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The elephant. The uncrowned king of the jungle. The largest animal on land. Over 5 tons of brute force. It roams the jungle like it owns it, because it does. Its menacing tusks are one of the most feared weapons in the animal kingdom. The bare sight of the charging tusker is enough to send shivers down the spine of every vertebrate in its vicinity. But not ours. The valiant humans.

We are fearless. We crawl up, with our puffed-up chests, straight into the elephant's territory. Armed with merely a high-powered rifle, we sneak up on the majestic beast. Then, with a gentle squeeze of the trigger, we end the elephant's reign.

When there isn't a gun handy, we just lace some food with deadly poison and leave it in the wild. Brave, isn't it?

The elephant is not alone in surrendering to our daredevilry. The 300-year-old oak tree that the human single-handedly cut down with an electroplated chainsaw is another force of nature that bowed down before our might. The whales, the biggest creatures on the planet, are chased down on motorised boats and killed with motorised harpoons. Giant boulders shattered to bits with dynamite. Evergreen forests

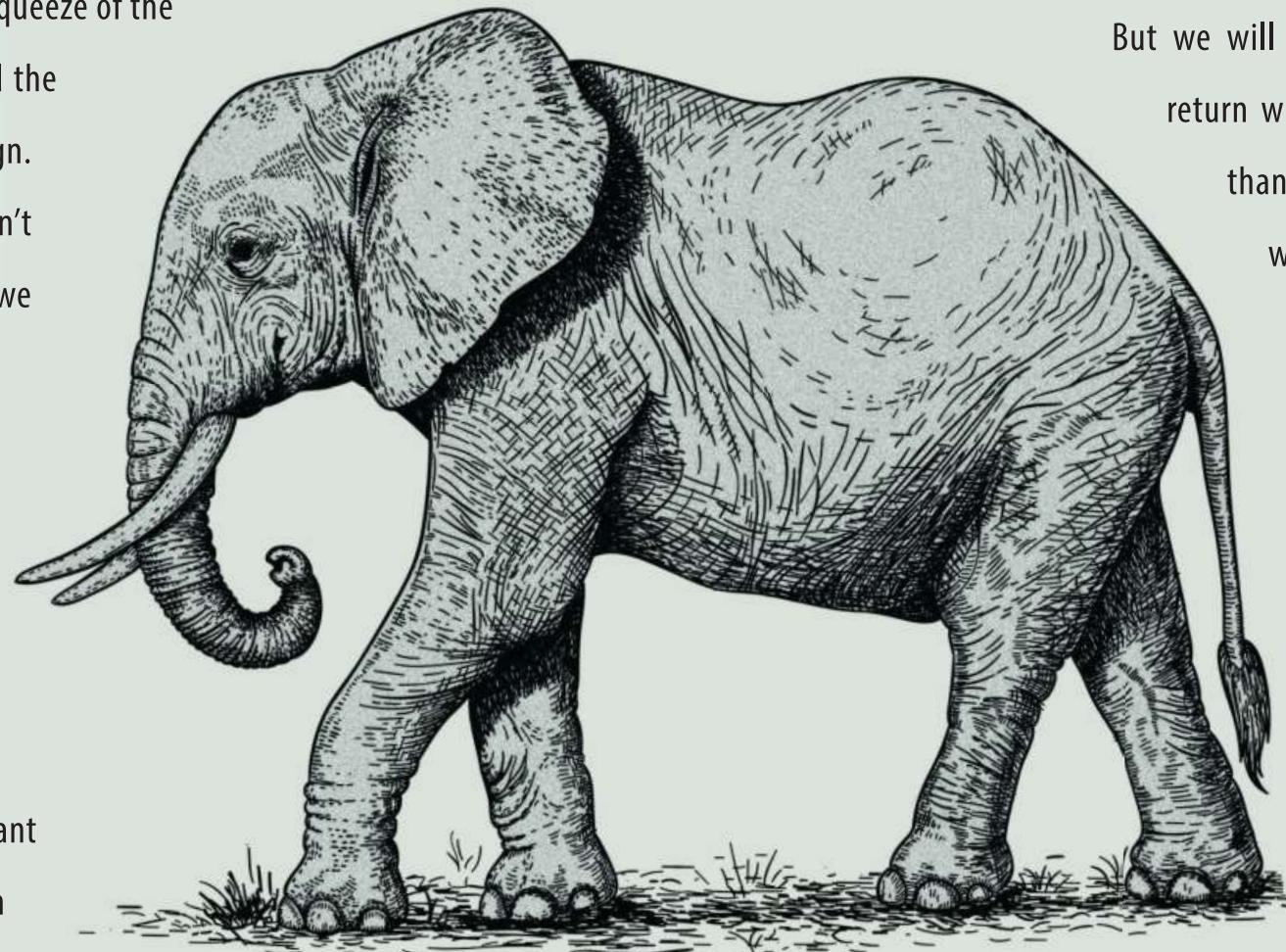
flattened with bulldozers. Graceful birds rendered flightless with mechanical crossbows. The list is endless. The courage of the humans knows no bounds after all. Well, almost.

The tiny virus has brought us mighty beings to our knees. We have been forced to retreat and stay within the confines of our homes. There is fear in the air, a word that cannot be found in our dictionaries. It has slowed us down, allowing the rest of the species to catch up. The hunter has become the hunted. The destroyer has become the destructible. The balance of power has changed, making us weak and the rest of the planet strong.

But we will be back. We will return with more audacity than ever before. We will tear down the environment without an iota of guilt or fear.

We will slay the inhabitants of the land, the sea and the sky. With

our vaccinated bodies and sanitised rifles. Our camouflaged gear and our night-vision goggles. Our explosives. Our vehicles. Our machines. We will force the planet to submit to our bravery, once again. We will grab power back, with every tool at our disposal. Except for our conscience, the one tool that makes us human in the first place.



5th June, 2020 – World Environment Day

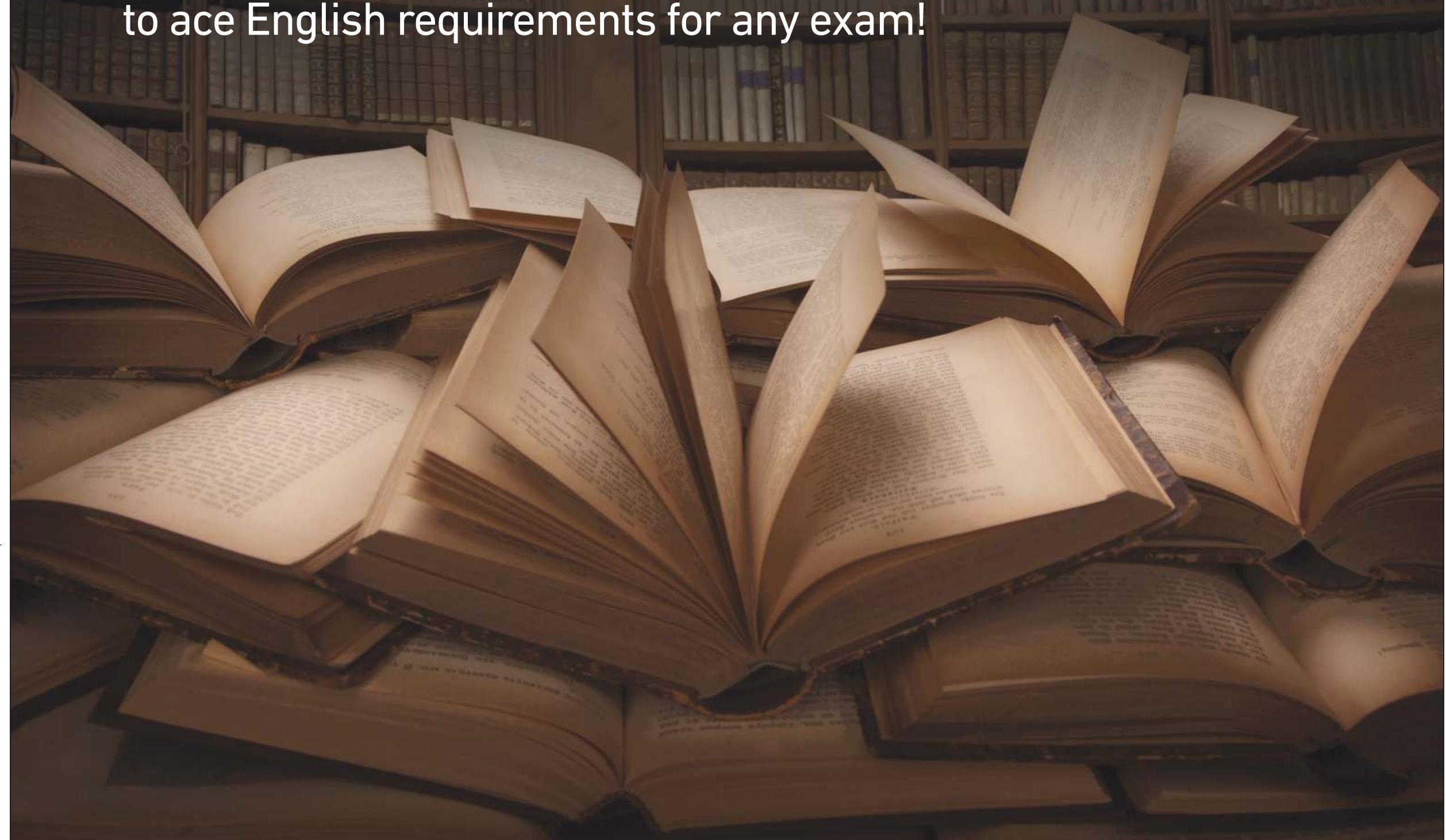
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India, Australia sign logistics support pact and 8 other agreements
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New Wave auteur Basu Chatterjee passes away
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Over 2,900 new cases, 123 more dead in State

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Maharashtra recorded 123 COVID-19 deaths on Thursday, the highest deaths in a day till date, along with 2,933 new cases. Total cases in the State surged to 77,793, while the death toll has reached 2,710.

"Of the total deaths reported today, 30 had occurred in the last couple of days while the remaining fatalities are from the period between April 30 and June 1. 75% of the deaths reported had high-risk comorbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma and heart disease," said Dr. Awate.

Forty-eight more patients died in Mumbai, while Jalgaon reported 21 deaths – at least 16 of them occurring over the last ten days. Eight deaths were reported from Thane, and five from Aurangabad.

The State now has 41,393 active COVID-19 cases, with 1,352 more patients being discharged on Thursday.

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India-China dialogue to focus on three areas

Lieutenant-Generals to aim at return to pre-May 5 positions

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

The first-ever talks between Indian and Chinese Lieutenant-Generals over the weekend to ease the tension on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) will focus on eastern Ladakh with the aim of moving back to the earlier positions, sources said on Thursday.

"The focus of the talks will be on the Galwan area, Pangong Tso and Gogra. The agenda will focus on the recent use of force, getting back to the positions before May 5 and subsequent de-induction of troops by China," defence sources said.

The General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Leh-headquartered 14 Corps will lead the Indian delegation at the talks to be held at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Chinese side. The delegation would also include officers of the rank of Major-General and Brigadier of that area and a translator.

These are the first-ever talks at the level of Lieutenant-Generals, which shows how critical the discussions are, an official said.

Pangong Tso is an important focus area as Chinese troops have taken positions in large numbers at the Finger 4 area. India holds one-third of the 135 km boomerang-shaped lake. India has always held areas in Finger 4, while it claims areas so far as Finger 8.

Major scuffles have broken out in this area in the past and on May 5, which were acknowledged by the Army. There was at least one more major scuffle later in this area, the sources said.

Galwan has never been an area of contention, and

sources said this would be strongly conveyed to the Chinese delegation. India and China have identified 23 "disputed and sensitive" areas along the LAC and both Galwan in Ladakh and Naku La in Sikkim do not figure on the list.

In the month-long stand-off at several areas along the LAC in Ladakh and Sikkim, Chinese troops have moved in large numbers into Indian territory at points in Pangong Tso, Galwan and Gogra in Ladakh and Naku La in Sikkim, besides the massive build-up on its side.

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Galwan has never been an area of contention, and

EDITORIAL ▶ PAGE 6



Preparing the ground: A landing and runway strip being laid in Anantnag district amid the border tension. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Small drop in joblessness in 2018-19: PLFS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's unemployment rate improved from the 45-year high of 6.1% in 2017-18 to 5.8% in 2018-19, says the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Thursday. The labour force participation rate also improved marginally, from 36.9% in 2017-18 to 37.5% in 2018-19.

The report shows the dip came across all categories, though women and rural workers showed the most improvement.

Women's unemployment fell from 5.7% to 5.2%, while male unemployment only fell from 6.2% to 6%. Urban unemployment was still at a high of 7.7% in 2018-19, a marginal drop from 7.8% in 2017-18, while rural unemployment fell from 5.3% to 5%.

Doubly prepared



New normal: A teacher giving away hall tickets and masks to Class 10 students at a school in Chennai on Thursday. The SSLC examinations in Tamil Nadu will now be held from June 15 to 25 after being postponed for the lockdown. ■ B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

'Cut prices, clear building stock'
Goyal tells realtors situation not going to improve in a hurry

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Union Railways and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has reportedly asked builders to cut prices and clear unsold inventory by "selling at any price they get now, as things were not going to improve in a hurry".

Mr. Goyal was speaking at a closed-door online meeting organised by builders' body National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO). He is heard saying in a video reportedly taken at the meeting, which has gone viral: "We are trying to see if some concessions can be allowed. If you don't get [concessions] then you have to sell [the unsold apartments]. The rest is up to you. I cannot be more explicit about it."

The Minister is seen saying that contrary to expectations, the government was not going to provide a financial helpline that would enable builders to hold their inventory and then sell at



Awaiting buyers: Newly built apartments at Rushikonda area in Visakhapatnam earlier this year. ■ C.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

higher prices, when the market improved. "Unless you reduce your rates, you are stuck with your material. You can choose to be stuck with your material and default with the bank and let the material go away, or you can choose to get rid of whatever you bought at high prices. You can think it as a bad decision or an unfortunate situation and move forward," the Minister is seen saying in the video.

He was addressing a battery of real estate tycoons,

including developer Niranjan Hiranandani, national president of NAREDCO.

Asking builders to be pragmatic, the Minister is heard saying in the video, "If any of you feel that the government will be able to finance you in such a way that you can hold longer and wait for the market to improve, the market is not improving in a hurry. Things are seriously stressed and your best bet is to sell."

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

After 11 bank staff die, employees ask govt. for transport, insurance

Unions seek ₹50 lakh life cover on par with frontline COVID-19 personnel

MANOJIT SAHA
MUMBAI

With at least 11 bank employees losing their lives to COVID-19 in Mumbai and adjoining areas, bank unions have demanded transportation for staff and implementation of safety measures.

In a communication to the Ministry of Finance, the United Forum of Bank Employees (UFBU) – the umbrella body of nine bank unions – said most bank employees working in branches in Mumbai live in the suburbs, and many commute from beyond city limits.

Banks are not providing any conveyance facility to these employees and public transport such as local trains and Metro rail services is shut. Best bus services have a low frequency, while State transport is not allowing bank employees to



No lockdown here: Bank employees continue to work with minimum staff inside a bank in Mumbai. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

use its services, saying they are not covered under essential services.

In addition, the letter said, most banks have discontinued posting guards at the entrance and do not have permanent sweepers, and thus security and cleanliness are also compromised. Banks are unable to regulate customer traffic to



No lockdown here: Bank employees continue to work with minimum staff inside a bank in Mumbai. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

the entrance, which has resulted in great risk to employees' lives.

"Further, the government has not extended insurance cover of ₹50 lakh to bank employees on a par with government employees, and different banks are following different policies of compensation in case of death due to COVID-19," said Devidas Tul-

japurkar, convener, UFBU, Maharashtra.

The union demanded that the government arrange safe transportation for employees, and ensure branches are sanitised regularly and entry is regulated. They have also demanded better security arrangements.

It said branches may operate with 50% staff with alternate day attendance and the remaining be allowed to work from home. Employees above the age of 50 and women staffers should be given preference to work from home, as well as employees with diabetes, blood pressure and chronic ailments.

"The employees attending the duties be paid Rs. 1,000 per day as discomfort allowance for the days for which they are attending," the letter said.

GoAir sacks trainee pilot over social media posts

ADITYA ANAND
MUMBAI

Mumbai-based GoAir on Thursday night terminated the employment of a trainee pilot for failing to comply with the company's rules on social media conduct. Asif Khan, a trainee first officer with GoAir had posted objectionable comments on Twitter that attracted criticism from many users.

In a statement, GoAir said it had a zero tolerance policy and it was mandatory for all to comply with the company's employment rules, regulations and policies, including social media behaviour.

"The airline does not associate itself with personal views expressed by any individual or employee. With immediate effect, GoAir is terminating the employment contract of the trainee first officer," it said.

MUMBAI
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KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI
SC questions interest during moratorium

The Supreme Court has questioned the RBI regulatory package requiring the continuation of payment of interest on bank loans after the three-month moratorium during the pandemic lockdown is lifted. "On one hand granting moratorium and then payment of interest... This is detrimental... These are unprecedented times..." Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul remarked in a virtual court hearing.

'WHAT IS THE RELIEF?' ▶ PAGE 9

heads, saying "comprehensive data" on migrant workers was "urgently required within three days".

They were asked to collect district-wise information on relief camps and details of employers whose labour was in situ at the workplace, as well as other localities where migrants were clustered.

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Other govt. figures indicate underestimation of numbers

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

The Chief Labour Commissioner's office has counted over 26 lakh migrant workers stranded across the country, of which 10% are in relief camps or shelter homes, while 43% are in situ at workplaces and 46% are in other clusters.

This is an extreme underestimation, going by the other assessments made by the Central and State governments, including Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's estimate of eight crore stranded migrants used to determine extra ration provisions in the Atmanirbhar package. On April 8, even as the first wave of workers was leaving the cities due to the lockdown, CLC (Central) Rajan Verma wrote to regional

bouring districts like Thane for whom travel to workplaces will be difficult in the absence of suburban train services. So road travel without passes from the MMR has been permitted.

"Shops on one side of the road will open on one day, while shops on the other side on the next day," as per the new norms. Municipal Commissioners and Police Commissioner have been asked to work in tandem with the shop owners associations for smooth enforcement of above norms and of social distancing and traffic management. This is set to be effective from June 5.

In the revised guidelines, Maharashtra government has allowed all private offices to operate with up to 10% of full staff strength or 10 people (whichever is higher) from June 8. Employers have

Travel lockdown within Mumbai Metropolitan Region lifted

State alters norms for private offices that can operate from June 8 +

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Easing the lockdown further, the Maharashtra government on Thursday opened up inter-district travel for those residing within the limits of municipal corporations in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

The State also altered the norms for private sector offices that can function from June 8, and shops or markets that can open from Friday. Newspapers can also be delivered from June 7, while educational institutions have been allowed to carry out non-teaching functions, including development of e-content, evaluation of answer sheets and declaration of results.

The country's commercial capital Mumbai's bustling office hubs are mostly manned by staff from neighbouring districts like Thane for whom travel to workplaces will be difficult in the absence of suburban train services. So road travel without passes from the MMR has been permitted.

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In the revised guidelines, Maharashtra government has allowed all private offices to operate with up to 10% of full staff strength or 10 people (whichever is higher) from June 8. Employers have

been advised to educate employees about precautions to be taken while travelling so that vulnerable groups, especially the elderly, are not infected.

The Maharashtra Societies Welfare Association welcomed the move to allow newspaper home deliveries and has issued guidelines to 60,000 cooperative housing societies to permit the same.

"The newspaper ensures that correct information reaches public at large in a relevant and balanced manner," the association said, stressing that it is a challenge to get authentic information presently.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had said on May 31 that the State will relax the lockdown in a phased and cautious manner, so that the COVID-19 pandemic doesn't spiral out of control.

In a statement, GoAir said it had a zero tolerance policy and it was mandatory for all to comply with the company's employment rules, regulations and policies, including social media behaviour.

"The airline does not associate itself with personal views expressed by any individual or employee. With immediate effect, GoAir is terminating the employment contract of the trainee first officer," it said.

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The day after, CM takes stock of cyclone Nisarga havoc

Raigad district is the worst-affected as six die and 16 sustain injuries, over 1 lakh trees uprooted while 5,000 hectares suffer damage

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday reviewed the losses caused by cyclone Nisarga in Maharashtra, at a meeting of senior ministers from the State Cabinet and officials of all coastal districts. Mumbai's neighbouring Raigad district suffered the most on Wednesday, with six people killed and 16 injured.

Mr. Thackeray will be visiting Raigad district on Friday to take stock of the situation. He will be meeting with district officials in Alibaug by afternoon.

"The cyclone travelled between Murud and Shrivardhan tehsils in Raigad district, with the latter being the worst-affected. The entire communication to Shrivardhan is disturbed," said Padmashri Bainade, Resident Deputy District Collector of Raigad. She also said over one lakh trees were uprooted while thousands of electricity poles had collapsed in the district. "Around 5,000 hectares of farm land have suffered damage."

Ms. Bainade said people have become anxious since landline and mobile telephone services are not working. "The landline network is damaged and over 500 mobile towers have collapsed," she said. In Ratnagiri, over 3,000 trees and thousands of electricity poles collapsed. In Mumbai city, 25 trees were uprooted, while 55 trees fell in the suburbs.

Relief and rehabilitation secretary Kishor Raje Nimalkar said the State moved 78,191 people to safer places on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis demanded immediate relief from the State government for those affected.



Miseries abound: (Clockwise from left) Raigad resident Prabhakar Gharat surveys the damage caused to his newly built house at Navadhar Baile village on Thursday; some of the food stalls at Kashid beach in Raigad district have been crushed under trees; an autorickshaw that has borne the brunt of a tree collapse in front of Utsav Hotel at Pachpakhadi in Thane; and a fisherman clearing accumulated rain water from his boat at Badhwar Park fishermen colony. • PRASHANT NAKWE • VIBHAV BIRWATKAR • VIVEK BENDRE

Damage assessment begins in Raigad

RAINA ASSAINAR
NAVI MUMBAI

A day after cyclone Nisarga left its trail of destruction in Raigad, various tehsils in the district are beginning to assess the damage.

"We first cleared the road to Shrivardhan, following which I visited the place. The energy infrastructure is completely destroyed. There is not a single house in the tehsil which has not been damaged," said Raigad Collector Nidhi Choudhari, who toured Shrivardhan, Alibag and Roha.

The road between Alibag and Murud is expected to be restored by Friday morning, followed by the road between Shrivardhan and Murud. At least 80,000 to 1 lakh houses are estimat-

ed to have been damaged. "I have asked everyone to click photographs of the damage so that it can be sent to the government for relief. No kuchcha house has survived the cyclone," said Ms. Choudhari.

Murud and Shrivardhan, she said, were the worst hit. Once road connectivity is restored, electrical infrastructure and water supply will follow. "Our priority now is electricity, water and health. Along with it, telecommunications will be restored. All the taluka headquarters will be connected to each other so that there is a smooth flow of communication," she said.

State Energy Minister Nitin Raut had visited Raigad district on Thursday. "The

minister has assured that additional teams would be sent to start the restoration work along with a senior official. Electrical infrastructure has faced the maximum loss. The distribution and transmission lines have been badly affected," Ms. Choudhari pointed out.

As a result of the blackout, families have not been able to get in touch with their loved ones in the tehsils. "I have not been able to speak to my parents who are in Murud. I am worried for their well-being," said Nida Khatib, who lives in Kuwait.

The power cut has also ensured people are finding it difficult to source water. Some of them are using nearby wells while others are being supplied water

through tankers.

Ms. Choudhari also warned of post-cyclone tragedies due to fittings and roofs that have come loose. "We are asking people to take the utmost precaution while going back to their homes or shops and to open every door and window with care. There could be a damaged wall or roof waiting to collapse," she said.

In Navi Mumbai, the cyclone has damaged 225 electrical poles and cables. Panvel city and rural, Taloja, Kalamboli, Rabale, Airoli, Turbhe MIDC, Pawane MIDC and some parts of Seawoods experienced power outages on Thursday.

The blackout persists in Uran taluka, where 250 electrical poles were damaged.

The black-out persists in Uran taluka, where 250 electrical poles were damaged.

Police to look out for spike in crimes against shoppers, office-goers

GAUTAM S. MENGLE
MUMBAI

The city is breathing easy at the gradual lifting of the lockdown, but for police personnel, it's a time of pincer-sharp surveillance. Police stations across the city have been instructed to look out for a spike in crimes targeting shoppers and office-goers.

The Maharashtra government on Thursday issued guidelines for the State, detailing the activities allowed and prohibited as part of Mission Begin Again, aimed at easing the State out of the lockdown in a step-by-step manner. Senior police officers on Thursday discussed measures to ensure that the process was conducted smoothly from a law-and-order point of view.

"The possibility of the crime rate increasing cannot be denied and this has been taken into account while deciding the deployment and other measures to be undertaken over the next few days," said Mumbai Police spokesperson, Deputy Com-

missioner of Police (DCP) Pranaya Ashok. "If nothing else, we will have to at least keep an eye out for street crimes, especially given the condition of the economy and its impact on various strata of society."

Police station personnel have been asked to look out for repeat offenders with a history of chain-snatching, pickpocketing, bag or cell phone theft, robbery and dacoity, besides enforcing bandobasts. Offences like drug peddling and black marketing of goods that may not be easily available at this time, have also been taken into account and agencies like the Crime Branch and the Anti Narcotics Cell are on the lookout for them, senior police officers said.

Mr. Ashok said manpower will not be an issue for the new tasks, even though the department is stretched during the COVID-19 crisis. The force has already lost 19 personnel to the pandemic, while those over 55 years of age have been sent on compulsory leave as a precautionary measure. "Even though some part of the

manpower is in hospital or under quarantine, a large number of our personnel have resumed duty on recovering. It is a dynamic situation and not as if manpower, once out of action, is lost forever," Mr. Ashok said.

Civil contractor shot dead at Ghansoli; search on for two

RAINA ASSAINAR
NAVI MUMBAI

The Rabale police are on the lookout for two suspects who shot one person dead and injured another in broad daylight at Ghansoli on Thursday.

Praveen Tayade, a civil contractor, was at a construction site in Sector 21 where his school-time friend Dattatreya Jamkhane had gone to meet him. The duo were heading home for

lunch on a bike when a man shot Tayade at point blank on his head. "The accused also tried to shoot Mr. Jamkhane from a distance but missed him. After Tayade was shot, the bike skidded and Mr. Jamkhane fell on road and fractured his hand," a police officer said.

Prima facie, the police suspect involvement of two people as after the shooting, the accused got into a car, which was parked nearby, and fled.

Central Public Works Department CORRIGENDUM No.2

RFP No: 08/EE/PEP/2020-21

In reference to advertisement for Selection of System Integrator for the Design, Development, Implementation and Maintenance of ERP Solution for CPWD. (SH: RFP for Hiring of PMU Consultants for ERP Implementation) published in newspaper on 17th May 2020 and corrigendum no.1 on 30th May 2020, following may noted:

The requirements of the qualifications, experiences and professional skills etc. of the manpower resources and some other terms and conditions of the referred RFP have been modified vide corrigendum No. 2. For details visit www.tenderwizard.com/CPWD.

The last date of submission of bids remains upto 3.00 PM on 19.06.2020.

Pune reports third death due to storm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PUNE

A 35-year-old man, who was severely injured in an incident of wall collapse during cyclonic storm Nisarga in Pune district, died at a hospital on Thursday, the police said. This is the third cyclone-related death reported in the district.

The cyclone impacted Pune as it moved towards the northern part of the State on Wednesday, battering parts of Khed, Maval, Mulshi, Junnar and Ambegaon tehsils. Pune district had already recorded two cyclone-related deaths on Wednesday.

Narayan Ananta Navale, whose mother Manjabai was killed after a wall of their home in Khed tehsil collapsed on Wednesday, died at a private hospital in Pune on Thursday, an official said. "Three members of the family, including him, were injured in the incident at Wahagaon village," he said. Earlier, Prakash Mokar (52), a resident of Mokwadi in Haveli tehsil, had died while trying to catch hold of the tin roof of his home on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, two cattle were electrocuted in Mulshi tehsil and tin roofs of three schools and a gram panchayat office in Velhe tehsil were blown away by gusty winds. Zilla parishad CEO Ayush Prasad on Thursday said 57 anganwadis, 31 zilla parishad schools, and four gram panchayats suffered damage during the cyclone.

The disaster control room received six complaints of slab collapse. It also received 70 complaints of trees or their branches falling and nine complaints of short circuit. No casualty was reported. IMD has forecast light to moderate rain for Mumbai till Monday but there is no alert.

Between 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday and 8.30 a.m. on Thursday, the city had received 24.8 mm rainfall. From 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, the city recorded 46.5 mm rainfall, with IMD's Colaba observatory recording 49.6 mm rain. Between 8.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m., some of the areas that saw heavy rainfall were Wadala (67 mm), Chembur (50 mm), Bandra (46.9 mm), and Dadar (44.96 mm).

Cyclone drenches Mumbai on way out

TANVI DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Despite no alert for Thursday, the after-effect of cyclone Nisarga caused moderate rain in many parts of Mumbai. Waterlogging was reported at a few usual rainfall spots and several trees were uprooted as well.

After the cyclone moved away from the Maharashtra coast on Wednesday, Mumbaiites were least expecting rainfall on Thursday. However, India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a nowcast warning at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday for the next three hours for Mumbai, Thane, Raigad and Palghar, and it rained in most parts.

Explaining the phenomenon, Shubhangi Bhute, se-



Unexpected: Many parts of the city received moderate rain on Thursday. • ARUNANGSU ROY CHOWDHURY

nior scientist at IMD Mumbai, said, "The rain was owing to the after-effect of the cyclone. The cyclonic system had not weakened entirely. It's like a truck passing, leaving behind a cloud of smoke."

Many parts of Mumbai, in-

cluding Sion's Kings Circle and Gandhi market, saw waterlogging. People took to social media to share videos of a waterlogged King's Circle and blamed the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation for it.

Timings MUMBAI

| |
|----------------------|
| FRIDAY, JUN. 05 |
| RISE 06:01 SET 19:14 |
| SET 18:55 SET 05:26 |
| SATURDAY, JUN. 06 |
| RISE 06:01 SET 19:15 |
| SET 19:58 SET 06:18 |
| SUNDAY, JUN. 07 |
| RISE 06:01 SET 19:15 |
| SET 20:58 SET 07:15 |

| Mumbai Weather | max min |
|----------------|---------|
| Mumbai Airport | 30 25 |
| Pune | 27 22 |
| Mumbai City | 30 25 |

Mumbai Today
33°C One or two spells of light rain is likely to continue. Day will be breezy and comfortable. A cloudy sky.

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Uber to help BMC automate its ambulance service

AJEEET MAHALE
MUMBAI

Uber on Thursday announced it is joining hands with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to equip its ambulances with automated dispatch and live tracking capabilities.

Uber will help the BMC dispatch the nearest ambulance, track all trips in real time and share the status of dispatches with hospitals. This will enable hospitals to manage queues and be prepared for patients.

Riders will be notified about the dispatch through an SMS alert, which will have a link to track the vehicle. The service can be accessed by dialling the helpline 108 or 1916.

Uber will train the BMC's ambulance drivers on how to use the app and navigate with maps to optimise travel time. BMC representatives will also be given special training to access Uber's technology tools and software so that they can view,

dispatch and coordinate requests for ambulances.

BMC Commissioner I.S. Chahal said, "We are pleased to partner with Uber to automate Mumbai's ambulance service and provide quick and efficient emergency travel, which is a pressing need at the moment. Uber's world-class technology will help optimise ambulance dispatch and monitor the movement of vehicles, allowing us to better serve the medical needs of Mumbai's residents."

Prabjeet Singh, director, operations and head of cities, Uber India & South Asia, said the partnership was a way to support the BMC's tireless efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Mr. Singh said, "By leveraging our global tech expertise, we hope to optimise allocation of ambulances and ensure their real time tracking. We are confident that our platform will help facilitate more efficient and timely ambulatory services for Mumbai's residents."

THE HINDU
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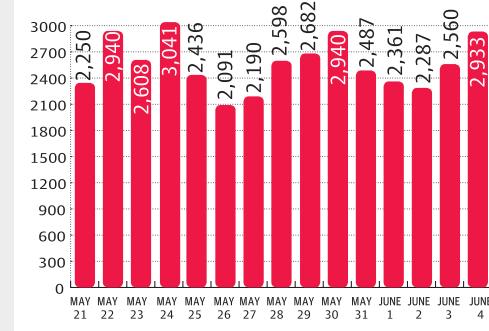
Maharashtra COVID-19 tracker

| TOTAL CASES | NEW CASES | ACTIVE CASES | RECOVERED | DEATHS |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| 77,793 | 2,933 | 41,393 | 33,681 | 2,710 |

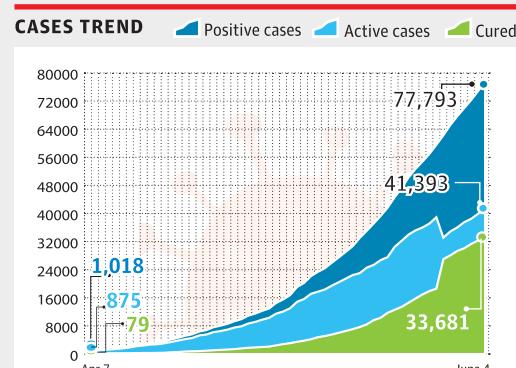
DISTRICTS AFFECTED: 35

| DISTRICT | CASES | DEATHS | DISTRICT | CASES | DEATHS |
|------------|--------|--------|------------|-------|--------|
| Mumbai | 44,931 | 1,465 | Jalna | 159 | 3 |
| Thane | 11,420 | 254 | Nanded | 157 | 7 |
| Pune | 8,825 | 376 | Yavatmal | 155 | 2 |
| Aurangabad | 1,714 | 89 | Latur | 131 | 4 |
| Nashik | 1,297 | 71 | Sangli | 127 | 4 |
| Raigad | 1,293 | 55 | Osmanabad | 96 | 3 |
| Palghar | 1,234 | 36 | Sindhudurg | 87 | 0 |
| Solapur | 1,125 | 92 | Buldhana | 80 | 3 |
| Jalgaon | 852 | 95 | Parbhani | 75 | 3 |
| Akola | 679 | 33 | Gondia | 68 | 0 |
| Nagpur | 635 | 11 | Gadchiroli | 40 | 0 |
| Kolhapur | 612 | 6 | Nandurbar | 39 | 4 |
| Satara | 584 | 22 | Bhandara | 37 | 0 |
| Ratnagiri | 329 | 5 | Chandrapur | 28 | 0 |
| An�avati | 272 | 16 | Wardha | 9 | 1 |
| Hingoli | 194 | 0 | Washim | 8 | 0 |
| Dhule | 187 | 21 | | | |
| Ahmednagar | 170 | 8 | | | |

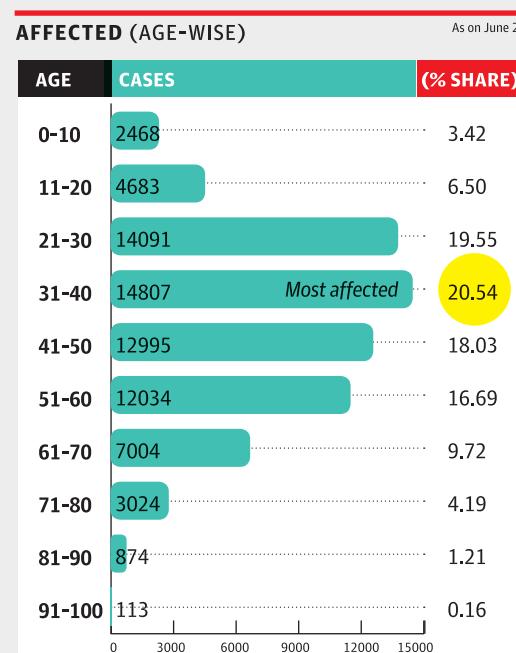
POSITIVE CASES OVER LAST 15 DAYS



1,439 (49%) of Thursday's cases are from Mumbai



43.29% is the State recovery rate



QUARANTINE NUMBERS

5,60,303 | 30,623

Home quarantine | Institutional quarantine



69% of deaths due to co-morbidities

HELPLINE NUMBERS

Toll free number: 104/1075

Maharashtra: 020-26127394

National: 1075/1800-112-545/011-23978046

State helpline email id: ssuhaarashtra@gmail.com

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

Mumbai nears 45,000 mark; 48 deaths takes toll to 1,465

BMC orders hospitals to dismiss staffers failing to report to duty within 72 hours

TANYI DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Mumbai recorded 1,439 new COVID-19 cases on Thursday, taking its tally to 44,931. The city also reported 48 more fatalities, pushing its death toll to 1,465.

Of the latest victims, 33 had co-morbidities, 23 were above 60 years, 18 were between 40 and 60 years, and seven were below 40 years. According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), 626 patients were discharged, taking total recoveries to 18,096. With 25,364 active cases, the city's case growth rate stands at 3.62%.

Most cases in G North ward As of June 3, seven wards in the city have crossed 2,400 cases each. G North ward (Dharavi, Dadar, Mahim) still leads with 3,258 cases. The ward has also recorded the highest number of recoveries: 1,898. L ward (Kurla) is inching towards the 3,000 mark, with 2,847 cases. Of these, 1,207 people have recovered.

The next five wards with the highest cases are F North (2,770), E (2,736), K East



Leaving no one behind: Healthcare workers check the temperature of a resident of Shastri Nagar in Dharavi on Thursday. • VIJAY BATE

(2,571), K West (2,559) and H East (2,476). G South ward (Worli), which topped the table a few weeks ago, has only 977 active cases. Cases in R North ward (Dahisar) are growing the fastest at 7.4% every week, while in P North and R South wards, the weekly growth rate is 7%.

Dharavi reported 23 new cases on Thursday, pushing its tally to 1,872. The BMC

has attributed the area's low mortality rate of 2.67% to a rise in screening and testing.

BMC Commissioner I.S. Chahal has ordered hospitals to issue notices under the Epidemic Diseases Act to employees not reporting to work. If staffers fail to report to duty within 72 hours, then they will be dismissed. Contract workers will be hired to fill vacancies. Mr. Chahal or-

dered officers to fill approved positions lying vacant.

84 cases in Navi Mumbai Navi Mumbai reported 84 new cases on Thursday, taking its tally to 2,557. The city also recorded three deaths – one each in Nerul, Koparkhairane and Airoli – pushing its death toll to 83.

(With additional inputs from Raina Assainar)

Staff union sanitises office premises at city airport

Two employees of Air India subsidiary company have died of COVID-19

ADITYA ANAND
MUMBAI

Employees of Air India Airport Services Ltd's ground services department at Mumbai airport are heaving a sigh of relief after the staff union sanitised the workplace on Wednesday.

The 700-odd employees of the Air India subsidiary company were worried about entering the premises as three colleagues have tested positive for COVID-19 and two others have succumbed to the virus so far.

The employees who tested positive were catering to cargo operations, transporting medicines to personal protective equipment within India and from China. Sixteen other Air India staffers have also tested positive.

On Wednesday, hours before Cyclone Nisarga halted airport operations, members of the Aviation Industry Employees Guild (AIEG) took it upon themselves to disinfect the premises. "Unusual times call for special steps. The management had sanitised the outside area. We disinfected the premises," said AIEG general secretary George Abraham.

He also recommended providing a special group insurance to the employees whose duties involve getting exposed to the virus.

AIEG has recommended to the management to use the tailoring section within the components overhaul division of Air India Engineering Services Ltd for manufacturing good quality face masks and PPE kits to meet in-house demand.

Provide compensation Mr. Abraham said, "We have also asked the management to provide cashless insurance coverage for employees testing positive, besides ₹50 lakh to the family as life insurance or compensation in the event of death due to COVID-19."

He also recommended providing a special group insurance to the employees whose duties involve getting exposed to the virus.

AIEG has recommended to the management to use the tailoring section within the components overhaul division of Air India Engineering Services Ltd for manufacturing good quality face masks and PPE kits to meet in-house demand.

The former chief minister reached his home to a warm welcome. Mr. Chavan was admitted to a private hospital on May 25 after he tested positive.

Mr. Chavan was in Nanded when he tested positive for the infection last month and was brought to Mumbai for treatment.

Earlier, State Housing Minister and NCP leader Jitendra Awhad also tested positive and was hospitalized for some days. He was discharged after recovery.

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OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES



Latha Thyagarajan

Nov. 18, 1952 - June 5, 2017

We thought of you today, but that's nothing new.
We thought about you yesterday and days before that too.
As it dawns another year, our thoughts do wander three years ago.
And all we are left with today:
- the beautiful memories you composed,
- the love you left written on our hearts and
- the framed picture of your smile on the wall.

Thyagarajan | Arvind | Vandana | Janani

Management Team & Staff of

SPINCO BIOTECH PVT. LTD. & SPINCO TECH PVT. LTD.

DEATH



'The best war films are anti-war'

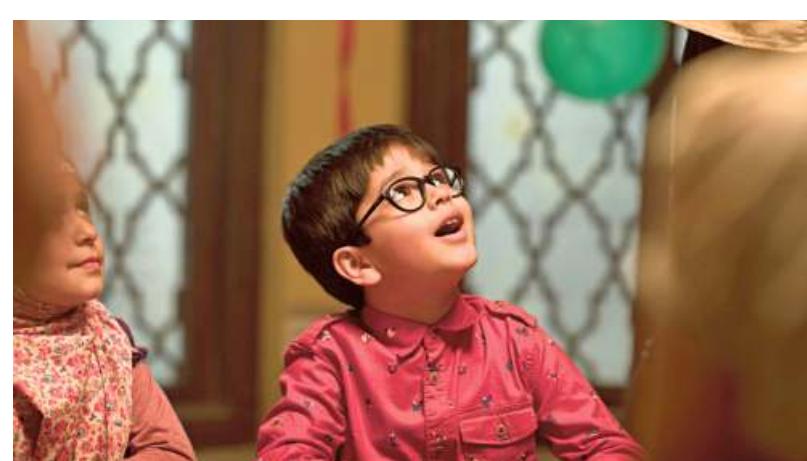
Filmmaker siblings Satyanshu Singh and Devanshu Kumar discuss the politics of their debut film, *Chintu Ka Birthday*, and working with Iraqi Arabic



KENNETH ROSARIO

More than a decade ago, when brothers Satyanshu Singh and Devanshu Kumar, were ideating on a feature film set in Iraq, they knew little about the war-torn country, the Gulf or world politics. Their knowledge was limited to Baghdad being the Iraqi capital and Saddam Hussein being their former President. "We were in our early 20s, and all we wanted was to take our Bihari culture into world cinema," says Singh, over a phone call. Singh was a medical student and Kumar had just graduated from a mass media degree in Mumbai, with no connection to the film industry. But they had wanted to chronicle the story of a family, much like the ones they grew up in, and show a confluence of cultures. The idea was simply to confine a few characters from different backgrounds in a cloistered apartment, as a war between Iraqi 'militants' and American 'soldiers' raged outside. But with time, as their understanding of geopolitics enhanced, the duo discovered the complexity of the situation – how no one nation is right, certainly not the oft-glorified Americans. The effort was to establish that grey area through the story of a trapped Indian family in *Chintu Ka Birthday*. "Once you finish [watching] the film, you see that all of them are human, including [George W.] Bush and Saddam," explains Kumar.

For the siblings, the film doesn't take any political stand or side with any nation but has a "human approach" to the conflict. "All governments, including the Indian one, are shown to be flawed, since our government is unable to bring home that one stranded Indian family," shares Singh. The confluence of various ideologies, the bond and conflicts they share are brought out through characters like an Iraqi landlord who hates Saddam Hussein, an Indian family who are focused on celebrating the birthday of six-year-old Chintu, the kid's two Iraqi friends and two American soldiers. "With the two American soldiers, for instance, one understands what is happening in Iraq and is more sympathetic and hopeless, while the other has just come from Georgia and wants to crush them like how they have crushed Americans," observes Kumar. "Ultimately these are human beings



Home invasion: (top) Satyanshu Singh and Devanshu Kumar; (above) a still from *Chintu Ka Birthday* • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

caught in the crossfire of political entities," adds Singh.

War on virus

For the duo, *Chintu ka Birthday* is an 'anti-war' film. "The best war films are anti-war," declares Singh. "If you look at it from the child's perspective, he only wants to eat cake." Even though they have been working on this since 2007, they believe that the film can never lose its relevance. "Unfortunately, in the world we live in, when one war ends, another begins," observes Singh.

Now, at the time of its release, it is a different kind of war that makes this film pertinent – the battle against a virus. Much like in the film, there is a looming danger outside, out of our control or even comprehension, immuring us indoors. "We have seen so many people in the last two months celebrate their birthdays and anniversaries inside their homes and realise that this is all that matters at the end of the day, to be able to celebrate with our families," observes Kumar.

A long journey

Produced by All India Bakchod (AIB), the film was supposed to premiere at the Mumbai Film Festival (MAMI) in 2018, but was pulled out after accusations of sexual harassment emerged against people associated with the comedy collective. Almost two years later, the film has finally released on a streaming platform. "It had crushed our spirit, to be honest," says Singh. "But we couldn't react emotionally, so we took a step back and decided to stay quiet because that was the right thing to do. A lot of films were removed from MAMI, and a lot of people were angry and I don't blame them, because it was an emotional moment, but we decided to stay quiet and that's how we showed our solidarity and support for the movement." After more than a decade of perseverance and some bumps along the way, the duo is excited to finally make their debut as established filmmakers, a far cry from the self-taught novices a decade ago.

Chintu Ka Birthday is streaming on Zee5

Chintu Ka Birthday is streaming on Zee5

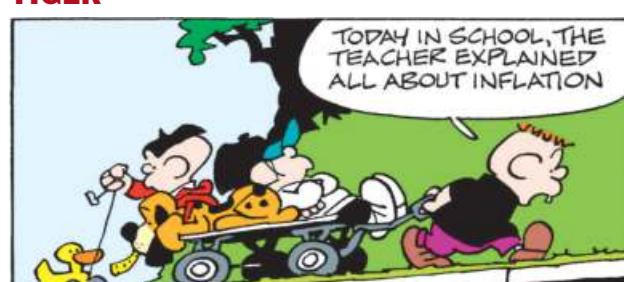
POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



DEBORAH CORNELIOUS

'A Sai Paranjpye thriller on demonetisation'

Choked brings to life the colourful milieu of a Maharashtrian society against an absurd and whimsical premise

Maharashtrians on set," says Kashyap, adding that the only two instances of cheating were having Roshan play a Tamillan and another Maharashtrian that essays a South Indian character. "The choices of colours and almost everything came from a great team. I only intervened when I had to say no to something. Everything was on a platter for me," beams the director.

Personally speaking

For Mathew, the lure of the film lay in his flawed character, who is resentful of his life but does little to change his circumstances. "It's not individual moments of something he did, but what he doesn't do," says Mathew. "It's about fighting a potato way of life." The backdrop of demonetisation too particularly resonated with his own experiences. His film, *Anandam*, released a few days before the demonetisation of all ₹500 and ₹1,000 banknotes. "This was my third film and it was doing really well in the first week," reveals the 28-year-old actor. "It was supposed to be a career-maker but people didn't have money and loose change to buy tickets for the film so it suddenly started not doing well anymore. It was a really stressful time."

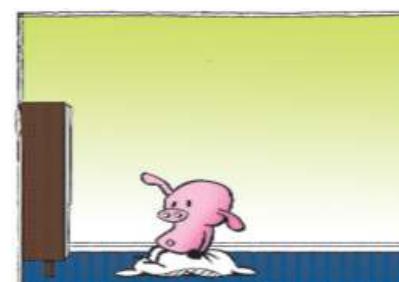
While almost everything was analysed and disseminated in a thorough script, Kashyap found himself coming on set simply to execute Bhave's vision. Except that is, for the film's climax. "We kept trying to rewrite the end. The film wasn't supposed to be about demonetisation. [Bhave] rejected all ten versions of what I wrote and finally came up with something different altogether," says the director, revealing that he tried to emulate a certain prolific director's dedication to the Maharashtrian aesthetic. If *Katha* (1983) would be a thriller, what would that be like? "That's what *Choked* would be, a Sai Paranjpye thriller directed by me," laughs Kashyap.

Choked premieres on Netflix today



Money matters: (top) Anurag Kashyap; (above) Roshan Mathew in a still from *Choked* • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

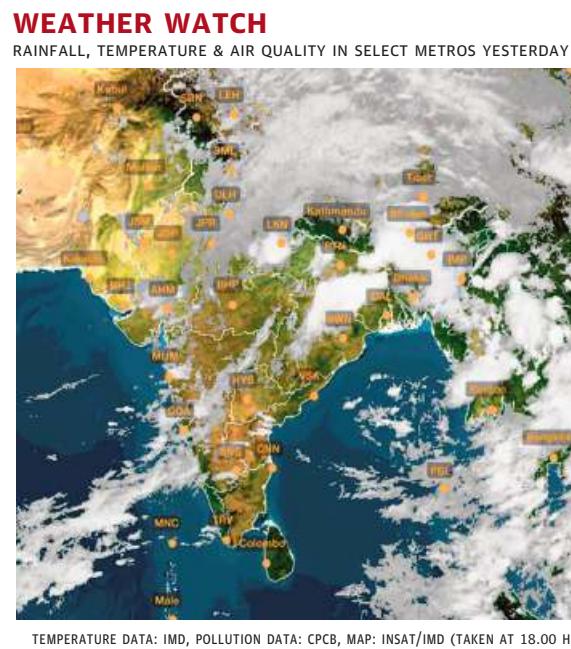


PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES





TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Kerala, Mahe, east Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and south interior Karnataka

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|-------------|------|---------|------|-----------------|---------|---------|------|
| Agartala | 11.1 | 29.5 | 25.3 | Kozhikode | 32.8... | 29.2... | 25.0 |
| Ahmedabad | 1.2 | 40.2 | 25.3 | Kurnool | ...— | 36.1... | 26.7 |
| Aizawl | 9... | 24.8... | 17.9 | Lucknow | 0.6... | 30.2... | 26.6 |
| Allahabad | — | 29.7 | 27.8 | Madurai | — | 39.0... | 26.4 |
| Bengaluru | 29.3 | 21.2 | — | Mangaluru | 2.9... | 29.7... | 24.2 |
| Bhopal | 23.2 | 22.6 | 21.4 | Mumbai | 50... | 29.2... | 25.8 |
| Bhubaneswar | — | 36.0 | 25.0 | Mysuru | — | 30.5... | 22.2 |
| Chandigarh | — | 37.8 | 24.2 | New Delhi | 0.5... | 36.1... | 24.9 |
| Chennai | — | 40.2 | 28.6 | Patna | 0.4... | 31.6... | 27.7 |
| Coimbatore | — | 33.4 | 25.4 | Pond Blair | 2.5... | 28.7... | 24.7 |
| Dehradoon | — | 33.2 | 21.2 | Puducherry | — | 38.2... | 28.2 |
| Gangtok | 7.4 | 19.7 | 15.2 | Pune | 31.4... | 26.7... | 22.2 |
| Goa | 26.5 | 30.0 | 24.0 | Raipur | 24.2... | 32.8... | 25.8 |
| Guwahati | 1.4 | 33.0 | 23.1 | Ranchi | — | 31.4... | 24.2 |
| Hubballi | — | 28.0 | 22.0 | Shillong | 7.3... | 25.0... | — |
| Hyderabad | — | 35.4 | 25.4 | Shimla | 23.6... | 26.4... | 15.0 |
| Imphal | 2.8 | 25.0 | 21.6 | Srinagar | — | 28.0... | 10.6 |
| Jaipur | — | 35.0 | 26.2 | Tiruchirappalam | 16... | 31.9... | 25.4 |
| Kochi | 18.2 | 31.4 | 24.2 | Vijayawada | — | 38.9... | 26.6 |
| Kohima | — | 24.2 | 14.2 | Visakhapatnam | 14... | 39.2... | 29.0 |
| Kolkata | — | 36.6 | 28.5 | Visakhapatnam | 14... | 34.4... | 29.4 |

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

| CITIES | SO ₂ | NO ₂ | CO | PM2.5 | PM10 | CODE |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----|-------|------|------|
| Ahmedabad | 28 | 47 | .27 | — | — | — |
| Bengaluru | — | .9 | .22 | .44 | .22 | — |
| Chennai | — | .2 | .19 | .94 | .61 | — |
| Delhi | — | 7 | .54 | .112 | .217 | 139 |
| Hyderabad | — | .4 | .43 | .15 | .33 | — |
| Kolkata | — | .4 | .8 | .12 | .33 | .49 |
| Lucknow | — | .3 | .32 | .44 | .239 | — |
| Mumbai | — | .1 | .8 | .18 | .88 | .90 |
| Pune | — | .10 | .19 | .61 | .33 | .12 |
| Visakhapatnam | — | .8 | .35 | .30 | .21 | .60 |

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Charki Dadri, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 197 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 15.

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

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

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Chhattisgarh suspends IAS officer charged with rape

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOPAL

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Thursday directed Chief Secretary R.P. Mandal to suspend an IAS officer who has been charged with raping a woman, and to launch a high-level inquiry into the allegations.

The Chhattisgarh police had on Wednesday registered a case against the 2007 batch IAS officer, who is the former Collector of Janjgir-Champa, on charges of raping a woman on the collectorate premises after threatening to remove her husband from government service.

Janak Prasad Pathak allegedly raped the woman on May 15, when he held the office of Collector. He also repeatedly sent her obscene messages and threats on the mobile phone, the woman told the Janjgir police. He was appointed director of land records last week.

The government, in exercise of powers conferred by Sub-rule (3) of Rule 3 of the All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969, has passed an order suspending him with immediate effect. Prima facie, his conduct "has been found to be unbecoming of an officer and is violate of rule 3 of AIS (Conduct) Rules, 1968," said the order issued by the General Administration Department.

The police have registered a case against the 53-year-old under Sections 376 (punishment for rape), 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) and 509 (B) (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) of the Indian Penal Code.

Row over PMC's move to scrap tie-up with PFI

Outfit was helping bury COVID-19 victims from minority groups

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) decision to revoke its tie-up with social outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) to bury COVID-19 victims from the minority community, has evoked sharp condemnations from the PFI's Pune unit and Muslim and Ambedkarite outfits.

The PFI, which has facilitated the final rites of 107 people irrespective of their religion, said it was shocked by Municipal Commissioner Shekhar Gaikwad's order to remove the tie-up on Tuesday.

The PMC's order came after Devendra Fadnavis criticised the tie-up. ■ FILE PHOTO



The PMC's move came after Devendra Fadnavis criticised the tie-up. ■ FILE PHOTO

the Malegaon blasts, being elected MP?" Mr. Inamdar's organisation, along with the PFI, had been tasked by the PMC to facilitate the burial of minority community members who died of the virus.

"There have been several cases where relatives have flatly refused to perform the last rites or even take the body to the ambulance. We have even helped perform the last rites of those who did not die of COVID-19," Mr. Inamdar said.

He said last week, the son of a senior citizen from Maharashtra Nagar did not get any help from neighbours and relatives to bury his father.

"The body lay there for five hours before someone called us. We have never questioned the religion of a person while performing these services. It is condemnable of Mr. Fadnavis to play politics at such a time," he said.

Rahul Dambale, who heads the Ambedkarite Republican Yuva Morcha, said it was unfortunate that Mr. Gaikwad and the PMC had succumbed to pressure from Mr. Fadnavis. "The PFI and the Mulnivasi Muslim Manch have been performing yeoman service in helping to bury these orphan dead bodies. Who will take this responsibility? We strongly condemn the PMC's directive and urge that it should be taken back," he said.

R.A. Rajeev, Metropolitan Commissioner, MMRDA, on Thursday clarified that there was no damage to the makeshift hospital built for non-critical COVID-19 patients. "The hospital is designed considering the weather conditions of Mumbai. We had started strengthening the structure two days earlier, and taking abundant caution patients were taken to a safe location," he said.



R. A. Rajeev, Metropolitan Commissioner, MMRDA, visits the site for Phase 2 of the hospital at BKC on Thursday. ■ VIJAY BATE

MMRDA chief denies BJP claims, says no damage to hospital

Patients shifted out to return soon

AJEET MAHALE
MUMBAI

Ameet Satam wrote to the MMRDA demanding a project cost sheet.

Mr. Rajeev said only a few tin sheets along the boundary had fallen. "We are repairing that, but the main hospital has not been damaged. Even the toilet blocks and the hospital structure of Phase 2 [being built] has not been damaged," he said, adding that the facility will not be impacted during the monsoon and patients will start returning soon.

Patients moved to NSCI

Around 240 patients had been shifted from the COVID-19 care centre in BKC to the facility set up at the NSCI dome in Worli on Tuesday. Dr. Rajeev Joshi, who is in charge of the NSCI facility, said around 220 patients who had been transferred from BKC were receiving treatment there, while a few had been shifted to Nair, Sion and KEM hospitals.

The first phase of the BKC hospital, which is already functional, has 1,008 beds, of which 504 are non-oxygen facility beds while the other 504 have oxygen supply. Ground work for construction of the second phase is also under way.

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(Skill Development Mission of Government of Kerala)

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 (Sd/-), Managing Director

HC allows unmarried woman to terminate 23-week pregnancy

She was unable to visit doctor since March due to lockdown

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court has allowed a 23-year-old unmarried woman to terminate her 23-week pregnancy and observed that continuing it will lead to a risk of grave physical and mental injury to her".

A Division Bench of Justices S.J. Kathawalla and Surendra Tavade was recently hearing a plea filed by a woman from Ratnagiri seeking permission to terminate the pregnancy.

The woman was in a relationship with a man from Ratnagiri, but the two later broke up. After the lockdown was announced in March, she could not visit a doctor and it was only after

receiving her sonography report on May 18 that she learnt she was pregnant.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971, permits termination of pregnancy up to 20 weeks, beyond which the courts have to decide.

She said it would be extremely difficult for her to carry the pregnancy to its full term, because she would not be able to raise the child as an unmarried single parent without sufficient financial and mental support. She said it would not be possible for her to get married in future because of the "social stigma" attached to being an unwed mother. The petition also said she is mentally not ready to be a mother.

The court allowed the woman to terminate the pregnancy by observing, "We are of the view that if the petitioner is compelled to continue with her pregnancy, the same will involve a risk of grave physical and mental injury to her."

The court allowed the woman to terminate the pregnancy by observing, "We are of the view that if the petitioner is compelled to continue with her pregnancy, the same will involve a risk of grave physical and mental injury to her."

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Skyrocketing tensions

U.S. and China must rebuild mutual trust to avoid a new kind of cold war

The U.S. government's decision to bar passenger planes from China from June 16 is but another instance of rising tensions between the two countries. A trade war which President Donald Trump launched in 2018 is yet to be resolved fully. In recent months, Mr. Trump and other officials in the administration had attacked China over its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. has also decided to end Hong Kong's special trade status in protest against Beijing's move to introduce a new national security law for the Special Administrative Region. Repeated targeting of China by Washington and Beijing's retaliatory moves make it look like the world's largest and second largest economies have entered into a new cold war. Administration officials say the decision on flights is in response to China's refusal to allow U.S. airlines to resume flights to the country. China had introduced restrictions on international flights in March, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and most of those curbs are still in place. Disputes such as this could be resolved through talks and cooperation. China has already sent signals of de-escalation, allowing foreign airlines to resume flights on a limited scale starting June 8. Whether or not Mr. Trump has a rethink, the larger problem is the U.S.'s overall approach towards China, which has taken an increasingly hostile turn in the last four years.

From trade and technology to the pandemic and Hong Kong, the battle lines have been drawn – China, which the Pentagon called “a revisionist power” in 2018, is the main rival of Washington, a position which the Soviet Union held during the Cold War. Ties between China and the U.S. are still not as bad as they were between the Soviet Union and the U.S. Beijing and Washington are still economically and financially entangled. The world is not divided into two ideological blocs, as it had been during the Cold War. The possibility of a military confrontation is very low. But the era of cooperation, peaceful trade and pragmatism that had defined the U.S.-China partnership since President Richard Nixon's reset in the 1970s seems to have made way for an aggressive leadership contest and deepening mutual mistrust. And with Mr. Trump desperately looking for an enemy to blame for the misfortunes that fell on America in an election year that has been battered by the pandemic and the deepest economic downturn since the Great Depression, tensions with China are expected to skyrocket in the coming months. Washington wanted an enemy and it found it in China. Unless the leaders of both countries change their course and rebuild the lost mutual confidence, a new kind of cold war would be forced upon the world.

Killing Gajah

A culture of exploitation led to the painful death of an elephant in Kerala

An outpouring of grief has followed the death of a pregnant elephant in Kerala, the treacherous use of a food bomb causing widespread revulsion and anger. Scores of elephants are killed every year in India as their paths cross those of humans, but the image of a mortally wounded animal standing impassively in a river in Palakkad as life ebbed out of it will remain imprinted on the mind. Whether the booby-trapped pineapple that took its life was intended for elephants or other animals matters little, because such traps litter the troubled landscapes that surround forests across the country. The tragic fate that befell this creature, however, is a ghastly reminder of the rising conflicts between humans and animals that are only destined to grow as commercial pressures eat into already diminished habitat. The perpetrators may be prosecuted for the elephant's death, but that can do little to mitigate the larger issue of lost ranges and blocked corridors for these wandering giants. India has thousands of elephants – just under 30,000 according to available counts – but no strong science-imbedded policy that encourages soft landscapes and migrating passages that will reduce conflict. Ironically, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar invoked Indian culture to deplore what happened in Kerala, but it is the lack of a scientific culture and the readiness to spare forested lands from commercial exploitation that is eviscerating nature. Even during the lockdown in April, the Ministry convened video conference meetings of the National Board for Wildlife and the Expert Appraisal Committee to clear disruptive projects in protected areas.

Shrinking ranges and feeding grounds for elephants cause serious worry, because the animals look for soft landscapes adjoining forests such as coffee, tea and cardamom estates, and in the absence of these, wander into food-rich farms falling in their movement pathways. Research in Karnataka showed that 60% of elephant distribution was encountered outside protected areas. In Kerala, such movement along human-dominated landscapes routinely produces conflict. Unsurprisingly, politicians of many hues in the State were opposed to the Madhav Gadgil Committee Report calling for the entire Western Ghats to be classified as ecologically sensitive and spared of destructive development. With such fundamental philosophical disagreement, and a vision of verdant landscapes as nothing more than a resource to be exploited for minerals and cash crops, elephants and other creatures have little chance of escaping deadly conflict. A sensible course open to conservation-minded governments is to end all intrusion into the 5% of protected habitat in India, and draw up better compensation schemes for farmers who lose crops to animals. A culture shift to protect, rather than prospect, would genuinely enrich people and save biodiversity.

A chill in U.S.-China relations

A binary choice between the U.S. and China is likely to test India's capacity to maintain strategic and decisional autonomy



VIJAY GOKHALE

As a slew of recent announcements on China by U.S. President Donald Trump is a clear indication that the competition between the U.S. and China is likely to sharpen in the post-COVID world. On May 29, the Trump administration said it would revoke Hong Kong's special trade status under U.S. law. The administration also passed an order limiting the entry of certain Chinese graduate students and researchers who may have ties to the People's Liberation Army. The U.S. President has also ordered financial regulators to closely examine Chinese firms listed in U.S. stock markets, and warned those that do not comply with U.S. laws could be delisted.

Complicit in China's rise

Americans have had a strange fascination for China ever since the early 1900s when Protestant missionaries decided that it was God's work to bring salvation to the Chinese. Books like *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck and *Red Star Over China* by Edgar Snow in the 1930s romanticised the country. Even after the Chinese communists seized power, the Americans hoped to cohabit with Mao Zedong in a world under U.S. hegemony. The Chinese allowed them to believe this and extracted their price. U.S. President Richard Nixon gave China the international acceptability it craved in return for being admitted to Mao's presence in 1972; President Jimmy Carter terminated diplomatic relations with Taiwan in

order to normalise relations with China in 1978; President George H.W. Bush washed away the sins of Tiananmen in 1989 for ephemeral geopolitical gain; and Bill Clinton, who as a presidential candidate had criticised Bush for indulging the Chinese, proceeded as President to usher the country into the World Trade Organization at the expense of American business. All American administrations since the 1960s have been complicit in China's rise in the unrealised hope that it will become a 'responsible stakeholder' under Pax Americana.

Disguising its real purpose

The Chinese are hard-nosed and unsentimental about the U.S. They have always pursued America with a selfish purpose, albeit couched in high principle. They have spoken words that the Americans wanted to hear – anti-Soviet rhetoric during the Cold War and market principles thereafter – to disguise their real purpose of thwarting U.S. hegemony. Ever since Cold Warrior John Foster Dulles spoke in 1958 of weaning China and other "satellites" away from the Soviets through regime change, known as "peaceful evolution", every Chinese leader from Chairman Mao to President Xi Jinping has been clear-eyed that the U.S. represents an existential threat to the continued supremacy of the communist regime. Mao put it best, when he told high-ranking leaders in November 1959, that the "U.S. is attempting to carry out its aggression and expansion with a much more deceptive tactic... In other words, it wants to keep its order and change our system." (Memoirs, Chinese leader Bo Yibo). The collapse of the Soviet Union only reinforced this view and strengthened China's resolve to resist by creating its own parallel un-



iverse. China is building an alternate trading system (the Belt and Road Initiative); a multilateral banking system under its control (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, New Development Bank); its own global positioning system (BeiDou); digital payment platforms (WeChat Pay and Alipay); a world-class digital network (Huawei 5G); cutting-edge technological processes in sunrise industries; and a modern military force. It is doing this under the noses of the Americans and some of it with the financial and technological resources of the West.

Voices of caution have been few and far between, among them political scientist John Mearsheimer, who wrote in 2005 that the rise of China would not be peaceful at all, but the world chose to believe General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Hu Jintao's assurances about "peaceful rise". When satellite evidence showed that China was building military installations in the South China Sea, China's Southeast Asian neighbours and the U.S. preferred to believe assurances to the contrary given by Mr. Xi on the lawns of the White House in 2015.

It is only under Mr. Trump that the Americans are finally acknowledging the uneasy fact that the Chinese are not graven in their image. He has called China out on trade practices. He has called China out on 5G. It was Mr. Trump's

2017 National Security Strategy document that, perhaps for the first time, clubbed China along with Russia as a challenge to American power, influence and interests. His recent China-specific restrictions on trade and legal migration are, possibly, only the beginning of a serious re-adjustment.

A full-spectrum debate on China is now raging across the U.S. Former White House Chief of Staff Steve Bannon declared that the U.S. is already at war with China. Others like diplomat Richard Haass and former president of the World Bank, Robert Zoellick, warn that a new Cold War will be a mistake. Scholar Julian Gewirtz, in his brilliant essay, 'The Chinese Reassessment of Interdependence', talks about a similar process under way in Beijing. Both sides are acutely aware how closely their economies are tied together: from farm to factory, the U.S. is heavily dependent on supply chains in China and the Chinese have been unable to break free of the dollar. If Mr. Trump's wish is to disentangle China's supply chains, Mr. Xi is equally determined to escape from the U.S. 'chokehold' on technology. To what extent the de-coupling is possible is yet to be determined, but one thing is inevitable, India will become part of the collateral damage.

The Hong Kong question

Will Hong Kong become a game-changer in the post-COVID world? China's decision to enact the new national security law for Hong Kong has been condemned in unison by the U.S. and its Western allies as an assault on human freedoms. Why is this significant? The points of divergence, even dispute, between them have so far been in the material realm. With Hong Kong, the U.S.-China rivalry

may, possibly, be entering the ideological domain. For some time now there are reports about Chinese interference in the internal affairs of democracies. Countries in the West have tackled this individually, always mindful of not jeopardising their trade with China. Hong Kong may be different. It is not only a bastion for Western capitalism in the East, but more importantly the torch-bearer of Western democratic ideals. Think of it as a sort of Statue of Liberty; it holds aloft the torch of freedom and democracy for all those who pass through Hong Kong en route to China. This is an assault on beliefs, so to speak.

This comes on the back of not unreasonable demands that China should come clean on its errors of omission in the early days of COVID-19, when greater transparency and quicker action might have prevented, or at least mitigated, the pandemic. In the months ahead, more information may become public, from sources inside China itself, about the shortcomings of the regime, that will further fuel a debate on the superiority of the Chinese Model as an alternative to democracy. Will this form the ideological underpinning for the birth of a new Cold War? That will depend on who wins in Washington in November; on whether profit will again trump politics in Europe; and on how skilfully the Wolf Warriors of China can manipulate global public opinion. The lines are beginning to be drawn between the Americans on the one side and China on the other. A binary choice is likely to test to the limit India's capacity to maintain strategic and decisional autonomy.

Vijay Gokhale is a former Foreign Secretary of India and a former Ambassador to China

Swiss cheese and defence reforms

The holes in the three cheese slices comprising the defence set-up must align for a nation to be prepared militarily



MANMOHAN BAHADUR

The Swiss cheese model is associated with accident investigation in an organisation or a system. A system consists of multiple domains or layers, each having some shortcomings. These layers are visualised in the model as slices of Swiss cheese, with the holes in them being the imperfections. Normally, weaknesses get nullified, other than when, at some point, the holes in every slice align to let a hazard pass through and cause an accident.

Three slices in defence set-up

When applied to a nation's defence preparedness, the Swiss cheese model, in its simplest form, works the reverse way. The slices represent the major constituents in a nation's war-making potential, while the holes are pathways through which the domains interact. At the macro level, there are only three slices with holes in each. These must align to ensure that a nation's defence posture is in tune with its political objectives; any mismatch may turn out to be detrimental to the nation's *aatma samman* (self-respect) when the balloon goes up. In these days of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan,

a clinical analysis is necessary to obviate any missteps that may prove costly a few years or decades down the line.

In the Indian defence set-up, the three slices are: one, the policymaking apparatus comprising the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) and Ministry of Defence (MoD); two, the defence research and development (R&D) establishment and domestic manufacturing industry; and three, the three services. When the MoD alone existed, a certain relationship between the three layers saw India prosecute four major wars since independence. The holes in the three slices were aligned to different degrees and hence the results were varied in each conflict; that the system required an overhaul would be an understatement.

With technology progressing exponentially, a single service prosecution of war was no longer tenable, because the advent of smart munitions, computer processing, networking capabilities and the skyrocketing cost of equipment brought in the concept of parallel warfare. Synergised application of tools of national power became an imperative. Thus, it became essential for militaries to be joint to apply violence in an economical way – economical in terms of time, casualties, costs incurred, and political gains achieved. The setting up of the DMA and the creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) to achieve synergy are the most fundamental changes; as further



modifications and tweaking take place in the way the services prepare to go to war, it is imperative that the transformation be thought through with clinical analysis, without any external, emotional, political or rhetorical pressure.

Access to the right equipment

India's security managers have to factor in the increasingly belligerent posture of the country's two adversaries. Terrorist activities have not reduced in Jammu and Kashmir, ongoing incidents along the northern border with China do not foretell a peaceful future, and the China-Pakistan nexus can only be expected to get stronger and portentous. Such a security environment demands that capability accretion of the three services proceed unhindered. To elaborate, the Indian Air Force at a minimum requires 300 fighters to bolster its squadron strength; the Army needs guns of all types; and the Navy wants ships, helicopters, etc. The requirements are worth billions of dollars but with COVID-19-induced cuts in defence spending, and their diversion to the social

sector, getting all of them is a joint mirage. Enter the well-meaning government dictat for buying indigenous only, but for that, in-house R&D and manufacturing entities have to play ball. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited can, at best, produce just eight Tejas fighters per year presently; the Army has had to import rifles due to the failure of the Defence Research and Development Organisation to produce them; and the Navy has earnest hopes that the hull designs that its internal R&D makes get the vital innards for going to war. So, the Swiss cheese slice representing indigenous R&D and a manufacturing supply chain that ensures quality war-fighting equipment, at the right time and in required quantities, is still some years away. Wars cannot be fought and won on well-meaning policy intentions and nationalist rhetoric; wars are won when war fighters have access to the right equipment to prosecute them.

Creating theatre commands

The forthcoming reform of creating theatre commands is the most talked about result of jointness expected from the Swiss cheese slice in which lie the DMA and a restructured MoD. Doing so would be a shake-up of huge proportions as it strikes at the very foundation of the war-fighting structure of the services. The three-year deadline spoken about by the CDS must take into account the not-so-comfortable state of assets of each ser-

vice which would need to be carved up for each theatre. The Chinese announced their 'theatrisation' concept in 2015; it is still work in progress. The U.S. had a bruising debate for decades before the Goldwater-Nichols Act came into force in 1986. Turf wars are not a patent of any one nation. New relationships take time to smooth out, and in the arena of defence policymaking, which is where the DMA and MoD lie, the element of time has a value of its own: any ramming through, just to meet a publicly declared timeline, could result in creating a not-so-optimal war-fighting organisation to our detriment.

So, the three services that constitute the third Swiss cheese slice have to contend with the other two slices being in a state of flux for some time to come. It's a no-brainer that this disruption requires level-headed non-parochial handling. The political, civil and military leadership must have their feet firmly on ground to ensure that the holes in their Swiss cheese continue to stay aligned; impractical timelines and pressures of public pronouncements must not be the drivers in such a fundamental overhaul of our defence apparatus. To paraphrase Deng Xiaoping, shun publicity and build capability first.

Manmohan Bahadur is Additional Director General, Centre for Air Power Studies. The views expressed here are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Right to information

As India continues to bear the brunt of the pandemic, it is essential for the government to disclose correct data ("Setback for Arvind Kejriwal government's 'Delhi Corona' app," June 4). The AAP government has been accused of not disclosing the right number of cases, deaths, and now beds in hospitals. Such confusion over beds can endanger people's lives if they are desperately seeking admission in a hospital. Divulging the right information is the most important duty of the authorities during a crisis

such as this. A government is being irresponsible if it is hiding facts and figures.

DEEPIKA JAIN,
Delhi

Public duty

The Supreme Court has held that when private bodies perform public duties, the High Courts can issue writs ("HC dismisses PIL plea seeking reservation of beds for COVID-19 cases", June 4). There is a greater need for the High Courts to interfere as citizens approach them only when they are helpless and the government is not acting. The need for surveillance of acts by

private bodies affecting public health and education assumes greater importance in this crisis. It is the solemn duty of the state, the judiciary included, to promote healthcare. The Madras High Court, by such an action at this hour of need, has become a constitutional defaulter.

N.G.R. PRASAD,
Chennai

Death of an elephant
It was distressing to read about the death of a pregnant elephant in Kerala ("Row over death of pregnant elephant in Kerala", June 4). It doesn't

matter that the trap was laid for a wild boar – this is no way to kill a wild boar either. This tragic incident is just one of the many examples of the pain that we humans cause to wild animals. It is yet another reminder of the man-animal conflicts taking place in disappearing habitats across the country.

VIDHYA B. RAGUNATH,
Thanjavur

Why a G-11?
U.S. President Donald Trump's call to transform G-7 into G-11 cannot be taken at face value ("Seven to eleven", June 4). He seems to be doing this to

shift attention away from the chaos in the U.S. He has not indicated why he wants to expand the group apart from a vague explanation that it is "outdated". Nor has he specified how this is going to happen given that the U.S. goes to elections in November. Where has G-7 failed and what are its needs? What are the special circumstances under which the proposed four countries are to be added? How does Russia suddenly qualify for admission? It is clear that Mr. Trump only proposes this to alienate China.

MANOHARAN MUTHUSWAMY,
Ramanathapuram

The Prime Minister's willingness to attend the G-7 summit is no doubt a positive approach. But at the same time, India's participation should not come in the way of its bilateral relationships with the U.S. and China. This is crucial especially since there are border tensions with China at the moment. India has always been – and must remain – impartial in the event of an international crisis.

HUSSAIN AHMAD SIDDIQUEE,
Patna

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Are social media platforms the arbiters of truth?

PARLEY

They need to bring changes to their moderation and bring grievance redressal mechanisms

In the midst of the massive protests that have erupted in the U.S. following the death of an African-American man in police custody, social media platform Twitter decided to do something it had avoided for several years: call out some of President Donald Trump's tweets as incorrect information and as against its policies. This prompted Mr. Trump to warn social media platforms of stricter controls via an Executive Order. It also prompted another social media giant, Facebook, to state that they did not want to take similar action since they did not want to be 'arbiters of truth'. These developments bring into focus the level of involvement the social media giants have in the dissemination of the public discourse, and raise questions on how these platforms should regulate content. Mishi Choudhary and Rishab Bailey discuss these issues in a conversation moderated by P.J. George. Edited excerpts:

Twitter and Facebook go to great extents to avoid the 'arbiter of truth' label. But they apply their terms of use selectively on erring users. Even on Mr. Trump, Twitter did not act on his tweets for a long time. In this sense, are they not arbiters of truth already?

Mishi Choudhary (MC): I think truth is an accident on these platforms. They are actually creators of engagement, who wish to usurp all human attention. Their entire business model feeds on that. But inevitably the question will rise about whether you are for truth or against it. I think the action which prompted this entire brouhaha is Mr. Dorsey [Twitter CEO Jack] giving what I would call 'ice in wintertime'. Saying that we're going to look for more facts on a problematic tweet is only a label telling people who want junk food, 'hey, come here, eat spinach.' But what most platforms want to say is what Mr. Zuckerberg [Facebook CEO Mark] has said; that they really don't care. And that all they are here for is to serve their business model, which is based on the reactions on the post. If they are forced

to take responsibility for something, they just want to bow out and tell us that they are private platforms that [have their] own rules and regulations and community guidelines. That is why society has to decide what it wants to do, now that information distribution is by people who don't care, and who prioritise engagement over truth.

Rishab Bailey (RB): This behaviour as 'arbiters of truth' arises out of four factors. First, the Communications Decency Act in the U.S., empowers intermediaries to make decisions regarding content, which is seen as avoiding government intervention and, therefore, protecting speech. Second, these entities are typically seen as private platforms that have the right to choose the content. Third, the user-platform relationship is governed by contracts that give platforms a great deal of power in deciding what they will permit. Fourth, there are practical considerations. Often decisions need to be made in real time, such as when illegal or harmful content, including terrorist attacks or suicide attempts are being streamed. Also, the sheer volume of content being exchanged on these platforms makes it difficult or impractical for external decision making.

Facebook and Twitter have a say over the self-expression of billions of people. Never before in history has so much control rested with so few people, and that too private entities. Has their clout grown too much?

RB: The power of the big technology companies can be problematic in a variety of ways. In the media business, for example, the advertising market is moving towards specific platforms. So, it is important to regulate online platforms. However, it is important to do this without hurting the benefits that the Internet has brought us, whether in promoting civil liberties or in enhancing efficiency. While there is clearly a problem with the way platforms handle content moderation and how they self-regulate, having the government involved in censorship is also



far from ideal. This can lead to over-censorship or politically-motivated censorship, particularly in a country with a relatively low rule of law standard as India. We've seen, for example, how even a relatively independent body such as the CBFC [Central Board of Film Certification] has performed in India.

The primary issue appears to be a lack of transparency, accountability in decision making, and allegations of bias and discrimination. These problems are exacerbated by the monopoly that many platforms enjoy, and there has to be broader thinking on the structural problems with the digital economy. But censorship is a different issue and it is important not to try a one-size-fits-all approach, like the generic regulations in the Indian government's intermediary guidelines of December 2018. It makes better sense to regulate procedural aspects, like the German law that requires social media companies with over two million registered users in Germany to put in place processes to receive user complaints and disable access to manifestly illegal content. Companies are also required to improve their transparency mechanisms and make public disclosures of how they handle complaints. The law fines companies not for failing to remove content, but for not having robust grievance redressal mechanisms.

So we need to look at targeted or proportionate measures that clarify what intermediaries are required to do from a procedural perspective, with an aim to make them more transparent and accountable to us-

Truth is an accident on these platforms. They are actually creators of engagement, who wish to usurp all human attention

MISHI CHOWDHARY,
Legal researcher

ers. This can be done through supervised self-regulation or even co-regulatory processes. Here, it is important to understand how experiments such as Facebook's Oversight Board will work.

MC: We all just want to tweak and fix the current system itself, whether it is the liability issues under Section 79 of the Information Technology act in India, or the counterpart DMCA [Digital Millennium Copyright Act] and Section 230 in the Communications Decency Act (CDA) in the U.S. All of us are now discussing whether it will be anti-trust, or if something would be broken up, or if it could be regulation of some kind. I want to say that the companies recognise that something must change. They know that the jig is up, and that the period of unregulated behaviour is over. They know that denial is no longer going to work. And that is why they are also in negotiation mode. Everyone now knows that it is not just innovation, but it's also harmful. And I do not think there are simple answers such as saying we want self-regulation, or that we don't want self-regulation. That's why Facebook has appointed an oversight board; because there has to be something more than just self-regulatory beha-

viour. But if you try to introduce a government into the picture, it is going to be mostly political censorship. It is also going to start a process of self-censoring, because there is fear.

I don't have a simple answer, but I don't think anybody does. And that's what it leads us to this Executive Order from Trump.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (CDA) in the U.S. has been credited with having spurred innovation in the technological sphere. Do you think taking it away will throttle innovation?

MC: Despite the fact that a vast majority of Facebook's users are now outside the United States, the discussion is still concentrated on Section 230 and what that did in the United States for the platform companies. Now, there is definitely the feeling that the companies have gone too far to the other side, and that they are not really innovating, but are mostly acquiring new products or just squishing out smaller products. At the time Section 230 was enacted, we needed such a thing. But today we live in a very different world where surveillance is the only economy or only business model that the Internet knows. People are addicted to free data. People are addicted to free services in return for free spying by the commercial platform companies. This isn't the age we lived in at that time when Section 230 was enacted. Something has to shift, and everybody recognises it. But nobody quite knows where they want to land.

In India, the similar Section 79 of the IT Act has been continuously challenged since its enactment. We start with the Avinash Bajaj case where the industry realised you can't have any e-commerce if you're going to go keep arresting CEOs of companies. With Section 79, the vision is the same: that we want the platform companies to do new things, and to come and have new, innovative ideas in India, and we will have to protect them some way or the other.

But we only get to talk about the larger players like a Facebook or a Google who can afford litigation teams. But the smaller players cannot. Police harass platform compa-

nies all the time and the smaller trial courts are filled with such cases. So, I will say it is much more complicated.

RB: Before answering the question, I think it is important to keep in mind that there are differences in the intermediary liability frameworks in India and in the U.S. Section 230 of the CDA does two things. It first recognises that all intermediaries are not publishers, and second, it explicitly sets up a self-regulating system for intermediaries. In India, on the other hand, the law is primarily brought in to extend the common law of distributor's liability to the Internet. So the idea just clarifies that intermediaries are not to be liable for illegal third party content, if they don't actively participate in the commission of the offence, or if they take down content once they have actual knowledge of this. Now, the original version of Section 79, when it was enacted in 2000, had language under which an intermediary basically had to show that it took all relevant measures to prevent illegal content from being exchanged. This led to the CEO of Baazi.com being arrested because users had exchanged an obscene clip online. The provision was changed in 2008, and now intermediaries just have to show that they carried out due diligence under the guidelines laid down by the government. These guidelines lay down self-regulatory frameworks that companies are required to adhere to. There is however, no specific requirement to censor content and so the decision broadly remains with the intermediary on how to enforce its terms. So changing these provisions by removing or significantly diluting safe harbour provisions will certainly have a negative effect on the digital ecosystem, both in terms of innovation and, importantly, in terms of civil liberties protections. It has been broadly accepted by academic literature on courts in India and abroad, that holding an intermediary responsible for third party content could lead to a chilling effect on free speech. I mean, as Mishi mentioned, smaller platforms in particular could face significant harassment if protections were removed. You will then have to move to a system where companies are incentivised to over-censor.



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Embracing alternative protein

They are vastly better for planetary health

VARUN DESHPANDE & RAJESH KASTURIRANGAN

On World Environment Day (June 5), the usual routine is to call for the protection of 'Nature' – but nature isn't defenceless. The emerging concept of planetary health characterises impacts of human-caused disruptions of Earth's ecological systems. COVID-19 is showing us that our lives and livelihoods are intricately intertwined with these systems – and when we inflict tremendous harms on the planet, the consequences can be catastrophic.

We don't think of the pandemic as an ecological disaster, but COVID-29 didn't happen in a vacuum. It is a direct consequence of anthropogenic impacts on the planet. In these anthropogenic impacts, pandemics and climate change find common causes. Nowhere is this link clearer than in the food system, and particularly in our reliance on animals for protein.

Hazards of factory farming

Large-scale, industrial animal agriculture for meat, eggs, and dairy – also called factory farming – creates and exacerbates planetary health risks at every scale. Scientists at the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization estimate that it is "one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems." Our need for animal protein uses vast tracts of land and quantities of water to raise those animals, to graze them, and to grow crops to feed them. It contributes more to climate change than emissions from the entire transportation sector. Wild and farmed seafood production also causes significant environmental degradation, species loss, and habitat destruction. Of course, as the names suggest, animals are also the sources of viral outbreaks of swine flu and avian flu. With regular outbreaks of these zoonotic diseases, COVID-19 is unlikely to be the last planetary health crisis caused by the close contact between humans, animals and microbes.

Expert voices ranging from the Food and Land Use Coalition, to the World Health Organization, to the EAT-Lancet Commission have all identified that diversifying protein sources away from animals is a huge

ly neglected intervention for human and planetary health. But with rising demand for meat, eggs, and dairy, a chorus of 'chickpeas over chicken' may not be enough. All over the world, companies in the exciting 'alternative protein' sector are making upgraded versions of meat, eggs, and dairy from plant or crop ingredients, or directly from animal cells. These foods satisfy consumers and producers without taking away their choice, because they taste the same, are used in exactly the same way, but are vastly better for planetary health. Countries like Singapore and Canada are already making alternative protein a central piece of their food security story, with an emphasis on research, entrepreneurship, and self-sufficiency.

Factory farming in India is still a small industry compared to the U.S., Brazil, or China, though it is increasingly being seen as an employment and income generator in a country with water scarcity and diminishing land holdings. We think that's a mistake – it is imposing a 20th century industrial model. Instead, we need to build upon our strengths in agriculture and manufacturing to create a new food system that works for farmers and is robust to systemic shocks. COVID-19 has underscored that we can scarcely afford the consequences of an inefficient protein supply. Why not completely rethink our way of producing food, and create a 21st century economy delivering plentiful, safe, and nutritious protein?

Food security and agricultural income are among our nation's major challenges in the coming years. We should turn this crisis into an opportunity by stimulating research and entrepreneurship in alternative proteins. India was never a leader in landlines – we leapfrogged that model and built a mobile telecommunications industry that is among the cheapest and most competitive on earth. We have a similar opportunity to set aside the liabilities of industrial animal agriculture and create a smarter alternative protein industry supplying us and the rest of the world.

Varun Deshpande is Managing Director, Good Food Institute India; Rajesh Kasturirangan is co-founder, Socratus



NOTEBOOK

From dull black ink to a tiny blue tick

Tweets sent by political leaders are now taken as the official word by scribes

MEERA SRINIVASAN

"Balu sir!" and "Hari sir!" were common refrains at *The Hindu's* Chennai reporting section those days. The two senior colleagues, who were office aides in the department and took turns in alternating shifts, effectively ran the section.

From reminding us to sign in the attendance register (yes, we used to physically sign in a thick, leather-bound ledger everyday before punching became a thing!), to filing the previous day's edition of the paper, using strings that held them firmly to a huge cardboard – as if it were one giant book of news – to keeping track of our night shift cycles to handing over the press releases marked to us by the city editor, we relied on them for several of our daily tasks. When it was time to change the film in the fax machine, we needed their help more than ever. Few

of us had the dexterity for replacing that cylindrical roll to get the machine to start beeping and spewing messages in dull black ink again.

We got a variety of fax messages. Organisers of religious discourses sent us announcements via fax, with a request for inclusion in our daily engagements' column on page 4. Private engineering colleges that competed with each other in seeking publicity – whether a Rotaract club inauguration or a tree-planting drive on campus – sent us invitations via fax, requesting coverage for what they thought was compelling content for a daily. More importantly, political parties and government departments commonly used fax to send official announcements, information and speeches of politicians.

Some of my senior colleagues who had covered Tamil Nadu's two main Dravidian parties for decades

could tell from the sound of the machine and the duration of the beep, what the fax message was about. "Must be Karunanidhi's clarification to Delhi", or, "This is Jayalalithaa's announcement – all her special announcements are released late, close to our deadline," I can remember them say, as they walked towards the fax machine kept at a desk near our side of the large reporting section. They were usually spot on. They would begin reading the pages as they walked back to their desks, to translate and file the report that would, at times, even displace the story slot for the front page.

Seal of confirmation

Hearing about these announcements was one thing, but actually seeing them in those glossy sheets twirled in the fax machine was like getting a seal of confirmation. It was now "authentic" news.

A decade and a half later, reporters are having to look elsewhere, for political leaders' statements and confirmations. Whether it is U.S. President Donald Trump who recently threatened White House protesters with 'vicious dogs' and 'ominous weapons', or Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent phone call with Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, offering support to combat COVID-19, Twitter is where we get the updates first.

Given that these are "official" handles, with a little blue tick beside them indicating they are verified accounts, we treat the tweets – ranging from the mundane to cordial and dramatic to appalling – as the official word, credible enough to report. We even cite these tweets in our news copy, with those hashtags intact, at times quietly wondering why some leaders couldn't tweet less.

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 5, 1970

Troop pull-out as planned: Nixon

President Nixon declared last night [June 3, 1970, Washington] that his Cambodian campaign, now just past its half way mark, had been an unprecedented success and that "all our major military objectives have been achieved." He said that this would enable him to keep his withdrawal timetable in South Vietnam and announced that 50,000 of the 1,50,000 U.S. troops, which he had promised to pull out by next April, would be out of South Vietnam by October 15. But while reiterating his other pledge to withdraw all U.S. ground and support forces from Cambodia by the last day of this month Mr. Nixon said that he would continue to send air missions into Cambodia "to interfere [with] enemy troops and materials" after the July 1 deadline. Mr. Nixon did not, however, say whether or not these U.S. air missions would also support South Vietnamese ground operations (in Cambodia) which he said Saigon was free to continue after the U.S. itself had pulled out. Also omitted from Mr. Nixon's interim report on Cambodia was any mention of the communist command's principal headquarters for Indo-China.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 5, 1920

"Intensive" frightfulness

(From an editorial)

"As regards martial law orders and cases arising out of the breach thereof we think it unfortunate that in several important respects, martial law assumed as intensive a force as it did..." This masterpiece in the art of special pleading represents, it is needless to say, the highest pitch of virtuous indignation the majority reported itself capable of over the atrocities perpetrated in the name of law and order. That a Committee which could tone down a massacre into a "grave error" should use words like "injudicious" and "unfortunate" in characterising these acts was naturally to be expected. Now there is one point with regard to these acts to which we wish to draw pointed attention. They were not isolated instances of brutality inspired by excess of zeal or by a honest and conscientious desire to restore order as speedily as possible. No impartial man could say however that these instances were either isolated or inspired by honest zeal. They were such as to cast, in their calculated brutality, the most brilliant efforts of Junkerdom into the shade. They were general and chronic symptoms of martial law administration and not individual aberrations.

CM YK

M BM-BME

FROM PAGE ONE

New SOPs issued for hotels and malls

In its SOPs for restaurants, hotels and shopping malls, the Ministry said the staff members and guests were to be allowed entry only if they were using face cover/masks. "The face cover/mask has to be worn at all times inside the hotel and adequate manpower shall be deployed by hotel management for ensuring social distancing norms. Staff should additionally wear gloves and take other required precautionary measures."

All employees who are at higher risk – older employees, pregnant employees and those who have underlying medical conditions – are to take extra precautions. "They should preferably not be exposed to any front-line work requiring direct contact with the public. Hotel management should facilitate work from home wherever feasible."

In shopping malls, the use of escalators with one person on alternate steps may be encouraged and the temperature setting of all air-conditioning devices should be in the range of 24–30 degrees Celsius. Intake of fresh air should be as much

as possible and cross-ventilation should be adequate. Large gatherings and congregations remain prohibited. Gaming arcades, children's play area and cinema halls in shopping malls shall remain closed.

The Ministry said takeaways should be encouraged at restaurants, instead of dine-in, and food delivery personnel should leave the packets at the doorstep and not hand them over to the customer.

The guideline for religious places notes that common prayer mats should be avoided and devotees should bring their own prayer mat. "No physical offerings, like prasad/distribution or sprinkling of holy water, to be allowed inside the religious place. Community kitchens and langars should follow physical distancing norms while preparing and distributing food," the Ministry said.

The touching of statues, idols and holy books is not allowed. Because of the potential threat of spread of infection, recorded devotional music may be played. Choir or singing groups should not be allowed.

26 lakh migrants in halfway houses: data

However, when RTI activist Venkatesh Nayak requested this information, the CLC's office responded on May 5, saying the information was not available. The Central Information Commission (CIC) held an urgent hearing of the appeal on May 27 and ruled that the information must be uploaded on the CLC's website within a week.

The document now available on the CLC website gives State-wise data on stranded migrants, saying that there are a total of 26,17,218 across the country. Chhattisgarh had the highest number of almost 11 lakh, of which 8.6 lakh are in clusters outside workplaces and shelters. Kerala has the largest number in relief camps, with 1.3 lakh out of a total 2.8 lakh stranded migrants in camps.

"The first step towards resolving a problem in public administration is to collect adequate information and data about the problem. The CLC's action of demon-

strating some measure of compliance with the CIC's advisory is to be welcomed as a good start," said Mr. Nayak.

"However, there is no indication of when this data was collected and whether it is reasonably complete." He pointed out that the Centre has said 91 lakh migrant workers have returned in trains and buses organised by the government, well after the CLC's order, which counted only 26 lakh stranded migrants. The CLC's figure of 88,852 stranded migrants in Karnataka is only a fraction of the 11 lakh figure for the State that was submitted to the High Court, he said.

"I am hoping that they will be more forthcoming with such information in the coming days. However, if this is all they have managed to collect after the D.O. was issued, it is indicative of the inadequacy of existing structures to channel adequate information to the CLC in real time," he said.

Cut prices and clear building stock: Goyal

Mr. Goyal also says, "Those who have sold and are less leveraged or got rid of their bank loans have survived this downturn. Those who are saddled with large loans, who kept holding on to their prices, have suffered."

Commenting on the remarks, Mr. Hiranandani told *The Hindu*, "We must compliment Mr. Goyal for saying this. Even Mr. Deepak Parekh [Chairman, HDFC Bank] and Mr. Uday Kotak [President, Confederation of Indian Industry] have said this. It is for the people [builders] who have borrowed money from banks and sitting with the stock [of unsold real estate]. This advice is not for all developers."

Mr. Hiranandani said the provisions of the Income Tax Act are such that any sharp reduction in prices would attract heavy penalties for both the seller and the buyer. "As per the Section 43CA of the Income Tax Act, anyone selling below 10% of the ready reckoner rate or circle rate will be liable to pay a penalty of 35% of the difference [between the original and revised price]. The buyer will also pay a penalty of 35%. So, unless this Section is amended, no further price cut is possible because people

have already cut prices by 10% in a year. So, we have requested Mr. Goyal to tell the Finance Minister to amend the provision."

Shishir Baijal, chairman & MD of real estate consultancy firm Knight Frank India remarked, "Developers are already dealing with mounting concerns over unsold inventory and liquidity. Most developers are struggling to maintain their margins and may not have too much leeway to cut prices further. At some level, the suggestion by the Minister to developers to lower prices is valid as it may help reducing inventory, though it may not be the most viable [option]."

The crux of the problem lies in dwindling demand that the sector has been experiencing for the last few years, he said. "Therefore, the main solution will be in creating stable long-term demand by providing adequate boost to economic growth and stability. Any movement on ready reckoner rates, stamp duties and taxes will come as a further relief to help converting latent housing demand to sales. The real estate sector thus needs tangible measures to resurrect demand and ease the concerns of its stakeholders," Mr. Baijal said.

Following a news report in these columns showing her attending an online class from her rooftop, officials of

Namitha Narayanan, fifth semester B.A. English student of KMCT Arts and Science College, Kuttippuram, who became a symbol of perseverance on Wednesday, will no longer have to climb atop her house to attend online classes.

Following a news report in these columns showing her attending an online class from her rooftop, officials of

a private service provider came to her house at Areekkal, near Kottakkal, on Thursday and ensured that she got high-speed connectivity.

Augmented facility

The technical staff of the company set up an augmented facility at her house, which will ensure steady and high-speed connectivity on the premises.

"I am happy I can now

learn from the comfort of my house," said Ms. Namitha. Her elder sister, Nayana, too, was happy about the positive response from the network operators.

A picture showing Ms. Namitha on top of her two-storey house had made wide impact with a number of people sharing it.

While many appreciated the positive spirit displayed by the student in circum-

stances, a few others used it to snipe at the government.

Offers of help

Sayed Abid Husain Thangal, MLA of Kottakkal, offered help to address the problem of poor connectivity.

E.T. Mohammed Basheer, MP, too, also contacted the family.

The MP congratulated Ms. Namitha on the positive spirit she displayed.

Symbol of perseverance

Namitha Narayanan will no longer have to climb atop her house to attend online classes.

Toll in Kerala rises as three die in a day

Tally of deaths and cases on the rise in south: Karnataka records four fatalities and Andhra Pradesh three

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala on Thursday reported three COVID-19 deaths in a day, taking the toll to 14. Karnataka recorded four fatalities and Andhra Pradesh, three deaths and 141 fresh cases.

Kerala also reported 94 COVID-19 cases, of which 84 were imported cases of infection involving people from abroad or from other States. Seven cases were among those in contact with known or unknown sources of infection.

Among the three deaths, the case from Kollam was

COVID-19

that of a 65-year-old patient who was brought dead to hospital and later confirmed to have had the infection. The test to diagnose COVID-19 was done as per the advice of the Medical Board.

The other COVID-19 deaths were that of a 73-year-old woman at Palakkad, who had returned from Chennai and a 27-year-old Malappuram

All is not well

Despite the many lockdown relaxations announced by both the Central and the State governments, many people are finding it tough to go back home



Patient wait: Migrant workers standing in a long queue to get food in Vijayawada on Thursday. ■ K.V.S. GIRI

native who had returned from Abu Dhabi. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan confirmed that the youth was being treated for blood cancer.

Kerala's case burden, mortality rate and disease transmission patterns changed after May 4, when the post-lockdown return of Keraleites from abroad and other parts of the country began.

On Thursday, 39 persons were reported to have recovered from the disease. The number of active cases was 884. Of the cumulative 1,588 cases so far, there were 690 recoveries.

The State had 1.7 lakh-plus people under surveillance, of whom, except for the 1,487 isolated in hospitals, the rest were in quarantine.

KERALA
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 1,588
ACTIVE CASES 884
DISCHARGED CASES 690
DEATHS 14

TELANGANA
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 3,147
ACTIVE CASES 1,455
DISCHARGED CASES 1,587
DEATHS 105

KARNATAKA
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 4,320
ACTIVE CASES 2,651
DISCHARGED CASES 1,610
DEATHS 59

ANDHRA PRADESH
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 4,112
ACTIVE CASES 1,520
DISCHARGED CASES 2,521
DEATHS 71

TAMIL NADU
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 27,253
ACTIVE CASES 12,132
DISCHARGED CASES 14,901
DEATHS 220

unit from his native place in Tamil Nadu over a week ago.

In Guntur, four new cases were detected in Christianpet of Tadepalli near the Chief Minister's camp office.

They were secondary contacts of a ward volunteer who till recently worked at a relief camp for migrant labourers at Vijayawada Club.

The State witnessed three more deaths and 141 fresh COVID-19 cases on Thursday, taking the toll to 71 and the tally to 4,112, a Health Department bulletin said. There was one death each in Krishna, Guntur and Kurnoor districts.

Among new cases, 98 were local residents and 43 cases were migrant returnees. Nineteen were linked to the Koyamedu hotspot.

Of the 98 cases, 22 were reported in Nellore, 14 in Kadapa district and 11 in Krishna district. They are followed by West Godavari (10), Chittoor (9), Guntur (8), Anantapur (7), Kurnool (5), Vizianagaram (4), Prakasam (3), Visakhapatnam (3) and East Godavari (2).

The total cases among fo-

reign returnees was 119 and migrant returnees and people from other States, 616.

Karnataka's four deaths was the highest in a day since the pandemic broke out, taking the toll to 57.

All four patients – two from Bengaluru Urban and one each from Gadag and Davangere – had co-morbidities.

Two were female SARI patients, aged 65 and 60 respectively from Bengaluru Urban. They died on June 3 and their tests were positive.

A 44-year-old man from Gadag with fever, cough, diabetes and urinary tract infection, died due to sepsis and broncho-pneumonia, and an 83-year-old woman, admitted on May 31, with chest pain died the same day due to severe acidosis and renal failure. Her tests also were positive on Thursday.

Meanwhile, 257 new cases were reported on Thursday taking the tally to 4,320. Of these 149 were returnees from Maharashtra.

(With inputs from Vijayawada and Bengaluru bureaus)

Investigation begins into Singareni Collieries blast

The mine explosion claimed four lives

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PEDDAPALLI

The Directorate General of Mine Safety (DGMS) and the Ramagundam Commissionerate of Police have launched parallel inquiries into the first-of-its-kind explosion in an open cast mine of the Singareni Collieries Company Limited in Telangana, which claimed four lives and injured three others on Tuesday.

The DGMS and the police are carrying out separate probes into the reasons for the explosion, which include high temperature, poor quality of explosives, cellular phone radiation and negligence of the supervisory staff while using the explosives provided by a private contractor to remove overburden earthwork for the expansion of the open cast

mine. In order to remove the boulders as part of the blasting process, the authorities had planned to drill at least 80 holes on Tuesday. They could drill only 33 holes, two to two-and-a-half metres deep, filled them with hot slurry and fixed detonators. The explosive slurry got ignited in only one hole, maybe due to a spark or the heat in the hole, sources said.

Luckily, a major mishap was averted as the slurry (gelatine) carrying vehicle and other holes did not explode due to the ignition, they said. They said it would have been a major disaster if the explosives in all holes exploded along with the slurry vehicle. It is also being alleged that the officials did not use thermometers to check the temperature in the holes.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that some legislators shared their discontent on the functioning of the "de

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Siddaramaiah says dissidents in BJP met him

People are saying govt. is led by the Chief Minister's son'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Former Chief Minister and Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah claimed that a few BJP MLAs in Karnataka had met him and shared their "dissatisfaction" over the functioning of the government led by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa.

Mr. Siddaramaiah's comments assume significance in wake of talks of dissident activity within the BJP following recent meetings by a section of senior legislators over selection of candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha and Legislative Council elections.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that some legislators shared their discontent on the functioning of the "de



jure Chief Minister" (Mr. Yediyurappa) and "de facto Chief Minister" (his son B.Y. Vijayendra).

People say Mr. Vijayendra is working as the unconstitutional Chief Minister, we are not saying it. Mr. Yediyurappa is CM only for name-sake, it is Mr. Vijayendra

who clears things," he said.

"Several disgruntled BJP legislators have met me and have shared their discontent," he claimed.

Participating in a function in Koppal, north Karnataka, on Wednesday, Mr. Siddaramaiah, however, said the Congress would not interfere in the functioning of the BJP. The government would fall on its own following discontent in the party, he said.

The BJP claimed the Congress leader was indulging in "diversionary tactics" and there was no evidence to substantiate his claim.

In Mysuru, Minister for Cooperation S.T. Somashekar said he had never had to consult Mr. Vijayendra. "Neither has Mr. Yediyurappa asked me to consult his son," he said.

BJP giving communal colour to killing of elephant in Kerala'

The party must tender an unconditional apology: Venugopal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP must tender an unqualified and unconditional public apology for giving communal colour to the death of a pregnant elephant in Kerala, Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal said on Thursday.

He was responding to the statements of Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar and former Union Minister Maneka Gandhi.

The death of the elephant after it ate a pineapple stuffed with firecrackers has made headlines across the world.

Mr. Venugopal said any kind of mindless violence against wildlife was unacceptable.

Saying it with sand: Ajay Rawat giving final touches to a sand sculpture of an elephant in Pushkar on Thursday. ■ PTI

table. But Mr. Javadekar and Ms. Maneka Gandhi were "deliberately" using the incident to spread communally motivated false information. They were even dragging Congress leader Rahul Gandhi into the controversy.

"This propaganda has proved once again that the BJP will stoop to any level to twist the facts for its narrow, divisive political purposes. It is shedding crocodile tears over the incident, and this divisive propaganda has exposed the BJP's hypocrisy," Mr. Venugopal said.

proved once again that the BJP will stoop to any level to twist the facts for its narrow, divisive political purposes. It is shedding crocodile tears over the

India-Australia meet strengthens ties

Modi, Morrison take relationship to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' at virtual summit

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

India and Australia raised their relationship to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" after a "virtual" summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who concluded nine agreements including a Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) and issued a joint declaration on a "Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific."

The two countries also agreed to increase the frequency of meetings between the two Prime Ministers, and took the "2+2" format of bilateral meetings to the level of Foreign and Defence Ministers, who will meet to "discuss strategic issues" at least every two years. The two leaders, who are expected to meet in person at the extended G-7 summit to be



Working together: Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaking to Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Thursday. • AP

held in the United States later this year, spoke for more than an hour over a video link, a first for a bilateral summit for India.

"Both India and Australia share a vision of a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region to support the freedom of navigation, overflight and peaceful and cooperative use of the seas by adherence of all nations to international law includ-

ing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and peaceful resolution of disputes rather than through unilateral or coercive actions," said the statement issued in New Delhi and Canberra.

'No talks on China'

The summit came amidst tensions between India and China over the stand-off at the Line of Actual Control,

and Australia-China tensions over trade issues and differences over handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Ministry of External Affairs officials said there had been "no discussion" on China, and the two leaders had not discussed including Australia for "Malabar" or quadrilateral maritime exercises that would include India, Australia, U.S. and Japan, something that China has opposed in the past.

"Both sides agreed to continue to deepen and broaden defence cooperation by enhancing the scope and complexity of their military exercises and engagement activities to develop new ways to address shared security challenges," the joint statement added, referring to the MLSA which will allow both militaries the reciprocal use of bases, humanitarian and disaster relief cooperation, port exercises, and

passage exercises. Other agreements announced included a framework arrangement on cyber technology, an MoU on mining and processing critical and strategic minerals including Australian rare earth metals used for electronics, governance, vocational training and water management.

Mr. Modi said the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) took on new meaning at the time of the global pandemic. "The world needs a coordinated and collaborative approach to come out of the economic and social side effects of this pandemic. Our government has decided to view this crisis as an opportunity," he told Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison said the CSP would raise the level of "trust" required to improve the "trade and investment flows" between India and Australia.

Devise system for inter-State travel in NCR'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered the Central government to meet with Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana officials to devise a "common, uniform" pass system for inter-State movement in the National Capital Region (NCR) areas during the pandemic.

A Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan said the Centre and the three States should decide in a week on a common pass system. "The petition says that in the NCR area there should be one policy, one pass recognised by all the three States to avoid confusion, difficulty to common man... Convene a meeting of the States' officials and endeavour to find out a common programme with respect to inter-State movement," it ordered.

The court was hearing a petition filed by Gurugram resident Rohit Bhalla.

Health Ministry lists measures after cases among staff increase

Premises to remain closed for sanitisation on June 6 and 7

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Wednesday issued a four-page memorandum listing out precautionary measures to be strictly complied with after it admitted that the Ministry was seeing a rise in the number of COVID-19 cases among its staff, along with a violation of social distancing norms at the workplace.

The office memorandum said the entire premises of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) at Nirman Bhawan (including washrooms, lift and staircase) would remain closed for thorough sanitisation on June 6 and 7, except emergency CO-VID-19 team.

The memorandum adds that all officials are advised to take care of their own health and look out for

symptoms such as fever and respiratory problems.

Mask must

It has also maintained that wearing a mask is mandatory for all employees and that only asymptomatic persons would be allowed in the building premises to attend the office.

"People should maintain social distancing at least one metre between them while walking or seating and queuing up for entry and inside

the building premises... No meeting/conference should be done physically. Meetings may be organised through videoconference only," the memorandum said.

ENT high-risk group

The Ministry has also identified ear, nose, throat (ENT) doctors as high-risk specialty and advised that tele-consultation be used as much as possible while walk-in patients should be discouraged. In its advisory to the group, the Ministry has said that all patients entering ENT OPD should be thermal screened to minimise exposure to staff and to patients.

"Patients having symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 [whether ENT symptoms or respiratory symptoms] should be seen in a separate 'COVID-19 screening clinic' and not in the ENT OPD," stated the Ministry.

A worker disinfecting an area in Delhi on Thursday. • AFP

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"People should maintain social distancing at least one metre between them while walking or seating and queuing up for entry and inside

SC Bar Association seeks members' views on regular hearings

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) on Thursday sought views of its member-lawyers on the resumption of regular courtroom proceedings in the court which has been holding virtual hearings since March 25 when the COVID-19-induced lockdown was imposed.

A three-judge panel, comprising Justices N.V. Ramana, Arun Mishra and U.U. Lalit, will review on Friday the functioning of the Supreme Court in light of the surging pandemic cases in Delhi, and the views of the SCBA has been sought.

The review meeting would take place amid rising demands from bar bodies, including the Bar Council of India and the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCAORA), to resume physical courtroom hearings on various grounds, including that the virtual court system was not working well for lawyers who did not have access to the technology.

SCBA president and senior advocate Dushyant Dave asked the lawyers to give their response to seven questions, which included whether they wanted regular court hearings to restart or not.

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|--|-----------|---|--|-------------------|---------|
| Supply, dismantling, erection, testing and commissioning of 3.3 KV, MV Switch board panels at valley substation, Donimalai, Karnataka State. Event No. ET/187. | 01 | 04/06/2020 To 24/06/2020 upto 2.30 p.m. (IST) | Rs. 5900/- Inclusive of GST | Rs. 25,000/- | |

Tender documents can be downloaded from our website www.nmdc.co.in at Tender section, CPP portal and MSTC e-portal. Any Corrigendum to the above Open Tender Notice will be uploaded only in our website www.nmdc.co.in and **MSTC e-portal**. Prospective bidders should visit the above website from time to time to note the corrigendum, if any.

Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike
Office of the Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division, BBMP Shopping Complex, 2nd Floor, J.C. Road, Bengaluru-02, Phone: 22115996

No.EE(CMP)TEND/E-Proc/01/07/2020-21 Date: 02-06-2020

CORRIDGEMENT

Ref: 1). Tender Notification No EE/CMP/TEND/E-Proc/01/20-21 Dated: 06-05-2020. 2). Tender Notification No EE/CMP/TEND/E-Proc/07/20-21 Dated: 19-05-2020.

With reference to the above Two Tender Notification No. EE/CMP/TEND/E-Proc/01/20-21 Dated: 06-05-2020 and Tender Notification No EE/CMP/TEND/E-Proc/07/20-21 Dated: 19-05-2020, due to technical reasons calendar of events has been revised as mentioned below.

Calendar of Events: 1). Last Date & Time for receipt of Tenders: 19-06-2020 up to 4:00 p.m. 2). Opening of Technical bid Document: 20-06-2020 @ 4:15 p.m. 3). Pre bid meeting document: 15-06-2020 at 4:00 p.m. 4). Opening of Financial bid Document: 22-06-2020 at 4:15 p.m. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Sd/-, Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division BBMP.
"Pay development charges, help to develop Bengaluru"

Tablighi activity now a specific visa violation

It can attract a penalty of \$500: MHA

VIJAYA SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has included "indulging in Tablighi activities" as a specific visa violation that will attract a fine of \$500.

It has added a new category—"restriction on engaging in Tablighi activities" in the "general policy guidelines relating to Indian visa".

The guidelines provide details of 24 categories of visas and the various conditions under which they could be granted online or by missions abroad.

Amended guidelines

The amended guidelines read, "foreign nationals granted any type of visa and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cardholders shall not be permitted to engage themselves in Tabligh work. There will be no restriction in visiting religious places and attending normal religious activities like attending religious discourses. However, preaching religious ideologies, making speeches in religious places, distribution of audio or visual display/ pamphlets pertaining to religious ideologies, spreading conversion etc. will not be allowed."

The \$500 fine is also for other violations such as overstaying of more than two years, visiting protected areas and cases involving both overstay and visa violations.

Headed by Anuj Sharma, Joint Secretary, Union Home Ministry, the team arrived at the Kolkata airport on Thursday and is likely to visit Patharpuram in South 24 Parganas on Friday and the affected areas of North 24 Parganas on Saturday.



The Nizamuddin markaz area in New Delhi.

ed from entering India for 10 years under "Category A" of the Visa Manual 2018, a senior government official said. A foreigner who is blacklisted cannot get a visa from any of the missions to come to India.

In 150 countries

Founded by a Deobandi Islamic scholar at Mewat, Uttar Pradesh, in 1926, the Tablighi Jamaat (Society of Preachers) focusses on "purifying" the Muslim faith. It has a presence in 150 countries.

In an interview to *Aaj Tak* news channel last week, Home Minister Amit Shah said the markaz organised congregations throughout the year and it was not a public event. "However, if the programme was stopped in time and medical help provided, then such a situation wouldn't have arisen," he stated.

On March 21, the MHA asked the States to "screen, quarantine" and deport them if possible. All international flights were suspended on March 23 and the country was placed under a 21-day lockdown on March 24 to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

Govt. defends SOP for health workers

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday told the Supreme Court that though hospitals were responsible for implementing the infection prevention and control activities, the final responsibility rested with healthcare workers to protect themselves from COVID-19.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare told the court that it was the responsibility of healthcare workers to adequately train themselves and take measures to prevent infection.

Hearing scheduled

A Bench, led by Justice Ashok Bhushan, allowed petitioner Arushi Jain to file a response to the Centre's affidavit within a week. The court scheduled a hearing for June 12.

Arushi Jain, a private doctor, has questioned the Centre's new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of May 15 for frontline COVID-19 healthcare workers, by which it has ended the 14-day mandatory quarantine for them.

'Protect themselves'

The government said that while the hospital infection control committee was responsible for implementing the infection prevention and control activities and for organising regular training for healthcare workers, the final responsibility lay with the workers to protect themselves.

It said the COVID-19 pandemic was unprecedented. There was no time-tested and universally-acceptable protocol for preparedness.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY CHENNAI - 600 008
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
E - TENDER NOTICE FOR THE SUPPLY OF STORES
No. 26 / 2020 Dated: 02.06.2020

Southern Railway has implemented an e-system. All advertised tenders will be dealt through e-procurement system only. No manual offer / postal offer will be entertained. These tenders can be accessed under the link www.irps.gov.in → SR → COS

| Sl. No. | E-Tender No. | Description | Tender Closing date & time |
|---------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 82/20/5288/EOT | RELAY PLUG IN TYPE 8F/BB | 08.07.2020 @14.30 hrs. |

Railway reserves the right to issue any corrigendum to the tenders. Important Notice to Vendors: e-procurement is in the link www.irps.gov.in.

Principal Chief Materials Manager

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NOTICE INVITING TENDER

| Sl. No. | Material Description | Due date |
|---------|--|------------|
| 1 | Supply of LT Power & Control Cables for TNPL Unit-II MEP | 29.06.2020 |
| 2 | Supply of Installation of Low side Air Conditioning works for TNPL Unit-II MEP | 29.06.2020 |
| 3 | Design, Manufacture and Supply of Non-IBR Manual Ball Valves for HWFL at TNPL Unit-II MEP | 29.06.2020 |
| 4 | Design, Manufacture and Supply of Non-IBR Manual Butterfly Valves for HWFL at TNPL Unit-II MEP | 29.06.2020 |
| 5 | Design, Manufacture and Supply of Non | |

Compensation for GST loss given till Feb.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday released ₹36,400 crore to State governments as Goods and Services Tax (GST) compensation due for the period from December 2019 until February 2020.

"Taking stock of the current situation due to COVID-19 where State governments need to undertake expenditure while their resources are adversely hit, the Central government has released the GST compensation of ₹36,400 crore to the States/UTs with legislature for the period from December 2019 to February 2020 today [on Thursday]," said a Finance Ministry statement.

It said that GST compensation worth ₹1,15,096 crore for the April-November period had been released earlier, completing payments for the 2019-20 financial year.

The GST council is due to meet next week.

Disasters displace lakhs: study

50 lakh international displacements in India in 2019, says CSE report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India had one in five of all internal displacements caused by disasters across the world in 2019, mostly caused by floods, cyclones and drought, according to the *State of India's Environment in Figures 2020* report released on Thursday. Also, 19 major extreme weather events claimed 1,357 lives last year.

There were more than 50 lakh internal displacements in India last year, the highest in the world. This refers to the number of movements, not people, as individuals can be displaced several times, said research and advocacy organisation Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), which published the report.

Flooding caused by the southwest monsoon led to 26 lakh displacements, while Cyclone Fani alone led to 18 lakh displacements, followed by cyclones Vayu and Bulbul. On the other hand, drought conditions in 19



Shifting sands: In this photo dated May 4, 2019, houses and fishing boats damaged by Cyclone Fani are seen at Penthakata village in Odisha. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

States led to another 63,000 displacements.

Apart from such forced migrations, many move for work. With migrant workers in the news due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, the report also broke down 2011 census data on migrant populations. There were over 45 crore migrants in the country at the time, with the vast majority migrating within their own State. In 2011, over

1.7 crore new migrants had moved for employment purposes, mostly from rural to urban areas.

Shrinking forests

The compilation also offers a snapshot of data on forests, water, waste, air, land, wildlife and other natural resources. It notes that there were 747 more tigers in 2018 than in 2014. However, the net area meant for tiger conservation shrunk by 179

sq.km. Forest cover has shrunk in 38% of districts, while five out of 21 river basins are now in a state of absolute water scarcity.

CSE also publishes the environment magazine *Down to Earth*. Its managing editor Richard Mahapatra, in a foreword to the report, said, "Each data is a story. It will raise your curiosity towards a development and will help you understand its impact better."

He was speaking at the launch of the TULIP (The Ur-

Vande Bharat Mission set to break evacuation record

During Gulf War, Air India brought back 1.76 lakh nationals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A total of 3,48,565 citizens have registered till now with the Indian diplomatic missions across the world for repatriation under the Vande Bharat Mission, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. The Ministry's spokesperson said that out of the total registered number, 1,07,123 Indians have been brought back by a mix of non-scheduled commercial flights, ships and cross-border bus service from Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan and the rest will be brought back in the coming weeks.

With this, the registered

number of evacuees under this mission has officially crossed the previous record held by the 1990 airlift of Indians from Kuwait after the invasion of the country by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. In the Gulf airlift, Air India had brought back 1,76,000 nationals. The final count of Vande Bharat mission is expected to go higher, officials have said.

Mr. Srivastava said out of the total number of repatriated citizens, 17,485 are migrant workers, 11,511 students and 8,633 professionals. "More than 32,000 Indians have returned through land border immigration

checkpoints from Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh," said Mr. Srivastava. The repatriation operation covers only those who register to return under "compelling grounds". The third phase of the mission will be launched on June 11 and go on till the end of June.

The third phase of the Vande Bharat Mission will evacuate 38,000 citizens from 31 countries in 337 commercial flights. 54 flights will take off from the U.S., 24 will arrive from Canada, and 11 such flights will come from Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Seychelles, and Mauritius.

Mr. Topno has been the Prime Minister's private secretary since 2014. He was appointed in the PMO in 2009 during the UPA regime.

Another officer who served in the PMO as Joint

IAS officer of 1993 batch and

Rajeev Topno

Secretary, Brajendra Navnit, a 1999 batch Tamil Nadu cadre IAS officer, has been sent to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India (PRI). He will be based in Geneva.

Besides them, another IAS officer of 1993 batch and

No action against employers for not paying wages: SC

Negotiations have to be held, says Justice S.K. Kaul

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday restrained the government from taking any "coercive action" against private employers unable to pay full wages to their workers during the COVID-19 lockdown.

A Bench, led by Justice Ashok Bhushan, reserved its order on a batch of petitions challenging the legality of a notification issued by the Un-

ion Ministry of Home Affairs on March 29, compelling employers to pay full wages to their workers during the entire period of the lockdown. The court said it would pronounce its judgment on June 12.

The petitions, filed by the owners of small commercial establishments, industries, shops and factories, said the pandemic had already driven them to the brink of insolvency. Paying workers full wages with no work done would irretrievably send them out of business. The economy would fall flat. They said the notification

was ill-devised and arbitrary. "You [the government] said everybody across the board should pay their workers 100% wages. Some of them [private employers] would be able to pay full wages, but many may not

even be able to pay 25% or 50% wages... You have made such employers even liable to penal action," Justice S.K. Kaul, on the Bench, questioned the logic behind the notification.

"The problem is on the one hand, you want to put money in the hands of the industries and on the other, workmen cannot be abandoned. A balance has to be maintained... Some negotiations have to be held from industry to industry, from workmen to workmen," Justice Kaul observed.

Senior advocate K.V. Vishwanathan, for some petition-

er-employers, submitted that the global pandemic had affected all. "Let this not be considered a bonanza for some and ruin for others. Quash the March 29 notification and let parties start negotiations with a clean slate," he said.

Justice Bhushan questioned the government's authority to compel private employers to pay full wages to their workers. "When it comes to governmental authorities, you can give such directions, but how can you force private persons," he asked.

Attorney-General K.K. Ve-

nugopal, for the government, said the notification was no longer operational and most workers had already returned to their villages.

"The measure was proactively taken by the respondent to prevent perpetration of a financial crisis within the lower strata of society, labours and salaried employees... It would neither be in the interest of justice nor in public interest to adjudicate the validity of a notification which operated only for 54 days to mitigate the financial hardships of crores of workers and employees," the government said.



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

SCAN TO PLAY



12 Repeat show on urn-making (5)
13 Otherwise, lees are to be thrown out (4)
14 Is the French one a girl's name worthy of respect? (9)
17 Restore this crypt with three-panel art works (9)
19 Companion carries large truncheon (4)
23 System of principles by alien greeting Catholic (5)
24 Will students take it and worshippers say it before time? (9)
25 Jumper inside light-lunch eatery (7)
26 Entertainer makes a stir with the disheartened (7)
27 Such a child has many succeeding (6)
28 Long voyages in sahyas - yes, Syd officially recalled (8)

■ DOWN

- 1 Reportedly eyes codes to break follies (8)
2 Characters saunter around (7)
3 Recover, say, in Nair settlement (6)
4 Body's signals network surveys Sen and Tom conducted (7,6)
6 Endless times inside and outside (8)
7 Almost look up to young man, a high-ranking officer (7)
8 Determinedly traps small mammal (6)
10 Hastening? Don't get lost in brief hook-up! (3-5,5)
15 Questionable short detail on debt notices (8)
16 Mad man aboard ship breaks up (8)
18 Tried again and got her up to dare anew (7)
20 Be responsible for poetry in Old English (7)
21 Insect let off another insect (6)
22 It's in the desert a great many perform with hearty lust (6)

ACROSS
1 I admit hiding new offer is not clever (8)
5 Deny the truth of all but fresh collections at sports venue (6)
9 Number needed for one disgruntled regent (7)
10 Best odd trip with mother after work (7)
11 Meat eater's vehicle, new one, overturns (9)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12953

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| G | I | O | D | A | E | A | I | | | | |
| O | P | A | Q | U | E | G | A | D | R | O | |
| O | T | D | A | E | A | I | T | | | | |
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| N | W | E | S | E | E | L | E | | | | |
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Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

FAITH

Follow and then preach

Among the characters in the Mahabharata, we find men like Duryodhana who are ambitious, envious and unjust in their thoughts, words and deeds. We find characters like Sanjaya, whose very name means 'he who has won in the right way.' Sanjaya had conquered his indriyas and had acquired jnana. Among the most virtuous ranks Vidura. We must not hesitate to take the advice of a person, even if he does not have a high position. Vidura was the son of a servant maid, and yet he was virtuous, whereas Dhritarashtra, the king, was not, said Kidambi Narayanan in a discourse.

Vidura never swayed from the path of dharma, and Dhritarashtra turned to him for consolation. Dhritarashtra sent Sanjaya to the Pandavas, with a request that they avoid war. But because of the adamance of Duryodhana, it was clear that war was going to break out soon. Dhritarashtra knew the war would go against his sons, and he was worried. Moreover, when Sanjaya returned, an anxious Dhritarashtra asked him what Krishna and the Pandavas had said. But Sanjaya said he would tell about that in court the next day, in the presence of the ministers and elders. Dhritarashtra was sleepless, and sent for Vidura. He asked Vidura for advice.

In the Mahabharata, Vidura's advice to Dhritarashtra is covered in 450 slokas, and it is advice not just for Dhritarashtra, but it is advice for all of us, and has validity at all times. Vidura adhered to dharma and so was qualified to offer counsel. In the Rama avatara, the Lord adhered to dharma. Mareecha said, "RamO vigrahavan dharmah - Rama is the embodiment of dharma." In the Krishna avatara which comes later, the Lord talks about dharma. So, the Lord shows us the importance of keeping to dharma, before we preach dharma to others.

Centre launches internship scheme for 25,000 graduates

Opportunities will be posted online; no guarantee of stipend



Hardeep Singh Puri

must be Indian citizens who have completed their final year of college within the last 18 months. Internship durations can range from eight weeks to one year.

"TULIP is founded on a value-driven pull strategy. For students, it's about experiential learning that makes them ready for the job market or may help them contribute to start-ups developing solutions for ground zero India," said Kunal Kumar, MoHUA Joint secretary who heads the Smart Cities Mission. "For city administrations, it is a valuable way to inject fresh energy and ideas into our urban governance."

The programme does not have any budget of its own, but the 100 smart cities and 4,400 urban local bodies can use the administrative expenses allocated by the Centre to pay stipends or perks, if they wish to. They are also free to develop their own selection procedures.

Officers face new charges in Floyd death

His memorial service is set to take place late on Thursday after days of protest, violence across the U.S.

REUTERS
MINNEAPOLIS

Minneapolis was set to hold an emotionally charged memorial service on Thursday for George Floyd, the African-American man whose death in police custody set off a wave of protests and unrest that has roiled America in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and a divisive presidential election campaign.

The Reverend Al Sharpton, a television political commentator and civil rights activist who will give a eulogy at the service, struck an optimistic tone on Thursday morning, praising the unity of marchers protesting at police brutality.

"I've seen more Americans of different races and of different ages, standing up together, marching together, raising their voices together," he told MSNBC. "We are at a turning point here," Mr. Sharpton said ahead of the event.

George Floyd, 46, died after a white policeman pinned his neck under the officer's knee for nearly nine minutes in Minneapolis on May 25, propelling the issue of racial justice to the top of the political agenda five months before the president-



United in grief: People looking at the casket of George Floyd ahead of his memorial service in Minneapolis on Thursday. • REUTERS

tial election on Nov. 3.

Prosecutors on Wednesday levelled new criminal charges against four Minneapolis policemen implicated in Floyd's death.

Derek Chauvin, 44, earlier arrested on charges of third-degree murder and manslaughter, was also charged with second-degree murder.

The added charge can carry a sentence of up to 40 years, 15 years longer than the maximum sentence for third-degree murder.

Chauvin was the white officer seen in video footage

kneeling on Floyd's neck as Floyd gasped for air and repeatedly groaned, "Please, I can't breathe."

Meanwhile, huge crowds have defied curfews and taken to the streets of cities across the country for nine nights in sometimes violent protests that prompted President Donald Trump to threaten to send in the military.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army General Mark Milley, issued a message reminding the armed forces of their oath to uphold

the Constitution, which gives Americans the right to "freedom of speech and peaceful assembly."

Similar messages were delivered by other military leaders.

Officer stabbed

Thousands of demonstrators massed near the White House lit up their cellphone flashlights and sang along to the 1970s soul tune "Lean on Me," before resuming a chorus of anti-police chants.

Several major cities scaled back or lifted curfews im-

posed for the past few days. In New York City's Brooklyn borough, police in riot gear charged into a crowd of about 1,000 protesters defying a local curfew, albeit peacefully, near an outdoor plaza, and clubbed demonstrators and journalists as they scurried for cover in heavy rain.

A man armed with a knife stabbed and wounded a Brooklyn policeman in the neck and two officers who ran to his rescue were wounded before they shot the attacker multiple times, police said. All four were taken to the hospital.

The confrontations in Brooklyn appeared to be the biggest exception to a calmer night, hours after the new charges in were brought in Minneapolis.

Floyd tested positive for the COVID-19, his autopsy showed, but the infection was not listed as a factor in his death. The official cause of death, according to the full report made public on Wednesday by the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office, was cardiopulmonary arrest while Floyd was being restrained by police. The manner of death was listed as homicide.

Hong Kong commemorates Tiananmen victims with vigil

Despite police ban, thousands light candles across the city

REUTERS
HONG KONG

Thousands defied a police ban to gather with candles in Hong Kong on Thursday to mark China's bloody Tiananmen Square democracy crackdown in 1989 and accuse Beijing of stifling freedoms too on their semi-autonomous territory.

Meeting in the city's Victoria Park, some chanted slogans such as "End one party rule" and "Democracy for China now" as they skirted an unprecedented prohibition by police on the annual vigil justified by police due to the coronavirus crisis.

"We are just remembering those who died on June 4, the students who were killed. What have we done wrong? For 30 years we have come here peacefully and reasonably, once it's over it's 'sayonara' (goodbye)," said Kitty, a 70-year-old housewife.

National anthem Bill

The anniversary has struck an especially sensitive nerve in the former British-ruled city this year after China's move last month to impose national security legislation. On Thursday, Hong Kong passed a Bill that would criminalise disrespect of China's national anthem, a move critics see as the latest sign of Beijing's tightening grip on the semi-autonomous city.



In unison: Participants during a vigil for the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Hong Kong. • AP

national security legislation. On Thursday, Hong Kong passed a Bill that would criminalise disrespect of China's national anthem, a move critics see as the latest sign of Beijing's tightening grip on the semi-autonomous city.

Elsewhere around the city, Hong Kong residents took to the streets and also lit candles in other peaceful rallies.

"We are afraid this will be the last time we can have a ceremony but Hong Kongers will always remember what happened on June 4," said Brenda Hui, 24, in the working class district of Mong Kok, where she and a friend stood with a white battery-illuminated umbrella that read "Never Forget June 4."

Trump trying to divide America, says Mattis

Ex-Pentagon chief accuses President of failing to provide mature leadership



Jim Mattis

try reeks from days of protest.

Mr. Mattis, who resigned in December 2018 over Mr. Trump's ordering of a full troop withdrawal from Syria, also voiced support for the demonstrators whose anti-racism rallies have roiled the country.

"Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the

American people -- does not even pretend to try," Mattis wrote in a blistering statement posted online by The Atlantic.

"Instead, he tries to divide us," added the retired Marine Corps General.

"We are witnessing the consequences of three years without mature leadership," he stated.

Mr. Mattis described himself as "angry and appalled"

after witnessing events of the last week.

Mr. Mattis wrote that the protesters' call for equal justice was a "wholesome and unifying demand."

He slammed the decision to use force to clear peaceful protesters from near the White House on Monday to allow Mr. Trump to pose for photographs at a damaged church, calling it an "abuse of executive authority."

China to allow foreign flights

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China said on Thursday foreign airlines blocked from operating in the country over virus fears would be allowed to resume limited flights, apparently deescalating a row with Washington following U.S. plans to ban Chinese carriers.

The latest spat was rooted in the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) deciding

to impose a limit on foreign airlines based on their activity as of March 12. Because U.S. carriers had suspended all flights by that date their cap was set at zero, while Chinese carriers' flights to the U.S. continued.

On Wednesday the U.S. said it would block Chinese passenger flights from June 16, raising concerns of another front being opened up in the economic titans'

standoff. But the CAAC on Thursday said all foreign airlines not listed in the March 12 schedule would now be able to operate one international route into China each week.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian expressed regret over the U.S. decision, adding that the CAAC is making "solemn representations" over the matter.

Guard in China primary school stabs 39 children

2 staff among wounded; none in danger

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

A knife-wielding attacker wounded 37 students and two adults at a primary school in southern China on Thursday, officials said, with local media identifying a security guard as the perpetrator.

All the victims, including teaching staff, were sent to hospital but were not in a life-threatening condition, authorities in Cangwu County, Guangxi region, said.

The incident at the Wangfu Central Primary School happened at 8:30 a.m. when children would normally arrive for class. The attacker, reportedly aged around 50, was "under control", the government said.

"37 students suffered mild injuries and two adults suffered more severe injuries. All of them were sent to a hospital for treatment, and none of their lives are in danger," it said. Schools in the region had only reopened in May after being closed for months due to the coronavirus outbreak.

A number of schools in China have been hit by attacks in recent years, forcing authorities to step up security amid calls for more research into the root causes of such acts. In November, a man climbed a kindergarten wall in southwest Yunnan province and sprayed people with a corrosive liquid, wounding 51 of them, mostly students.

India vows \$15 mn to vaccine alliance

Gavi is a symbol of international solidarity, says PM Narendra Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

As India pledged \$15 million to Gavi, the international vaccine alliance, on Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the country stood with the world in these challenging times. He was addressing the virtual Global Vaccine Summit hosted by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Addressing heads of state, Ministers, business leaders, U.N. agencies and civil society of over 50 countries, Mr. Modi said: "India's civilisation teaches to see the world as one family and that during this pandemic it had tried to live up to this teaching," a government statement read.

He said India had shared its stocks of medicines with



Vaccine push: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson hosted the Global Vaccine Summit on Thursday. • AFP

over 120 countries, set up a common response strategy in its immediate neighbourhood and provided specific help to countries in need while protecting its own population, the statement said.

The Prime Minister said the COVID-19 pandemic, in

some ways, has exposed the limitations of global cooperation and that for the first time in recent history, the human kind faces a clear common enemy."

Symbol of solidarity

He said Gavi was not just a global alliance but also a symbol of international solidarity. He said India understood the importance of immunisation since it has a huge population and limited health facilities.

The country had added six vaccines to its National Immunisation Programme to expand protection, he said. The vaccine supply chain had been digitised and an electronic intelligence network had been developed to monitor the integrity of the cold chain, he said.

"The Prime Minister said India is also the world's foremost producer of vaccines and that it is fortunate to contribute to the immunisation of about 60% of the world's children. Mr. Modi said India recognises and values the work of Gavi...," the statement said.

North Korea lashes out at U.S., says China eclipses it

It also fumed over defectors floating balloons with anti-North Korean leaflets from across the border

CHOE SANG-HUN
SEOUL

North Korea lashed out at both Seoul and Washington on Thursday, threatening to scrap key parts of agreements with South Korea and comparing the United States to a setting sun being eclipsed by China.

The attack on the U.S. comes as President Donald Trump is in an increasingly bitter standoff with China, blaming it for the spread of the COVID-19 and threatening action over its weakening of Hong Kong's autonomy. And it follows Trump's sputtering efforts to court the North's leader, Kim Jong-un, and get North Korea to give up its nuclear arms.

Unrest in U.S.
In a statement carried by state media, North Korea also highlighted the unrest that has been consuming the U.S. over the death of George



A file photo of Kim Jong-un in Hanoi, Vietnam. • NYT

Floyd in police custody.

"Demonstrators enraged by the extreme racists throng even to the White House," said the statement published by Rodong Sinmun, North Korea's main state-run newspaper. "This is the reality in the U.S. today. American liberalism and democracy put the cap of leftist on the demonstrators and threaten to unleash

democracies, Western values."

Mr. Pompeo also said that the U.S. could work with its allies around the world, including South Korea, to "ensure that the next century remains a Western one modelled on the freedoms that we have here in the U.S."

The statement carried by Rodong Sinmun said Mr. Pompeo's remarks showed that "he is nervous over the plight of the U.S. on the downhill side" in relation to an ascendant China.

"Pompeo, who has been engrossed in espionage and plot-brewing against other countries, has become too ignorant to discern where the sun rises and where it sets," the statement read.

If South Korea does not stop the leaflets, she said, North Korea could scrap an agreement between Kim Jong-un and South Korea's President, Moon Jae-in, to operate a joint liaison office and cease all hostile military acts along the border.

'End violent drug war in Philippines'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
GENEVA

The U.N. human rights office called on the Philippine government in a new report on Thursday to end all violence targeting suspected drug offenders and to disband private and state-backed paramilitary groups.

The U.N. rights office chronicled long-standing concerns about state-backed and vigilante violence that it says has worsened in the Philippines under President Rodrigo Duterte, who has particularly drawn domestic and international condemnation for a deadly crackdown on drug offenders and users.

It said many of the human rights concerns "have become more acute in recent years" and have continued even amid COVID-19 outbreaks.

Pakistan couple arrested for killing 7-year-old maid

Her fault was 'letting a pet bird escape'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RAWALPINDI

A Pakistan couple have been arrested for allegedly murdering their seven-year-old maid after she was blamed for letting a pet bird escape, police said, the latest case of violence against child domestic workers in the country.

Hassan Siddiqui and his wife employed Zahra Bibi at their home in a middle-class suburb of Rawalpindi, near the capital Islamabad, to care for their son of a similar age.

The poor girl's body was subjected to torture by Siddiqui and his wife, who accused her of freeing one of their four pet Macao parrots, investigating officer Mukhtar Ahmad told AFP on Thursday.

"Siddiqui kicked her in the lower abdomen, which proved fatal," said the Ministry of Human Rights. Some 8.5 million people

including many children – are employed as domestic workers in Pakistan, according to the International Labour Organization.

It is illegal to employ anyone under the age of 15.

Zahra was taken to hospital by the couple on Sunday, but died the following day. The incident was reported to the police by staff at the hospital.

The young girl's body was handed over to her parents, who live in Muzaffargarh, more than 500 km away from where she was working.

Human Rights Minister Shireen Mazari confirmed the arrests in a tweet and said the Ministry was in touch with the police. "Violence and physical torture against children will not be tolerated," city police chief Muhammad Ahsan Younis added.

MARKET WATCH

| | 04-06-2020 | % CHANGE |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Sensex | 33,981 | -0.38 |
| US Dollar | 75.57 | -0.13 |
| Brent oil | 39.45 | -0.28 |

NIFTY 50

| | PRICE | CHANGE |
|-------------------|----------|---------|
| Adani Ports | 339.20 | -0.35 |
| Asian Paints | 1633.75 | -82.80 |
| Axis Bank | 394.35 | -15.20 |
| Bajaj Auto | 2817.25 | 33.85 |
| Bajaj Finserv | 5136.80 | -149.25 |
| Bajaj Finance | 2313.05 | -98.85 |
| Bharti Airtel | 572.45 | 20.80 |
| BPCL | 357.25 | 8.20 |
| Britannia Ind | 3450.35 | -59.95 |
| Cipla | 660.55 | 19.35 |
| Coal India | 140.25 | -1.45 |
| Dr Reddy's Lab | 3998.90 | 36.50 |
| Eicher Motors | 17272.95 | -269.90 |
| GAIL (India) | 97.25 | 0.90 |
| Grasim Ind | 605.10 | 7.30 |
| HCL Tech | 578.95 | 16.15 |
| HDFC | 1764.30 | -71.35 |
| HDFC Bank | 1001.70 | -20.55 |
| Hero MotoCorp | 2329.25 | 29.05 |
| Hindalco | 142.65 | -0.70 |
| Hind Unilever | 2120.60 | 0.10 |
| ICICI Bank | 347.85 | -9.00 |
| IndusInd Bank | 415.05 | -17.30 |
| Bharti InfraNet | 218.90 | -0.10 |
| Infosys | 707.75 | 6.20 |
| Indian Oil Corp | 85.90 | -1.10 |
| ITC | 200.15 | 3.45 |
| JSW Steel | 192.00 | -0.70 |
| Kotak Bank | 1334.40 | -52.15 |
| L&T | 930.70 | -30.60 |
| M&M | 478.45 | -6.65 |
| Maruti Suzuki | 5690.20 | 66.20 |
| Nestle India Ltd. | 17196.60 | -210.95 |
| NTPC | 95.15 | 0.45 |
| ONGC | 84.90 | -1.40 |
| PowerGrid Corp | 169.25 | 4.70 |
| Reliance Ind | 1579.80 | 38.15 |
| State Bank | 174.05 | -0.85 |
| Shree Cement | 21396.65 | -233.45 |
| Sun Pharma | 494.85 | 18.70 |
| Tata Motors | 98.50 | -0.25 |
| Tata Steel | 319.95 | 2.55 |
| TCS | 2091.55 | 45.40 |
| Tech Mahindra | 582.10 | 28.85 |
| Titan | 971.25 | -13.10 |
| UltraTech Cement | 3803.90 | -52.00 |
| UPL | 422.05 | 2.95 |
| Vedanta | 104.40 | 7.70 |
| Wipro | 216.25 | 4.90 |
| Zee Entertainment | 205.60 | 9.90 |

EXCHANGE RATES

| CURRENCY | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar | 75.38 | 75.70 |
| Euro | 84.42 | 84.78 |
| British Pound | 94.34 | 94.75 |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 69.14 | 69.43 |
| Chinese Yuan | 10.58 | 10.63 |
| Swiss Franc | 78.47 | 78.82 |
| Singapore Dollar | 53.76 | 54.00 |
| Canadian Dollar | 55.79 | 56.03 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 17.62 | 17.70 |
| Australian Dollar | 51.94 | 52.17 |

Source: Indian Bank

Amazon in talks to buy \$2 bn stake in Airtel

Investment could give e-commerce major 5% stake; deal could boost telco's fortunes as it competes against number one Jio



A deal with Bharti could boost Amazon's cloud business as access to the vast fibre network will help lower costs. ■ REUTERS

REUTERS
NEW DELHI/HONG KONG
Amazon.com is in early-stage talks to buy a stake worth at least \$2 billion in mobile operator Bharti Airtel, three people with knowledge of the discussions told Reuters, in a move that could turbocharge India's digital economy.

The planned investment, if completed, would mean Amazon acquiring a roughly 5% stake based on the current market value of Bharti and would give India's third-largest telecoms company a boost as it seeks to compete against the number one player Reliance Jio.

"Jio has transformed itself from a pure mobile operator to a digital technology-led consumer facing platform, and Airtel can do the same," said one of the people.

"Airtel is looking to play a catch-up game here, and for Amazon it makes all the stra-

tegic directional sense for the India business."

Amazon had been mulling several investment options, including buying a stake worth up to 8-10%, a second person said.

The talks between Bharti and Amazon are at an early

stage and the deal terms could change, or an agreement may not be reached, said two of the three people, all of whom declined to be identified because the discussions are confidential.

If talks to buy a stake fail, the companies could also

'Working with digital players, no other activity to report'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Amid reports of U.S.-retail giant Amazon looking at investing at least \$2 billion in Bharti Airtel, the telecom major on Thursday said: "We routinely work with all digital and OTT players and have deep engagement with them to

bring their products, content and services for our wide customer base. Beyond that, there is no other activity to report."

When contact, an Amazon India spokesperson said, "We don't comment on speculation about what we may or may not do in future."

look at a commercial transaction that could give Bharti's customers cheap access to Amazon products, one of the people said.

An Amazon spokeswoman said the company does "not offer comments on speculation of what we may or may

not do in future." Shares in Bharti closed 3.8% higher after rising as much as 6% on news of the Amazon talks.

U.S. tech interest
Discussions between Amazon and Bharti underscore the attraction of India's digi-

tal economy for U.S. tech giants.

Over the past six weeks, Jio, the digital arm of Reliance Industries raised \$10 billion from global investors including Facebook as it seeks to establish itself as a one-stop digital commerce platform.

Alphabet Inc's Google is also exploring an investment in Vodafone Idea, a joint venture between Britain's Vodafone Group Plc and India's Idea Cellular, the Financial Times reported last week.

A deal with Bharti could help e-commerce major Amazon expand offerings via its smart speakers and also boost its cloud business as access to Bharti's vast telecom fibre network could help Amazon lower costs.

Reliance's Jio has already partnered with Microsoft for use of its Azure cloud platform.



Most MSMEs to shed staff to revive: survey

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Over 70% of MSMEs who responded to a survey by the All India Manufacturers Organisation (AIMO) intend to reduce headcount across the board. AIMO received 46,525 responses from MSMEs, corporate CEOs, the self-employed, experts and individuals.

About 49% of the survey's respondents were from MSMEs and 7% were corporate CEOs. "The most striking aspect of the survey was that 72% of MSME respondents and 42% of corporate respondents said they would definitely reduce headcount to get their business back on track. In fact, only less than 20% of all categories said they would continue with the same headcount," said K.E. Raghunathan, immediate past president, AIMO.

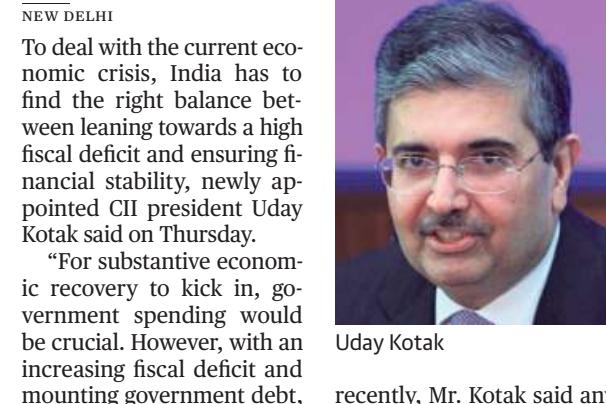
The extent of the job loss will be clearer by the end of August 2020, as most respondents were in the process of gauging how many of their labourers will return and the optimum employee strength required to sustain their business in the near future, the survey said.

Issues likely to be faced during the unlocking period are forecasting demand, collection of pending dues, raw materials along with present interest burden and salary issues.

SBI board to meet on fund raise of \$1.5 bn

India runs risk of rating downgrades

Further downgrade will make India susceptible to flight of capital: Uday Kotak



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
To deal with the current economic crisis, India has to find the right balance between leaning towards a high fiscal deficit and ensuring financial stability, newly appointed CII president Uday Kotak said on Thursday.

"For substantive economic recovery to kick in, government spending would be crucial. However, with an increasing fiscal deficit and mounting government debt, the economy runs the risk of rating downgrades which has consequences," Mr. Kotak said during a video conference. Following Moody's downgrading India's rating

to be borne by three entities: individuals and businesses, the government and the financial system. "Perhaps, the government will have to take on a disproportionate share of this pain in order to ensure long-term survival of businesses and a financial system strong enough to support the recovery in the real sector," Mr. Kotak said.

Mr. Kotak said it was reasonable to presume that Indian economy would witness a contraction in FY21. However, the question is how deeply negative the growth is likely to be.

On relaxations in labour laws in various States, Mr. Kotak said that change is

needed to get investments back and there is also a need to ensure that a social security framework is created for ensuring fairness to the workers.

Asked about the Supreme Court rapping RBI over non-waiver of interest on loans for the moratorium period, Mr. Kotak reasoned that banks are intermediaries between depositors and borrowers. "We cannot have a one-sided contract where we allow moratoriums on interest to the borrowing side and, of course, banks have a fundamental obligation to pay principal and interest to the depositors. It cannot be an unequal game."

TAFE free tractor rental plan aids ryots

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The CSR initiative of TAFE (Tractors and Farm Equipment Ltd.) to rescue small and marginal farmers from the economic implications of COVID-19 has benefited over thousands of them in the last 60 days of the cropping season, said the company in a statement.

TAFE, through its JFarm Services platform, launched a free tractor rental service for farmers in Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh on April 1 for a period of 90 days.

The scheme received an overwhelming response from the farming community. Within 60 days of its implementation, over 1,00,000 acres have been cultivated and rental service provided to thousands of farmers in this crucial cropping season, it said.

In the last few months, there have been instances where technical glitches have led to issues such as prices not getting updated and client margins not being reflected properly.

"The launch marks a significant milestone in the company's history and will define our future course as we set out to achieve our vision to be among the top 10 players in the commercial vehicle player creating reliable and differentiated product," said Dheeraj Hinduja, chairman, Ashok Leyland, said through a video call.

While terming the new products as a game changer, he said: "AVTR will take our customers to the next level of trucking and they will reap the benefits of modularity.

"In line with our decision, the new range will not only

provide reliability and quality, but will allow us to take our products to many international markets around us.

This will allow us to demonstrate the global competitiveness of Made in India product across all parameters," he said.

Asserting that the last 18 months were challenging for the industry, he said, "based on our current assessment,

the next few quarters will

continue to test our resilience. Well, it is going to be the new normal. We have decided to power on and launch these new products.

Today's launch is a testimony to adaptability and readiness to take on the future in our own turf."

Mentioning that he had seen many downturns in the past, he said "we are leaving no stone unturned to re-build at our business model."

The Hinduja Group company had invested ₹500 crore in the new modular platform and tested the vehicles on different terrains.

The range will be produced at Ennore, Hosur and Pantnagar facilities.

Multiple options

The modular platform is a first-of-its-kind in the Indian CV industry, says CTO Saravanan. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Big firms may have to inform on MSME dues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government is mulling to make it mandatory for large firms to disclose their dues to the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to ensure timely payments to them, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said.

He said despite various interventions, including promising MSMEs that payments by the Centre and its undertakings will be made within 45 days of delivery of goods or services, a satisfactory solution to the problem had been elusive.

"We are thinking of various ways on how MSMEs can get their money. One attempt is to make the bigger firms declare whether they have paid MSMEs or not and make the same binding for them," he said.

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Basu Chatterjee: the quintessential family man

He was a torchbearer of light-hearted, middle class family dramas that often pivoted around independent women

NAMRATA JOSHI
MUMBAI

Filmmaker-screenwriter Basu Chatterjee could well be called the quintessential family man of Hindi cinema of the 1970s and 1980s. His debut film, *Sara Akash*, set in a joint family in Agra, was about a young, incompatible couple, forced into an arranged marriage, trying to adjust to domesticity and gradually getting to discover each other. The 1969 film – along with Mrinal Sen's *Bhuvan Shome* and Mani Kaul's *Uski Roti* from the same year – is regarded as having ushered in the New Wave movement in Indian cinema.

Kaul, Kumar Shahani and Basu Bhattacharya continued to remain Chatterjee's creative comrades and friends, though he himself opted to embrace what has since been called the middle-of-the-road cinema. He, along with Hrishikesh Mukherjee, became the torchbearers of light-hearted, entertaining, middle-class family dramas that offered a parallel narrative to the mainstream Angry Young Man movies on the one hand and the radical, path-breaking, artistic and experimental concerns of the New Wave.

That journey started with *Piya Ka Ghar* (1972), where newly married Malti (Jaya Bachchan), used to the expanse of her village home, finds it disconcerting to have no privacy with her husband Ram (Anil Dhawan) in the matchbox flat which houses all the members of the family together.

Family and the skein of relationships within its folds remained a lifelong concern for Chatterjee. Be it *Priyatama* (1977), about a young couple on the verge of divorce, or *Khatta Meetha* (1978) that looked at the hell



1930-2020

that breaks loose when two widowed people decide to get married much to the consternation of their kids. There were the Perreira-Braganza families of *Baton Baton Mein* (1979) that came to define Bandra households, while *Apne Paraye* (1981) looked at the fissures within a family that can lead to its eventual disintegration.

Anil Dhawan, who played the lead, alongside Jaya

Bachchan, in *Piya Ka Ghar*, says it feels fresh even today. "Till date, I get calls when someone watches it," he says. The reason it has held so well is because it's real, a part of the lived experiences of the audience, and holds a mirror to their lives. "There's nothing fake about it. Filmmakers show us dreams; he showed us our reality – our homes, our food, the bags we hold while catching a bus for going to office," he says.

Chatterjee's storytelling, like that of Mukherjee's, was straightforward, unadorned and uncomplicated, even if the emotions dealt with would have been complex. "His content was like a fresh breeze even though his cinematic grammar remained simple and basic," says actor-director M. K. Raina, who worked with him in *Ek Ruka Hua Faisla* (1986), an Indian adaptation of Sidney Lumet's *Twelve Angry Men*.

A singular aspect about Chatterjee's films was how much they were pivoted around women – educated, intelligent and independent, negotiating personal or relationship conundrums, questioning but not quite pushing the envelope, eventually coming back to the conventional family fold than straying far away from it. Like Vidya Sinha in *Rajnigandha* (1974), caught between two polar opposite men in her life, played by Dinesh Thakur, and Amol Palekar in his Hindi film debut. The film turned out to be a sleeper hit and led to two more successes from the Chatterjee-Palekar duo – *Chhoti Si Baat* (1976) and *Chitchor* (1976).

Even his foray into television, in the heydays of Doordarshan, was marked with the iconic series *Rajani*, which made Priya Tendulkar instantly popular as the crusader taking on the ineffi-

cient government offices and systems.

Having been a journalist and cartoonist, he picked his stories with care. The popular Doordarshan series *Byomkesh Bakshi* (re-telecast during the lockdown) was based on Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay's works centred on the iconic detective.

Chatterjee's films were about long-term associations, be it with Vidya Sinha or Amol Palekar or Deven Verma or Asrani or Rajesh Roshan, Rakesh Roshan, Amit Khanna or Yogesh. In a matter of two months during this pandemic we have had three of these team members pass on in quick succession – Ranjit Chowdhry, Yogesh, and now, the captain of the ship, Basu Chatterjee. The consolation is that films, and the families in them, will live on in our collective memories and shared nostalgia.

The films may not have played at the Croisette but will receive Cannes 2020 label that will help their journey ahead in the film festival circuit and theatres.

56 films to receive Cannes 2020 label

Will help their journey in the festival circuit and theatres

NAMRATA JOSHI

Wes Anderson, Francois Ozon, Naomi Kawase, Steve McQueen, Timothee Chalamet, Saoirse Ronan, Kate Winslet and many more stars would have shined on the red carpet at Palais des Festivals et des Congrès, with their new films premiering at Grand Theatre Lumière and Claude Debussy Theatre, had the 73rd edition of Cannes Film Festival, scheduled to run from May 12-23, not been cancelled in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

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The 56 films were chosen from the 2,067 feature films received this year compared to 1,845 in 2019, 1,916 in 2018 and 1,885 in 2017.

"Cannes Film Festival will maintain its mission of putting cinema at the heart of the world, as it has been doing since its first edition."

"We will bear witness to cinemas imperious presence and prodigious vitality," said Fremaux, in a communiqué ahead of the announcement.

The full list of 56 films can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/3eHuvWi>

IN BRIEF



Diego Costa fined, avoids jail in tax fraud case

MADRID Atletico Madrid forward Diego Costa has been ordered to pay a fine of €543,000 after admitting to defrauding Spanish tax authorities of more than a million Euros, judicial sources said on Thursday. AFP

Eintracht beats relegation threatened Bremen

WERDER BREMEN Werder Bremen's fight against relegation from the Bundesliga faltered on Wednesday after a 3-0 home defeat by Eintracht Frankfurt that leaves it mired in the drop zone. Bremen, with six matches left, is second-from-bottom and three points from safety.

The result: Werder Bremen 0 lost to Eintracht Frankfurt 3 (Andre Silva 61, Stefan Ilsanker 81, 90). AFP

Rashid, Aditi and Diksha recommended for Arjuna

NEW DELHI Golfers Rashid Khan, Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar have been nominated for this year's Arjuna Award by the Indian Golf Union (IGU). The Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) and Women's Golf Association of India (WGAI) send their recommendations to the IGU. PTI

AIFF to pay stipend to u-17 WC probables

NEW DELHI The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Thursday decided to pay two-month stipend of ₹10,000 per player for the months of June and July to the country's FIFA u-17 Women's World Cup probables to meet their dietary requirements as training remained suspended. PTI

MCA apex council meeting on June 8

MUMBAI The rescheduled meeting of the apex council of the Mumbai Cricket Association to form an ad-hoc Cricket Improvement Committee (CIC) will be held on June 8. Apart from forming the ad-hoc CIC, the council is expected to fix the date of its AGM and also discuss the 2020-21 season. PTI

VFI free to conduct league, rules arbiter

CHENNAI Volleyball Federation of India is free to conduct the Volleyball League without any impediment, according to a press release from the federation. The arbitrator (K. Kannan), in the arbitration between Baseline Ventures and VFI modified his earlier order dated January 18, 2020, and clarified in an order on Wednesday (June 3) that the VFI can call for fresh tenders to conduct the league. In a message to *The Hindu*, Joy Bhattacharya, CEO, Baseline Ventures, said they will not ask for restoration of rights, but will pursue a multi-crore damage case against the VFI.

Have battled depression: Uthappa

I was thinking about how I would survive this day'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Robin Uthappa, a key member of the 2007 World T20-winning Indian team, revealed that he battled clinical depression and suicidal thoughts for nearly two years during his career, a phase when the game was perhaps the only thing that kept him from "jumping off a balcony".

"I remember around 2009 to 2011, it was constant and I would deal with that on a daily basis.

"There were times where I wasn't even thinking about cricket, it was probably the farthest thing in my mind," he said during a Royal Rajasthan Foundation's live ses-



• FILE PHOTO: K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

I remember around 2009 to 2011, it was constant and I would deal with that on a daily basis

Still a fragile situation: Naubert

Athletes should not overexert themselves on return: Ghouse

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

World sport is slowly coming back to life, starting with the German football league.

Even though it was the first major event to get back on the field after the COVID-19 outbreak, the rest of the world may not be able to use the Bundesliga's blueprint – with different situations and rules in place in different countries.

"Germany was hit hard by the coronavirus, but the death rate was not very high. We tried to bring football back and get back to normal general life," said Peer Naubert, Head of Marketing of Bundesliga, in an interaction about the 'new normal' in sport, organised by the Fed-

eration of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

"The measures by the German government were right, and the national health system was strong. Everyone played their part in the restart, and we are going match by match. It is still a fragile situation," conceded Naubert.

JSW Sports CEO Mustafa Ghose said it was important to be in constant touch with the athletes and calm them down. "The athletes have pent-up energy. We have to ensure that they don't overexert on return. Since there are not too many high-level competitions till the end of the year, we can plan on slowly increasing

their training load," he said.

With so many football leagues reviving around the world, Ghose said there would be enough examples for the ISL to follow when it starts in October.

Touching on the economic situation, IOA president Narinder Batra said cricket and football left only 5 to 7% of the sponsorship money to be shared by about 58 disciplines, and that the government had assured support for main sports until the Commonwealth and Asian Games in 2022.

Pointing out that the world economy had taken a huge hit during the lockdown, Ghose said, "We are mentally prepared for the tough road."

We need to be smart in how we invest in programmes, says Bates

UTHRA GANESAN
NEW DELHI

New Zealand all-rounder Suzie Bates feels cricket will have to take a hard look at its programmes, planning and investments as the world comes to terms with a new normal amidst the coronavirus pandemic.

Some of ICC's new guidelines, including social distancing and ban on use of saliva, Bates feels may be difficult to enforce. However, the no-saliva rule is of less concern to women than men "since it would affect the red ball more than white ball," she says.

Back to the nets

The 32-year-old Bates, who resumes indoor nets next week – New Zealand is set to declare coronavirus officially 'eliminated' on June 15 – is also "trying to be positive and planning as if the 2021 World Cup will go ahead as scheduled."

"We are going to have to

be smarter with how we invest in both men's and women's programmes and consider reducing domestic and international travel," Bates told *The Hindu* in an exclusive interaction from Dunedin.

More tournament-style play to reduce travel and scheduling of international series in one city might be the way forward. Most existing sports business models are not sustainable in the changed scenario and reassessment at the grassroots and professional levels were

required, she said.



Suzie Bates. • AFP

The pandemic has also taught her to be grateful. "I have always appreciated my lifestyle as a professional cricketer, but I will never take for granted the freedom to travel and play cricket around the world again," said ICC's two-time women's ODI Player-of-the-Year.

BWF cancels Hyderabad Open 2020

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

As widely expected, the inaugural \$90,000 Hyderabad Open, announced as part of the Badminton World Federation (BWF) calendar for 2020, stands cancelled.

On Thursday, the BWF announced its decision to cancel the tournament, a Super 100 event on the lower-tier BWF Tour scheduled from August 11 to 16, after getting the nod from Badminton Association of India (BAI). An already-suspended Australian Open (June 2-7) and Korea Open (Nov. 24-29) have also been cancelled.

Dubov takes title

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Less than two years after surprisingly becoming the World rapid champion, Daniil Dubov firmly established his credentials as the next big speed-chess player by nailing Hikaru Nakamura 3-2 and winning the \$150,000 Lindores Abbey

Speed king: Daniil Dubov, who won the Lindores Abbey Rapid Challenge chess title on Wednesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

BFC allotted Asia berth

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

The AIFF, on Thursday, announced Bengaluru FC as India's third team in the 2021 AFC continental club competitions. The side will feature in the AFC Cup play-off next year. FC Goa will play in the AFC Champions League group stage and ATK Mohun Bagan in the AFC Cup group stage.

The play-off slot was reserved for the winner of the ISL play-offs, ATK in this case, but after it formed a joint venture with I-League winner Mohun Bagan, it took the direct entry secured by the latter. BFC, third in league phase, earned the slot vacated by the second-placed ATK.

The elephant. The uncrowned king of the jungle. The largest animal on land. Over 5 tons of brute force. It roams the jungle like it owns it, because it does. Its menacing tusks are one of the most feared weapons in the animal kingdom. The bare sight of the charging tusker is enough to send shivers down the spine of every vertebrate in its vicinity. But not ours. The valiant humans.

We are fearless. We crawl up, with our puffed-up chests, straight into the elephant's territory. Armed with merely a high-powered rifle, we sneak up on the majestic beast. Then, with a gentle squeeze of the trigger, we end the elephant's reign. When there isn't a gun handy, we just lace some food with deadly poison and leave it in the wild. Brave, isn't it?

The elephant is not alone in surrendering to our daredevilry. The 300-year-old oak tree that the human single-handedly cut down with an electroplated chainsaw is another force of nature that bowed down before our might. The whales, the biggest creatures on the planet, are chased down on motorised boats and killed with motorised harpoons. Giant boulders shattered to bits with dynamite. Evergreen forests flattened

bulldozers. Graceful birds rendered flightless with mechanical crossbows. The list is endless. The courage of the humans knows no bounds after all. Well, almost.

The tiny virus has brought us mighty beings to our knees. We have been forced to retreat and stay within the confines of our homes. There is fear in the air, a word that cannot be found in our dictionaries. It has slowed us down, allowing the rest of the species to catch up. The hunter has become the hunted. The destroyer has become the destructible. The balance of power has changed, making us weak and the rest of the planet strong.

But we will be back. We will return with more audacity than ever before. We will tear down the environment without an iota of guilt or fear. We will slay the inhabitants of the land, the sea and the sky. With our vaccinated bodies and sanitised rifles. Our camouflaged gear and our night-vision goggles. Our explosives. Our vehicles. Our machines. We will force the planet to submit to our bravery, once again. We will grab power back, with every tool at our disposal. Except for our conscience, the one tool that makes us human in the first place.

5th June, 2020 – World Environment Day

THE HINDU

The real bravery is in saving the planet. If you know any tales of such courage, tell us at hello@thehindu.co.in. We will feature the best ones.