and how much they have been pressed for debt restructuring. It would also be better for them to remember that India has a stimulus package as large as Pakistan's annual GDP," Mr. Srivastava said.

# Plea in SC seeks CBI probe into Palghar lynching case

Court asks Maharashtra govt., police to respond to petition

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Maharashtra government and the State police to respond to a petition filed by the relatives and fellow priests of two Juna Akhara sadhus, who were lynched by a mob at Palghar during the lockdown, to transfer the investigation to the CBI.

A Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan issued a formal notice to Maharashtra, the Centre, the DGP and the CBI on the plea. The court listed the petition, filed by Balaji Srinivasan, for July second week. The case would be taken up with a petition filed by advocate Shashank Shekhar Jha alleging police complicity in the incident. It also sought an investigation by a judicial commission or a central agency like the CBI or the NIA. The petition also laid claim to the land on

which the incident happened to construct a memorial for the two sadhus. "... the deceased persons were law-abiding citizens of India who were entitled to the guarantees and rights granted by the Constitution of India... and had every right to life and personal liberty which has been snatched away in a most deplorable, inhuman, barbaric and concerted [conspiratorial] manner..." the plea said.

**अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, नागपुर (महाराष्ट्र)**  
**ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, NAGPUR (Maharashtra)**  
 Plot No. 2, Sector - 20, MIHAN, Nagpur, Pin : 441108, www.aiimsnagpur.edu.in  
 Dated : 11.06.2020

**WALK IN INTERVIEW : SENIOR RESIDENT**  
 Under the residency scheme of Govt. of India, 06 Senior Resident (SR) are to be recruited for AIIMS Nagpur through Walk-in-interview in subject **General Medicine (UR-01), General Surgery (UR-01), Obstetrics & Gynecology (UR-01), Anaesthesiology (UR-01), Radio diagnosis (UR-01), Pediatrics (UR-01)**  
 Pay scale - ₹ 67,700/- (As per 7th CPC in Level-11, Cell No.1), Allowances as applicable.  
 Please visit our website for details like Application Form, Eligibility Criteria, etc and for any info/updates.  
**Director**  
**AIIMS Nagpur**

# Group torches Dalit huts in Jaunpur, Yogi orders NSA against accused

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday ordered officials to lodge the National Security Act (NSA) against persons accused of setting ablaze several huts of a Dalit community in Jaunpur.

Police said 37 persons had been arrested and search was on to nab the others. The arson took place in Bhadethi village in Sarai Khawaja area on Tuesday.

Reportedly, a scuffle broke out between two groups of youngsters who had taken their grazing buffaloes and goats to a pond.

While sources said the dispute started over plucking of mangoes, the SHO said it started after a buffalo belonging to one community kicked a goat on the other side.

# Trinamool launches youth network to help fight COVID-19

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

With an eye on the 2021 Assembly polls in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has launched 'Banglar Jubo Shakti', an initiative that aims to bring together one lakh youth to support those whose lives have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic and Cyclone Amphan.

Over the next month, the TMC Youth Congress, headed by MP Abhishek Banerjee, will bring on board one lakh young women and men from "across blocks and towns" of Bengal, a party statement noted. Anyone in the age group of 18-25 can be part of the brigade called 'Jubo Joddhas'. "After a period of 30 days, a mega virtual interactive session will be organised to meet and interact with the one lakh 'Jubo Joddhas' and to inform them about the activities that they need to undertake..." the statement said.

# Sundram Fasteners Limited

CIN: L35999TN1962PLC004943

Registered & Corporate Office : 98-A, VII Floor, Dr Radhakrishnan Salai, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004  
 Tel: +91 - 44 - 28478500 | Fax: 91 - 44 - 28478510

Email: investorshelpdesk@sfl.co.in | Website: www.sundram.com

## STATEMENT OF AUDITED (STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED) FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2020

S. No.	Particulars	Standalone		Consolidated	
		Quarter ended	Year ended	Quarter ended	Year ended
		31.03.2020	31.03.2019	31.03.2020	31.03.2019
		Audited		Unaudited	
1.	Total Revenue from Operations	719.60	3,124.57	1,004.25	830.91
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	74.52	387.70	143.86	70.22
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax after exceptional items)	63.22	376.40	143.86	70.22
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax)	46.80	314.04	107.35	53.39
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	34.07	290.64	107.32	44.31
6.	Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Re 1 each fully paid up)	21.01	21.01	21.01	21.01
7.	Earnings Per Share (EPS) (for continuing and discontinued operations) (Face value of Re 1/- each) (not annualised) (in Rs.)	2.23	14.95*	5.11	2.60
	(a) Basic				
	(b) Diluted	2.23	14.95*	5.11	2.60

\* Annualised

Notes:

1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of the standalone and consolidated financial results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites, www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com and on the Company's website www.sundram.com
2. The Statutory Auditors have carried out an audit for the year ended March 31, 2020 and have issued an unmodified report thereon.

For Sundram Fasteners Limited

Chairman

Place : Chennai

Date : June 11, 2020

&lt;div style="border:

# Maharashtra reports 3,607 new cases

The State's total number of cases surges to 97,648; 152 deaths push the toll to 3,590

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE  
Maharashtra reported 3,607 new COVID-19 cases and 152 deaths on Thursday, in a new single-day high, as the State's tally of cases surged to 97,648 and death toll to 3,590.

However, as per Health Department figures, only 47,968 cases are active. As many as 1,561 patients were discharged on Thursday, taking the total number of recoveries to 46,078.

**Recovery rate improves**  
State Surveillance Officer Pradeep Awate said the State's recovery rate had increased to 47.2% and the case fatality rate had climbed to 3.7%.

Thursday's surge in cases and fatalities exceeded Wednesday's high of 3,254 cases and 149 deaths.

With 1,418 new cases, Mumbai's tally has reached 54,085 cases, including 27,915 active ones. Ninety-seven of the new deaths were reported from the city, where the toll reached 1,954.

Fatalities were also reported from the Mumbai Metro-



**Twin trouble:** Mumbai, grappling with COVID-19 cases, is taking preventive steps to contain malaria ahead of the monsoon. A worker fumigating an area at Mazgaon on Thursday. • PTI

politan Region, with nine deaths from the Mira Bhayander civic body area and seven from Kalyan-Dombivali, taking their toll to 54 and 43.

Health Department officials said eight deaths were reported from Pune district where the toll went up to 447. However, district officials said the toll had already

risen to 452. Similarly, Health Department officials said Solapur district in the Pune division reported eight more deaths to take its total to 120. But

the total tally, as per the Health Department figures, has reached 10,882, with more than 400 new cases reported in two days. And 4,227 of them were active cases.

Besides Mumbai, the surge in new cases continued in Thane, with another spike of 230 cases, taking the

district's tally to 6,997. Navi Mumbai reported 231 cases as its tally surged to 4,126, while its death toll touched 96 with four fatalities.

Pune district's total tally, as per the Health Department figures, has reached 10,882, with more than 400 new cases reported in two days. And 4,227 of them were active cases.

These coaches can be used for very mild cases that can be clinically assigned to the COVID care centres as per the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

"These coaches can be used in areas where the State has exhausted the facilities and needs to augment capacities for isolation of both suspect and con-

firmed COVID cases," the Railways said.

**5,231 coaches modified**

These facilities are part of the integrated COVID plan developed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the NITI Aayog.

The Railways has modified 5,231 coaches into CO-

VID care centres. Trains with a unit composition of 10 coaches and a patient capacity of 16 per coach have been made ready, it said.

Uttar Pradesh has finalised 24 stations for deployment of these coaches.

Telangana has chosen Se-

cunderabad, Kachiguda and Adilabad, the Railways said.

# U.P., Delhi, Telangana seek rail coaches for isolation

They can be used to keep very mild cases of COVID-19

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Telangana have requested the Railways for coaches modified into COVID-19 isolation wards.

Deaths were also reported from Hingoli, Jalna and Nanded districts in the Marathwada region.

"Of the total deaths reported today, 35 were in the last couple of days, while the rest are from the period between April 1 and June 8. As many as 70.3% of the deaths were caused by high-risk comorbidities," Dr. Awate said.

Pune district's total tally, as per the Health Department figures, has reached 10,882, with more than 400 new cases reported in two days. And 4,227 of them were active cases.

Besides Mumbai, the surge in new cases continued in Thane, with another spike of 230 cases, taking the

district's tally to 6,997. Navi Mumbai reported 231 cases as its tally surged to 4,126, while its death toll touched 96 with four fatalities.



**Every inch counts:** A worker sanitising a COVID-19 isolation coach at the Patna Junction. • RANJEET KUMAR

## Assam govt. hints at community transmission

It is limited to a part of Guwahati

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

The Assam government has hinted at community transmission of COVID-19, but within a specific part of Guwahati.

Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the spike in the number of cases reported among people without any travel history was a matter of grave concern.

"Thirteen cases were reported from society. So, there is a strain moving. We have some worries about Guwahati," he told newscasters on Wednesday. The Health Department has identified three localities where it suspects community spread. Health officials said the recent trend was worrying since 98% of the positive cases reported less than a week ago were linked to returnees lodged in quarantine centres.



Security personnel manning a containment zone at Lakhtokia in Guwahati. • PTI

## Navy to shield personnel from virus

Exemptions for those above 50 to prevent spread, says Admiral Singh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Navy is considering a proposal that personnel aged above 50 and co-morbid may be exempted from carrying out roles with increased risk of COVID-19 in the daily activities including sea going duties, Navy Chief, Admiral Karambir Singh, said in a video message to service personnel on Thursday.

Stating that relaxation of lockdown restrictions under 'Unlock 1.0' does not mean business as usual, Adm. Singh said that personnel must adapt and adopt practices to prevent the spread of infection.

### Regional assistance

Listing activities undertaken by the Navy to assist countries in the region, he said the Indian Navy has deployed medical assistance teams to the Comoros and



**On the front line:** Crew of INS Magar getting ready to evacuate stranded nationals from Male earlier this month. • PTI

Mauritius for COVID-19 containment and also provided assistance to the Philippines Navy.

"Philippines Navy ships were deployed in the Indian Ocean. They sought assistance in repatriation of citizens from Indian ports and

ri for providing medical aid and support to Indian Ocean littoral states.

### Concern on borders

Stating that the security situation currently on the northern and western borders was not good, Adm. Singh said there is no let up in operational deployment by the Navy. Working under COVID-19 restrictions, Navy ships have been sailing continuously for 100 days at a stretch.

In May, Navy's offshore patrol vessel INS Sunayna entered Kochi after more than 80 days on anti-piracy deployment in the Gulf of Aden.

"The ship sustained the last 80 days of the Mission Based Deployment without entering any port. She was fuelled and resupplied by tankers of the Indian Navy and U.S. Navy," the Navy had stated.

Under Mission Sagar, the Navy has deployed INS Kesa-

## Punjab CM orders strict lockdown on holidays

No restrictions on industrial sector

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Amid apprehensions of community spread of COVID-19 and projections that the pandemic peak in the State is still two months away, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Thursday ordered stricter lockdown on weekends and public holidays, with movement to be restricted to e-pass holders.



Staff cleaning a mall in Chandigarh. • AKHILESH KUMAR

## India removes export ban on HCQ

Firms still have to supply 20% of their production to domestic market: Minister

REUTERS

BENGALURU

India has lifted the export ban on hydroxychloroquine, the anti-malarial drug touted by U.S. President Donald Trump as a potential "game changer" in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Department of Pharmaceuticals has approved the lifting of ban on export of Hydroxychloroquine API as well as formulations," Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Sarbananda Goswami has tweeted.

Manufacturers, except export-oriented units and those in special economic zones, would still have to supply 20% of their production to the domestic market, Mr. Goswami said.



U.S. President Donald Trump had championed the use of HCQ to fight COVID-19. • AFP

The country, a leading exporter of generic medicines across the world, banned the export of the drug and its formulations in March as

the coronavirus outbreak disrupted supply chains.

But India eased some of these restrictions in April and shipped 50 million tablets of the drug to the United States that month, Reuters reported.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

**Conflicting reports**  
Mr. Trump's championing of hydroxychloroquine had initially raised expectations for the treatment of COVID-19, but conflicting reports of its efficacy have added to confusion about the decades-old drug.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "useless" at treating COVID-19 patients.

A Lancet medical journal

study that found hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death in COVID-19 patients was withdrawn a week after it led to major trials being halted.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said it would resume its trial of the drug for potential use against the novel coronavirus after those running the study briefly stopped giving it to new patients over health concerns.

IPCA Laboratories and Cadila Healthcare are two leading Indian manufacturers of the drug. IPCA's shares were down 1.2%, while Cadila's stock was up 1% in a broader Mumbai market that was lower on Thursday.

British scientists last week halted a major trial after it found that the drug was "

# Lion census method outdated: experts

Deaths due to a virus were not reported, they say

JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI

An outdated methodology and the true mortality from a virus affecting India's lions dent the credibility of the Gujarat government's claims on its lion population. On Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar tweeted results of the 2020 Asiatic Lion Census that put the number of lions at 674, a 28% rise from 2015.

A wildlife biologist who closely works with the Union Environment Ministry on wildlife surveys said that the canine distemper virus (CDV) that killed at least 36 lions in Gir, Gujarat in 2018 had not ebbed. This was in spite of the government inoculating lions with an import-



Pride of place: Lions resting in the Gir sanctuary ■ VIJAY SONEJI

ed vaccine. "There have been more deaths from the virus since January but no data about these have been shared," the biologist said.

Yadvendradev Jhala, senior scientist at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), an autonomous organisation of the Union Environment Ministry, said the Gujarat government uses a 100-year-old method to count lions that would not "stand the scrutiny of contemporary science". This approach, called the Direct Beat Verification or Block Count method, involves officials from the State wildlife depart-

ment laying stake at watering holes across the animals' territorial range.

## Fewer personnel

This year, from June 5-6, department officials monitored the numbers of the lions. In normal years, alongside these forest officials, there would be independent experts and observers from non-governmental organisations. This year, the process involved 1,400 personnel. Normally, about 2,000 persons would be involved and the monitoring would be done over two days. The reduction in number of people

involved was due to travel restrictions imposed for the pandemic.

Dr. Jhala said that newer methods such as camera trapping and identifying lions based on permanent marks on their body, and statistical estimates based on the animals' predatory patterns and numbers of their prey base – all of which were used to count tigers – were more scientifically precise. In a research paper published in *Plos One* in February, he and colleagues, based on a survey in Gir, identified 67 individual lions from 368 sightings. "Using photographs and other markers, we can reliably identify individuals but we have been never allowed to do a census. I have been trying for 15 years. With the current methods and the fact that lions can range as much as 700 sq. km., you can both grossly under count or over count," he said.

An official from the Union Environment Ministry's wildlife division said, "Camera traps are not yet suitable for lions as they don't have clearly discernible permanent physical features, unlike in tigers, which have unique stripes. There are lots of ideas but going ahead, we will consider newer methods that are practical. The CDV was an issue in 2018 but this year, we haven't yet got any report of such deaths," the official said.

H.S. Singh, a member of India's National Board for Wildlife and an expert on Gir lions estimates 26 lions to have succumbed to CDV this year. "The virus is endemic in livestock and periodically infects lions so only large-scale vaccination of livestock can help. However, I don't think it significantly decreases the population. That 60% of the lions are outside the protected area and increasing is a more serious issue."

## EPFO allows digital life certificates

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Thursday said pensioners of its Employees Pension Scheme (EPS) could submit life certificates closer to home, at any of the 3.65 lakh common service centres.

"In recognition of the need to bring service delivery closer to the doorstep of EPS pensioners, especially during the challenging times of COVID-19 pandemic, EPFO has partnered with CSCs [Common Service Centres] to provide the facility to submit Digital Jeevan Pramaan. By leveraging the last mile network of over 3.65 lakh CSCs, EPFO provides its 65 lakh pensioners facility to submit Digital Jeevan Pramaan closer to their residence," an EPFO statement said.

The pensioners are required to submit the certificates every year to continue receiving pension.

Apart from the CSCs, they can submit certificates through 135 regional offices and 117 district offices of the EPFO as well as banks that disburse pensions.

"A key policy change has been to allow EPS pensioners to submit Digital Jeevan Pramaan at any time during the year as per their convenience. The life certificate will remain valid for one year from the date of submission. Earlier, the pensioners were required to submit the Jeevan Pramaan in the month of November," the EPFO said.

## 194 students in Kyrgyzstan seek flights

They have appealed to the Centre and CMs of northeastern States for help

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Nearly 200 students from the northeastern States have appealed to the Indian embassy in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek for evacuating them out of the central Asian country. Many of the stranded students from Assam have also appealed to Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal for help.

"The Vande Bharat mis-

sion has started but only four flights were operated in the first phase to take students of other parts of India to Delhi, Hyderabad and Gaya. We waited for the second phase and are aghast at not finding the names of the 194 students from the northeast," said Sehil Akhtar Khan, who hails from western Assam's Barpeta district.

Arif Ahmed, also from Barpeta and a student of the

International School of Medicine in Bishkek like Mr. Khan, said they have been facing food, lodging and health issues for almost three months now.

The embassy officials said evacuation was not in their hands while the Assam government contacted via email and Twitter has not given any satisfactory response. Only the Arunachal Pradesh government has re-

sponded properly and is ready to take back their students," he said.

There are 12 students from Arunachal Pradesh in Kyrgyzstan. Manipur has the most students (107) followed by Assam (72). Mizoram has two and Tripura one. Sandul Hussain, a student of Kyrgyz State Medical Academy, said the students were being ignored by the embassy.

## Last eligible 'foreigner' freed from Silchar centre

He was picked up by police in 2018

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Siddeque Ali has paid the price of not being able to read the notice he was served more than 2 years ago.

Ali is unlikely to be the last declared foreigner in any of Assam's six detention centres. But on Thursday, he became the last to be released from the only detention centre in southern Assam's Barak Valley as the beneficiary of a Supreme Court order. The ruling said those who had served two years could be released.

A declared foreigner, or DF, is a person marked by any of 100 Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs) in Assam for allegedly failing to prove his or her citizenship after being marked by the State police's Border wing as an illegal immigrant.

The 69-year-old Mr. Ali, an illiterate daily wager, did not know why the Border



Siddeque Ali on the day of his release.

police picked him up from his residence at Hatikhali in Hima Hasao district on June 5, 2018.

It was too late when he learnt that an FT in Dima Hasao district headquarters had on April 20 that year declared him a foreigner in a one-sided verdict. He was accused of not responding to a notice the Border police had pasted on the wall of his house, a notice he could not read.

## Railways offers discount to compete with road hauliers

Lower prices to be charged for round-trip bookings

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

To boost goods traffic, the Railways will compete with the road transport sector, offering discounts on round-trip bookings. A new scheme has been rolled out to woo consignors with a 10% discount.

After an analysis revealed that one of the reasons for consignors to move goods by road even when a rail network existed on the same route was that road hauliers offered customers a discount when traffic was assured in both directions, the Railway Board said in a note to the General Managers of Zonal Railways.

Under the scheme, if a consignor commits himself to traffic back to the originating station, either from the destination station or from any point within 200 km, the outward and return traf-



The discount on cargo bookings will be implemented from July 1.

fic will be charged at a lower rate. This is because several trains ran back empty.

If a consignor transports 'A' class goods in the outward direction, which has a prescribed rate, and 'B' class goods in the return direction, which has another rate, he/she will be charged lower for both directions.

In case the same class of

goods are moved in the round-trip, the consignor will be entitled to a 10% discount.

Senior officials in charge of the commercial and operations departments were told to analyse the traffic flow by road of various commodities and hold discussions with potential customers about the new scheme that would be implemented from July 1, 2020, for a period of one year.

The freight train kilometre across the network increased from 391 million km in 2016-17 to 415 million km in 2018-19. The revenue-earning freight traffic in 2018-19 was 1,221.48 million tonne.

In November 2019, the Railways increased the freight rate for coal, raw material for steel plants, iron and steel, iron ore and other goods by 8.75%.

## A. Vaidyanathan, former plan panel member, dead

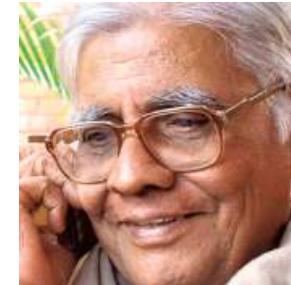
He chaired a Central task force in 2004

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

A. Vaidyanathan, former Member of the Planning Commission, died in Coimbatore on Wednesday. He was 88.

He was Professor at the Madras Institute of Development Studies and the Centre for Development Studies. Mr. Vaidyanathan had chaired the Government of India Task Force on Revival of Cooperative Credit Institutions in 2004 and was a member of the K.N. Raj Committee on Taxation of Agricultural Income (1969-70).

An alumnus of Loyola College, Chennai, he received his doctoral degree in economics from Cornell University, U.S., and joined the National Council of Applied Economic Research in 1956. He was associated with State-level planning in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. He is survived by wife Shanta, daughters Rama Baru and Radhika Vaidyanathan.



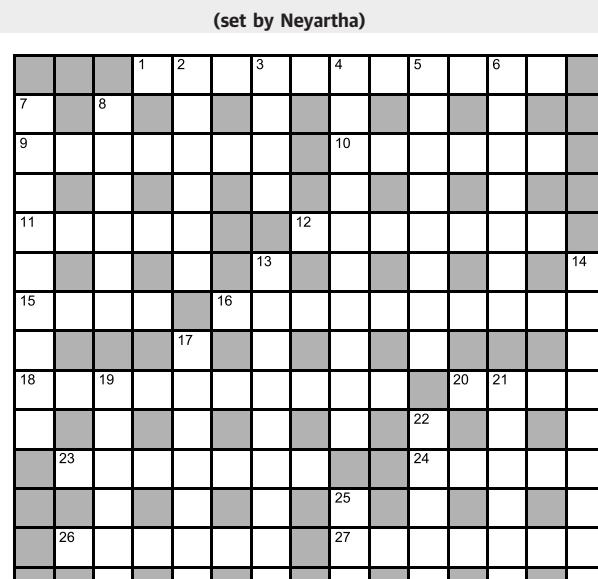
and worked along with P. T. Tambaram during his stint at the Food and Agricultural Organisation, Rome.

After a term at the World Bank between 1972 and 1976, he returned to join Prof. K. N. Raj as a member of the faculty of Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. He was associated with State-level planning in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. He is survived by wife Shanta, daughters Rama Baru and Radhika Vaidyanathan.

## TH CROSSWORD + 12960

(set by Neyartha)

Feeling down in lockdown?  
Get across to our Crossword site.  
@ <https://crossword.thehindu.com>



- 1 Purchase made by WHO in France to participate in the battle to get hold of silicon (11)  
9 Contacted over the Internet? (1-6)  
10 Mixed in with the letters from Mizoram I'd stenographed (6)  
11 Removal of the first stage results in disapproval (5)  
12 Horse's vehicle for hire (7)  
15 Charts returned with unwelcome messages (4)

- 16 A lone cow gets camouflaged after the Frenchmen's entry for public welfare (10)  
18 Italian taken in by the revolutionary bites into crumbling talc inside a cave structure (10)  
20 Think in old style after the Spanish disappear with a garden tool (4)  
23 Auction bid resulting from Penny's uncontrolled temper (7)  
24 Leaders of the orchestra copyright the exquisite tune of a musical composition (5)  
26 Ointment from the accountant following the Indian queen's initial turmoil (6)  
27 Defective box for a computer attached to a note on a cave structure (7)  
28 Pet, homeless, wandering near some cave structures (11)  
■ DOWN  
2 Carefully study covering of the Scottish chimney depicting a cave structure (6)  
3 Menu option in the German's party below (4)  
4 Street party upset by a small bug on a cave structure (10)  
5 Assessment of the body's absorption of a fluid from a well (8)  
6 Disgraceful to have broken bones strewn around the church (7)  
7 Steep rising interrupts Pole invited by the seers in trouble to take back property (9)  
8 Steep ask to make Lawrence leave the fancy dock (6)  
13 Paint roof fresh after harnessing energy with a musical instrument (10)  
14 Mass of ice at sea reportedly seen with a building material for a cave structure (9)  
17 With time, it may contribute to a project's cost (8)  
19 Auditor's next in line with an empty flag to get a parachute delivery (3-4)  
21 Budget for the king taking over a new country (6)  
22 British artillery gun's part of the cheerleader's accessories (3-3)  
25 Stop a hoodlum from smuggling moonfish (4)

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 12959

F	I	N	G	E	S	T	A	L	L	S	A	C
A	U	M	L	V	A	I	U					
L	A	T	E	D	O	R	N	M	E			
L	S	E	N	I	C	S	L					
I	N	H	E	R	I	T	A	N	T	R	E	
B	E	E	E	S	A	T						
L	I	L	P	A	D	O	T					
E	L	A	T	E	M	I						
E	S	C	U	P	C	E	T					
A	S	E	U	H	G	E						
V	R	O	O	M	I	S	T	E	N	D		
E	L	A	P	A	W	O	I					
S	H	A	R	K	S	I	N	D	L	I		
T	C	E	E	I	T	N	I					
A	W	E	R	U	N	N	G	M	A	T		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	2

# Trump targets ICC with sanctions over Afghanistan war crimes case

He authorises economic sanctions and travel curbs against Court employees

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday issued an executive order authorising sanctions against individuals involved in an International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation into whether U.S. forces committed war crimes in Afghanistan.

A senior White House official, without providing details, said the ICC probe is "being pushed forward by an organisation of dubious integrity" and accused Russia of having a role.

The order authorises Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, in consultation with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, to block assets in the U.S. of ICC employees involved in the probe, the official said.

It also authorises Mr. Pompeo to block entry into the U.S. of these individuals.



Latest target: Donald Trump addressing U.S. troops in Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, in this file photo. ■ REUTERS

Mr. Trump has repeatedly assailed The Hague-based ICC set-up to prosecute war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. It has jurisdiction only if a member state is unable or unwilling to prosecute atrocities itself.

Afghanistan is a member of the ICC, though Kabul has argued that any war crimes should be prosecuted locally. The U.S. government has never been a member of the

court, established in 2002. The government imposed travel restrictions and other sanctions against ICC employees a year ago.

The ICC decided to investigate after prosecutors' preliminary examination in 2017 found reasonable grounds to believe war crimes were committed in Afghanistan and that the ICC has jurisdiction.

The senior administration

official said the directive authorises sanctions against any individual directly engaged in any effort by the ICC to investigate U.S. personnel without American consent.

## Mass killings'

The official said the probe threatens to infringe on U.S. sovereignty and that while the ICC was established to provide accountability, "in practice the court is an unaccountable, ineffective and out-of-control international bureaucracy that threatens American service members and intelligence officers."

ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda wants to investigate possible crimes committed between 2003 and 2014, including alleged mass killings of civilians by the Taliban, as well as the alleged torture of prisoners by Afghan authorities and, to a lesser extent, by U.S. forces and the CIA.

# Virus hits U.S.-China trade deal

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIJING

Beijing and Washington need to resume strategic communications, a senior Chinese government advisor said on Thursday, noting relations were "very unsatisfactory" and that the coronavirus had hit the implementation of their trade deal.

Under the deal, Beijing agreed to import an additional \$200 billion in U.S. products over two years, although economists question if this will happen with business activity hampered by the virus.

Zhu Guangyao, a State Council counsellor, told a press briefing that "objectively speaking, the epidemic has an impact on the implementation of this deal".

"But even under such circumstances, China has been emphasising that both sides should work together," added Mr. Zhu, who is also a former Vice-Finance Minister.

# Teacher killed in stabbing attack at Slovakia school

Several injured; killer, a former student, shot dead by police



Horror-struck: Police officers and forensic technicians at the scene of reported assault in Vrucky, Slovakia. ■ REUTERS

cebook page.

"He dealt a lethal injury to a deputy principal and injured several others, including a female teacher and two children."

Officers opened fire on the man, killing him around 200 m from the school.

"He broke the glass door to get in, the staff tried to stop him and he used a knife he had brought with him," Slovak police chief Milan Lukanec said on his official Fa-

cebook page.

Police had no immediate comment about the motives of the attacker.

The injured were taken to a hospital in the nearby city of Martin.

Prime Minister Igor Matovic conveyed his "sincere condolences" to the family of the victim.

The Interior Minister was flying to the scene, Mr. Matovic told journalists.

# Harvard study full of holes: China

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIJING

Beijing on Thursday criticised a preliminary study by U.S. researchers suggesting the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) may have been circulating in China since August 2019, calling it proof of a disinformation campaign.

The virus first emerged late last year in the central city of Wuhan, but the U.S. has repeatedly accused China of a lack of transparency about the outbreak and its origins.

The new paper by researchers at Harvard and Boston universities analysed

photos of parking lots at Wuhan hospitals and search trends on the Chinese search engine Baidu.

The team led by Elaine Nsoesie at Boston University said they found a "steep increase in volume starting in August 2019" at Wuhan hospital parking lots, "culminating with a peak in December 2019."

The authors said that while they could not definitively confirm that the data they documented was linked to the virus, it supported conclusions reached by other research suggesting that the virus began circulating earlier than the first report-

ed cases at the end of 2019. But China's Foreign Ministry criticised the paper as "full of holes" and "crudely manufactured."

## U.S. blamed

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said she believed the study was evidence of coordinated efforts in the U.S. to "deliberately create and disseminate disinformation against China."

"Some U.S. politicians and media acted like they found buried treasure and wantonly spread (the study), treating it like new proof that China concealed the epidemic," Ms. Hua said.

# U.S. COVID-19 case tally crosses 2 million mark

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

The COVID-19 pandemic has infected more than two million people overall in the United States.

It has caused 1,082 fatalities in the past 24 hours in the country, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

The world's leading economic power is by far the country most affected by the pandemic, both in terms of the number of reported deaths – 1,12,833 – and the number of diagnosed cases, which stood at crossed 2

million on Thursday.

The U.S. continues to record around 20,000 new cases of COVID-19 every day. The country is struggling to come down from that plateau as the level of infections wax and wane in different parts of the country.

In Texas and North Carolina, for example, there are currently more COVID-19 patients hospitalised than there were a month ago.

With half a million tests performed per day, the country is the world champion in screening per capita.

# Norway gunman jailed for 21 years

He killed his Chinese-born stepsister, fired shots in mosque

REUTERS  
OSLO

A far-right Norwegian man was jailed for 21 years on Thursday for the racially motivated murder of his Chinese-born stepsister and attempting to kill worshippers in a mosque shooting spree.

Philip Manshaus expressed strong anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim views before last year's attack and was unrepentant at trial.

Manshaus, now 22 years old, shot and killed Johanne Zhangja Ihle-Hansen in their family home, later explaining he believed the



Philip Manshaus

adopted daughter of his father's spouse posed a risk to the family because of her Asian origin.

He then drove to the nearby al-Noor Islamic Centre and entered the building, fir-

ing several shots but hitting no one before being overpowered by a 65-year-old member of the congregation who wrestled away his guns.

"He went in with the purpose of killing as many Muslims as possible," judge Anja Lindstrom said.

Manshaus expressed admiration for the massacre of more than 50 people at two New Zealand mosques last year by a white supremacist.

Manshaus wore a helmet camera, filming the mosque shooting, but failed in his attempt to broadcast the attack online.

# + 10 Ivory Coast soldiers killed in jihadist attack

First such attack since March 2016

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
ABIDJAN

Dozens of suspected jihadists attacked a frontier post on Ivory Coast's border with Burkina Faso before dawn on Thursday, killing around 10 soldiers, security sources said.

It is the first assault by Islamist extremists on Ivorian soil since March 2016, when a raid on the southeastern beach resort of Grand-Bassam left 19 people dead.

Thursday's shooting attack "targeted an Ivorian frontier post at Kafolo," where an anti-jihadist operation had just ended, one Ivorian source said, in an account confirmed by a Burkina Faso source.

An Ivorian source said 12

people were killed – 11 soldiers and a gendarme – while six people were injured and two were listed as missing.

Another Ivorian source put the toll at nine dead, while a Burkina Faso source said 10 troops, a gendarme and an assailant had been killed, and two people were missing.

"There were sounds of rifles toward the river," an anonymous Kafolo resident said in a telephone interview.

The attack was carried out by dozens of armed individuals believed to be from the Group to Support Islam and Muslims (GSIM), which has a hold in the area, according to a source.

Protesters toppled a statue of Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederate States of America during the Civil War, in Richmond, Virginia, on Wednesday night, as demonstrators across the country continued to target symbols of white supremacy after the death of George Floyd.

Demonstrators knocked down the statue at about 11 p.m., according to the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and local news reports showed photographs of it lying on the street, with the police nearby before a tow truck carted it away.

The statue was among a number of prominent Confederate monuments that had stood on Monument

Avenue in Richmond, which was once the capital of the Confederacy. It came down one week after Mayor Levar Stoney of Richmond said that he would propose an ordinance to remove all four Confederate monuments that the city

controls along Monument Avenue.

Mr. Stoney said he would introduce the Bill on July 1, when a new state law goes into effect giving local governments the authority to remove the monuments on their own.

In 2018, a commission appointed by Mr. Stoney recommended that the Davis monument be removed and replaced with a new statue.

## Floyd protests

The statue came down amid a national reckoning over racist imagery and emblems fuelled by the protests that have erupted after the death of Floyd, a black man in Minneapolis, who was killed after a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Across the country, at least 10 monuments to Confederates or other controversial historical figures have been removed, and people have challenged similar monuments in more than 20 cities. ■ NY TIMES

# Pak. to soon restart polio vaccinations: Army chief

COVID-19 brought campaign to a halt

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Army chief has told Microsoft co-founder and billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates that despite the challenge of COVID-19, Pakistan plans to restart polio vaccination campaigns across the country.

In a statement on Wednesday, the military said General Qamer Javed Bajwa spoke with Mr. Gates by phone and assured him the campaign to eliminate polio in the impoverished Islamic nation would begin again soon. No start date was given.

Polio is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus and Mr. Gates has worked to try and eradicate the disease worldwide.

Pakistan had hoped to eliminate the disease in 2018 when only 12 cases were reported, but there was a surge in new cases the following year. Pakistan halted its anti-polio campaign after the first COVID-19 case was reported in February.

Gen. Bajwa told Mr. Gates that the government is planning to restart campaigns against polio in the coming weeks.

Mr. Gates apparently called Mr. Bajwa because the military provides security for polio workers administering vaccinations in former militant strongholds bordering Afghanistan.

# Who killed Sweden's Olof Palme?

After 34 years of investigation and a wrong conviction, Swedish police now believe that they know who shot down the Social Democratic PM

STANLY JOHNY

Close to midnight on February 28, 1986, Sweden's Prime Minister Olof Palme and his wife Lisbet were walking to a metro station after watching a movie with their son and his girlfriend at Stockholm's Grand Cinema. Palme had already dismissed his security for the day. While crossing the central Stockholm street Sveavagen, they came under attack. He was shot in the back at close range. At the Sabbatsberg Hospital, Palme, who was 59, was pronounced dead on arrival. Lisbet survived.

Palme's murder had been the most high-profile mystery in Scandinavia, a region known for its top-quality crime fiction. Palme, a long-time protégé of Tage Erlander, who ruled Sweden from 1946 to 1969, led the Swedish Social Democratic Workers Party from 1969 until his assassination. Since 1986, several investigators followed

CM YK

multiple leads, interviewed hundreds of people, tested several hypotheses. Current Prime Minister Stefan Löfven called the case an "open wound" in Swedish society. Thirty-four years later, on June 10, the Swedish police held a press conference and announced that they finally know who the killer is.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

Palme had no dearth of enemies. He had openly supported the African National Congress, which was fighting the apartheid regime. Right-wing groups within Sweden were opposed to him because they thought he was too leftist. He supported the Prague Spring, the uprising in Czechoslovakia and attacked the Soviet Union's intervention in the country in 1968. He slammed the U.S.'s sanctions on Salvador Allende's socialist government in Chile and Sweden continued to provide aide to the South American country.

island. In Santiago, Cuba's second largest city, he shared stage with Castro and lauded the island's revolutionaries. "Long live the solidarity of the peoples! Long live this free and independent Cuba," Palme said in his concluding remarks.

And Palme was one of the most vocal critics of the U.S.'s war in Vietnam. Swedish, South African and American intelligence agencies. Police took Larsson's memo seriously and were exploring the theory that South African intelligence got him killed through the help of local right-wing groups. Another theory was that the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the Kurdish militia group fighting the Turkish state, was behind the killing. Palme's government had termed the PKK a terrorist

group. But the investigation reached nowhere. In December 1988, Christer Pettersson, a drug addict and local criminal, was arrested and charged with the murder. But the prosecutors failed to prove the motive. Nor did they find the murder weapon. Pettersson was freed by an appeals court exactly a year later. Authorities continued to believe that Pettersson was the killer until a new chief prosecutor officially stated in 2018 that it was not Christer Pettersson who killed Prime Minister Palme.

Man" because he had worked at the insurance company, Skandia. Engstrom was working in an office that's close to the crime scene. He had been trained in military and had access to guns. He was also critical of Palme's leadership. The police say the statements he made as a witness were not corroborated by the other witnesses. For example, he had told the police that he had given first aid to the injured Palme immediately after the attack. None of the witnesses recalled this account. Based on his statements and those of other witnesses, the police concluded that Engstrom was the killer.

Engstrom committed suicide in 2000. There won't be any prosecution. The police have no new forensic evidence to offer. The murder weapon is still not found. They haven't established the motive either. But the case is closed.

Engstrom committed suicide in 2000. There won't be any prosecution. The police have no new forensic evidence to offer. The murder weapon is still not found. They haven't established the motive either. But the case is closed.

Engstrom committed suicide in 2000. There won't be any prosecution. The police have no new forensic evidence to offer. The murder weapon is still not found. They haven't established the motive either. But the case is closed.

Engstrom committed suicide in 2000. There won't be any prosecution. The police have no new forensic evidence to offer. The murder weapon is still not found. They haven't established the motive either. But the case is closed.

Engstrom committed suicide in 2000. There won't be any prosecution. The police have no new forensic evidence to offer. The murder weapon is still not found. They haven't established the motive either. But the case is closed.

Engstrom committed suicide in 2000. There won't be any prosecution. The police have no new forensic evidence to offer. The murder weapon is still not found. They haven't established the

## MARKET WATCH

	11-06-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	33,538	-2.07
US Dollar	75.79	-0.26
Gold	48,190	1.10
Brent oil	39.27	-3.23

## NIFTY 50

## PRICE CHANGE

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	338.65	-7.90
Asian Paints	1610.60	-25.35
Axis Bank	413.45	-14.00
Bajaj Auto	2718.55	1.35
Bajaj Finserv	5158.00	-65.00
Bajaj Finance	2338.90	-96.75
Bharti Airtel	551.85	-15.25
BPCL	370.05	-8.90
Britannia Ind	3370.35	-6.65
Cipla	635.00	-7.95
Coal India	137.70	-3.00
Dr Reddys Lab	4057.60	-54.90
Eicher Motors	16442.80	-647.25
GAIL (India)	95.55	-2.55
Grasim Ind	590.60	-24.15
HCL Tech	578.05	-0.65
HDFC	1787.45	-21.85
HDFC Bank	968.60	-23.25
Hero MotoCorp	2309.95	17.70
Hindalco	144.40	-2.55
Hind Unilever	2106.90	-12.70
ICICI Bank	341.25	-11.75
IndusInd Bank	523.15	23.55
Bharti Infratel	210.80	-21.90
Infosys	703.95	-11.90
Indian Oil Corp	88.35	-1.60
ITC	194.25	-4.80
JSW Steel	184.65	-6.30
Kotak Bank	1298.70	-33.55
L&T	930.45	-16.10
MSM	474.55	2.50
Maruti Suzuki	5426.15	-249.45
Nestle India Ltd.	16608.25	73.55
NTPC	98.05	-0.10
ONGC	86.90	-1.35
PowerGrid Corp	171.00	0.95
Reliance Ind	1537.70	-34.45
State Bank	177.15	-10.55
Shree Cement	21251.20	-262.10
Sun Pharma	473.65	-25.50
Tata Motors	106.15	-5.25
Tata Steel	313.15	-10.85
TCS	2067.65	-41.10
Tech Mahindra	571.85	-18.65
Titan	951.25	-26.00
UltraTech Cement	3704.90	-87.55
UPL	417.45	-7.55
Vedanta	101.05	-5.05
Wipro	212.90	-4.10
Zee Entertainment	175.95	-13.85

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	75.58	75.90
Euro	86.11	86.48
British Pound	96.07	96.48
Japanese Yen (100)	70.73	71.05
Chinese Yuan (100)	10.70	10.74
Swiss Franc	80.35	80.71
Singapore Dollar	54.53	54.77
Canadian Dollar	56.14	56.40
Malaysian Ringgit	17.79	17.89
Australian Dollar	52.55	52.78

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



## TVS Srichakra reappoints MDs

CHENNAI The nomination and remuneration committee of TVS Srichakra Ltd. has reappointed R. Naresh as the MD for a further period of three years with effect from June 16. Further, he has been designated as executive vice-chairman, the company said in a filing. Besides, Shobhana Ramachandran was also reappointed as Managing Director for a further period of five years from August 25, at the board meeting held on Thursday.

## EID Parry Q4 profit contracts 46.71%

CHENNAI EID Parry India Ltd.'s standalone net profit for the fourth quarter ended March 2020 contracted 46.71% to ₹68.84 crore on muted sugar prices and a drop in Karnataka cane volumes. Revenue from operations rose to ₹608 crore (₹563 crore). "The company's performance has improved over the last year. Higher realisations from distillery segment and effective cost and cash management has augured well for the firm," said S. Suresh, MD.

## Sundram Fasteners cuts staff pay by up to 35%

CHENNAI Sundram Fasteners Ltd. (SFL), a TVS Group company, has announced a reduction in the employees' remuneration in the range of 15% to 35% due to COVID-19 that impacted the company's financial performance for FY20 along with the slowdown in the automobile sector. Meanwhile, SFL's standalone net profit for the fourth quarter ended March 2020 contracted 56.40% to ₹46.80 crore following economic slowdown and the outbreak of pandemic during March 2020, the firm said.

## ATM cash withdrawals halved in April

With the country in lockdown, overall payments suffered following a slump in economic activity

MANOJIT SAHA  
MUMBAI

Cash withdrawals from automated teller machines (ATMs) declined by 50% in value from the preceding month in April – the first full month of the nationwide lockdown.

ATM withdrawals fell to ₹1.28 lakh crore from the ₹2.51 lakh crore in March, Reserve Bank of India data showed. In February, ₹2.86 lakh crore was withdrawn at ATMs.

All other payment system indicators also showed a sharp decline in value in April compared with the preceding months, indicating the magnitude of the impact that the lockdown had on economic activity.

ATM manufacturers said apart from restrictions on

## When cash is not king

Prepaid payment instrument transactions such as mobile wallets saw a significant fall in ₹ crore

	February '20	March '20	April '20
ATM cash withdrawals	2,86,463	2,51,075	1,27,660
Total retail payments	32,88,739	36,03,844	19,66,882
Total digital payments	1,16,19,377	1,50,85,750	82,46,850
Total payments	1,22,78,836	1,56,51,064	84,10,535

centres for providing cash.

"The reason is, one, people cannot go outside. Also, when economic activity stops people want to save money," Mr. Irani said. India has a little more than 2.4 lakh ATMs, of which Hitachi manages over 55,000.

## ATM maintenance hit

Mr. Irani added that ATM maintenance was also impacted as movement of engineers was restricted during the lockdown, affecting transactions.

"ATMs require physical access. You have to go and load cash... if may be needed, a spare part needs replacement. Engineers were unable to go and fix the ATMs during lockdown. So, if a ATM is not working, people will not be able to access cash. Maintenance has suf-

fered big time," he said.

Digital payments were also affected in April.

For example, transactions of prepaid payment instruments such as mobile wallets saw a significant drop. Data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed transaction volume in mobile wallets dropped to ₹8,693 crore in April compared with ₹13,111 crore in March.

By the last week of May, as some lockdown restrictions were eased, there was a marginal increase in the withdrawals at ATMs. "We believe that it will take a little while to get back to normal. But how quickly that little while is nobody knows.

"I think, when economic activity returns, people will go back to earlier spending habits," Mr. Irani added.



It was pointed out that the October 2019 judgment did not dwell on dues with regard to PSUs. ■ PRASHANT NAKWE

## SC pulls up telecom dept. for 'order misuse'

DoT sought AGR dues from PSUs

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said it was "totally impermissible" for the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to "misuse" a judgment of the Apex Court to demand ₹4 lakh crore in adjusted gross revenue (AGR) from public sector undertakings.

A three-judge Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra also questioned the viability of the government's 20-year 'formula' for telecom companies to repay their AGR dues to the tune of ₹1.42 lakh crore. "Twenty years is too long a period. If companies go into liquidation, what will happen? How to secure the dues?" Justice Mishra asked.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the government, said the formula was chalked out considering the "impact" such huge payouts may have on the private telecom sector. He said the companies would be in the best position to tell the court about how they would guarantee payment.

Senior advocates Arvind Datar for Tata, A.M. Singhvi for Bharti Airtel and Kapil Sibal for Hughes sought

time to file detailed responses to the court's queries, saying it was a serious matter concerning huge sums.

The court finally asked the telecom companies to file affidavits detailing the "personal guarantee" they could put on the table to ensure the payment of dues within a fixed time frame.

Meanwhile, the Bench threatened contempt action against the officials responsible for the demand on PSUs.

Justice Mishra pointed out the court's October 2019 judgment, directing telecom companies to pay AGR dues in three months, was completely silent with regard to the (dues) court did not include PSUs.

But the court refused and directed the government to file an affidavit within a week, explaining this demand made on PSUs using the verdict as a basis.

## Retail vehicle sales fall 89% in May

Early June witnesses very low urban demand; survey points to buying interest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Retail sales of vehicles in the domestic market fell nearly 89% in May as the country began to open up partially after nearly two months of nationwide lockdown to slow the spread of COVID-19.

In May, total retail sales across categories stood at about 2.02 lakh units, compared with over 18.21 lakh vehicles sold last year, as per data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA).

Sales in April 2020 were nil due to the lockdown.

FADA president Ashish Kale said that at the end of May, of the 26,500 outlets, about 60% showrooms and 80% workshops were operational across the country.

Hence, registrations were

not indicative of demand. He, however, added that the first 10 days of June witnessed extremely low demand and weak consumer confidence, especially in urban areas, as customers stayed away due to the threat of community spread.

Mr. Kale said that assuming there would be no further lockdown, a substantial pick-up is anticipated in retail sales in comparison to

May, "but the overall outlook continues to be grim with projected sales to witness a de-growth upwards of 25% over the previous year".

Two wheeler sales in the last month nosedived 88.8% to about 1.59 lakh, while that of passenger vehicles was down 87% to 30,749 units, commercial vehicle sales fell 96.93% to 2,711 units, and tractor sales declined 75.58% to 8,317 units.

## Car purchase, a priority

Separately, a survey by EY showed that with the nationwide lockdown being lifted in phases, a car is likely to be top priority among purchases by consumers.

The survey, conducted among 1,120 people with

nearly 90% in the 18-42 age bracket, found that 74% res-

pondents are leaning towards owning a vehicle and considering it to be a priority purchase post the relaxation of the national lockdown.

While about 57% of first-time buyers said they were likely to buy a pre-owned vehicle, 57% of existing car owners are likely to upgrade their car, the survey said, adding that 37% of respondents are likely to buy within the hatchback segment.

Som Kapoor, partner and automotive retail lead, EY India said, "We are sensing a shift in preferences from shared mobility / public transport to their own vehicle owing to perception of increased health and safety in one's own vehicle. This will provide an impetus to entry level and compact vehicle segments in the near future."

May's survey showed that

subsidy on vehicle purchase

will be a key factor in the purchase decision.

May's survey showed that

sub

# Optimistic about IPL 2020: Brijesh Patel

Looking at September-October window for the 13th edition, says governing council chairman

AMOL KARHADKAR  
MUMBAI

Almost three months after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) suspended the Indian Premier League (IPL) on March 13, the league's governing council chairman Brijesh Patel sounded optimistic about the prospects of staging the tournament in 2020, in an interview with *The Hindu*. Excerpts:

How much have things changed in these three months vis-a-vis IPL 2020? A lot, I would say. There was a lot of uncertainty back then.

Now everyone is cautiously looking for a way forward, so we are quite positive about hosting the IPL this year.

Obviously it all depends

on the ICC [International Cricket Council] to take a call on the T20 World Cup. Since the T20 World Cup and the IPL are interlinked, in terms of the availability of the window, do you expect the T20 World Cup to be postponed shortly?

They can't leave it till the last minute. All the teams have to prepare if they are going ahead with it. Otherwise all the alternative plans have to be in place. They should decide shortly.

If the World Cup cannot happen, each Board will have to think of how to utilise the October window in consultation with the respective governments.

How optimistic are you about the fans being able to witness the IPL in 2020?



**First choice:** Though UAE and Sri Lanka have agreed to host the IPL, Brijesh's preference is India. ■ FILE PHOTO: VIVEK BENDRE

I am quite optimistic. See, we are looking at the September-October window as of now, depending on the T20 World Cup and Asia Cup.

And I am optimistic that we can play the IPL this year.

If it happens, will the 13th edition of the IPL be played in India, Sri Lanka or the United Arab Emirates?

They [Emirates Cricket Board and Sri Lanka Cricket] have informed us that they are prepared to host the IPL.

But our first preference is India, if we get the government's permission.

It is certain that we cannot play at more than three or four venues in India, but the permissions will depend on how the COVID-19 outbreak pans out.

Otherwise we will have to explore playing overseas, which will be the last option.

Once you are playing without spectators, it doesn't really matter where you are playing as long as it suits television timings.

for domestic cricket. "The BCCI will come up with more details over the next couple of weeks," he said

Saurashtra Cricket Association secretary Himanshu Shah welcomed the communication. "It's heartening to see the BCCI president reaching out to all the associations and briefing us about its plans. Hopefully, we shall have more clarity about the next season soon," Shah told *The Hindu*.

However, not all State associations are happy with the mail. "There's absolutely nothing new or concrete in it. If at all such a mail had to be sent, it should have been four weeks earlier. It's high time some concrete steps are announced about the domestic season," said the secretary of an association from the south.

India's tour of Sri Lanka called off

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

India's limited-over tour of Sri Lanka in June-July was on Thursday called off due to COVID-19, with both Boards saying that the situation was not feasible for the games to go ahead. India was scheduled to play three ODIs and as many T20s. The dates had not been finalised.

"It is not possible to go ahead with the tour in June-July and we have conveyed it to the Sri Lankan board. We remain committed to the series (at a later date)," BCCI treasurer Arun Dhupal said.

## IN BRIEF



Amir Sohail withdraws from England tour

LAHORE  
Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir, in pic, and middle-order batsman Haris Sohail on Thursday pulled out of the upcoming England tour due to personal reasons. "Amir has withdrawn so that he can be with his wife during the birth of their second child, while Haris will miss the tour because of family reasons," said the PCB in a statement. "Pakistan will send 28 players and 14 support staff for the series (three Tests and three T20Is) to be played in August and September," it added. PTI

**ITF to disburse \$350,000 to lower-ranked players**

PARIS  
The International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced on Wednesday it would distribute up to \$1,000 each to players ranked between 501 and 700 to help them deal with the pandemic. They will receive the funds as part of a \$350,000 package. Last month, ITF as well as the ATP, WTA and the four Grand Slams said they had contributed more than \$6 million to a Player Relief Programme. AFP

Alli handed one-match ban for insensitive post

LONDON  
Dele Alli will miss Tottenham's first game, against Manchester United, after receiving a one-match ban from the Football Association for a racially insensitive post on Snapchat in which he joked about the virus and appeared to mock an Asian man. He also was fined £50,000 and must attend an education course. AP

**Sports will be a part of curriculum, says Rijiju**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday said sports will be a part of the curriculum in the country's new education policy and won't be considered an extra-curricular activity.

"The new education policy of India is also going to have sports as a part of education (and) sports not as extra-curricular activities," Rijiju said on Thursday during the inaugural session of the 'International Webinar on Olympism and Olympic Education in the 21st century'.

Rijiju said sports cannot be treated as an optional subject and it has to be accepted as a part of education.

"Sports is also an education, so sports cannot be extra-curricular activities. Thereby sports cannot be

considered an extra-curricular activity."

## Saliva ban impact will be on Test pacers: Karthik

Don't tweak IPL format or player combinations, says KKR CEO Venky Mysore

Y.B. SARANGI  
KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders captain Dinesh Karthik said on Thursday the proposed ban on use of saliva to shine the cricket ball would impact pace bowlers in the longer version of the game.

"In ODIs and T20s it will not make much of a difference, but in Tests it's going to be a massive challenge. It will be tough especially for the (faster) bowlers," said Karthik at the online launch of KKR's Sahayata Vahan (assistance vehicle) to distribute essential items to cyclone-affected people in West Bengal.

### Need for swing

"When the ball is new for the first 20-30 overs, on most

grounds in the world, conventional swing is what they look for. If you don't apply saliva, it's going to be tough for them to swing the ball," he said.

Players would need about a month to get back to full form after the restrictions were lifted, Karthik said.

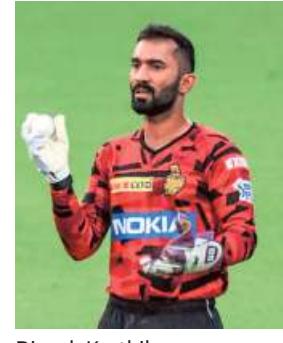
"Especially the fast bowlers, because they are coming off a very quiet time. To go and start bowling at 140-150 kmph through the day, it's going to be a massive challenge for them," he said.

Karthik said if the Indian Premier League (IPL) happened, it would be nice to win the trophy for the cyclone-affected people of West Bengal. "We are emotionally attached to Kolkata. I think winning the IPL is the

least we can do for the State."

KKR CEO Venky Mysore, who flagged off the assistance vehicle with West Bengal Sports Minister Aroop Biswas, did not favour tinkering with the format of the IPL or combination of players.

"The quality of the product has made it really spe-



Dinesh Karthik.  
■ FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

### The backbone

"It is primarily the Indian players who are the backbone of any team. But we should recognise, when you look at even our own team, a Sunil Narine, an Andre Russell, an Eoin Morgan and now a Pat Cummins come as a combination with the Indians to make it really special."

"The IPL as a product has become the biggest spectacle, which has caught the imagination not only of India but also of the world," said Mysore.

"It's safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."

cial. It is safe to say the collective view is that we have to have the tournament in its full format, the same number of matches, with all the players."