



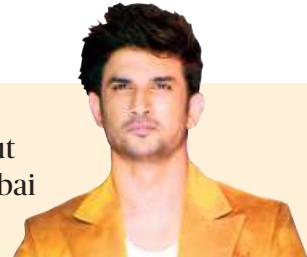
Amit Shah reviews  
COVID-19 situation in  
Delhi with CM Kejriwal  
page 9



4,827 seafarers will  
return in largest crew  
sign-off exercise  
page 9



Gujarat experiences  
5.5 magnitude quake,  
no damage reported  
page 10



Bollywood actor  
Sushant Singh Rajput  
found dead in Mumbai  
page 14

Police warn of  
action against  
those sharing  
pictures of  
actor's body

GAUTAM S. MENGLE  
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Cyber department on Sunday night issued an advisory cautioning people against sharing pictures of deceased actor Sushant Singh Rajput's body, warning of legal action.

Disturbing pictures of Rajput's mortal remains surfaced on WhatsApp mere hours after his demise. Within a short while, they made their way onto WhatsApp groups and other platforms like Twitter.

Several social media users expressed shock and outrage at those sharing the pictures just to gain visibility online.

Late on Sunday, the Cyber department tweeted, "A disturbing trend has been observed on Social Media platforms by Maharashtra Cyber that pictures of deceased actor Shri. Sushant Singh Rajput are being circulated, which are disturbing and in bad taste. It is emphasised that circulation of such pictures is against legal guidelines and court directions, and are liable to invite legal action. Maharashtra Cyber exhorts and directs all netizens to refrain from circulating the aforesaid pictures. The pictures already circulated should be deleted henceforth. (sic)"

Officials said with a medium like WhatsApp, tracing the original source of the pictures would be next to impossible. They said all social media platforms are being watched so action can be taken against anyone found sharing the pictures.

EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 11

## In the pandemic, the disabled remain an invisible minority

Study says 75% of such people were hit by lockdown

SUCHITRA

In Delhi's Wazirpur, two families are struggling each day to make it. Pulinder, 49, is paralysed due to an epileptic seizure. For the past two years, his wife, Asha Devi, has been supporting the family. They have a son, who has an undiagnosed ailment that leaves him weak now and then. Ms. Asha Devi wipes a tear and says,

"Where should I go now? Should I buy food or medicines?"

Ms. Asha Devi works in a steel line. Post the lockdown, the families have got absolutely no support from the government or from their employer. She has not received wages from the steel line she works at, and Mr. Pulinder has not been able to access proper medication for his condition.

Another woman who is a product of deprivation on account of both disability and class is Naznin. Her husband, Sajjaad, lost the use of

his legs in an accident two years ago. He needs Ms. Naznin's assistance for most of his tasks. She sighs in anguish and says, "How can I stand in long lines for ration when there is nobody to take

### SPECIAL

care of him back home? I have three small children to support as well. Who should I ask for help?"

According to a report by the National Centre for the Promotion of Employment for Disabled Persons (NCEDP) – which includes

results from a study of 1,067 people with disabilities (about 73% male, 27% female) – over 73% of those surveyed faced serious difficulties due to the lockdown.

### Locked out

For many like Mr. Pulinder and Mr. Sajjaad, living with disabilities has been more of a task post-lockdown because of governmental negligence, combined with inaccessibility to healthcare and rewarding employment. A large class divide has become increasingly visible in the lockdown.

According to professional psychologists, individuals with disability and their families are at a greater risk of poor health and quality of life outcomes because either their social status is affected by their disabilities or their disabilities are made worse by the inaccessibility that comes with social status. Lower income levels have been consistently correlated with poor health and inferior quality of life.

(The writer is an independent journalist based in Delhi)

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8



Pushed to penury: Delhi couple Sajjaad and Naznin are having a hard time finding a livelihood. ■ SUCHITRA

## India's rise in cases third fastest globally

Country has been adding 11,000-plus cases and over 300 deaths daily; new highs in Maharashtra, Delhi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

With 11,220 new COVID-19 cases and 325 deaths registered on Sunday, the total number of infections and the death toll in India reached 3,32,777 and 9,521 respectively. This data was based on reports from State Health Departments and collated by *The Hindu*.

The recovery rate was nearly 51%. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the total number of samples tested on Sunday was 1,51,432, up from 1,43,737 on Saturday. Maharashtra led the tally with 3,390 new cases and 120 deaths. Delhi registered 2,224 cases and 56 deaths.

India now ranks third, behind Brazil and the U.S. in the daily increase in COVID-19 cases (7-day rolling average) across the world.

In the number of deaths registered every day, India ranks fourth below Brazil, ranks fourth below Brazil,

### Viral trend

The graphic looks at the number of new cases and deaths recorded in India on Sunday and the change (% from 14 days ago). States are characterised based on where the cases are rising (red), dropping (green) or shows a mixed trend (yellow).

IN INDIA  
NEW CASES  
11,220  
14 DAY-CHANGE  
+ 37.15%

NEW DEATHS  
325  
14 DAY-CHANGE  
+32.31%



the U.S. and Mexico. It again ranks fourth in terms of total number of cases behind the U.S. (with nearly 2.1 million), Brazil (8,50,514) and Russia (5,28,267) and ninth in total fatalities, according to the

Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 tracker.

While India's infection rate in terms of cases per million people was much lower, the country has conducted fewer tests per million

3,000 than others with the most infections, according to data maintained by the website Our World in Data.

The comparable testing rates for the U.S., Russia and the U.K. are 70,000, 99,870

and 55,860 respectively. Brazil's testing data was not available.

## Panic as new cases climb in Beijing

After two months with almost no new COVID-19 infections, Beijing has now recorded a total of 51 cases, all linked to a wholesale food market, raising fears of a resurgence of the disease. The Beijing wave has already spread to the neighbouring province of Liaoning, where two new cases were reported. At least 10 Chinese cities have urged residents not to travel to the capital. ▶ PAGE 12

and 55,860 respectively. Brazil's testing data was not available.

MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGES 7, 8, 9 & 12

with 60% effectiveness after the lockdown, the demand for treatment facilities can be met until the first week of November. Thereafter, isolation beds could be inadequate for 5.4 months, ICU beds for 4.6 months and ventilators for 3.9 months, projections by the researchers showed.

However, this shortfall is estimated to be 83% less than what it could have been without the lockdown and public health measures.

With sustained measures to increase the infrastructure and the varying pace of the epidemic in different regions, the impact of the unmet need can be reduced. If the coverage of healthcare measures can be increased to 80%, the epidemic can be mitigated.

## ICMR study plots mid-Nov. peak

It warns of bed and ventilator shortage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The peak stage of COVID-19 in India has been delayed by the eight-week lockdown along with strengthened public health measures, and it may now arrive around mid-November when a paucity of isolation and ICU beds and ventilators can arise, a study says.

The study, conducted by researchers from an Operations Research Group constituted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), said the lockdown shifted the peak by an estimated 34 days to 76 days and helped bring down the number of infections by between 69% and 97%, allowing time to shore up resources and health infrastructure.

In a scenario of intensified public health measures

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## China has preferred talks: Rajnath

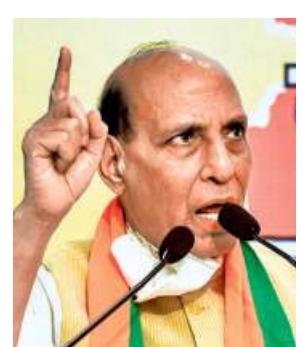
Minister says military and diplomatic channels open to resolve Ladakh stand-off

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
JAMMU

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Sunday that dialogue was under way to resolve the stand-off on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

"Military and diplomatic channels are open with China. China has also expressed desire to resolve the issue through a dialogue. We also believe that Indo-China tussle could be resolved through a dialogue at the military and the diplomatic levels," Mr. Singh said addressing BJP leaders and workers in a virtual *Jan Samvad*.

Referring to the Opposi-



### The last firing on the border

Though 1967 marked the last major fighting between India and China, it was not, however, the last incident of a shot being fired on the contested boundary. That would happen eight years later. ▶ PAGE 10

tials at an appropriate time," he said. He assured the people and the Opposition that "there will be no compromise with national pride".

"India is strong, not weak."

We are augmenting the security of the country," he said.

**'Will change J&K future'** Promising to initiate an "unprecedented development" process in the next five years in Jammu & Kashmir, Mr. Singh said people in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) would soon prefer India to Pakistan after watching the progress on this side. "Development is our priority. In the coming five years, we will change the future of J&K and PoK residents would envy it too," he said.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8**

## Pak. firing in Poonch kills soldier

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

A soldier was killed and two others were injured as the Pakistani Army violated the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Baramulla district in Kashmir on Sunday.

Doctors of a hospital in Poonch said a soldier with multiple splinter injuries was admitted there around 8 a.m.

"The jawan was injured in a firing and shelling incident during the night. He died of his injuries later," an official said.

Army sources identified the deceased as Sepoy Lun-abu Abomli, 29.

It is the third time that a soldier has lost his life in firing and shelling by Pakistani troops in the Pir Panjal Valley this month.

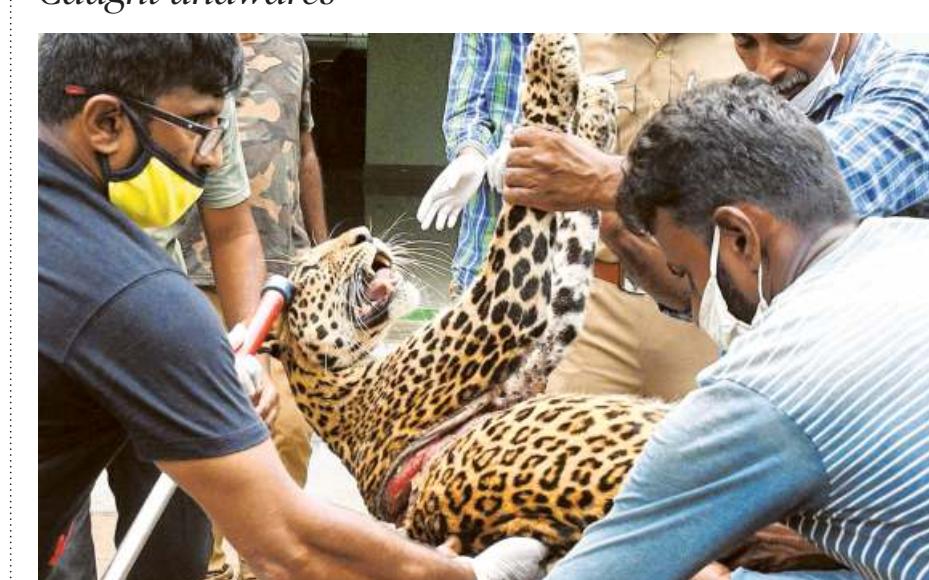
**'Befitting response'**

An Army spokesman in Srinagar said Pakistan violated the ceasefire in the Rambur sector of Baramulla district too. "Pakistan initiated an unprovoked ceasefire violation along the LoC in Rambur by firing mortars and other weapons on Sunday morning. A befitting response is being given," he said.

The intermittent exchange of fire between the two Armies was reported throughout the day in the Uri sector of Baramulla.

A woman was killed and two other civilians were injured when Pakistani troops resorted to heavy shelling in the Haji Pir Sector of Uri on Saturday.

## Caught unawares



**Wire tapped:** Forest staff attend to a leopard that got caught in a barbed wire fence at a village in the Sirumugai range near Coimbatore on Sunday. The 18-month-old female, which sustained severe injuries, was shifted to a treatment facility near Mettupalayam. ■ M. PERIASAMY

## Squeezed – Punjab, Haryana in space jam

Haryana Speaker turns to Governor for more space in shared Secretariat complex

VIKAS VASUDEVA  
CHANDIGARH

Over five decades of living together have not made Punjab and Haryana happy neighbours, especially on the issue of sharing space in the erstwhile Punjab Assembly building. Since Haryana was formed in 1966, the two States have been sharing space in the building for their Secretariats and Assemblies.

The space crunch has forced Haryana Speaker Gian Chand Gupta to write to Punjab Governor-cum-Chandigarh Administrator V.P. Singh Badnore seeking more space. The letter comes days after Punjab



Room for discontent: The Punjab and Haryana Secretariat in Chandigarh. ■ AKHILESH KUMAR

Speaker Rana K.P. Singh made it clear that the State did not have any surplus area to spare.

"The Governor has assured me that he will

constitute a committee to look into the matter," Mr. Gupta told *The Hindu*.

"As per our records, 20 rooms, which had been designated for Haryana,

have not been given to us... We should have got a 40% share of space in the building under the Punjab Reorganisation Act, but got only 27% so far," he said.

In his June 2 letter to the Governor, Mr. Gupta said the additional rooms under the control of the Punjab Assembly Secretariat are not being put to any constructive use and are only being used as stores.

The 64,430 sq ft building was trifurcated in 1966 – 24,630 sq ft for Haryana, 30,890 sq ft for the Punjab Vidhan Sabha and 10,910 sq ft for the Punjab Vidhan Parishad, which ironically does not exist.

The intermittent exchange of fire between the two Armies was reported throughout the day in the Uri sector of Baramulla.

A woman was killed and two other civilians were injured when Pakistani troops resorted to heavy shelling in the Haji Pir Sector of Uri on Saturday.

Ticket windows will be opened for commuters, but passes will be issued only to those who can furnish a government ID card.

Earlier in the day, railway officials met representatives of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the Mumbai Police to work out protocols.

Western Railway (WR) will run 120 services from Vihar to Churchgate, while Central Railway (CR) will run 200 services. On WR, services will run at 15-minute intervals between 5.30 a.m. and 11.30 p.m. On CR, trains will only halt at fast service stations and will depart from Panvel, Kasara, Karjat, Kalyan and Thane. The RPF is also being provided. The RPF is also being redeployed across stations to manage crowds and 150 additional staff from the Maharashtra Security Force have also been requisitioned. The Government Railway Police has also asked all its staff to hold discussions on crowd control with their RPF counterparts.

A key point discussed during the meetings was whether to allow essential staff working in the private sector to use the services. The Railways Board has allowed private health care workers to avail of the services.

A B.M.-B.M.E

Man dies on board Vande Bharat flight

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

A 42-year-old passenger died on-board a Vande Bharat Mission repatriation flight from Lagos to Mumbai on Sunday.

Airline officials said the passenger, Manesh Patil, was flying Air India flight AI 906 and attempted to revive him by an on-board doctor proved futile, and he was declared dead.

Officials said the deceased was suffering from malaria and that his brother, who was a Mumbai resident, had been intimated.

Mumbai International Airport Ltd. doctors also attended to the passenger after the flight landed at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, at 3.45 a.m. The body was sent to Cooper Hospital as per protocol.

An Air India spokesperson said the crew, who are trained to handle medical emergencies, had tried to resuscitate him.

## ZEE flags off CSR drive for COVID-19 relief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

ZEE Entertainment on Sunday flagged off its national-level CSR drive by donating 46 ambulances and 50 high flow heated respiratory humidifiers to the Brihamnagar Municipal Corporation (BMC). It also donated over 200 ambulances, 40,000 personal protective equipment kits, and building over 100 intensive care units across the country.

The drive was launched in the presence of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Minister for Tourism, Environment and Protocol Aaditya Thackeray and ZEE Entertainment managing director and CEO, Punit Goenka.

"The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in India have been far reaching and calamitous for vulnerable communities. It is important that we step up our efforts during such times. ZEE is committed to continue its

# 23-year-old man held for rape, murder of minor girl in Dongri

The seven-year-old victim lived in the same locality as the accused

GAUTAM S. MENGLE  
MUMBAI

The Dongri police on Saturday arrested a 23-year-old man for allegedly sexually assaulting and murdering a seven-year-old girl from his locality. The girl had been missing since May 30 and her body was recovered on Sunday, following the accused's confession and arrest.

### CCTV clues

According to the police, the victim was reported missing at 9.30 p.m. on May 30. The police said she had stepped out of her Dongri residence in the evening to play, but never returned.

After searching for her at all possible spots, her family members approached the police. In keeping with the procedure for missing minors, the police registered a case of kidnapping against unknown persons and initiated inquiries.



Investigating officers said the first clue came from CCTV cameras installed in the area. "We scanned footage from scores of CCTV

cameras in and around the area till we found a man heading out of a locality with a gunny sack on his shoulder late at night. We obtained stills of the footage and started looking for the man, till we found a possible suspect matching his description on Friday," an officer with the Dongri police said.

The suspect was picked up and brought to the police station. For nearly a day, he held up under sustained questioning, claiming that he had been taking garbage from his house to dispose of. Finally, on Saturday, the suspect allegedly confessed to

committing the crime.

### 'Secluded spot used'

"The accused is from the same area and convinced the victim, who he saw while on his way home, to come with him. He took her to a secluded spot in the locality, which he knew is deserted at night and forced himself on her, after which he strangled her to death. He then stuffed her body in a sack, which he had in his house, and dumped it close to the railway tracks near the Sandhurst Road station," senior police inspector Sandeep Bhagdikar, Dongri police station, said.

The accused was arrested and charged with kidnapping, sexual assault and murder under the Indian Penal Code along with sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. He has been remanded in police custody till June 20.

In the next five days, Maharashtra will see good

# Monsoon has arrived: IMD

Heavy to very heavy rainfall predicted in Mumbai

TANVI DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Monsoon has officially arrived in Mumbai and entire Maharashtra, said the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday, forecasting heavy to very heavy rain for Monday and Tuesday.

The 'normal' date for onset of monsoon in Mumbai is June 11. However, last year it was the most delayed in 45 years, arriving only on June 25. This year, however, the city experienced showers throughout last week. Mumbai has received 208.5 mm rainfall in pre-monsoon showers since June 1 but is yet to see heavy rain.

### Monsoon arrival over the years

Year	Date of onset
2014	June 15
2015	June 12
2016	June 20
2017	June 12
2018	June 9
2019	June 25
2020	June 14



ARUNANGSU ROY CHOWDHURY

rainfall. Some parts of Konkan, central Maharashtra, Marathwada and Vidarbha will see very heavy rainfall," said Shubhangi Bhute, senior scientist at IMD, Mumbai.

From 8.30 a.m. on Saturday to 8.30 a.m. on Sunday, Mumbai had received 19.7 mm rainfall.

However, the city did not see any rain on Sunday, despite the declaration of monsoon. Explaining this, Ms. Bhute said, "There are several criteria for declaration of onset including upper air observation, ground obser-

vation, thunderstorm and 2.5 mm rain in two days among others. All of these indicated the onset of monsoon. It has been raining in Mumbai for several days now. Even an hour of heavy rain is enough."

Apart from Maharashtra, IMD also declared onset of monsoon over Gujarat. It has forecast that the monsoon will advance further north in the next two days. "Active monsoon conditions are expected over West Coast and interior Maharashtra in next two to three days," IMD said in a press release.

## ISBC has kept boxing fraternity live indoors: Narsi

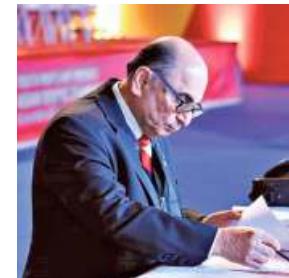
Veteran boxing administrator, who had narrow escape from Wuhan outbreak, speaks on sport's evolution

NANDAKUMAR MARAL  
MUMBAI

Boxing administrator Kishen Narsi (80) would have been in early March been in Wuhan as part of a technical panel appointed by AIBA (world boxing association) to oversee a competition in China.

"Travel arrangements were made; I had my visa in hand and was ready to leave. Fortunately, the Asia/Oceania Olympic Qualifying Tournament was moved to Jordan, else I would have been in the middle of it (the outbreak in Wuhan); god is great," Mr. Narsi said.

The Mumbai-based chairman of the Asian Boxing Confederation's competitions committee, relieved to have escaped a health hazard due to the change in venue, returned after a fortnight of work in Amman's Prince Hamzah hall, straight to the monotony of home quarantine. "For two weeks, I was inside my flat, helping my wife in anyway that I could, be-



Kishen Narsi at the technical table during a competition.  
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

sides working out. I walked inside the house for two hours and did my abdomen exercises, apart from the household chores," he said.

The curbs on outdoor sporting activity have been frustrating for the former boxer, who earned international reputation as a referee/judge and jury for tournaments at the Asia and World level, besides the Olympics. He was also an executive committee member of AIBA for 10 years. "I quit competitive boxing in 1962, then kept

my body and mind active by playing different sports, especially tennis, snooker and bridge. Sports is a way of life," Mr. Narsi said.

He used the extended lockdown to participate in the Indian Shadow Boxing Challenge (ISBC), 2020 (see box). Mr. Narsi has submitted a 30-second clip of him attacking and defending against an imaginary opponent in an imaginary ring at home. ISBC is a shadow boxing competition organised by the Mumbai City Boxing Association, open to Indian citizens worldwide, and classified into different age categories.

Mr. Narsi believes though he may be old in age, he is young at heart. "My wife asked me if I was sure about doing the boxing home video, and even pointed out that I didn't have boxing gloves. But you don't need equipment for shadow boxing, so I went ahead and submitted the video," he said.

The retired boxer said AI-

BA had also asked him to fly to London to oversee another event post the Amman qualifiers, but he excused himself to give his wife company in Mumbai.

"I have not stepped out of my flat since I returned from Jordan. I keep wondering when this lockdown will end and I can go out to play tennis at the Bombay Gymkhana," Mr. Narsi said.

The veteran said he would be more than happy to lend a hand to the city association's move to popularise shadow boxing. "The ISBC has brought about a feeling of being together, it has kept the boxing fraternity alive. Now that we are all indoors anyway, it helped to continue training. Most of our boys are training through this," Mr. Narsi said.

The experienced administrator also noted that boxing had evolved beyond a competitive sport into a fitness sport. "There are people I know ready to give fitness

### All about shadow boxing, ISBC

Shadow boxing is part of the training regimen of boxers where they attack and defend themselves against an imaginary opponent in an imaginary ring. The sport can be practised anywhere, indoors or outdoors, and is considered an excellent cardio and conditioning workout. ISBC 2020 is an initiative to encourage competition via shadow boxing as people remain indoors due to the lockdown.

The invite for ISBC 2020 was sent out by Jay Kowli, president of Mumbai City Boxing Association and secretary general of Boxing Federation of India. Mr. Kowli asked participants to send in 30-second videos via WhatsApp, Facebook or Telegram to the contest address. Entries can be sent by Indian citizens across the world.

The competition has 12 categories, with the lowest being for the under-nine age group and the highest, called stalwarts, for those above 80 years old. Mr. Narsi entered in this category.

State following Vijender Singh's emergence in world boxing. Singh's career highs being the bronze medals won at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing and the 2009 World Boxing Championships at Milan.

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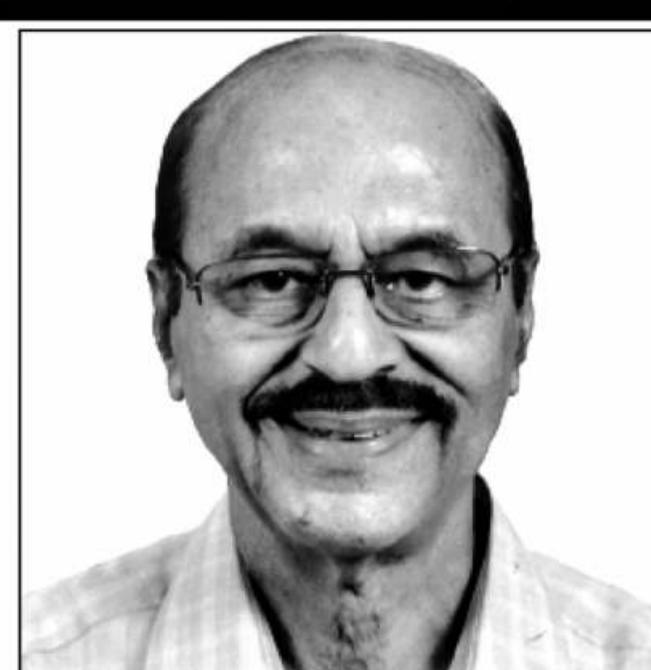
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## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

## 5th ANNIVERSARY



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#### Timings

MUMBAI

MONDAY, JUN. 15
RISE 06:01 SET 19:17
RISE 01:56 SET 14:18
TUESDAY, JUN. 16
RISE 06:02 SET 19:18
RISE 02:29 SET 15:06
WEDNESDAY, JUN. 17
RISE 06:02 SET 19:18
RISE 03:04 SET 15:55

#### Mumbai Weather

max min

Mumbai Airport 33 26

Pune 31 23

Mumbai City 33 26

31°C Heavy rain and thundershower are expected. Day will be humid with a cloudy sky.

**Mumbai Tomorrow**  
30°C Heavy rain and thundershower is likely. A cloudy sky with humid day.

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**Maharashtra COVID-19 tracker**

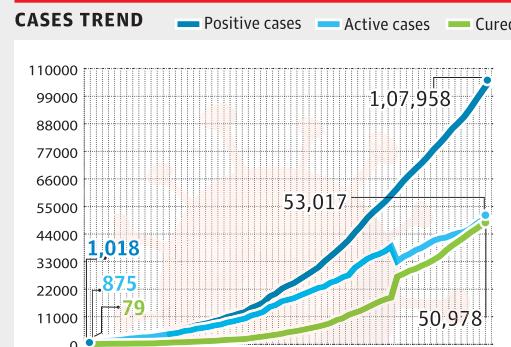
TOTAL CASES	NEW CASES	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERED	DEATHS
1,07,958	3,390	53,017	50,978	3,950

**DISTRICTS AFFECTED: 35**

DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS	DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Mumbai	58,226	2,182	Hingoli	239	1
Thane	18,080	434	Sangli	225	7
Pune	12,184	480	Nanded	235	10
Aurangabad	2,668	135	Yavatmal	181	3
Nashik	1,934	105	Latur	176	8
Palghar	2,326	50	Osmanabad	146	5
Raigad	1,868	64	Sindhudurg	150	0
Solapur	1,820	131	Buldhan	125	3
Jalgaon	1,702	131	Parbhani	82	3
Akola	1,021	42	Gondia	70	0
Nagpur	1,013	12	Beed	75	2
Satara	741	28	Gadchiroli	49	1
Kolhapur	694	8	Chandrapur	47	0
Ratnagiri	392	16	Nandurbar	48	4
Dhule	393	26	Bhandara	49	0
An�avati	344	21	Wardha	14	1
Jalna	262	6	Washim	49	2
Ahmednagar	239	9			

**POSITIVE CASES OVER LAST 15 DAYS**

1,395 (41.15%) of Sunday's cases are from Mumbai

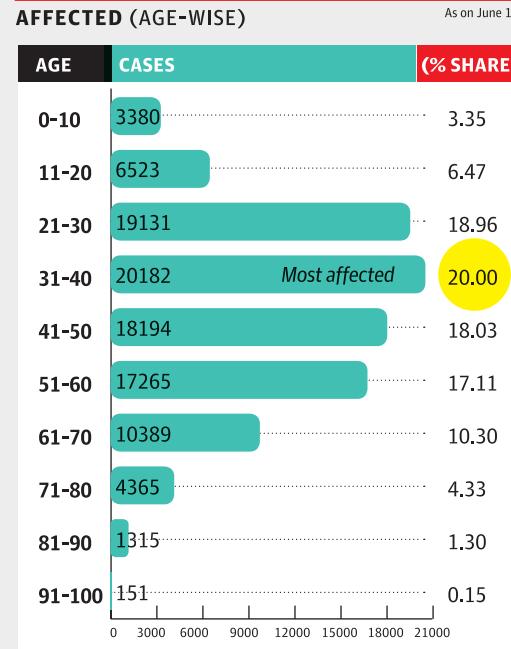


47.19% is the State recovery rate

**MORTALITY RATE**

Maharashtra: 3.66%

India: 2.87%

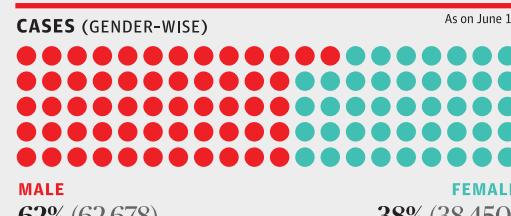
**QUARANTINE NUMBERS**

5,83,302 | 28,200



Home quarantine

Institutional quarantine



70% 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: ssummaharashtra@gmail.com

**CITY-WISE HELPLINE NUMBERS**

Mumbai city: 022 22664232

Mumbai suburbs: 022 26556799 / 26556806

Thane: 022 25301740

Palghar: 02525 297474

Raigad: 02141 222118

Ratnagiri: 02352 226248

Sindhudurg: 02362 228847

Source: Public Health Department, Maharashtra, BMC

# 133 staffers of Solapur hospital booked for remaining absent

They ignored notices, say officials; Pune district reports 150 new cases

**SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE**  
PUNE

As many as 133 employees, including doctors and other medical personnel, of a private hospital in Solapur district have been booked for violating orders by remaining absent from work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The doctors, nurses, ward boys and office staff of Ashwini Hospital were issued multiple show cause notices, which they chose to ignore, said district authorities.

Police officials said a case had been lodged against the staff under Sections 51 B (refusing to comply with government orders) and 57 (contravention of any order) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and Sections 269 (negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and 336 (act endangering life or personal safety of others) of the Indian Penal Code.

"The hospital was directed to admit patients as the government has regulated beds in private facilities in



Cover up: Street vendors sell face shields at Deccan in Pune on Sunday. ■ JIGNESH MISTRY

wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, a majority of the staff at the Ashwini Hospital chose to remain absent from work," said a senior medical official. He said staff of eight other private facilities were also under the scanner and would face similar cases if they refused to abide by the rules.

After Pune district, Solapur is the worst-affected in the Pune division, reporting nine COVID-19 deaths on Sunday to take its death toll

to 146. Another 47 cases saw its case tally rise to 1,659. Of these, 647 are active.

In Pune district, 150 new cases and four fatalities were reported till Sunday evening, to take its total case tally to 11,877 and death toll to 489. Pune Divisional Commissioner Dr. Deepak Mhaisekar said only 3,931 cases were active, while 7,457 people have been discharged till date with the district's recovery rate standing at 62.79%

Dr. Mhaisekar said the

death toll in Pune division, which includes Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur and Solapur and Pune districts, has risen to 681. The division's case tally has reached 15,198, of which 4,965 cases are active.

"Till date, 9,552 people in these five districts have been discharged, while 262 of the active patients are critical," said Dr. Mhaisekar.

"Satara reported eight new cases to take its tally to 726. But the number of active patients has come down to 196 with 499 recoveries thus far. The district has reported 31 fatalities," Dr. Mhaisekar.

Kolhapur reported 10 new cases in the last 24 hours to take its tally to 720. Its active case tally has dropped drastically to 96, with as many as 616 people discharged. The district has reported eight deaths thus far.

In Sangli, 16 new cases took its total to 216, of which 95 are active and 114 have been discharged. The district has reported seven deaths so far.



Check-up queue: Dharavi residents wait outside a primary health centre at Pila Bunglow. ■ PRASHANT NAKWE

## Mumbai tally up to 58,226; 69 more die

Only 29,050 cases currently active

**TANVI DESHPANDE**

MUMBAI

COVID-19 cases in Mumbai crossed the 58,000 mark on Sunday, with 1,395 new cases emerging. The city also reported 69 more fatalities, pushing the death toll to 2,182.

According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), of the 2,111 deaths reported till June 13 in Mumbai, 1,645 were of those above the age of 50. As of June 13, as many as 978 patients were critical. Only 17 of the 1,206 intensive care unit (ICU) beds in the city were available, and only 12 of the 532 ventilators. The BMC aims to set up 500 more ICU beds soon.

According to available data, this is the only such hospital in the world to perform more than 300 deliveries of COVID-19 positive pregnant women so far. The hospital conducted its first such delivery on April 14 and by Sunday, had conducted 302. These include a set of triplets, and twins as well.

"According to available data, this is the only such hospital in the world to perform more than 300 deliveries of COVID-19 positive pregnant women so far. The hospital conducted its first such delivery on April 14 and by Sunday, had conducted 302. These include a set of triplets, and twins as well.

According to the statement, babies of COVID-19 positive mothers do not contract the virus in the womb, but may get infected through contact. At Nair hospital, 10 babies had tested positive, but did not develop any symptoms. They tested negative later and were discharged.

The hospital had counselled all mothers on what precautions were to be taken. The hospital management will be publishing a research paper on the feat.

## Saluting COVID-19 warriors



Painting on the wall: A man walks past artwork honouring essential service workers like doctors, police personnel, delivery boys and sanitation workers. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

## State reports 3,390 new COVID-19 cases

Total case tally goes up to 1,07,958

**SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE**  
PUNE

Maharashtra reported the third consecutive single-day surge of over 3,000 COVID-19 cases on Sunday.

It reported 3,390 new cases, taking the total to 1,07,958, and 120 deaths, pushing the number of fatalities to 3,950.

According to the figures released by the State Health Department, only 53,017 cases are active. As many as 1,632 patients were discharged. The number of recovered cases went up to 50,978.

State Surveillance Officer Pradeep Awate said the recovery rate stood at 47.2%, while the case fatality rate climbed to 3.65%.

Health Department officials said 11 deaths were reported from Pune to take the district's toll to 480.

Eleven more deaths were reported from Jalgaon, a major hotspot in north Maharashtra. The district's cumulative toll went up to 131.

Three deaths reported from Solapur in the Pune division took its toll to 131, said State officials. Seven deaths reported from Aurangabad took the toll to 135.

Fatalities were also reported from Osmanabad, Akola and Ratnagiri.

"Of the total deaths reported today, 43 had occurred in the last couple of days, while the remaining fatalities are from the period

## Govt. grants ₹15 crore for hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

THANE

The Maharashtra government has sanctioned ₹15 crore to set up a 1,000-bed COVID-19 hospital in Mira Bhayander, Owala-Majiwada MLA Prat

# 'Now I can get on with my LIFE'

After two decades, Eoin Colfer's anti-hero makes it to the screen. Also, the Irish author tells us why he's swearing off the Internet once *Artemis Fowl* premieres on Disney+

ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

## DEBORAH CORNELIOUS

In a way, Eoin Colfer is the embodiment of Peter Pan, JM Barrie's fictional boy who stayed a child. Well, sort of. People keep telling the 55-year-old Irish author to never grow up and to continue thinking up leprechauns, fairies and other fantastical creatures. He is happy to oblige – how else would we have Artemis Fowl, a 12-year-old anti-hero named after the Greek goddess of hunting.

Fowl is the protagonist of the bestselling eponymous series of eight books. The first two – *Artemis Fowl* and *The Arctic Incident* – have been adapted into a live-action film that dropped yesterday on Disney+, ending a 20-year-long, will-they-won't-they saga. Colfer admits he has been plagued by a single question for the last two decades: what's happening to the *Artemis Fowl* film? "I was so disappointed for the first two to three years," says the author, whose name is pronounced 'Owen', over a Zoom call. "I was in despair, but I stopped after a while. Once I turned 40, I decided I'm too old to worry about whether a movie is coming or not." The lengthy journey hasn't exactly been smooth sailing either. If an unnamed film executive had had his way, he would've made Gollum from *The Lord of the Rings* and Thomas Harris' Hannibal Lecter share the same frame as the tween! Not a recipe for success.

The film was commissioned even before the first book made it to print. Colfer recent-

ly told Sky News how he wrote *Artemis Fowl* in his "box room, on the nappy changing table... so when Disney approached me, it meant I could have a little office in the garden; it was that simple and I really didn't hesitate". But since then it has been passed around between plenty of skippers. Production houses and directors – from former film producer Harvey Weinstein's Miramax to filmmakers Lawrence Guterman and Jim Sheridan – came and went, but the green light remained elusive. One production bigwig wanted an outer space setting while another concocted an elaborate interspecies (human and fairy) romance. But the worst was the parody tribute suggestion. "I don't know who had that idea but I was very upset," he reveals. "I'm glad that didn't go ahead." Thankfully, better sense prevailed and the result is mostly faithful to the source material.

### Cut to cues

Before Colfer became a beloved children's author, he spent almost 15 years as a teacher, working on his novels without an agent. After all, in Ireland having professional representation is enough to get you killed because you have "notions about yourself", as he put it during a talk at The Oxford Union last year. In school, he'd absorb his pupils' antics like a sponge, regurgitating their personalities into fictional characters. Take Holly from *Artemis Fowl*. The feisty fairy is

based on Rachel, a tiny but intense student who punched a much bigger rugby-playing classmate in the knee (that's as high as she could reach) for disrupting class. In addition to becoming her teacher's sometime-weapon against class miscreants, she also found herself immortalised in his books.

As for his protagonist, Colfer looked no further than home. "I'm a big believer in drawing inspiration from your family," says the author, who has often used storytelling to reconcile and work out his personal issues. Younger brother Donal's trouble-making ways paved the way for Fowl, including his posh get-up of a suit and tie. In Donal's case, it was a first communion outfit that made him look especially villainous. "All my [four] brothers feature as characters. My mum, dad and sons are in my books, too. But they don't mind being the inspiration for all these crazy characters," adds Colfer, who grew up in Wexford, Ireland, in a boisterous family. His two sons now have disclaimers before uttering anything that might make its way into the public domain.

### Change is good

The breadth of Colfer's output is wide. He has 43 books to his name, including picture books, graphic novels and fantasy series, besides plays, collaborations and even musicals. His latest, *Highfire* – a fantasy novel for adults revolving around Vern, a vodka-swilling dra-

gon, and Squib, a young delinquent – released in January to great reviews. But if there's something common, it is how most of his books are a mixture of escapism and tackling issues. Fowl, true to his name, is foul, but there's also good... deep, deep beneath the surface. "The message is that anybody can change as you get older," says the writer, who didn't stumble on the essence of his anti-hero's redemption until book one was done and dusted. It was an experiment to see if being bad could, in fact, be good. "I decided then that the arc of the series would be that this character would change quite slowly, and that happens at the very end of the last chapter of the last book."

For now, the tween is alive, courtesy Kenneth Branagh's (*Thor*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Cinderella*) sleight of hand. And the author says he will swear off social media a day after its worldwide streaming premiere. Despite his bestsellers and the accolades, a single bad review out of a thousand could end in sleepless nights. "It is a big deal for me because there are only 200 Disney movies and one of them is based on my books. Whatever happens in my career, this is a lovely part of it and I will always be very proud," says Colfer, adding, "So I'm just going to enjoy the movie" and then not pay any mind to what comes after.

### Director's call

The perennially favourite children's series –

though voraciously consumed by all ages – has been compared to *Harry Potter*. Especially with Branagh behind the camera. Mixed reviews followed the trailer that featured a much watered-down Artemis Fowl whose original evil-most-potent ways lassoed in readers. The film has gender and race swaps along with ambitious creative liberties. Naturally, it has stung some hardcore purist fans. But Colfer cautions: "When you go into a movie expecting it to be the same as the book, you will always be disappointed. It is better for directors to take big chances rather than try and follow the book exactly."

Ferdia Shaw, 12, who stars as Artemis Fowl, echoes the sentiment, reiterating that the books and the film are two separate entities. "If the two are exactly the same, that would just bore the audience," says the debut actor.

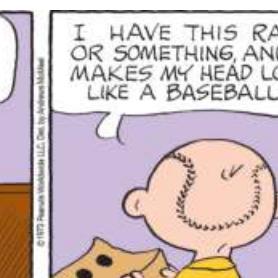
Initially slated for a theatrical release on May 29, the coronavirus pandemic has forced *Artemis Fowl* to a smaller screen. But Colfer has taken the development in his stride. The alternative would have been another two-year wait. "I think it is better that we see it now," he laughs. "Something else could happen by then and I am running out of patience. At least now I can get on with my life and do something else!"

*Artemis Fowl* is streaming on Disney+ Hotstar.

## POOCH CAFE



## PEANUTS



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



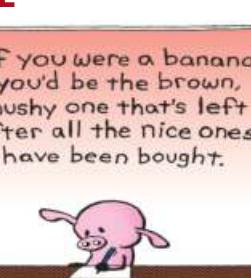
## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## TIGER



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



# Govt. to use social media to identify blood donors

71 blood banks will be registered on Facebook

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government has decided to utilise the services of social media platforms to coordinate between blood donors and patients in need of blood.

Around 71 government blood banks will be registered on Facebook's blood donation tool. When needed, a blood bank can get in touch with the tool to identify donors in the vicinity.

"We decided to use the tool as the government is extending a number of relaxations after the lockdown. It has been said time and again that the State requires blood not only for COVID-19 patients, but also for those suffering from other diseases. The Facebook tool is an attempt to ensure more donors get connected," said State Health Department's principal secretary Pradeep Vyas, on the occasion of World Blood Donation day.

Mr. Vyas said 71 government blood banks will be registered on Facebook's blood donation tool. "When requirement arises, a request will be made on the digital



A blood donation camp organised by Nanaheb Dharmadhikari Pratishthan at SNDT College in Ghatkopar. ■ FILE PHOTO

platform. Those who have registered with the social media platform, will be notified about the need," he said.

A message will be sent to the donors in the vicinity about the required blood group and address of the blood bank. "The rapid communication due to digital platforms will save lives," he said.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has been highlighting the requirement of

blood in the State's blood banks. The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown have restricted the flow of usual blood donors.

Several youth organisations, including those of the three ruling parties of Congress, Shiv Sena, and Nationalist Congress Party have been organising blood donation camps, while adhering to physical distancing norms.

## SBI shuts three branches in Mumbai, Thane after spike in COVID-19 cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

The nation's largest lender, State Bank of India, has temporarily closed three branches – two in Mumbai and one in adjoining Thane – after eight staff tested positive for COVID-19, bank employees said.

The bank's main branch in Thane was shuttered last week after seven of the 25 staff were found COVID-19 positive, according to a senior bank employee.

A cash officer at the local cheque processing cell (L CPC), also known as the clearing department, in J jogeshwari (East) was found COVID-19 positive, leading to temporary closure of the branch early last week, said another employee.

As a precautionary measure, the bank temporarily stopped operations at its L CPC located in Andheri, after a gardener working there was found to be infected with the virus, the employee said.

When contacted, the SBI said, "Our quick response team headed by a general manager is continuously monitoring the situation in the entire country and due protocol is followed in case of any infection. Many of our staff members, who got infected, have recovered

## Uddhav to kick-start Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0 with 12 pacts

Companies from U.S., China, South Korea, Singapore are keen to invest in State, said officials

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

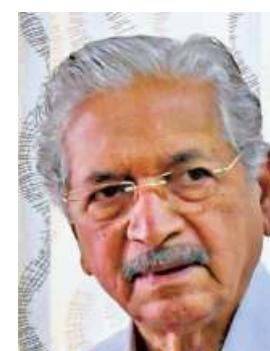
Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Monday will launch Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0 to revive the economy in post-COVID-19 times, as part of the State government's 'Mission Begin Again'. This will be the first major government event promoting the industrial development of the State, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The State will be signing 12 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with Indian as well as companies from the U.S., China, South Korea, and Singapore.

The foreign companies, from diverse sectors such as engineering, car and spare parts manufacturing, information technology, logistics, chemical, and food processing, have agreed to invest in the State, according to an official from the Industries Department. A spe-



Uddhav Thackeray



Subhash Desai

cial session via videoconferencing will be held at 6.30 p.m. on Monday, which will be attended by industrialists, ambassadors from several countries, and investment agency representatives, along with Mr. Thackeray, Industries Minister Subhash Desai, and other officials.

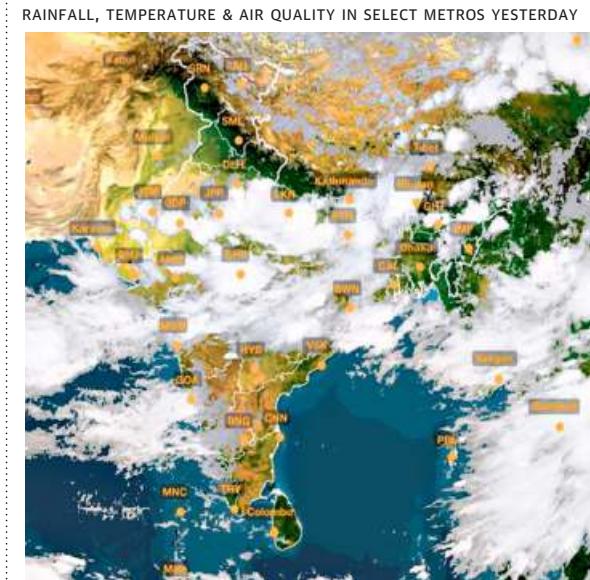
The official said Maharashtra is a preferred destination of businesses and aims to re-establish supply chain in south-east Asia. "Monday's event will kick-start Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0. The State has offered plug and play infrastructure, a land bank of over 40,000 acres, flexible rent and cost mechanisms, and automatic licences in 48 hours through Mahaparvanya and labour bureau to

fulfil the need of workers. All these initiatives by the State will surely attract more investments," the official said.

The previous government had launched the Magnetic Maharashtra summit with an aim to bring in investments worth ₹10 lakh crore. Though the then government had claimed several MoUs were signed, the Opposition had questioned how many translated into investments on the ground.

While the lockdown has hit industries and trade, relaxations offered by the State are beginning to restart the economic cycle. The Industries Department claimed that it had begun over 60,000 businesses and over 15 lakh workers had reported for duty.

### WEATHER WATCH



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

**Forecast for Monday:** Heavy to very heavy rainfall likely at a few places over Goa, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Gujarat and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	... 50.0	... 28.0	... 23.6	Kozhikode	... 59.4	... 28.0	... 23.6
Ahmedabad	75.2	34.0	22.2	Kurnool	... 35.0	... 24.5	... 24.5
Aizawl	... 27.2	19.0	13.0	Lucknow	... 38.9	... 28.6	... 28.6
Allahabad	... 38.9	29.8	26.6	Madurai	... 40.0	... 26.6	... 26.6
Bengaluru	1.8	28.9	21.0	Mangaluru	80.2	28.1	23.2
Bhopal	... 35.0	25.6	20.0	Mumbai	11.2	32.2	26.0
Bhubaneswar	20.2	29.4	25.4	Mysuru	... 1.1	28.4	21.8
Chandigarh	3.4	38.8	25.5	New Delhi	... 40.8	28.0	28.0
Chennai	... 40.1	28.6	23.0	Patna	2.8	35.0	27.8
Coimbatore	0.7	33.3	22.6	Port Blair	1.1	31.7	25.6
Dehradun	... 34.7	23.1	19.0	Puducherry	... 38.2	27.8	27.8
Gangtok	0.2	21.6	16.3	Pune	... 32.4	23.6	23.6
Goa	68	32.1	23.9	Raipur	... 32.8	27.5	27.5
Guwahati	14.5	35.0	25.0	Ranchi	2.4	26.7	24.5
Hubballi	... 26.0	23.0	20.0	Shillong	2	25.7	15.0
Hyderabad	... 33.5	24.2	20.0	Shimla	3.1	30.0	19.8
Imphal	5.6	31.8	22.2	Srinagar	2.6	24.6	13.0
Jaipur	... 40.0	28.0	23.8	Tiruvananthapuram	11.2	31.0	23.8
Kochi	4.4	30.0	24.8	Tiruchi	... 38.3	27.6	27.6
Kohima	6.4	24.2	17.5	Vijayawada	... 37.0	28.4	28.4
Kolkata	9	30.1	27.5	Visakhapatnam	... 31.0	28.8	28.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	22	.37	51	... 41	—	■■■■■
Bengaluru	11	.22	34	... 54	—	■■■■■
Chennai	.2	25	75	... 66	—	■■■■■
Delhi	19	.79	71	245	134	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.7	.49	18	... 10	23	■■■■■
Kolkata	.7	.8	12	19	38	■■■■■
Lucknow	.4	.2	53	119	—	■■■■■
Mumbai	—	.1	53	13	26	■■■■■
Pune	11	.4	44	... 14	13	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	—	—	—	—	—	■■■■■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bhawali, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 231 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Kozhikode, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 20

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

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**NO<sub>2</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form 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

## Four girls drown in pond

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DAHOD

Four tribal girls drowned while taking bath in a pond at a village in Gujarat's Dahod district, the police said on Sunday.

The victims, aged 9 to 12 years and related to each other, went to the pond in Gungardi village on Saturday evening, an official from Garba police station said.

"While taking bath, one

of the girls started drowning following which the other three tried to save her. However, later all of them started drowning and died while trying to save each other," police sub-inspector Yogesh Rathwa said.

Divers later fished out the bodies which were sent to a local community health centre for post-mortem, he said, adding further investigation is under way.

## State forms committee to probe issues related to barrage in Telangana

Move comes after farmers' land submerged in Gadchiroli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government has formed a six-member committee to examine the problems that arose following submergence of land in the State due to the Medigadda barrage in neighbouring Telangana.

It is possible Telangana constructed the barrage "in a different manner" than what it had conveyed to Maharashtra, the Uddhav Thackeray-led State government said in a recent order.

**Pact signed in 2016**

Land was acquired in Sironcha of Gadchiroli district for the project. The barrage was inaugurated by Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao last year at an event, which was also attended by then Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. The two States had signed a memorandum of understanding for the construction of the inter-State irrigation project in August 2016.

"It is possible that Telangana constructed the bar-

rage in a manner different

from what it had conveyed to the Maharashtra government when the inter-State agreement with regard to the barrage was reached," the Shiv Sena-led government said in its order. "Also, it needs to be examined what is (the area of) the forest land that will be submerged (due to the barrage)," the government said.

**Government criteria**

It also needs to be probed whether the certificate issued by the forest department was issued as per the government criteria or under somebody's pressure, it said.

"The local office of deputy conservator for forest had raised objections on certain aspects while the construction was on, but the then district collector instructed him not to act; this was probed under whose pressure it was done," said the committee's terms of reference.

**Compensation**

The committee will take up with the Telangana government the issue of compensation for farmers in Sironcha, whose land was submerged, the order said. The panel, to be headed by Nagpur divisional commissioner, has been asked to submit its report within a month.

**Hit hard by lockdown, museums in Goa await govt. approval to reopen**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
PANAJI

Owners of Goa's heritage museums, which are struggling to stay afloat due to the COVID-19 crisis, are hopeful that the State government will allow them to reopen their premises for visitors soon. Though a lot of curbs have been lifted in Goa, museums have not yet been allowed to reopen.

Goa, which is popular among tourists as a beach destination, is also home to several museums that showcase the rich culture and heritage of this former Portuguese colony.

Since the lockdown came into force in March, these museums, which used to attract hundreds of visitors on normal days, have remained closed.



## No longer special

India and Nepal need to move quickly to reverse the recent setback to ties

**A**fter months of brinkmanship, India and Nepal have brought their relations to the edge of a precipice. The Oli government's decision to pass the constitutional amendment ratifying a change in its maps that include Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyaduwa, territories that India controls, marks a decidedly new phase in ties. While the issue is an old one, it resurfaced in 2019 when New Delhi published new political maps to reflect the changes following the decision on August 5 to reorganise the State of Jammu and Kashmir, and Nepal objected to the depiction of disputed territory. In 2000 and 2014, India and Nepal agreed to hold talks about Kalapani and Susta, without much success. Matters snowballed when India's Defence Minister inaugurated a surfaced road over the territory; when Nepal protested, Indian Army Chief, General Naravane, suggested it was at the "behest" of China. At the base of the rift is the lack of diplomatic manoeuvring to allow a step back from the brink. While New Delhi contends that it was willing to discuss matters "at a mutually convenient date", Kathmandu says the MEA has rejected two dates suggested by the Nepal MoFA, and has routinely dismissed requests from the Nepal Ambassador for a meet with the Foreign Secretary. That the MEA said Kalapani talks could wait until both countries had dealt with the coronavirus pandemic first, further enraged the Oli government, which has pointed out India's participation by videoconference in bilateral and multilateral meetings. Meanwhile, Mr. Oli's purposeful manner in pursuing the amendment at exactly the same time as the India-China border stand-off bolsters the belief among some in New Delhi that he is speaking with confidence borne from Beijing's backing.

Regardless of the truth of those accusations, or who is more responsible for the downside in ties, the speed with which the constitutional amendment was passed has left little space for diplomacy now. That the vote was unanimous should also inform New Delhi of the futility of casting Mr. Oli alone as the 'villain' of the piece. It is necessary the two nations resolve their issues through dialogue lest they face more serious consequences. The Modi government has in the past not flinched from taking tough measures, including the 2015 blockade that severely affected India's land-locked neighbour. The Oli government, which seeks to build its legacy by overturning what it calls "unequal" agreements made by the monarchy, could also cause a security nightmare for India if it opens up other parts of their long boundary, and reverses old commitments on open and unsecured border posts. Both sides moved quickly this week to manage the fallout of border firing by Nepali police on a group of Indians that left one dead. The same alacrity is needed to manage the fallout of Saturday's amendment vote, on the once celebrated "special" relationship between the two countries.

## Behind the curve

The Centre must help States tide over the pandemic crisis by giving GST dues

**M**eeting for the second time since the pandemic took hold in the country, the GST Council, last Friday, decided to relax late fees and interest payable for those taxpayers failing to file returns on time. For businesses with no tax liabilities under the indirect tax regime, the late fees were completely waived. This is in line with similar relaxations announced by the Centre in March, before the lockdown was declared, to ease compliance deadline worries of small businesses in particular. Since the full lockdown lasted longer than initially envisaged, and only began to unwind this month, the forbearance on offer was a necessary step. But given the extent of economic damage as well as the States' fiscal positions in the period between these two meetings of the Council, its decisions are far from sufficient. In March, GST collections had slipped to ₹97,597 crore after surpassing the ₹1-lakh crore mark over the previous four months, and the numbers for April and May will not be known before July. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has told State representatives in the Council that just 45% of the indirect tax target had been met in the past two months. Although aware of the dwindling tax kitty during the lockdown, States have had their hands full managing the pandemic.

It is for this reason that several States have been urging the Centre to extend emergency fiscal support and release past GST compensation dues enshrined in the pact that allowed the new tax regime to take off three years ago. In its stimulus package, in May, the Centre enhanced States' power to borrow, but only part of that was completely unconditional, and a large chunk was contingent on States undertaking specified reforms. These reforms may be long-pursued ideals, but whether this is the right time for prioritising them has been questioned. GST compensation (for revenue shortfalls in the first five years of GST) due to States for December 2019 to February 2020 was only released on June 4. Perhaps, it was timed to pre-empt discontent in the Council's meeting. Yet, Centre-State ties could turn more fractious, especially in the GST Council where things have usually evolved with consensus so far – thanks to the failure to finalise the way forward for paying States the compensation. One of the ideas on the table, officially discussed for around two months, is to raise loans against future GST cess accrals in order to compensate States. Any decision on this front, along with proposed GST rate rationalisations in the textiles, footwear and fertilizers sectors that were on the Council's agenda, can now only be expected at a special meet in July. Procrastination is not an appropriate response at this arc of the curve – be it the pandemic or the economy.

# The need for an anti-discrimination law

India is unique among democracies in that a constitutional right to equality is not backed by comprehensive legislation



SUHRITH PARTHASARATHY

**S**port is often a microcosm of society. Much as we might sometimes see it as a leveller, it invariably tends to underscore more endemic inequities. Recent revelations made by the former West Indies cricket captain Darren Sammy, therefore, must awaken us to a problem that goes far beyond the cricket field and its narrow confines, of a society rife with racism.

### Voices in sport

In our country, this problem is only exacerbated by other historically ingrained forms of discrimination, along the lines of caste, class, gender, and religion among other things. Indeed, in reacting to Mr. Sammy's statements, the former Indian cricketer Irfan Pathan pointed not only to how players from the south of India routinely faced abuse from crowds in the north – something which the Tamil Nadu and India opener Abhinav Mukund too attested to – but also to another form of prejudice even more entrenched in society. On June 9, Mr. Pathan said, in a tweet, that racism in our country goes beyond the colour of our skins, that enforcing embargoes on people seeking to buy houses based on their faith ought to equally be seen as a feature of prejudice.

Predictably, Mr. Pathan faced a volley of abuses for his tweet. A number of people told him that India had given him everything – love, fame and money – and that he should check with Pakistan on

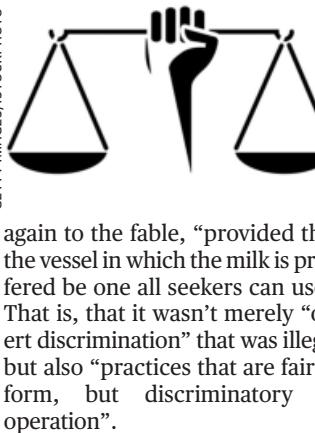
how they were doing. But, if anything, these responses only reinforced his argument. Here was a cricketer, who had represented India on the world stage with some distinction, being asked to prove his loyalty all over again, simply on account of his faith. So vitriolic were some of the responses that Mr. Pathan was eventually forced into clarifying that his opinions "are always as an Indian and for India". He did not need to do this, not least because his judgment had captured the kernel of the debate: that more than 70 years after Independence, our society remains rife with structural discrimination.

### Blow against race-neutrality

These prejudices, which pervade every aspect of life, from access to basic goods, to education and employment, are sometimes manifest. But, on other occasions, the discrimination is indirect and even unintended. The latter, however, is just as pernicious. The forms that it takes were perhaps best explained by the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Griggs vs. Duke Power Co.* (1971). There, the court held that an energy company had fallen foul of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964 – which made racial discrimination in private workplaces illegal – by insisting on a superfluous written test by applicants for its better entry-level jobs. Although, on the face of it, this requirement was race-neutral, in practice it allowed the company to victimise African-Americans.

In a memorable judgment, invoking an Aesop fable, Chief Justice Burger wrote that "tests or criteria for employment or promotion may not provide equality of opportunity merely in the sense of the fabled offer of milk to the stork and the fox." On the contrary, the law, he said, resorting

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again to the fable, "provided that the vessel in which the milk is professed be one all seekers can use." That is, that it wasn't merely "overt discrimination" that was illegal but also "practices that are fair in form, but discriminatory in operation".

### State and private contracts

Both direct and indirect forms of discrimination militate against India's constitutional vision of equality. The verdict in *Griggs* was notably applied by Justice S. Ravindra Bhat in the Delhi High Court's 2018 judgment in *Madhu vs. Northern Railway*. There, the Railways had denied free medical treatment to the wife and daughter of an employee which they would otherwise have been entitled to under the rules. The Railways contended that the employee had "disowned" his family and had had their names struck off his medical card.

The court held that to make essential benefits such as medical services subject to a declaration by an employee might be "facially neutral", but it produced a disparate impact, particularly on women and children.

But while this case concerned discrimination by the state, entry barriers to goods such as housing, schools and employment tend to function in the realm of private contracts.

The Constitution, though, is markedly vocal on this too.

Article 15(2) stipulates that citizens shall not on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth be denied access to shops,

public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment. Yet, on occasion, this right, which applies horizontally, *inter se* individuals, comes into conflict with the rights of persons to associate with others, often to the exclusion of certain groups. This is why every time a case of discrimination is brought, the party that discriminates claims that he possesses a liberty to do so, that he must be free to act according to his own sense of conscience.

The Supreme Court, in *Zoroastrian Cooperative Housing Society vs District Registrar Co-operative Societies (Urban) and Others*, endorsed one such restrictive bond, when it ruled in favour of a bye-law of a Parsi housing society that prohibited the sale of property to non-Parsis. This right to forbid such a sale, the Court ruled, was intrinsic in the Parsis' fundamental right to associate with each other. But in holding thus, the judgment, as Gautam Bhatia points out in his book, *The Transformative Constitution*, not only conflated the freedom to contract with the constitutional freedom to associate, but also overlooked altogether Article 15(2).

At first blush, Article 15(2) might appear to be somewhat limited in scope. But the word "shops" used in it is meant to be read widely. A study of the Constituent Assembly's debates on the clause's framing shows us that the founders explicitly intended to place restrictions on any economic activity that sought to exclude specific groups. For example, when a person refuses to lease her property to another based on the customer's faith, such a refusal would run directly counter to the guarantee of equality.

An overruling of the verdict in *Zoroastrian Cooperative*, while desirable, is unlikely, however, to

serve as a panacea. India is unique among democracies in that a constitutional right to equality is not supported by comprehensive legislation. In South Africa, for example, a constitutional guarantee is augmented by an all-encompassing law which prohibits unfair discrimination not only by the government but also by private organisations and individuals.

### Attempts at change

In India, there have been a few efforts to this end in recent times. Shashi Tharoor introduced a private member's bill (drafted by Tarunabh Khaitan) in 2017, while the Centre for Law & Policy Research drafted and released an Equality Bill last year. These attempts recognise that our civil liberties are just as capable of being threatened by acts of private individuals as they are by the state.

Ultimately, our rule of law must subsume an understanding that discrimination partakes different forms. Any reasonable conception of justice would demand that we look beyond the intentions of our actions, and at the engrained structures of society. This does not mean that we need to live under an illusion that a statute will resolve our systemic biases, that we will somehow magically transform ourselves into the kind of nation that B.R. Ambedkar envisioned. But, now more than ever, as we look to reset our societal arrangements in the wake of COVID-19, a rededication to our original constitutional commitment could be worthwhile. To that end, the idea of enacting a law that will help ameliorate our ways of life, that will help reverse our deep-rooted culture of discrimination, is worth thinking about.

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## The emergence of the real Kejriwal

The Delhi Chief Minister no longer needs those who hailed him as the beacon of a new politics



VARGHEESE K. GEORGE

**T**he criticism of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) enacted by India last year to grant citizenship to Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian people persecuted in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh comes from two opposing perspectives – liberals see it as an exclusionary law while nativists find it too inclusive. Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) founder and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's opposition to the CAA falls in the second strand – Hindu or Muslim, persecuted or not, Pakistani or Sri Lankan, why should anyone be allowed to India at all?

"I understand that the law favours Pakistani Hindus and is against Indian Hindus... We cannot and will never do that as we are deshbhaktas," he said in the Delhi Assembly in mid-March. In January, he had wondered, "What is the guarantee that Pakistan would not send spies as Hindus...?" He has argued that as Chief Minister of Delhi, his responsibility is only to look after the welfare of its people.

His decision, now overturned by the Delhi Lieutenant Governor, to limit private and State-government-run hospital services in the context of COVID-19 treatment only to the residents of the city who have the documents to prove that was, therefore, in line with this familiar position. India only for Indians; Delhi, only for Delhi-ites.

Mr. Kejriwal's three consecutive victories in Delhi had raised hopes of a new model of non-ideological politics that could potentially replace the various mobilisation strategies of legacy parties. His ability to win public approval cutting across class, caste and religion had borne out that potential. Politics was no longer about representation and empowerment; it was only about management and efficiency. For the consumer citizens, Mr. Kejriwal became the most reliable delivery boy in their conception of politics as an online marketplace. Public services in Delhi became better under Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) rule. Or so it appeared until the pandemic struck.

**Behind the apoliticism claim** This apoliticism of the AAP, however, was always a tenuous claim. Nativism is politics and service delivery came wrapped in Hindu symbolism. Deployment of Hindu symbolism is near universal in Indian politics these days, and Mr. Kejriwal paraded them with panache, ahead of the 2020 Delhi Assembly election. He could run with the hare and hunt with the hounds on the CAA – he was counted among its opponents while pleasing anti-Pakistani voters – a politician's dream. But the whirlwind unleashed by the Bharatiya Janata Party threw him off balance on his tightrope. Equivocation was not enough for the urban voters of the city who voted overwhelmingly for Hindutva twice between voting for him three times. In return, he cheered the stripping of Jammu and Kashmir's Statehood even while arguing for full Statehood for Delhi. He looked the other way when an armed group went on a rampage

at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi in January. He offered platitudes when communal riots shook the city and claimed more than 50 lives.

The AAP's 2020 manifesto promised patriotism courses in schools and to instil reverence for the armed forces among students. As the national lockdown (COVID-19) began, he said he and his family would use the time to read the *Bhagavad Gita* and urged others to follow suit.

### The record so far

The grass-root level activists, liberal intelligentsia and Left-leaning supporters who were the most vocal supporters of Mr. Kejriwal were soon disappointed, and they were purged from the party. A recent book on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) records that its chief Mohan Bhagwat was worried over the influence of such activists in the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement in 2011-12, the precursor to AAP. The IAC was a heterogeneous crowd ranging from non-governmental organisations to the RSS; AAP metamorphosed as majoritarian in instincts and authoritarian in practice.

Mr. Kejriwal had figured the cocktail that sways politics – a hybrid of left-leaning economic mea-

sures and right-leaning cultural flashing. He repudiates the market.

Taking oath as Chief Minister this year he said: "Some say Kejriwal is making everything free. All the invaluable things are free, a mother's love for the child, a father's staying hungry to support his child's education... Kejriwal loves Delhi's people, they love him back; this love is also free."

He could harvest the sentiments of those disenfranchised and brutalised by the market, though they are now left to fend for themselves. He projects himself as the strong leader of the hard state.

Sedition charges against JNU students were signed off by his government, after wavering over it for sometime. Privacy is a huge concern for a section of the intelligentsia, but he boasts about expanding surveillance and wins votes. Government schools in the city are rolling out a technology tool that allows parents to watch their wards real time. He feigns humility and claims to listen to the people. There is nothing between the people and the Leader – no cabinet, no media that can ask questions. The decision to shut out 'outsiders' from Delhi hospitals was taken after "90 percent of the people" in a digital poll wanted it that way, Mr. Kejriwal announced. People against people.

It has been pointed out that in the new Delhi cabinet, there are no women. The party, however, wanted the death sentence for more types of sexual offences. A Delhi government advertisement on female foeticide is instructive of Mr. Kejriwal's views regarding women empowerment. "I am a girl child speaking from my mother's womb...," the dramatised

voice of a child opens it, pleading for her life. Then comes Mr. Kejriwal's voice: "I am talking for lakhs of such unborn girls... Killing an unborn child is as bad as killing a living person... As much sin... These girls will grow up to be someone's mother, daughter-in-law, wife..and these daughters will be our nation's Kalpana Chawla, Samia Mirza, P.T. Usha... Will bring glory to the nation" Quite a candid explanation of the instrumentality of women in the progress of the nation.

### The present and the future

The intelligentsia, including feminists, might find such positions detestable, but Mr. Kejriwal no longer needs them. Questioning the majority's view is not the smartest thing in politics. Other than the Congress's Rahul Gandhi, no other mainstream politician who has a stake in heartland politics has questioned the Narendra Modi government's Kashmir policy. Mr. Kejriwal's deputy, Manish Sisodia, briefly appealed to empathise with the anti-CAA protesters in Delhi and almost lost his Assembly seat, even though he is in charge of education which appears to be doing well. Mr. Kejriwal was thought of as an alternative to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by many. He might want to be his successor still, and if he actually makes it, it will not be by challenging Hindutva. Meanwhile, his claims of efficiency in governance are under the first real life test in Delhi as the city, and the AAP government, wake up from the lockdown slumber to a collapsing health-care system and burgeoning cases of COVID-19.

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teacher and vice-versa through text and voice discussions. An advantage is access to recorded streams which the students can repeatedly watch to clear their doubts and revise. It also promotes technological awareness among teachers and students. Google's YouTube is a good example of leveraging online content for e-learning. We need to embrace e-learning with an intent to work through its shortcomings. Amid a pandemic, it is a boon. Jayansh Singh, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Nepal redraws the map

While China's aggressive postures accompanying its territorial claims in parts of Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh and now even in Sikkim do not come as a surprise, given its past behaviour, Nepal flexing its muscles by passing a Constitution Amendment Bill to unilaterally include certain Indian territories in its official map – disregarding India's concerns – is outrageously misguided (Page 1, "Nepal passes amendment on new map", June 14). At the same time, these developments also betray New Delhi's

monumental diplomatic and political failures in resolving the boundary disputes amicably, and within a reasonable time frame. With the Constitution amendment now being a *fait accompli*, there is very little elbow room for India to turn the clock back through diplomatic initiatives. There is no convincing explanation to justify New Delhi's persistent reluctance to hold at least virtual talks at Foreign Secretary-level despite Nepal's repeated requests. One is bound to conclude that the Narendra Modi

government, which is obsessed with improving its bilateral relations with an unpredictable Trump administration, tended to take its traditionally friendly neighbour for granted. It is to be watched how Nepal is now going to assert its territorial claims on the ground. This development has also exposed the incompetence of India's Foreign Minister, a career diplomat, for turning a friendly neighbour into a foe. He must take the moral responsibility and step down to set an example. The Prime Minister on his

part too must take the Opposition into confidence and initiate a consultative process on issues concerning India's sovereignty and integrity. S.K. CHOURHURY, Bengaluru

■ For the past several years Nepal has been hobnobbing with China, though India is equally responsible for Nepal's change of heart. Nepal thumbing its nose at India and its bravado in including a legitimate part of India under Nepal is nothing but playing to the gallery. This is a tactic to bring India to the discussion table.

knowing fully well that India will not cede even an inch of its territory. Nepal may be claiming cartographic victory but nothing has changed on the ground. DEEPAK SINGHAL, Chennai

**E-class** The

# Making public transport safe during COVID-19

Several safety measures could prevent mass transmission of the virus and a shift to private modes of transport

R. JAYAKRISHNAN, ASHISH VERMA & S. VELMURUGAN

Central to India's lockdown to control the spread of COVID-19 was a complete shutdown of the transport system. Now, as the country emerges from the lockdown, a proper ramping up of the transport system is needed. This should not be done in haste, however.

Can COVID-19 spread through public transport systems? It is difficult to answer this question with numbers. A recent paper from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology argued that New York's subways seeded the epidemic in the city. While the research fails to establish causation from the observed correlation, as the author had admitted, it cannot be discarded as implausible. It is commendable that India shut down public transport before it could contribute to the spread, with an early lockdown. We now need to consider what can ensue on a restart, especially of metro rail.

**COVID-19 and public transport**  
Fearing crowd infections, commuters prefer travelling in private modes like two-wheelers. Cities like Delhi, that resumed services nearly four weeks ago, observed less ridership than the allowed 20 passengers per bus, despite the limited frequencies on many routes. Although bus crowding is seen in some cities such as Mumbai, it is temporary and due to a lack of alternatives. A significant drop in public transport ridership can be expected for months after resumption, based on opinion surveys. That means measures are needed to gain the public's confidence in mass transport modes, to avoid a significant modal shift to road traffic.

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation has released guidelines to tackle several social distancing and sanitisation concerns, and to address the possibility of viral transmission through tokens, push buttons on lifts, and handrails at the station elevators. Other metro rail systems are also expected to follow similar guidelines. Are these measures enough to prevent serious viral transmission?

Unfortunately, public transit agencies around the world face the problem of a dearth of research by scientists on the specific modality of COVID-19 transmission during public



A Delhi Metro coach on March 1. • SANDEEP SAXENA

transport commute. Confidentiality laws usually prevent the availability of contact-tracing data to extract the precise details of how any individual got infected. There have been some notable research efforts, currently under peer review, that did use detailed contact-tracing data from China and Korea. One study says that SARS-CoV-2 does not seem to get transmitted much outdoors. In fact, only a single cluster of two cases out of nearly a thousand was traced to an outdoor infection in China. Correlation to the effect of air conditioning airflow has also been established based on precise seating locations of those infected at a restaurant and at a call centre. Indian authorities who were already working under similar assumptions on the effects of AC will be proven justified by the conclusion of such research that there is clearly high risk in indoor areas under AC with focused air flow.

From the above research we can conclude that a non-AC bus with open windows offers a much less risky outdoor-like environment. However, it would be wrong to conclude that an AC metro rail coach is risky - for a different reason, in that contact-time is also very important in viral transmission in indoor spaces. A majority of metro rail trips in Indian cities are no more than 20 minutes long, and there is research indicating that this may not be long enough for significant viral densities and inhalation of sufficient viral particles, even without social distancing. It is unlikely for any significant level of public transport infections to happen via inhalation or even crowding and clothed-body contact, though we cannot say it with certainty.

However, hand contact with common surfaces must be considered, as it is well-known to cause significant COVID-19 spread. The guidelines being developed in India address some of the related issues. However, they leave out certain key elements that should be taken very seriously - the handgrip rings and handrails from the ceilings, the stanchion poles, and any grabrails on the seatbacks. If an infected asymptomatic person deposits viral particles on such surfaces, and another person grabs the same spot even briefly, the viral particles could be picked up by their hand. The second person could later deposit the particles on his/her face.

Probabilities may help, and another person may not hold on to the exact 3-inch long area before the virus dissipates, in all cases but one - that of the handgrip rings. Their surface is potentially the most dangerous inside a coach. Every successive individual who hangs on to the handgrip where one infected person deposited the virus can pick up the virus at a high density from the same spot.

Then the probability is quite high that, within an hour, two or three others could pick up the virus left by one person on a handgrip. There is also a high probability that those people will touch their faces soon after.

## Suggestions for more safety

Considering such possibilities, we offer a few safety suggestions that can be implemented immediately. The first is to employ staff to wipe the handgrips at frequent intervals, constantly moving from end to end in the train. Any handgrips in buses also need to be cleaned often. Another is to give wet sanitising wipes to ev-

ery traveler entering a metro rail coach with a suggestion to have it in their palms before touching or gripping anything. Wipe disposal bins will be needed in the coaches.

The metro rail agencies' focus may need to shift to the egressing passengers, as it is important to prevent them from transferring what is on their hands to their faces after egress. We should expect a lot of passengers to leave in a hurry and to not bother with cleaning their hands, even if hand sanitiser dispensers are available. Paid staff or volunteers dispensing hand sanitisers on platforms can be an option. Offering contactless wash basins with soap dispensers at the platform level could be effective. Signs on hand hygiene vis-a-vis touching surfaces are needed.

There are possible options in metro trains to create external airflow to dissipate viral particles. Metro rail authorities are planning to leave the doors open at the terminal before the next run of each train. Since a majority of metro rail stretches in India are elevated, there are other creative options, if safety considerations will allow them. One would be to have staff onboard to direct passengers away from a certain coach to other coaches. The doors of the empty coach can be opened during a run for two or three minutes. We are not aware of such operations anywhere, so any attempt must only be after careful experimentation. Eventually, metro rail AC systems could be changed to High Efficiency Particulate Air filters with frequent circulation of fresh air.

Actions are needed from both authorities and the public to keep our public transport systems safe. If no such actions are taken and a serious level of viral transmission is later traced to public transit, the result will be a mode shift to private vehicles. As pollution and accidents kill more people in India than COVID-19 does now, a mode shift away from public transport will have long-term consequences. Our buses and trains must be perceived as safe, so it is vital to assure ourselves that public transport is for the public - not the virus.

R. Jayakrishnan is Professor, University of California, Irvine, U.S.; Ashish Verma is Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru; and S. Velmurugan is Chief Scientist, Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi

## FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

# The data story

How the data team sources and tracks COVID-19 numbers



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

A report in this newspaper, "India may have undercounted cases" (June 14), based on a serological survey by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has reignited the debate on the accuracy of COVID-19 data. While it is impossible for any news organisation to authenticate numbers put out by official sources, let me assure readers that *The Hindu* data team follows certain guidelines to document the daily numbers. I say this as some readers have cited different sources to question the figures published by the newspaper. For instance, Zaheeb Ajmal sent us a number of screenshots and PDFs to contest the numbers published by *The Hindu*. His source is Worldometer. Another reader, Somak Basu, from Trichy was unhappy with the newspaper's interpretations of doubling time and felt that they showed India in a poor light.

The newspaper sources its data from State governments, the Central government, the World Health Organization (WHO) and respected academic organisations. It tries to avoid data from websites where the data sources are suspect. *The Hindu* is transparent about its sourcing of data. This does not mean that data furnished by agencies cannot be questioned or subjected to a closer scrutiny.

## Tracking data

*The Hindu* data team uses two trackers for page 1 news and for other COVID-19-related stories. At times, there may be some variations in the total number of cases and deaths as some States (Tripura and Delhi, for example) tend to release their numbers late. The newspaper's robust reporter and desk network works round the clock to update a master sheet on daily COVID-19 cases across States by sourcing numbers from the health departments of the respective States. Normally data from most States are available by 10.30 p.m. These are the numbers the newspaper uses to update the daily count on page 1. The full data on the master sheet are also used to generate maps and updates for its live page ([thehindu.com/coronavirus](http://thehindu.com/coronavirus)).

Data related to testing/samples, etc. are also gleaned every day by *The Hindu* data team which maintains a more detailed

break-up of State-wise COVID-19 numbers here (<https://www.thehindu.com/data/covid-19-state-wise-tracker-for-coronavirus-cases-deaths-and-testing-rates/article31248444.ece>). The aim of this tracker is to provide the infection and fatality curves of each State and compare the testing and positivity rates of these States on a regular basis.

Why does the data team prefer to use State trackers instead of Central government data? The reason is simple. The State governments release data earlier than the Union Health Ministry. This helps the newspaper stick to deadline. Initially, *The Hindu* reported both State and Central numbers on page 1. But when the data team realised that the State tracker was stable and, more importantly, available before the print deadline, the newspaper abandoned reporting the Union Health Ministry's numbers. For page 1 updates, the data team also uses the ICMR's daily release of the number of total samples tested. This is published along with the State-wise updates on cases and fatalities.

## Reliable data

For comparison across countries, the data team uses the 'COVID-19 Global Cases' tracker provided by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering at Johns Hopkins University (JHU). *The Hindu* data team prefers the JHU tracker for many reasons. One, it is one of the earliest trackers that listed worldwide information on cases and deaths. Two, it provides an API interface and hosts the data on an open source GitHub account from where base data can be easily sourced. Three, it relies on data from official sources from the respective countries and lists these data properly. Four, it provides up-to-date data faster than, say, the WHO's tracker.

Many readers cited the disputed figures from the website, [Worldometers.info](http://Worldometers.info), to contest *The Hindu*'s headline "India's COVID tally fifth highest in world" (June 7). On the day of reporting, both the JHU tracker and the WHO showed that Spain had close to 2.4 lakh cases. When India's tally crossed the mark in JHU's table, *The Hindu* team used that for the headline. The JHU's number matched the official tally of Spain's Health Ministry, whereas the Worldometer's tally did not.

Besides stories related to testing, infection rates, doubling time and fatalities, the data team has also looked at the impact of the lockdown on the economy. Each of these stories cited the sources from where the base data was taken, analysed, and reinterpreted.

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# Silence of the stars

Bollywood has never been the conscience-keeper of the country save for a few isolated attempts

KUNAL RAY

The recent killing of George Floyd has led to large-scale riots and public demonstrations across the U.S. Angry mobs have taken to the streets protesting the inhuman treatment meted out to Floyd and several others like him - a violence which has become systemic. A filmmaker friend from Minneapolis wrote to me saying that people are angry and fed up. James Baldwin immediately comes to mind. Amongst others, he wrote about the problem of being black in America. I will never forget how hauntingly he wrote about the colour of his skin on account of which he was constantly stared at a small village in Switzerland.

Barry Jenkins' masterful adaptation of Baldwin's novel, *If Beale Street Could Talk* (2018), features an African-American man being wrongly charged for a crime he never committed. *When They See Us* (2019), a web television miniseries created for Netflix, is based on a real incident. In it, five teens of colour from Harlem are falsely accused in a rape case and sentenced to prison. The U.S. has a long history of racial violence, which is deplorable to say the least.

India has its own ugly realities to deal with. Caste-based crimes are rampant even today. For many living in metropolitan India, news items on caste-based discrimination and violence introduce us to a reality that many may not have personally encountered. Cinema can play a significant role in initiating these dialogues owing to its wide reach. Contemporary Tamil cinema, for example, with proponents such as Vetrimaan and Pa. Ranjith, does a fantastic job of delineating caste injustice in contemporary India.

**Focused on economic gains**  
During a recent conversation, a Bollywood actor mentioned that there's a lot of money at stake when a film is released. This could explain the silence of actors during moments of turmoil. But is that an excuse at all? What kind of a film culture have we created and endorsed that doesn't think beyond economic gains?

Having said that, another question to ponder is, why should we care about what Bollywood thinks when the answer is already known? After all, Bollywood has never been the conscience-keeper of the country save for a few isolated attempts.

While a lot is being said about the aftermath of the pandemic, I cannot help wonder if it would also change the way film celebrities are treated in this country. Will we still care for empty rhetoric? Or will we, at least now, listen to those who lead by action through participation in long-term social change projects and who inculcate progressive values amongst their fan base?

**Selective in espousal of causes**  
During the ongoing protests in the U.S., certain sections of the Indian media chose to highlight reactions from mainstream Bollywood stars sharing their anguish about the spate of events in faraway U.S. Many of these actors perpetually live in denial of the reality of their land. They are never seen or heard speaking about issues closer to home. For them and many of their followers, Black Lives

Matter is just another hashtag that trends on social media. It is reduced to an empathy-generating spectacle.

One wonders how the same brigade remains silent when caste atrocities and events of other injustice are committed on a daily basis in the country they call home. Their studied silence during the recent protests in India owing to the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens bears further testimony to such behaviour. Why is mainstream Bollywood selective in its espousal of causes? Or do stars only want to be vocal about events which may not directly impact the fate of their films upon release? To say the least, this is an escapist attitude. Of course, it's true that a small coterie of progressive faces from the industry is seen at protests. Some also speak up every other day on social media. But by no means should this be deemed representative of the industry. These are individual voices who also endorse these values through their films. Their number is small, though necessary.

**Focused on economic gains**  
During a recent conversation, a Bollywood actor mentioned that there's a lot of money at stake when a film is released. This could explain the silence of actors during moments of turmoil. But is that an excuse at all? What kind of a film culture have we created and endorsed that doesn't think beyond economic gains?

Having said that, another question to ponder is, why should we care about what Bollywood thinks when the answer is already known? After all, Bollywood has never been the conscience-keeper of the country save for a few isolated attempts.

While a lot is being said about the aftermath of the pandemic, I cannot help wonder if it would also change the way film celebrities are treated in this country. Will we still care for empty rhetoric? Or will we, at least now, listen to those who lead by action through participation in long-term social change projects and who inculcate progressive values amongst their fan base?

**Selective in espousal of causes**  
During the ongoing protests in the U.S., certain sections of the Indian media chose to highlight reactions from mainstream Bollywood stars sharing their anguish about the spate of events in faraway U.S. Many of these actors perpetually live in denial of the reality of their land. They are never seen or heard speaking about issues closer to home. For them and many of their followers, Black Lives

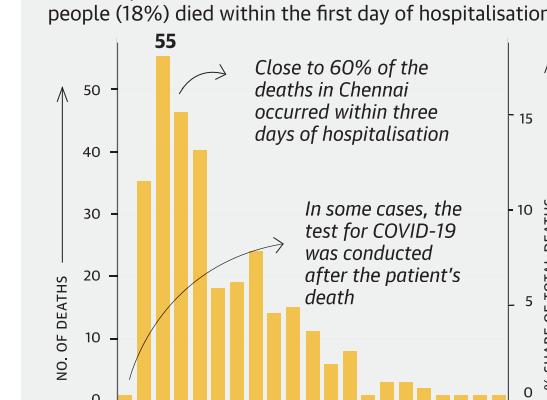


## DATA POINT

### Final days

Most deaths related to COVID-19 in Chennai and Karnataka occurred within two to three days of admission to hospitals. These regions were chosen as they were among the few which provided the date of admission. Notably in Chennai, younger people died relatively sooner after hospitalisation compared to elders. By *The Hindu Data Team*

**DEATHS IN CHENNAI** | The chart shows the no. of deaths recorded in Chennai and the number of days the patients were hospitalised until their demise. For instance, 55 people (18%) died within the first day of hospitalisation

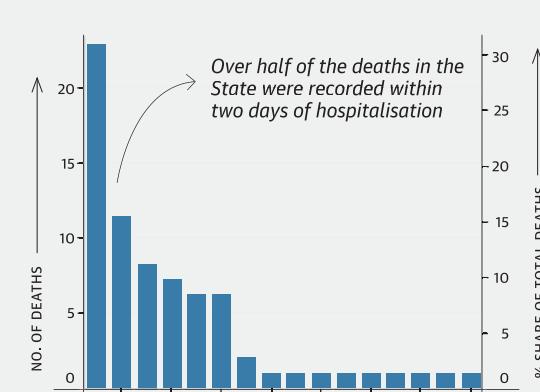


The table shows the age-wise split of % deaths in Chennai within certain days of hospitalisation. All patients less than 60 years of age died within 3 days. Whereas, only 30% of patients aged > 60 died within 3 days

Age-group	0 to 3	4 to 10	> 10
<40	100%	0%	0%
>40 and <60	100%	0%	0%
>60	30%	59%	12%

Data sourced from State health bulletins, Arun (@amasaesle) and Mohit Rao (@mohitmrao)

**DEATHS IN KARNATAKA** | In Karnataka, out of the 71 deaths for which data were available, 22 (31%) died on the day they were hospitalised



## FROM PAGE ONE

## The disabled remain an invisible minority

For the people with disabilities, however, this is not new, says Preeti Singh, a disability rights activist with cerebral palsy and a student at IIM Calcutta. "We always come as an afterthought for the government. When we have no representation in Parliament, how do you expect them to think of us?"

"Where is the inclusion of people with disabilities in online education? Does the government know how many children have disabilities? Do they have scribes for exams? Are the websites equipped to deal with visual disorders? How many people like Asha can even afford to have an online education?"

"People with disabilities have pre-existing conditions like MRSA [an infection], or have compromised spinal cords, which make them more susceptible to virus infection. There is no accessibility in the quarantine centres, and I personally know people who have had horrifying experiences because of lack of accessibility," says Ms. Singh.

Ms. Asha Devi and Ms. Naznin's struggle to feed their families points to a larger problem of invisibilisation of the struggles of persons with disability.

"For every political party, you have a religious minority cell, a caste cell, a women's cell, have you ever heard of a disability rights cell?" asks Nipun Malhotra, CEO of Nipman foundation, and Wheels for Life, a disability rights organisation. Mr. Malhotra has a condition called arthrogryposis.

He says, "there is no representation in Parliament, and hence, nobody to ensure the policy made for us is intersectional in nature."

**Socially distant**  
Social distancing is a privilege for the marginalised classes, and is worse for those with disabilities. The government has offered no respite.

The pandemic has various implications for people with disabilities. Look at quarantine centres, we don't have accessibility there. The concept of social distancing is redundant for people who need assistance

for everything. I need somebody's help to do the basic task of washing hands. How do I practise social distancing?" asks Mr. Malhotra.

Rahmat Ali, a social worker who runs Vir Abdul Hamid Yuva Club, an NGO, has been helping the families with access to food. He says, "For families such as these, the crisis is harder to deal with considering that they have been deprived of two things, able bodies and financial sustainability. It is therefore imperative that the government should act."

For a person like Mr. Pundir, who needs assistance for basic tasks, it is highly unlikely that provisions have been made taking into account disability.

Ms. Naznin, like many others, is yet to receive not just the wages. She has not received the ₹1,000 promised by the government for daily wagers.

She says she needs to allocate for Mr. Sajjad's medicinal needs and the other immediate needs.

In spite of talk of redressing caste, class, gender and other types of discrimination, disability from systemic oppression has largely been ignored. Mental health is further pushed into invisibilisation and stigmatisation.

COVID-19 is worsening it.

"We must think of PwDs living alone, those quarantined in centres, and ensure that Persons with Disability are given basic facilities if their primary caregiver is quarantined," says Mr. Malhotra.

"There must be a consolidated Ministry, instead of just rebranding us as "divyaang" or just saying that an effort is being made," Ms. Singh says.

"We need an interlinking of policymakers with disability as the focus. The best way to do that is to create joint Secretary-level positions for disability affairs in the Health, Home and Information and Broadcasting Ministries. These officers would connect the department and concerned Ministries, ensuring disability is not overlooked during policy formulation," says Mr. Malhotra, and Ms. Singh concurs.

## ICMR study plots mid-November peak

According to the model-based analysis for the pandemic in India, with the additional capacity built for testing, treating and isolating patients during the lockdown, the number of cases at the peak could come down by 70% and the cumulative cases may drop by nearly 27%.

As for mortality, approximately 60% deaths were prevented and one-third of this mortality prevention is attributed to the reduction in the unmet need for critical care as a result of the intervention, the analysis showed.

## China has preferred talks, says Rajnath

"People in PoK will also raise their voice and will prefer to live in India's J&K, not with Pakistan," Mr. Singh said.

Mr. Singh also highlighted the opening up of six new medical colleges, two central universities in the Union Territories.

On the revocation of Article 370 and J&K's special status, Mr. Singh said even Muslim countries supported it, except Malaysia and Turkey.

"Article 370 and Article 35-A were in our manifesto. Even the party workers were suspicious if the BJP will pursue the agenda. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, what we say, we do. PM Modi did it in the blink of an eye. We will not allow a crisis of credibility," said Mr. Singh, while defending the move of reading down the Article 370 on August 5 last year.

The Defence Minister said in the garb of the *azaaadi* (freedom) agitation, the Pakistani and the Islamic State flags were being unfurled in Kashmir. "But, only the national flag is being hosted in Kashmir now," he said, adding "Kashmiriyat is about the coexistence of the Hazratbal shrine and the Baba Barfani (Amarnath shrine)."

# 10 die of virus in Karnataka, Telangana and A.P.

Telangana expects case tally to rise as it ramps up testing, most new positive tests in Kerala are of travellers

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

The death of five people with COVID-19 was reported by Karnataka on Sunday, taking the total number of deaths to 86. With 176 new cases being recorded, the total number

### COVID-19

of positive cases in the State stood at 7,000.

With two more fatalities in East Godavari and Kurnool districts, the toll in Andhra Pradesh rose to 84. In Telangana, three more people died, taking the total to 185, but the number of deaths was lower than the daily trend for the month so far.

The highest number of Karnataka's new cases on Sunday were from Bengaluru Urban at 42, followed by Yadagirigowda with 22.

Three of the deaths were in Bengaluru Urban, while

### Living on a prayer

Several temples, churches and mosques have cautiously opened their doors to devotees while adhering to strict social distancing norms.



Hoping for a miracle: Devotees at the St Mary's Basilica in Shivajinagar, Bengaluru on Sunday.

■ K. MURALI KUMAR

one fatality each was reported in Dakshina Kannada and Bidar. The patients who died in Bengaluru included a 57-year-old woman and a 50-year-old man, both of whom

had fever. Another 60-year-old female patient with severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) passed away. Besides this, the death of a 24-year-old male patient from Daksh-

ina Kannada who had returned from Maharashtra was attributed to the virus. The fifth patient who died was a 76-year-old man in Bidar district.

### Blurred vision



Monsoon showers: Two-wheelers on the road during rain in Palakkad on Sunday. The Indian Meteorological Department has said that Kerala will receive heavy rain over the next two days. ■ K.K. MUSTAFAH

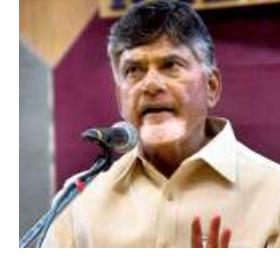
## Govt. targeting TDP leaders, says Naidu

### We will move Human Rights Commission'

#### STAFF REPORTER VIJAYAWADA

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) on Sunday decided to lodge a complaint with the Human Rights Commission (HRC), denouncing the manner in which party deputy leader in the Assembly and Tekkali MLA K. Atchanna Reddy was arrested ignoring his medical condition, following which he developed bleeding from a surgical wound.

"Mr. Atchanna Reddy may have to undergo a second surgery because of the



N. Chandrababu Naidu

wicked and illegal act of the YSRCP government. The

TDP will not rest until the culprits are booked and punished," TDP national president N. Chandrababu Naidu said.

Addressing elected

party representatives and village committee in-

charges via video link, Mr.

Naidu said that Mr. Atchanna Reddy, who had undergone a surgery, was forced to travel by road. "It reflects the democratic rule in the State."

"At a time when COVID-19 is spreading fast, the government is targeting TDP leaders," he said, and cited the arrest of another party leader J.C. Prabhakar Reddy and his son in Anantapur.

Both Mr. Atchanna Reddy and Mr. Prabhakar Reddy have neither succumbed to the YSRCP's intimidatory tactics nor fallen for the lure of money," Mr. Naidu said.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's one-year term was full of human rights violations, abuse of power, fabricated cases and illegal arrests, he alleged.

### Prabhakar Reddy, son in Kadapa prison

#### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT ANANTAPUR

Former TDP legislator J.C. Prabhakar Reddy and his son Ashmit, arrested in the BS-III trailer lorries case, were lodged in the Kadapa Central Prison on Sunday.

They were remanded to judicial custody for 14 days and sent to the Reddipalli District Jail on Saturday.

Permission was sought later in the night to lodge them in the Kadapa Central Prison. They were shifted to the district on Sunday.

## Row over monkey park plan

### VEERENDRA P.M. SHIVAMOGGA

Environmentalists have opposed the Karnataka government's plan to set up a monkey park on the uninhabited islands in the Sharavati backwater region.

Following a spike in cases of monkeys raiding agricultural and plantation crops in the Malnad region, farmers staged protests demanding a solution to the problem.

To solve the menace, the government decided to establish the park and allocated

₹6.25 crore for it in the 2020-21 budget.

Initially, it was planned to set up the park on 150 acres of government land near Nagodi village in Nittragram panchayat limits in Hosanagar taluk.

Fearing that the project may trigger outbreaks of diseases like the Kyasanur Forest Disease, locals opposed the project. The Nittragram panchayat also passed a resolution against the project.

Following this, the State government planned to shift

the project to the uninhabited islands in the Sharavati river backwater region.

### New location likely

A delegation comprising senior officials of Forest and Revenue departments visited three such islands near the Talakalale reservoir, a balancing reservoir of the Linganamakki dam on May 16.

Nagaraj L., Assistant Commissioner of the Sagar subdivision, said a search was on for a suitable place.

## Malabar gliding frog spotted at Pullad



The Malabar gliding frog.

### RADAKRISHNAN KUTTOOR PATHANAMTHitta

A green frog with a slender body, webbed feet, unusual body positions, very well camouflaged and gliding in the air. This was how a juvenile Malabar gliding frog (*Rhacophorus malabaricus*), a rare amphibian that can glide in the air up to 10-12 m, was spotted in the orchard of a

house at Pullad, near Kozhencherry in Kerala, on Saturday.

Jithesh Krishnan, assistant professor of botany at NSS College, Pandalam, who spotted the frog endemic to the rain forests of the Western Ghats in his orchard, told *The Hindu* that it was the second time he spotted this rare species in the or-

chard in the past two years.

Their gliding abilities help these frogs cover 10-12 ft in one leap, he said.

The frog has got a body length of 10 cm, making it one of the largest mossy frogs. The fingers and toes are like sticks to attach to and walk through tree branches. Males are smaller than females.

In the biggest single-day spike so far, Andhra Pradesh reported 294 cases on Sunday and the case total crossed the 6,000-mark, the Health Department said.

The total number of positive cases stood at 6,152. The number of recoveries went up to 3,316, including 131 during the previous 24-hour period. The number of active cases was put at 2,752.

Of the 294 new cases, two were foreign returnees, 39 migrant returnees and people of other States, and 253 local residents. For the first time, the single-day tally of local cases crossed the 200-mark.

The number of COVID-19 cases in Telangana touched 4,947 as 237 more samples tested positive on Sunday.

Of these, 195 were from Greater Hyderabad, which had 82% of new cases. Of the remaining 42, 10 cases were from Medchal, eight from

Rangareddy, five from Sangareddy, three from Mancherial, two each from Warangal Urban, Kamareddy, Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Mahabubnagar, one each from Medak, Sirsilla, Adilabad, Siddipet, Yadadri, and Warangal Rural.

More COVID-19 cases might be detected as 50,000 tests were to be conducted in 30 Assembly constituencies in Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Vikarabad, Medchal, and Sangareddy districts, over the next 10 days.

Kerala reported 54 new cases and 56 recoveries on Sunday. Active cases stood at 1,340.

Of 54 new cases, 48 were diagnosed in people who had returned from abroad and other States. Of six cases of local transmission, three were health-care workers.

(With inputs from Vijaya-wada, Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram bureaus)

## Nadda hails Karnataka govt.'s handling of COVID-19 crisis

'Only 500 cases in Bengaluru compared to other metros'

### STAFF REPORTER BENGALURU

The BJP high command's acknowledgement of B.S. Yediyurappa's leadership in successfully handling COVID-19, especially in Bengaluru, came as a relief to the beleaguered Karnataka Chief Minister after the recent loss of face over selection of candidates for the Rajya Sabha.

Party national president J.P. Nadda, who addressed an online "Janam Samvad" rally to celebrate the one year of the Narendra Modi-led NDA government, said Mr. Yediyurappa's leadership was evident "when

and his team. The administration's success can be attributed to 4Ts – Trace, Treat, Test, and Technology." Mr. Nadda also congratulated the Chief Minister on "reform measures".

The appreciation comes at a time when several MLAs raised a banner of revolt and the high command rejected all three names he recommended for the Rajya Sabha.

we see the COVID-19 situation in metro cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata, compared to Bengaluru".

"There are just over 500 cases in Bengaluru, which is a testament to the proactive leadership of Yediyurappa

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# Testing to be ramped up in Delhi: Shah

Home Minister meets Delhi CM, L-G and Union Health Minister to review COVID-19 situation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Amid an exponential rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in Delhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Sunday that testing would be ramped up in the next two days and polling booths would be used to test patients in containment zones. A house-to-house survey in containment zones was also planned.

As on Saturday, there are 241 containment zones in Delhi, and more than 1,000 deaths due to the infection have been reported so far.

Mr. Shah met Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Anil Baijal, and Union Health



Taking stock: Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Health Minister Harsh Vardhan in Delhi on Sunday. ■ PTI

Minister Harshvardhan on

Sunday to discuss the COVID-19 strategy in Delhi. Soon after the meeting, Mr. Shah posted a series of

tweets about the outcome.

"To contain COVID-19 in Delhi, testing to increase two-fold in the next two days and will be further increased

three times after six days. Also after a few days, testing will start at every polling station in containment zones," Mr. Shah tweeted.

#### Telephonic guidance

He said to provide information and guidelines to small hospitals in Delhi, the Modi government had decided to constitute a committee of senior doctors for telephonic guidance in the AIIMS and a helpline number would be released on Monday.

"A committee has been formed under chairmanship of Dr. V.K Paul (of Niti Aayog) to provide 60% of dedicated COVID-19 beds in private hospitals at a low rate, the committee will submit its re-

port tomorrow on private hospitals... Centre has assured the Delhi government of all necessary resources such as oxygen cylinders, ventilators, pulse oximeters to fight COVID-19," he said.

#### Comprehensive survey

He added that a comprehensive health survey would be done after visiting each household in containment zones and the report would be submitted in a week.

"For effective monitoring, each person will be made to download Aarogya Setu App," he said. A second round of meeting with Mayors of Delhi and municipal chiefs is expected at 5 p.m. on Sunday.

# SC to extend virtual court system amid COVID-19 fears

Advocates had sought resumption of physical hearings

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A committee of seven Supreme Court judges, led by Justice N.V. Ramana, has decided to continue the virtual court system and not revert to the physical hearings, given the "alarming growth" in COVID-19 cases.

A letter from the Supreme Court Registry to the office-bearers of the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association said the court "shall continue functioning through the virtual court system for the present, with further direction that the matters may be listed before

hon'ble judge-in-chambers as well as before the court of the registrar, through virtual court system only, to enable wider participation of learned advocates". The Registry informed the lawyers that the committee would next meet on June 30 or any other suitable date to again take stock of the situation.

On June 2, the court agreed to explore the feasibility of physical appearances of advocates while adhering to physical distancing norms. It has been hearing urgent cases through video-conference. The court had named this mechanism the

"virtual court system".

The Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association, the Supreme Court Bar Association and the Bar Council of India have been repeatedly making representations that a majority of the lawyers feel that they cannot effectively present their arguments at virtual hearings.

They have been calling for resumption of physical hearings from July. The other members of the committee are Justices Arun Mishra, R.F. Nariman, U.U. Lalit, A.M. Khanwilkar, D.Y. Chandrachud, and L. Nageswara Rao.

## 3 States yet to reply on labour law changes

Panel had sought info on amendments

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

More than a month after the Parliamentary Committee on Labour wrote to eight State governments seeking explanation on the changes brought to the labour laws during the extended lockdown, three BJP-ruled States – Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh – have not responded, despite two reminders from the committee.

The three States have effected the most significant changes, suspending the majority of the labour laws for a period of up to three years.

The committee had sought details of the amendments made by them and also the instruments (executive order or ordinance) used to effect the change. A total of 13 State governments had diluted the labour laws in May, with eight of them raising the daily working hours from eight to 12.

Asked if this amounted to undermining the Parliamentary Standing Committee, Labour Committee Chairperson and Biju Janata Dal MP Bhartruhari Mahtab said, "I can only say that their reply is awaited."

#### 'Tardy response'

Sources said the State governments had been tardy in responding, with Assam being the only one to send in its response within a week. The Rajasthan government replied only a few days back. Among other changes, it has amended the Industrial Disputes Act to increase the threshold of companies coming under the law from those employing 100 workers to those having 300 workers.



A total of 13 States had brought in changes to labour laws amid the lockdown.

Further, the meeting of the committee had to be cancelled twice after the officials at the Union Labour Ministry tested positive for COVID-19. It was first scheduled for June 5 and then rescheduled for June 17. But now it has been deferred and may be held on June 26.

"More than 50% of the members are willing to attend the meeting in Parliament since we haven't heard from the Speaker's office to hold committee meetings via video conferencing," Mr. Mahtab said.

Explaining the changes made by U.P., M.P. and Gujarat governments, Tapan Sen, general secretary of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), said the amendments made by the three States pushed 80% of the workforce out of coverage of labour laws. "In these three States, barring the child labour laws and laws related to women working the night shift, most other laws have been suspended in the name of reform. The custodians of the law themselves want to throw the workers at the mercy of the employer," Mr. Sen said.

Following the amendments, 10 central trade unions had complained to the International Labour Organisation, which has sought a reply from India.

## Field work



Swinging into action: Around 160 health personnel, including 40 doctors, conducting a mass screening in the Govandi area of Mumbai. Maharashtra reported the third consecutive single-day surge of over 3,000 cases on Sunday. ■ VIJAY BATE

## India looks to deploy Naval Liaisons

Officers will be posted at Madagascar and Abu Dhabi for information exchange

DINAKAR PERI  
NEW DELHI

After joining the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) as Observer in March, India is looking to post Navy Liaison Officers at the Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC) in Madagascar and also at the European maritime surveillance initiative in the Strait of Hormuz for improved Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA).

"We are working closely with France who is a pre-eminent member of IOC to post a Naval LO at the RMIFC in Madagascar. We are also working on posting a Naval LO at the European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASOH) in Abu

Dhabi," said a defence source. "This will be in the overall realm of improving linkages of the Navy's Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in Gurugram with other IFCs and become the repository for all maritime data in the IOR," the source said.

The RMIFC functions under the aegis of the IOC, of which India became an Observer in March 2020 along with Japan and the United Nations. The IOC is a regional forum in the Southwest Indian Ocean, comprising five nations – Comoros, France (Reunion), Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles. China and the European Union (EU) have been Obser-

vers in the IOC since 2016 and 2017, respectively.

The Navy LO is expected to be posted at EMASOH by July and at the RMIFC by September or October, the source said. India has an LO at the IFC in Singapore for over four years now.

#### Freedom of navigation

The EMASOH headquarters is composed of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and French officers and based at the French naval base in Abu Dhabi. The aim is "to monitor maritime activity and guarantee freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz." On February 5, the initiative was declared oper-

ational by the French Ministry of Armed Forces.

The Navy set up the IFC-IOR in December 2018 within the premises of the Information Management and Analysis Centre in Gurugram to track maritime movements in the region. France became the first country to deploy a LO at the IFC-IOR, followed by the U.S. and several other countries including Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom have announced their intention to post LOs. Currently, infrastructure is being built to house the officers. Pre-fabricated structures are being built and are expected to be ready by the end of the year, another source said.

## Mega cruise liners dock for crew sign-off

4,827 to head home from Mumbai

ADITYA ANAND  
MUMBAI

The Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT), which is hosting three mega cruise ships, *Anthem of the Seas*, *Celebrity Infinity* and *Carnival Splendor*, for the next four days, is in the middle of carrying out the largest crew sign-off exercise involving 4,827 seafarers who are returning home after the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

The next few weeks are only going to get busier on the cruise liner front, with nine more ships – of the 13 that planned to visit Mumbai – already on route with 7,000 Indians on board.

Seafarers disembarking from *Marella Discovery* at the Mumbai port in April.

Commander Malao now has two ships under his watch: *Celebrity Infinity* and *Anthem of the Seas*. Another cruise ship, the *Ovation of the Seas*, belonging to Royal Caribbean Cruises, dropped off 870 crew members at Mumbai last week. On May 12, J.M. Baxi and Company helped 168 Indian crew members disembark from *Seven Seas Voyager*, operated by Florida-based Regent Seven Seas Cruises, a unit of Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings.

The MbPT has crossed the handling of 9 lakh tonnes of cargo in the post-lockdown phase. "A large range of cargo, from bulk lentils to hot and cold rolled coils, plates, base oil, sugar, bitumen, and vehicles to a variety of projects have been handled within the limited storage areas with assistance and support of dedicated staff and officers," Mr. Bhatia said.

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY					
The following e-tenders are published in IREPS website. Firms are requested to login to <a href="http://www.reps.gov.in">www.reps.gov.in</a> and quote against these tenders. Manual Quotations will not be entertained for these tenders. Hindi Translation of Display Advertisement available in the website <a href="http://www.icf.indianrailways.gov.in">www.icf.indianrailways.gov.in</a> Closing and Opening Time for all tenders are 10.30 Hrs. and 11.00 Hrs. respectively.					
Sl. No.	Open Tender No.	Short Description of Work	Approx. Value	Date of Tender	
1	EW/1076	Housekeeping, Garden maintenance and Toilet cleaning services to Technical Training Centre, Basic Training Workshop, Chennai Rail Museum, Apprentice Hostel and Advanced Welding Training Institute in ICF for 2 years.	₹ 177.67 Lakhs	06-07-2020	06-07-2020

GREEN ICF ! CLEAN ICF !

## भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

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Airports Authority of India invites item rate tender through e-tendering portal by Assistant General Manager (Engg-Elect), Tirupati Airport on behalf of Chairman, AAI from eligible contractors who are having similar nature of work experience for the work of "Extension of runway and strengthening/resurfacing of existing runway - 08 / 26 for Code-B type of aircraft at Tirupati Airport": Provision of Ring main System of Power Supply for ILS & DVOR and laying of OFC / RC Cable for ILS & DVOR.

S.No.	Name of Work	Estimated cost (₹)	Period of completion Months	Last date and Time of submission of bid document
1.	Supply of LTCables	1,94,43,000.00	02	06.07.2020 upto 18:00 Hrs
2.	Laying of LTCables, Earthing, SITC of LT Panels and Laying of RCCables.	1,86,53,520.00	04	06.07.2020 upto 18:00 Hrs

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## The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (A Govt. of India Enterprises)

Technical Services Centre, A-1, Industrial Estate, Aligarh-202001, U.P.  
Ph.: 7983985314, 6290392624. Email: [ntsecalg@nsic.co.in](mailto:ntsecalg@nsic.co.in)

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) invites sealed offers through Tender under two Bid system from eligible bidders for Supply and Installation of machineries like **Trolley with Hydraulic lift, Hydraulic Press, Hand Hydraulic Press, Optical 3D Scanner, Measuring Instruments, CNC Milling machine, Salt Spray Chamber** for their Aligarh Technical Centre. Last date of submission of Tenders is **06.07.2020 up to 15:00 Hrs.** For details, please visit NSIC's website: <https://www.nsic.co.in/tender/Current-Tenders.aspx> Deputy General Manager (Centre Head – Aligarh)

## Nepal's upper house takes up Bill on map

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Nepal's new map that claims the disputed Kalapani region in Uttarakhand, is likely to complete the legislative process within the next four days. Rajendra Phuyal, Secretary of the National Assembly secretariat tabled the Second Constitution Amendment Bill, 2077 (Vikram Samvat) on Sunday when the bill was cleared unanimously for discussion.

Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Shiva Maya Tumbahamphe introduced the bill and sought the support of the 59-member National Assembly in passing it. Mr. Phuyal announced that the House will vote on the Amendment in four days, indicating that the bill could be passed as early as on Tuesday. The decision comes a day after the Lower House voted unanimously in favour of adopting the new map.

## Mamata flays draft Electricity Bill, seeks Opposition support

It goes against the spirit of cooperative federalism, she says



Mamata Banerjee

One of the sweeping changes proposed in the Bill is an end to subsidies. All consumers, including farmers, will have to pay the tariff, and the subsidy will be sent to them through direct benefit transfer.

Ms. Banerjee argued in her letter that this would mean people would have to pay a huge sum towards electricity charges, while receiving support through direct benefit transfer later. This would result in defaults

leading to penalties and disconnection, she said. "As the public at large are still to benefit from 100% financial inclusion, the success of direct benefit transfer is itself a big grey area ... the subsidy through the tariff mechanism should continue as the government has social obligations," she wrote.

The draft "divests" the States of their power to fix tariff and hands over the task to a Central government-appointed authority. This is discriminatory, since the tariff can be tweaked according to the whims and fancies of the Central government, she said. She also criticised the provision that makes it compulsory for the State power companies to buy a minimum percentage of renewable energy fixed by the Centre. This would be detrimental to the cash-strapped power firms, she said.

## Forgotten in the fog of war, the last firing on the India-China border

Four Indian soldiers died when a patrol of Assam Rifles jawans was ambushed at Tulung La in Arunachal Pradesh in 1975

**ANANTH KRISHNAN**

CHENNAI  
The 1967 clash between India and China is often remembered as the last shot fired on the India-China border.

That clash in Sikkim, where India got the better of China just five years after defeat in the 1962 war, saw more than 80 Indian soldiers killed while estimates say 400 Chinese soldiers may have been killed.

**1967 clashes**  
If it is true that 1967 marked the last major fighting that

saw casualties on both sides, it was not, however, the last incident of a shot being fired on the contested boundary.

That would happen eight years later, when a patrol of Assam Rifles jawans was ambushed by the Chinese at Tulung La in Arunachal Pradesh. Four were killed.

"We often remember 1967, but to say that was the last firing, and that what happened eight years later was some sort of accident does not square with the facts," said Nirupama Rao, a former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to China.



Last shot: Soldiers keeping watch on the India-China border at Bum La, a few dozen kilometres from Tulung La. ■ AP

"It was an ambush, plain and simple, and four of ours lost their lives."

The Indian government maintained that the Chinese had crossed the Line of Ac-

tual Control (LAC) and ambushed the patrol on October 20, 1975. The Chinese denied this and blamed India for the incident.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing accused the patrol of crossing the LAC and firing at a Chinese post. The Ministry handed a protest note on October 22 to the Charge d'Affaires of the Indian Embassy in Beijing describing China's actions as "a self defence response", according to a November 3 report in the French newspaper *Le Monde*, that was shared with

*The Hindu* by Saurabh Vashist, a researcher on India-China relations. The report said India recovered their bodies a week later on October 28.

### U.S. cable

A U.S. State Department cable from 1975 noted India's view that the "Chinese ambush was sprung 500 metres south of Tulung La" and took place on Indian territory.

It quoted a senior Indian military intelligence officer as saying on November 5 the border there was very clear,

marked by a distinctive shale cliff.

He said China had moved up a company to the pass and detached a platoon which erected stone walls on India's side of the pass, and from there fired several hundred rounds at the patrol.

Four of the patrol had gone into a leading position, while two others, who escaped, had stayed behind. The officer said the patrol was routine and had been in the area several times before.

The cable noted that Tulung La was among the

more remote passes in the region, a few dozen kilometres from Bum La and Tawang. It noted China had used the pass during the 1962 war as a channel to send its troops down to Bomdi La, to defeat the Indian resistance there to their offensive.

"Although the Chinese appear to be following their policy of enforcing the status quo with respect to the LAC pending negotiations," the cable concluded, "they apparently still lay claim to Arunachal Pradesh down to the foothills".

## India, China press ahead with aid

As COVID-19 cases mount, both reach out to countries across South Asia, IOR

**SUHASINI HAIDAR**  
NEW DELHI

Amidst its own tensions with India and the month-long stand-off between India and China at the Line of Actual Control, Nepal Prime Minister K.P. Oli has decided not to accept medical teams from either New Delhi or Beijing, an official of the ruling Nepal Communist Party told *The Hindu*. As cases of coronavirus increase in countries across South Asia and some of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) countries, both India and China are pressing ahead with medical supplies, including medicines and protective gear, as well as offers of medical teams to be stationed there.



Nepal has decided not to accept medical teams from either India or China. ■ AP

ween Mr. Oli and a Chinese Communist Party official, that *The Hindu* had reported on. In March, the Indian Army, which has a special relationship with the Nepali Army, had also offered to send a medical team to Nepal. However, the Nepal government decided it would be better not to accept either, especially after some criticism from the opposition Nepali Congress party over the possibility of Chinese military teams in Nepal.

### SAARC countries

India and China have also made rival offers of aid in other parts of the region. With nearly 6,00,000 cases now, the eight SAARC countries (India, Pakistan, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan) account for about 7.5% of the world total of 7.9

million COVID-19 cases, and about 3% of global coronavirus deaths.

According to its "Health Silk Road" initiative, China has sent 29 medical expert teams to 27 countries, including military medical teams to Pakistan, Laos and Myanmar, while India has intensified its offers in the SAARC region (minus Pakistan) and the IOR, deploying aid by Air India flights as well as by the Indian Naval Ship 'Kesari' and sending teams as well.

Last week, a Chinese medical team flew into Dhaka to help train healthcare professionals in COVID-19 treatment.

India has thus far sent medical teams to the Maldives, Mauritius, Comoros, and Kuwait, and the Army had prepared "Rapid Response Teams" (RRTs).

**Medical materials**

"Nepal is happy to welcome medical materials from our

friends," said Bishnu Rijal, Deputy Chief of the NCP's Foreign Affairs department. "But our health professionals are capable to handle the pandemic. We need medical materials now, not medical practitioners," he added.

The decision comes on the heels of an offer of a PLA medical team that was made during a conversation bet-

ween Mr. Oli and a Chinese Communist Party official, that *The Hindu* had reported on. In March, the Indian Army, which has a special relationship with the Nepali Army, had also offered to send a medical team to Nepal. However, the Nepal government decided it would be better not to accept either, especially after some criticism from the opposition Nepali Congress party over the possibility of Chinese military teams in Nepal.

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**Special screening**

State Food and Civil Supplies Minister Ramesh Meena,

who is considered close to the Sachin Pilot camp, distanced himself from the gathering. Despite several leaders having reportedly called him, Mr. Meena did not show up at the hotel even on Sunday.

## Congress MLAs stay put at Jaipur hotel for fourth day

Party wants to prevent any poaching bids ahead of RS polls

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
JAIPUR

Ahead of the Rajya Sabha elections, senior Congress leaders stayed put at a luxury hotel in Jaipur for the fourth consecutive day on Sunday, as they interacted with party MLAs and independent legislators supporting the Rajasthan government.

AICC general secretary Avinash Pande and Chhattisgarh Minister T.S. Singh Deo spoke to the MLAs separately. The legislators were first shifted to a resort on the outskirts of Jaipur and later to the hotel, amid allegations of horse-trading by the BJP.

### Special screening

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Close-knit: Congress legislators at a hotel in Jaipur on Saturday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

who is considered close to the Sachin Pilot camp, distanced himself from the gathering. Despite several leaders having reportedly called him, Mr. Meena did not show up at the hotel even on Sunday.

A special screening of the film *Gandhi* was held for the MLAs at the hotel during the day, while a cricket match between the teams of Congress and independent MLAs was organised in the evening.

## Quake jolts parts of Gujarat

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat experienced 5.5 magnitude earthquake on Sunday, with its epicentre near Bhachau in Kutch.

A preliminary statement by the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) said the quake occurred at 8.13 p.m. at a depth of 10 km in Kutch district, approximately 120 km from Rajkot.

According to the map on the NCS website, the quake struck around 85 km from Bhuj, the site of a devastating 7.7 magnitude earthquake on January 26, 2001 that reportedly killed over 20,000 people and left over 1.5 lakh injured in Gujarat.

Moderate to strong tremors were felt in large parts of the State, including Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Morbi, Kutch, Jamnagar..

## Petrol, diesel prices hiked yet again

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI

State-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) on Sunday increased the price of sensitive petroleum products petrol and diesel for the eighth consecutive day.

The price of petrol was increased by 62 paise per litre and diesel by 64 paise, as OMCs continued to adjust retail rates in line with costs after an 82-day break from rate revision because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In Delhi, a litre of petrol costs ₹75.78, up from ₹75.16 on Saturday.

Diesel price rose 64 paise to ₹74.03 per litre from ₹73.39.

The OMCs have increased petrol price by ₹4.52 per litre and diesel by ₹4.64 in the past eight days.

## Jamiat challenges plea in SC over law on places of worship

Hindu body's petition says law protects 'barbarous actions'



by the Vishwa Bhadra Pujari Purohit Mahasangh in the court earlier in the week.

The Mahasangh has challenged the validity of Section 4 of The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991. It claims the provision "validates the alleged illegal and barbarous action of invaders who had converted the Hindu places of worship".

The Jamiat said the court should not even issue notice on the petition and make the Muslim community insecure about their places of worship, especially after the recent culmination of the Ayodhya dispute.

The Jamiat, represented by advocate Ejaz Maqbool, has filed an impleadment application on Saturday against a writ petition filed

right of Hindus to reclaim possession of these places of worship which had been converted by the invaders". It alleged that the Section "discriminates the members of the Hindu community vis-a-vis the members of the Muslim community in the matter of restoring possession of places of worship".

The Mahasangh's plea gains significance in the case of Kashi and Mathura, where two mosques stand.

The Jamiat highlighted how the Ayodhya judgment had held that "law cannot be used as a device to reach back in time and provide a legal remedy to every person who disagrees with the course which history has taken".

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## Reward on 17 accused in hut burning case

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
LUCKNOW

Days after several huts belonging to a Dalit community in Jaunpur were set ablaze after two groups clashed over a minor incident involving youths, police have announced a reward on 17 accused.

Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Jaunpur, Sanjay Kumar, said a reward of ₹5,000 each had been announced on the 17 absconding persons. "All the accused barring 17 were arrested," said Mr. Kumar.

Police had arrested 37 persons in connection with the incident, in which seven huts of a Dalit community were set ablaze and cattle heads were also burnt to death last Tuesday at Bhadethi village.

## U.P. recruitment scam: real Anamika Shukla finally gets a job

Several women occupied govt. jobs using forged papers



Anamika Shukla. ■ PTI

took a new turn last week, when Ms. Shukla submitted her documents at the office of the Basic Education Officer in Gonda, stating that she never worked as a teacher despite applying in five districts since 2017. On her complaint, the Gonda police have now lodged an FIR against persons accused of impersonating her to get employed as teachers.

Meanwhile, in Mainpuri, police arrested a woman Anita Devi on charges of getting appointed as a teacher while employing her. "Barah acha lag raha hai (I am feeling really good)," Ms. Shukla told reporters after accepting the appointment.

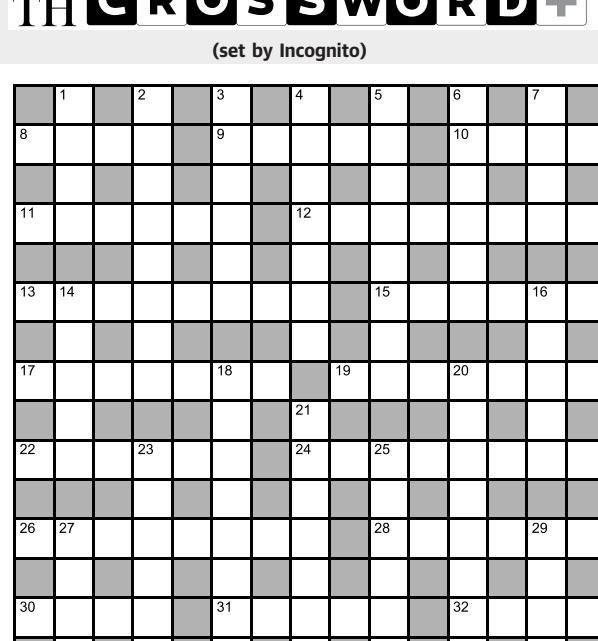
The teacher recruitment

scam which has roiled the State for the past few weeks,

## TH CROSSWORD + 12962

(set by Incognito)

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



- ACROSS
- 8 Legendary garden in Shepshed, England (4)
- 9 The Black Superman hung around the same place giving evidence of being elsewhere (5)
- 10 Test Ms West on return around 10 (4)
- 11 Desert Indian astrophysicist and artist (6)
- 12 Slaughter religious congregation on moderately large area of land

- (8) Forensic reconstruction of tall trees (8)
- 15 Sailor on street overseas (6)
- 17 Spy cola being mixed for fabulous nymph (7)
- 19 Cause for doom? (3,4)
- 20 Store arranged to import English musical equipment (6)
- 21 Lands producing fruits or vegetables (8)
- 26 Scipte coasting at sea (8)
- 28 Narrate once again about legendary Swiss marksman (6)
- 30 Nurse's vehicle is followed by ambulance at last (4)
- 31 Egg-containers? (5)
- 32 Signify "average" (4)
- DOWN
- 1 Silly aide gives suggestion (4)
- 2 Hiding that thing in India, South Africa and New York? That's madness (8)
- 3 Cope with silver in hair (6)
- 4 Thai people prepare sesame oil without use of liquid oxygen initially (7)
- 5 Kiss a Han wildly in African capital (8)
- 6 Engineers brace and set things right (6)
- 7 Keralite carried by Indian Airlines? (4)
- 14 Portia drops setter and dances creating a visual treat (2,3)
- 16 Evade one chasm (5)
- 18 Just croon about drink (8)
- 20 Until then, it's setter against setter (8)
- 21 Inexpensive stool built around water closet (3-4)
- 23 Hordes clamber around Greek island (6)
- 25 Stroke vehicle on English ship (6)
- 27 Good! Ant mutated into another insect! (4)
- 29 Look – a fine block of bread (4)

## SUDOKU

4			3			1	8
			9		5	4	3
	1	4					

With so many advantages in going online, this is the best time for Indian higher education institutions to build their digital presence

■ HARI KRISHNAN NAIR

India's FY21 budget had a slew of announcements for the education sector. The most radical (and prescient, given today's situation) was that the government allowed the top 100 universities (as per India's National Institute Ranking framework) to award fully online degrees to learners in the country.

This is a big leap from the previous stance where universities were allowed to offer only 20% of the degrees online, because of unanswered questions on quality and limited mechanisms for oversight.

The education sector – especially companies operating in the ed-tech space – have welcomed these initiatives, as they have long been advocating the benefits of using technology to learn online, and make quality education more accessible and affordable for all.

#### Benefits

**Accessibility:** Universities can reach out to a much wider audience since learners don't need to be physically present in a classroom. This also gives learners a chance to interact with faculty and others from across the country. Universities can think of launching programmes for different sections of population, which can be conducted at times



convenient for learners; theoretically offering universities a chance to be open 24x7 and reach out to the largest possible number of learners. With geographical boundaries no longer being a constraint, learners can get access to high-quality education from the best institutions and faculty across the country and possibly even the world. Imagine a scenario where

people who hold jobs can work and earn a recognised degree because they are able to learn for a few hours every day after their shift ends. Or someone who is physically unable to travel to a classroom now gets the benefits of a university degree without having to worry about how to get there daily.

**Affordability:** As online degrees scale, the costs

associated with delivery will also come down, leading to high-quality education being more affordable. This, in turn, makes it more accessible to a larger section of our population.

**Quality:** Having no geographical constraints will lead to more competition among universities and force them to invest more in their learning material, motivate faculty to deliver better

learning outcomes and focus on delivering a world-class education.

#### Making the shift

Going online requires effort and understanding of what makes a truly transformative learning experience. A key component is technology and use of data and machine learning to ensure effective delivery and meaningful learning outcomes for all. It is

not enough to just put out hours of video lectures and expect learners to magically learn.

While the basic technology exists, there is a need to simulate a classroom experience, and also take care of doubt resolutions, assignments (submission and evaluation), provide additional learning material, and a permanent forum for discussion of concepts and much more.

In addition, online learning, when delivered effectively, also provides solutions to drawbacks of the classroom-only model – evaluate how learners are understanding concepts almost real-time, take feedback from learners at a session-level enabling universities to course correct almost immediately and even use data to predict how likely a person is complete the course based on his/her interaction in the first few sessions.

With the Indian government warming up to the concept of online degrees, the quickest way to forge ahead is for universities to partner with ed-tech players who have the technology and years of experience in this domain. The time is right for Indian universities to provide high-quality, affordable education not just for Indian learners, but for all citizens of the world.

The writer is Co-Founder of the ed-tech company Great Learning.

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



#### OFF THE EDGE

NANDINI RAMAN

I am 21 years old and in my last year of IT engineering. I want to pursue a master's in International Relations to prepare for the UPSC. Please let me know if I should do this or not. – Mallika Srivastav

Dear Mallika,  
The choice is always yours. Yes, there are good universities in India where you can apply for M.A. in International Relations. You will have an entrance exam for most colleges, and the basic eligibility criteria is graduation in any discipline.

I am a BDS graduate currently doing my internship. I have no interest in dentistry. I like photography and interior designing. What are the best photography and interior designing premium institutes in India? Can you suggest other options apart from dentistry? – Monika Baisav

Hi Monika,  
Post BDS, the most logical path would be to do a MDS. The other option is to join an accredited dental college as a lecturer (but as a BDS graduate, your pay will be minimal). The best ID colleges in India are NID, Ahmedabad and Delhi; SJII School of Art, Mumbai; IIFT, Chandigarh; Srishti, Bengaluru; Pearl Academy, Delhi; CEPT, Gujarat to name a few. Good luck.

I am a 20-year-old B.Com graduate. I have been preparing for an MBA but feel that margins and profit percentages don't amuse me. I consider myself creative. Can you please suggest a course and college related to MBA/PGDM in India but not related to Finance? – Abhishek Machkar

Dear Abhishek,  
The course structure of PGDM is more industry-oriented compared to MBA. It has a more practical approach. However, PGDM is a diploma while MBA is a degree course offered by universities affiliated to universities. PGDM is much more flexible though in terms of syllabus as it is not bound by a particular university. However, both courses will have finance as a subject in the first year and then you could specialise in marketing, given your creative bend. Some of the best colleges in the country are IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Calcutta, IIM Bangalore, FMS Delhi, IIM Lucknow, XLRI Jamshedpur, IIM Kozhikode and JBIMS Mumbai. They all have an entrance exam that you will need to prepare well for. Best wishes.

I completed my mechanical engineering in 2016, and worked as a melting supervisor for four months. After that, I developed an interest and pursued MBA in May, last year. But I didn't get through because of my spoken English. Now, I am 25 and I want to land a government job. After failing the first two attempts in the IBPS exam, I am dejected and apprehensive. What steps should I take? Should I prepare for TNPSC along with bank exam? – Ragul Beem

Dear Ragul,  
You haven't mentioned where you are employed currently. I understand that you feel dejected and apprehensive with the IBPS setback but, to me, you come across as someone who is full of courage and has a never-say-no attitude. Learning English is not a big deal. Please find a good spoken English institute or sign up for online classes immediately. The more you speak, the better you will get. The IBPS exams are tough, but have great scope with central government postings.

Will you be able to prepare for both exams simultaneously? That is a tall order that you are setting up for yourself. Check the syllabus of both in detail and work on a cost-benefit analysis of what exam you would like to take, given the opportunities that both might present on completion, and set your final goal. Then start preparation with complete dedication. Find the best exam coaching centre in your city and work towards realising your goal. Good luck.

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

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. She has worked extensively with students and young adults across a range of issues.

Send your questions sent to [eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com](mailto:eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com). The subject line should be: 'Off the edge'.

#### SCHOLARSHIPS

##### IISER Mohali Swarna Jayanti Fellowship

The Department of Mathematical Sciences, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER-Mohali), desires to engage researchers on a temporary basis under a Fellowship project 'Knots, Groups and Actions' sponsored by SERB.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to students who hold a PhD in math, and are interested in transformation groups, knot theory, braid groups or algebraic systems in low-dimensional topology.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹47,000 plus 16% HRA per month

**DEADLINE:** June 15

**APPLICATION:** Through email only [www.b4s.in/edge/IJS3](http://www.b4s.in/edge/IJS3)

##### ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources Junior Research Fellowship

ICAR-National Bureau invites applications meant for a DBT-funded project "Exploiting Genetic Diversity for Improvement of Safflower through Genomics Assisted Discovery of QTLs/Genes Associated with Agronomic Traits".

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to candidates below 35 years of age who hold a master's degree in Bioinformatics, Biotechnology, Agriculture, Botany, Life Sciences or Environmental Science with NET/GATE qualification.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Up to ₹35,000 pm plus HRA

**DEADLINE:** June 16

**APPLICATION:** Online only [www.b4s.in/edge/IQJ5](http://www.b4s.in/edge/IQJ5)

##### IIT Kanpur Department of Aerospace Engineering Junior Research Fellowship

IIT Kanpur, invites applications for the project "Turbulent Jet Manipulation Using Unsteady Injection".

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to students with an MTech/ME in Aerospace Engineering with specialisation in Aerodynamics, or an MTech/ME in Mechanical Engineering with specialisation in Fluid Sciences, or a BTech in Aerospace/Mechanical Engineering with a valid GATE score.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹31,000 plus HRA

**DEADLINE:** June 20

**APPLICATION:** By email or post. [www.b4s.in/edge/DAE3](http://www.b4s.in/edge/DAE3)

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

#### EXAM PREP

## Crack it with confidence

The postponement of the NEET exam only means more time to prepare and ace it

■ AAKASH CHAUDHRY

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has pushed NEET 2020 from May 3 to July 26. The exam date has been delayed beyond expectations, creating pressure on students to work even harder to achieve their goal. On the other hand, they have got more time to plan their preparation strategically for the best possible score, to get admission in MBBS/BDS courses.

#### Tips to prepare

##### Follow a well-planned schedule

Divide your time strategically so that you can devote more time to weaker areas. In addition, avoid long hours of study and take short breaks to refresh your mind. This will result in productive learning.

**Mock tests:** Solve full-length mock tests available online to help them analyse their speed, accuracy, mistakes and weak areas. However, since NEET 2020 will be conducted offline, attempt tests in that mode too. This will not only strengthen their preparation but also build confidence.

**Video lectures:** In our technologically advanced world, access to the Internet is easy. You can use video lectures to clarify doubts and learn complex concepts.

Moreover, the brain tends to process visuals faster than text. You can use these lectures to revise and visualise important topics.

**Time management:** This plays a critical role in cracking the NEET. You must utilise each minute wisely so that they can attempt all 180 questions within 180 minutes. This means working on your speed. You should solve as many mock tests and previous papers as possible to devise strategies to improve speed and accuracy.

**Revision strategy:** Practice time-bound MCQs, both subject-wise and topic-wise, to enhance speed and accuracy. Go through the NCERT textbooks, which contain effective and in-depth knowledge of all topics. Read your notes, refer to coaching modules and revise all formulae and diagrams and analyse previous papers and thoroughly prepare "must-do topics".

**Keep stress at bay:** It is equally important to deal with stress so that preparation doesn't get affected. Keep anxious thoughts at bay and do not let them interfere with their learning. Regular exercise or yoga helps calm the mind.

##### On D-Day, remember:

Avoid a heavy meal before the exam, as it tends to make you lethargic.

Do not study just before the exam. Give the brain at least a two-hour break to restore alertness and energise it.

If one feels anxious and stressed, listen to some light music as it has a soothing effect.

Do not learn anything new at

**Reach out to teachers:** If you still have doubts or if any concept is not clear, then, you must reach out to your teachers. Don't be shy of asking questions and clarifying doubts. Write down the questions, as they occur, and approach the teacher.

**Keep stress at bay:** It is equally important to deal with stress so that preparation doesn't get affected. Keep anxious thoughts at bay and do not let them interfere with their learning. Regular exercise or yoga helps calm the mind.

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Do not learn anything new at

**Students should divide their time strategically so that they can devote more time to weaker areas.**

this point as it will only lead to further confusion.

Read the questions carefully and do not rush through them.

Manage time well and do not get stuck on a particular option.

In case of doubt, shift the focus from locating the correct answer to eliminating the wrong options first. This will save time.

Be cautious while marking answers. Do not leave it for the end.

Be confident and positive.

The writer is Director and CEO, Akash Educational Services Limited



I completed my mechanical engineering in 2016, and worked as a melting supervisor for four months. After that, I developed an interest and pursued MBA in May, last year. But I didn't get through because of my spoken English. Now, I am 25 and I want to land a government job. After failing the first two attempts in the IBPS exam, I am dejected and apprehensive. What steps should I take? Should I prepare for TNPSC along with bank exam? – Ragul Beem

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# U.S. official resigns over black man's death

Atlanta police chief quits after officer fatally shoots Rayhard Brooks near a restaurant in the city

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

The police chief in the U.S. city of Atlanta resigned after an officer fatally shot a black man during an arrest, the Mayor said Saturday, with the new killing injecting fresh anger into protests against racism and police brutality. Images on local media showed hundreds of protesters in the streets on Saturday and flames engulfing the Wendy's restaurant where 27-year-old Rayhard Brooks was killed.

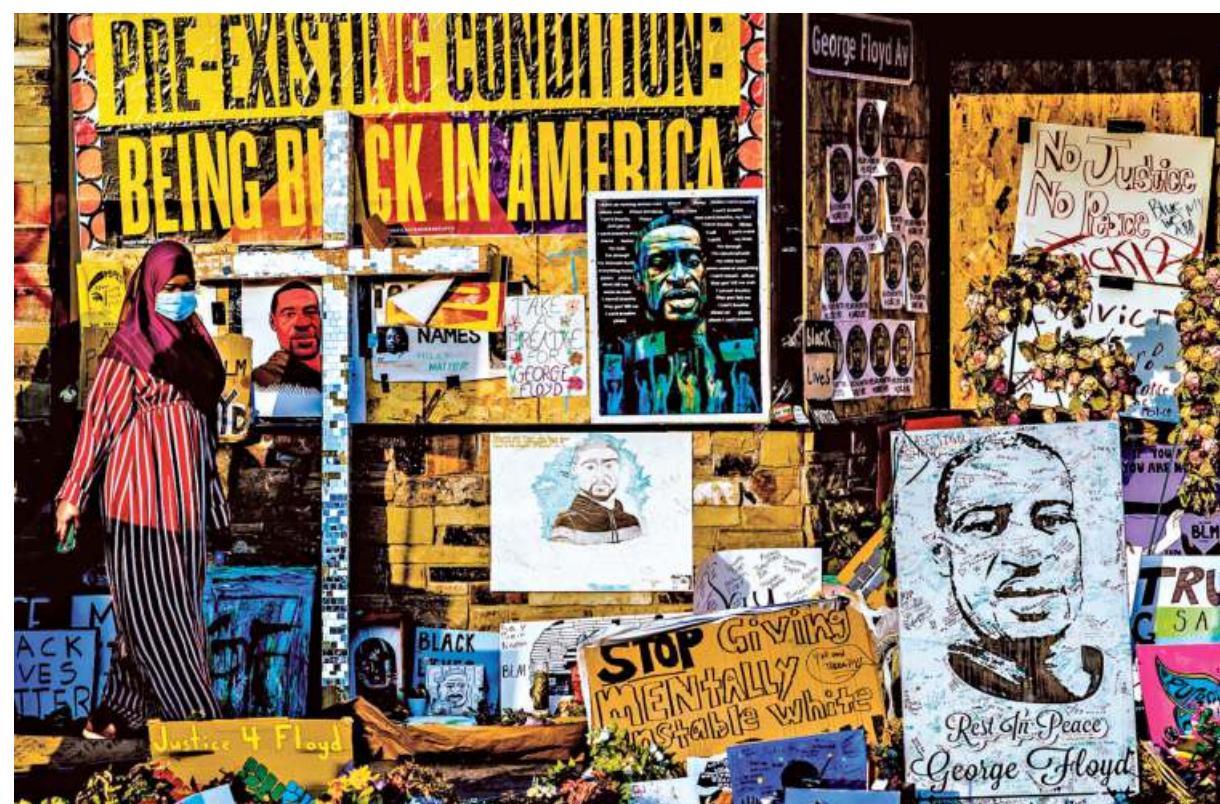
The officer who shot Brooks was dismissed on Saturday and identified by Atlanta police as Garrett Rolfe. The second officer was placed on administrative duty, according to ABC News. Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms – who has been touted as a potential running mate for Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden – earlier announced the resignation of Chief Erika Shields.

## Asleep in car

Wendy's employees called police on Friday night to complain that Brooks was asleep in his car and blocking other customers on the premises, an official report said. He failed a sobriety test and resisted when police tried to arrest him, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) said.

Surveillance video showed "that during a physical struggle with officers, Brooks obtained one of the officer's Tasers and began to flee from the scene," the report continued.

"Officers pursued Brooks on foot and during the chase, Brooks turned and pointed the Taser at the officer. The officer fired his weapon, striking Brooks," it said. Brooks was taken to hospital but died after surgery, it said,



**Wave of tributes:** A woman walking past a makeshift memorial to George Floyd near the site where he died in police custody, in Minneapolis, U.S., on Saturday. • AFP

adding that one officer was injured.

An attorney acting for the dead man's family said disproportionate force was used in the confrontation. "In Georgia a Taser is not a deadly weapon – that's the law," L. Chris Stewart told reporters. "Support came, in I think 2 minutes. He would have been boxed in and trapped. Why did you have to kill him?" "(The officer) had other options than shooting a man in the back."

Brooks has four children, Stewart added, and had celebrated the birthday of his eight-year-old girl earlier on Friday. His death is the 48th shooting involving an officer the GBI has been asked to investigate this year, according to local newspaper the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Fifteen of those incidents were fatal.

## Reckoning on racism

The unrest comes as the U.S. faces a historic reckoning on systemic racism, with mass civil unrest ignited by the May 25 killing of another African-American man, George Floyd, while in police custody. Floyd died after a white Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Protests which spread first around the country then the globe, have forced a conversation on the legacies of slavery, colonialism and white violence against people of colour, as well as the militarisation of police. Police chief Shields had worked for Atlanta's police department for more than two decades.

## Churchill's photo goes 'missing' from search results

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Google said Sunday it would explore why the picture of Britain's Second World War leader Winston Churchill disappeared from its search results list of former U.K. Prime Ministers, during controversy over his record on racism.

The search giant said the photo's removal from its horizontal list atop search results for former British Premiers was due to an automatic update and "not purposeful", but apologised "for any concern".

It noted that the issue

only applied to its so-called "knowledge graph" listing and that many images of Churchill were still easily found on its search engine. "We're aware an image for Sir Winston Churchill is missing from his knowledge graph entry on Google," the firm's search liaison arm said on Twitter. "We apologise for any concern. This was not purposeful & will be resolved. Images in such panels are automatically created & updated. During an update, they can briefly disappear." The statement added his photo would be restored.

## Sri Lanka holds mock poll to test health measures

4 out of 22 electoral districts take part

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka staged a mock election on Sunday to test measures aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19 during a parliamentary vote in August. The poll was due to be held on April 25 but was put off and then postponed indefinitely due to the epidemic, which official figures show has infected nearly 2,000 people and killed 11. The Election Commission said on Wednesday that the vote would be held on August 5.

The new health measures – to be implemented at polling booths and counting centres – were trialled in four of the 22 electoral districts, Commission chairman Mahinda Deshpriya told reporters. "We were very pleased to see that all those who volunteered to



Polling officers taking part in a mock election in Negombo, Sri Lanka. • AP

take part in this exercise today wore face masks," he said. "Officials and polling agents will be behind clear plastic screens or wear face shields. We have also ensured that voters will stand a metre apart when they queue up." Voters will also be required to bring their own pen or pencil to mark ballot papers.

## 19 dead, 172 injured as tanker explodes on Chinese highway

The truck was carrying liquefied gas, say authorities

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIJING

The number of people killed in a tanker truck explosion on a highway in eastern China has climbed to 19, with more than 170 injured, local authorities said on Sunday.

The force of the blast on Saturday afternoon caused nearby homes and factories to collapse, and sent huge clouds of black smoke billowing into the air as flames engulfed several cars.

Local government authorities said on Sunday afternoon that there were 172 people injured in the accident near Wenling city in the eastern province of Zhejiang.

China's emergency management department had earlier said there were 189 injured people being treated in hospital.

Local authorities said the



**Collateral damage:** A man walking past a building and a car damaged by Saturday's explosion in Zhejiang, China. • AFP

truck was loaded with liquefied gas. State news agency Xinhua reported on Sunday that there was a second blast when the truck fell onto a workshop near the expressway after the first explosion.

Emergency responders were still conducting search and rescue operations, it added.

Deadly road accidents are common in China, where traffic regulations are often flouted or not enforced.

Last year, at least 36 people died and 36 others were hurt in eastern China when a packed coach with a flat tyre collided with a truck.

## ELSEWHERE



'Pak. could see more than 1 million cases'

ISLAMABAD  
Pakistan's Planning Minister Asad Umar warned on Sunday that the number of COVID-19 cases in the country could double by the end of June and peak at more than a million infections just a month later. • AFP

## Russia has handled virus better than U.S.: Putin

MOSCOW  
Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Sunday that Russia was emerging from COVID-19 with minimal losses, having handled it better than the U.S.. With 5,28,964 confirmed cases, Russia has the third-highest number of infections after Brazil and the U.S. • AFP

## Trump sidesteps controversies in address

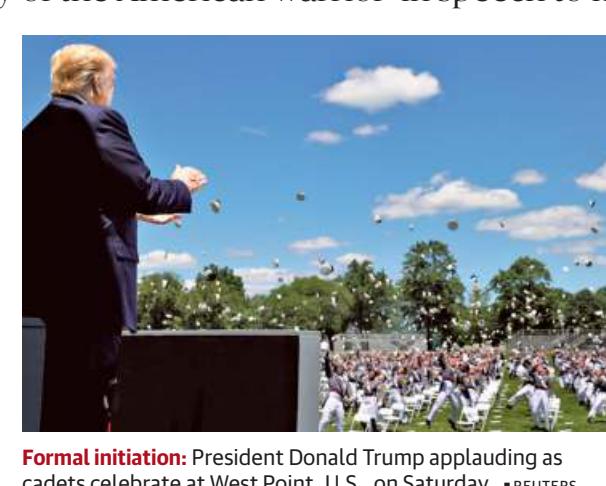
He praises the 'glory of the American warrior' in speech to military graduates

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday addressed the new graduating class of the West Point military academy, praising the "righteous glory of the American warrior" but largely sidestepping recent controversies over racial unrest and the military's role in putting it down. "America is the greatest country in human history," Mr. Trump told the 1,107 newly minted second lieutenants as they sat, well-spaced, under a bright sun on the parade ground of the U.S. Military Academy.

## Racial challenges

But he made no direct mention of the recent racial turmoil and only glancingly referred to recent dissent from top military figures over his threat to employ active duty troops to put down protests.



Mr. Trump's closest mention came when he said, "I also want to thank the men and women of our National Guard" for responding to "challenges from hurricanes and natural disasters to ensuring peace, safety and the constitutional rule of law on our streets." The President, who was

introduced by the academy's first black superintendent, Lieutenant General Darryl Williams, also referred only passingly to the nation's racial challenges.

## Remark on segregation

"The army was at the forefront of ending the terrible injustice of segregation," he

said, and it was West Point graduates who led the fight in the Civil War to "end the evil of slavery." Mr. Trump did not mention that one West Point barracks still bears the name of General Robert E. Lee, who led the break-away Confederate forces during that war, which brought an end to slavery. Mr. Trump has rejected recent demands to rename U.S. military bases bearing the names of Confederate officers.

Tensions between Mr. Trump and the military had soared since he threatened to call out active duty troops to put down sometimes violent protests.

The academy had been shut and students sent home because of the COVID-19 pandemic. But Mr. Trump abruptly announced in April that he would address the graduates in person.

## New wave of Beijing outbreak spreads to neighbouring Liaoning

Virus could have come from Europe, says expert

REUTERS  
BEIJING

After weeks with almost no new COVID-19 infections, Beijing has recorded dozens of new cases in recent days, all linked to a major wholesale food market, raising concerns about a resurgence of the disease.

There had been almost no new cases in the city for almost two months until an infection was reported on June 12, and since then the total number has climbed to 51, including eight more in the first seven hours of Sunday.

According to the city's health authority, contact tracing showed all the infected people had either worked or shopped inside Xinfadi, said to be the largest food market in Asia, or had been in contact with someone who was there.

"Beijing has entered an extraordinary period," city spokesman Xu Hejian told a news conference on Sunday.

The market was closed before dawn on Saturday and the district containing the market put itself on a "wartime" footing.



**Making tests accessible:** People queuing for a swab test at the Guang'an Sport Centre in Beijing on Sunday. • AFP

the food market and which has one of China's biggest used car centres, raised its epidemic risk level to high on Sunday, becoming the only neighbourhood in the country to be on high alert.

This status means there can be no economic activity until the outbreak is controlled.

As of 3 p.m. on Sunday, 10 neighbourhoods in Beijing, such as Financial Street, had raised their risk levels from low to medium. "Beijing will not turn into a second Wuhan, spreading the virus to many cities all over the country and needing a lockdown," a government epidemic expert told *Health Times* on Sunday, referring to the city where the epidemic in China first emerged late last year.

Zeng Guang, former chief epidemiologist at Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention and currently a senior expert with the National Health Commission, predicted that the outbreak will likely be controlled after the initial spike of a few days, according to the report by *Health Times*,

a paper run by state media *People's Daily*.

Like other countries around the world, China is concerned to prevent a second wave from emerging after easing lockdowns that hammered its economy earlier this year.

## 'Contaminated meat'

An epidemiologist with the Beijing government said on Sunday that a DNA sequencing of the virus showed the latest outbreak in the market could have come from Europe.

"Our preliminary assessment is the virus came from overseas. We still can't determine how it got here. It might've been on contaminated seafood or meat, or spread from the faeces of people inside the market," state media quoted Yang Peng as saying.

Officials said anyone who had been to or had contact with people who had been to Xinfadi since May 30 will be required to report to their work or residential units and get tested for COVID-19, the *Beijing Daily* said on Saturday.

## Australian States further relax COVID-19 restrictions

50 person limit on indoor venues eased

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KABUL

The Taliban have killed or wounded more than 400 Afghan security personnel over the past week, the Interior Ministry said Sunday, accusing the insurgents of increasing attacks ahead of expected peace talks.

"In the past one week, the Taliban carried out 222 attacks against the Afghan security forces, resulting in the death and injury of 422 personnel," Interior Ministry spokesman Tareq Arian said at a press conference. He also accused the Taliban of targeting religious scholars in a bid to put "psychological pressure" on the Afghan government.

On Friday, four people including a prayer leader were killed when a blast ripped through a mosque in Kabul during the weekly prayers.

Sunday said there had been nine new infections since late Friday.

## Indoor businesses

In neighbouring Victoria, where pubs and other venues are currently limited to 20 people, indoor businesses will be allowed to have up to 50 seated patrons from June 22, said State Premier Daniel Andrews. All sports for children would resume, he said. Indoor sports centres and physical recreation spaces like gyms will be allowed to host 20 people, per four square metre rule.

Nightclubs and music festivals would also be allowed to operate from August if new cases remain low, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

The State on Saturday reported the first locally transmitted COVID-19 case in weeks, and State officials on

## N. Korea warns South of retaliation over leaflets sent by defectors

'People have been sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda'

REUTERS  
SEOUL

The sister of North Korea's leader has warned of retaliatory measures against South Korea that could involve the military, in the latest escalation of tensions over defectors from the North who have been sending back propaganda and food.

Kim Yo-jong, who serves unofficially as one of Kim Jong-un's top aides, issued the warning in a statement carried by state news agency KCNA on Saturday. "By exercising my power authorised by the Supreme Leader, our Party and the state, I gave an instruction to the ... department in charge of the affairs with (the) enemy to decisively carry out the next action," Ms. Kim said. Her statement, which did not say what the



Kim Yo-jong, sister of North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un. • REUTERS

next action could be, came days after South Korea took legal action against defectors who have been sending material such as rice and anti-North leaflets.

South Korea's Unification Ministry and Defence Ministry each released statements asking the North to honour inter-Korean agreements reached in the past.

On Sunday, South Korea's National Security Council meeting was held with security and diplomatic chiefs in attendance, "to examine the current situation of the (Korean) peninsula," the presidential Blue House said, without elaborating.

South Korea's Unification Ministry and Defence Ministry each released statements asking the North to honour inter-Korean agreements reached in the past.

## ASK US



N. SREEKANTH

**Q.** My wife and I have separate PANs and file income tax returns separately. My wife has no income per se but taking a PAN and filing ITR were done to facilitate domestic use as I was an NRI then. Now, I have returned to India and am paying taxes/ filing ITR of my own. Is it feasible to discontinue with my wife's ITR in this context?

VIJAY KRISHNAN AND GITA

**A.** An individual is not required to file an ITR if he/she does not have any taxable income in a particular assessment year or if income does not exceed the maximum amount which is not chargeable to tax. However, it is advisable to verify the 26AS of that assessment year in order to ascertain if any amount is credited by way of TDS (for NRIs, TDS will be deducted by the bank even for SB interest unless the bank is informed of the change in the status of residency) and accordingly file the ITR even if the basic exemption limit is not exceeded in order to claim refund and also to avoid any notices from the department due to mismatch between TDS records and non-filing of ITR.

**Q.** I'm a senior citizen aged 64. I own a flat that I had purchased in 1989. Now, I want to sell the flat and buy a new one. In view of my age, I wish to buy the flat in the name of my daughter. Can I save capital gains tax by investing the sale proceeds in purchasing the new flat in my daughter's name?

V. AYAPPAN

**A.** Under Section 54 of the Income Tax Act, an assessee can avail the benefit of capital gains on selling one residential property and using the proceeds to purchase another residential property in India. Thus, the new residential property must be registered in your name in order to avail the exemption. This view can be deduced from a plain reading of the legislature. However, contrary views have been adopted by certain appellate forums of the department and High Courts wherein exemptions were extended to the spouse of the assessee, considering the section to be beneficial in nature and must be viewed in such manner. Although such a stand has not been established in a father and child relationship, you may consult your auditor in this matter to seek further guidance before the sale is done.

**Q.** I satisfy the conditions for making payment of self-assessment tax and for the past three assessment years, I have been making payment in one lump sum before filing the return. I would like to know whether it can be paid in instalments (may be one or two payments in a month) before filing the return?

I would also like to mention that I paid one instalment on April 5, 2020 for AY 20-21.

N. VENKATESAN

**A.** Yes, self-assessment tax can be paid in instalments; it is advisable to file the return after payment of all the self-assessment instalments. It is worthy to note that the payment of self-assessment tax can be made only after April 1 of the concerned assessment year; (ie for the Assessment Year 20-21, self-assessment tax can be paid only from April 1, 2020).

Further, you also have the option of paying income tax in instalments for a particular assessment year based on an estimation of tax liability by way of advance tax. Though there are provisions in the Act requiring only certain assessees to pay advance tax in instalments, you may still pay advance tax in your name for a particular assessment year depending on your fund flows and availability. At the time of payment of advance tax, you have to be careful in choosing the correct assessment year.

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

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



## MIND YOUR MONEY

Continuing with a loan will dent long-term wealth creation

## Get rid of EMIs, go for investments

GAURAV MASHRUWALA

"Not having the burden of EMI is a big relief," a banker who had retired from a foreign lender at a senior level had told me once.

His comment surprised me a little. As a banker all his life, he was supportive of loans. In fact, he had even resisted my recommendation to pay back his home loan at an early date. However, he said, he had realised the stress it had caused on the family and after retirement, even he was not comfortable with it.

This is not a stray experience for me. A CEO of an MNC was relieved when his loan was paid back.

He was not happy in his job, it was turning out to be stressful and he was missing spending

time with family and pursuing hobbies which he wanted to do all his life.

Once the loan was paid back, he immediately switched over to a job which demanded less of his time. It, of course, paid less but gave him more time. According to him, "Now that the loan is behind me, I am feeling like a free bird."

In the current times, when we are facing turbulence in income, erosion in wealth and experiencing issues concerning health, those who do not have liabilities, will be more at ease.

As a professional, I have been witness to the other extreme also. "If there is an EMI, it helps me control and stay focussed on the expenses. If there is no EMI burden, I tend to splurge." This was told to me by

a youngster. I find it weird. It is like saying, 'I have cough and cold, I am fairly indisciplined about taking medicines, so, I have hired nursing staff at home to give me medicines.' If we don't do that, then why do we continue with a loan?

As an individual, if there is a fixed monthly commitment to be honoured, what will be the preference? Paying the monthly instalment of a loan, i.e. EMI or investing every month in a mutual fund scheme i.e. SIP. In fact, even regularly setting aside an amount in a bank in the form of a recurring deposit will give more happiness and, of course, lead to long-term wealth creation.

Taking on a loan is not bad; of course it should not be for splurging. But, continuing with

the loan will dent long-term wealth creation.

**A taboo in the past**

About 2-3 decades ago, borrowing was taboo in this country. In 1997, I was promoting credit cards for a foreign bank.

In those years, 'loan' was a bad word. Many youngsters would want to apply for a card but were reluctant. According to them, if elders in their family came to know about it, it would have been a big issue. As a society, we have come a long way from there.

Loans or borrowing are no more bad words but still, a majority would prefer coming out of it. Currently, I don't have the data but my gut feeling is when it comes to a home loan, irrespective of tenure for which indi-

viduals borrow, most of them get rid of the loan much before the end of the actual tenure.

There are instances of individuals continuing with a loan for tax benefit, using the funds available for repayment of loan to invest. All these sound great.

However, they are more like joy rides, something which gives a high for some time. The latent feeling is of following some kind of a brilliant strategy to build more wealth. Honestly, it is nothing but a kick, a feeling of a high. This is short lived.

From a long-term wealth creation perspective, stick to the basics. Basics are always beautiful. Pay off the loan and invest the money saved from paying monthly loan instalments. To pay off the loan, a certain amount of capital will

be used. But upon repayment of the loan, that entire asset will be a clean investment of ours. This will add to the net worth of our balance sheet.

Having paid back the loan, use the amount saved every month to invest. This will also add to wealth creation. Over a period, both the fully paid asset and regular investments will add to our net worth.

Net worth means the clean assets we have in our balance sheet after paying back all the loans. Therefore, always focus on 'My EMI.' 'My EMI' is not 'My Equated Monthly Instalment' but 'My Equal Monthly Investment' for building long-term wealth.

The writer is a financial planner and author of 'Yogic Wealth')

## INSURANCE: ADEQUACY OF COVER

## The numbers must stack up

Determining the exact insurance cover required by an individual involves an interplay of several factors

M.S.R.A. SHRIHARI

How much insurance should I have? This is a billion-dollar question to almost all insurance prospects. In fact, nobody on earth can either mitigate or indemnify the loss and the hardship faced by the deceased's dependents. But to arrive at an approximately equal and justifiable value of human life, there are certain thumb rules or empirical formulae.

**Human Life Value (HLV)**  
Insurance companies generally go by this rule. Let's not deeply delve into those actuarial calculations, which have far too many complex details.

Suppose the breadwinner of a family is going on a tour for two to three days. He arranges a few thousands of rupees for his spouse and children to spend until he returns. If the same person has to go for a two- or three-month period on project work, he provides ₹40,000 or ₹50,000 depending on his earning capacity and the spending habits of the family.

And, if the same person disappears suddenly, the amount he might have provided for his family for maintaining the present standard of living during their lifetime determines the

## Insurance coverage reckoner

Generally, all insurance companies offer coverage commensurate with one's income. The broad limits will be as under (with minimal variation from company to company)



Age range	For income less than ₹10 lakh p.a	For income more than ₹10 lakh p.a
Up to age 35 years	25 times annual income	30 times annual income
36 - 45 years	20 times	25 times
46 - 50 years	15 times	20 times
51 - 55 years	15 times	15 times
56 and above	10 times	10 times

## POINTS TO PONDER

1 Before taking a policy, one has to ascertain the premium rates, riders offered, claim settlement ratios of the company

2 An individual will have to provide for coverage of outstanding loans

cover or join a group insurance (if you are an employee and your employer provides the same). Here also, the most important thing to bear in mind will be to have a provision for coverage of your outstanding loans. Otherwise, the entire claim amount arising out of a policy may or may not be sufficient to clear the debts of the deceased. That defeats the basic purpose of insurance.

Almost all insurance companies offer online sale of term policies. As per the table, Mr. Raj is eligible for ₹3.60 crore term insurance. But, given his commitments and necessities, he may opt for ₹1.20 crore; ₹1.35 crore or ₹1.50 crore term insurance, as the case may be.

Before taking a policy, one has to ascertain the premium rates, riders offered and claim settlement ratios of the insurance company.

**Under- or over-insurance**  
These are two major problems that prospects generally face while taking an insurance policy. Under-insurance means the insurance policy one takes is not sufficient to meet his obligations. In our example, if Mr. Raj takes insurance, say, for ₹50 lakh sum assured, how will it be

sufficient to maintain his family and repay the outstanding loans in case of any contingency? This is under-insurance.

Likewise, if one is over insured i.e. insurance not commensurate with one's income and expenditure, the policy premium becomes a white elephant for him to continue and ultimately results in lapsation, which is a great loss to the policy holder.

**Opt for longer tenures**  
It is always better to choose longer term policies. As per the age advances, the premium rates will be very high and one has to undergo many tests to get the same coverage as one gets at a younger age.

The most important thing to remember here is at a younger age, one will not have any medical history which is a favourable sign for companies to offer insurance at lower premiums and for longer terms. Advanced age is the time when there is a real necessity for insurance.

Hence, it will always be better to choose a term up to the maximum age allowable under term insurance.

The author is Associate Member of the Insurance Institute of India

HLV of that person.

To arrive at that value, let's not go deep into factors such as inflation rate adjustments, yield earned on investments, increase in incomes, decrease in expenses, and the like. Let's restrict ourselves to some thumb rules to make it simple.

As such, if Mr. Raj can provide ₹30,000 per month to his family, they may survive. But he had taken loans worth ₹60 lakh, both for housing and vehicle put together. Some companies offer insurance against outstanding loan on diminishing balance method – the premium for such a policy will be added to the loan principal and the

income and expenses per month: Income (net after tax) – ₹1 lakh; EMIs on loans – ₹50,000; family expenses – ₹30,000; savings – ₹10,000; emergency fund – ₹10,000.

EMI will be fixed. This is also one of the options.

To get a recurring income of ₹30,000 a month at present rates, one needs a corpus of ₹60 lakh at 6% return; or ₹72 lakh at 5% return or ₹90 lakh at 4% return. Add the ₹60 lakh loan to this. Both these put together, will be the amount of insurance Mr. Raj needs viz. ₹1.20 crore, ₹1.32 crore or ₹1.50 crore, respectively.

Traditional policies for such a huge amount will cost heavily.

Hence, it will always be better to opt for a term insurance

and charges as on June 11, 2020

Source: Paisabazaar.com

Rates and charges as on June 11, 2020

Source: Paisabazaar.com

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Rates and charges as on June 11, 2020

# Sushant Singh Rajput passes away

Police looking into death of young Bollywood actor

GAUTAM S. MENGLE

MUMBAI  
Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput, 34, was found dead in his Bandra residence on Sunday afternoon.

According to the Bandra Police, the incident came to light at around 12.30 p.m. when his house help noticed that he had been in his bedroom for a long time.

"Rajput had excused himself after breakfast and gone to his bedroom. Around 12.30 p.m., his servant found that he had locked himself inside. The door was broken down and Rajput was found lifeless, after which his friend called the Police Control Room," an officer with the Bandra Police said.

The body was taken to the Cooper Hospital in Vile Parle for post mortem examination, while his family members in Patna were informed. Officers said that his sisters reached the city late in the day to complete the requisite formalities, as his father's health took a turn for the worse after he heard the news.

"We have not found any note and the motive behind his extreme step is still not clear. Investigations are underway with all possibilities in mind," Mumbai Police spokesperson Deputy Commissioner of Police Pranaya Ashok said. He added that no evidence had come to

light that Rajput had been undergoing treatment for depression.

The police have for the moment registered an Accidental Death Report in connection with the incident, and are probing the matter further.

**Those who require assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts may contact BMC mental health helpline 022-24131212 (24x7); Vandrevala Foundation: 18602662345/ 1800233330 (24x7); I Call: 022-25521111 (8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday to Saturday); The Samaritans Mumbai: 8422984528/ 8422984529/ 8422984530 (3 p.m.- 9 p.m. all days).**



Tragic: Sushant Singh Rajput's sister Mitu Singh, left, at the Cooper Hospital in Mumbai. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

# A shooting star with a sparkling legacy of films

A hard-working actor whose sincerity shone through

NAMRATA JOSHI  
MUMBAI

Thirty four years of age, with barely a decade in the world of entertainment and 11 odd films behind him, Sushant Singh Rajput deserved much more of them all – life, movies, roles, plaudits and his due place in the sun – but could not enjoy them for the vicissitudes of stardom, and the ups and downs of life itself. He was a true blue shooting star who leaves behind a prematurely abbreviated but sparkling legacy of films.

He debuted on television in Balaji Telefilms' *Kis Desh Mein Hai Mera Dil* (Star Plus) and endeared himself to everyone as Manav Deshmukh in *Pavitra Rishta* (Zee TV), also a Balaji Telefilm production, in a role for which he went on to bag many an award. Manav's character was underlined with a sincerity and maturity, and sincere is the quality for which industry insiders remember Rajput most.

## Top form

He was in top form in his big screen debut in 2013 – Abhishek Kapoor's *Kai Po Che!*, based on Chetan Bhagat's book *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*. Rajput played Ishaan, a frustrated, angry and agitated local cricketer who tames his restlessness to help a poor child, Ali, become the best batsman of the country. You couldn't take your eyes off him on screen and the finale left a lump in the throat, quite like the sudden vacuum his passing has created

among his admirers today.

Three years later, Rajput embraced cricket again, in one of the biggest hits of his career – Neeraj Pandey's *M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story* (2016). "Mahi maar raha hai" ("Mahi is hitting it"), shouted a fan in the film. One saw a similar thrill and electric urgency, and also many a wet eye, cheering on for Rajput as Mahi on the big screen.

## Industrial

Most remember him as an extremely hard-working actor who also took pride in his industriousness. There was an inherent energy and dynamism, youthfulness, spontaneity and likeability about him. It got channelised really well in films like Maneesh Sharma's *Shuddh Desi Romance* (2013), about young people's views on love, commitment, live-in relationships and marriage. But he tried not to bracket himself in the youthful romance zone.

There were duds like Dinesh Vijan's *Rabta* (2017), or the recent *Drive* (2019) on Netflix. However, despite this not being so evident to many, Rajput kept making very interesting choices, whether they hit the bull's eye is another story.

He opted to play a small role in Rajkumar Hirani's *PK* (2014), became the lead in Dibakar Banerjee's ambitious *Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!* (2015). In times of political polarisation, he opted to play a Muslim *pithi* (porter) Mansoor, who tran-

sports pilgrims and their luggage to and from Kedarnath in the 2018 film of the same name by Abhishek Kapoor.

He never fitted in any mould, didn't belong to any camps in Bollywood. Last year, he appeared as a *baaghi* (rebel, dacoit) in the 1970s *Chambal*, in what is arguably the best film of his career – Abhishek Chaubey's *Sonchiriya*. This was followed by one of his biggest hits, Nitesh Tiwari's *Chhichhore*. Ideally, 2020 should have been the time for him to peak. For now, Mukesh Chhabra's remake of *The Fault in Our Stars* titled *Dil Bechara* is all we have left of him.

In *Sonchiriya*, the title is a metaphor for a rare bird of redemption. "Apni apni Sonchiriya, apni apni mukti" goes a line in the film. It's all about a journey towards finding your own bird of salvation. Like in the film, Rajput has also opted to go on his own journey to infinity. A journey that he embarked on way too soon.



1986-2020

# A kind act remembered

STAFF REPORTER  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

commented on his Instagram page on August 21, 2018, that he did not have enough money but wanted to help. In response, the actor posted: "I will donate ₹1 crore in your name, make sure that it reaches directly to our friends out there."

Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan issued a condolence message recalling his contribution.

Arya Suresh, who did voluntary work during the floods, recalled Rajput's quick response when she contacted him for relief materials.

## IN BRIEF



Rohit wants to play both T20 World Cup and IPL

MUMBAI

India's limited-over vice captain Rohit Sharma wants to compete in both the T20 World Cup and the IPL this year as chances are that only one of the two could be salvaged due to the coronavirus pandemic. Rohit said in an Instagram chat that he would "preferably play both" when asked which event he would choose. The ICC is yet to decide on the World Cup, scheduled to be held in October-November in Australia, while the BCCI has postponed the IPL indefinitely.



Zampa returns to NSW after seven years

MELBOURNE

Spinner Adam Zampa has signed a contract with New South Wales for the upcoming season, returning to his former club after a seven-year stint with South Australia. The 28-year-old, who made his First Class debut with NSW in 2012, will be sharing the dressing room with top cricketers such as Nathan Lyon, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc and David Warner. PTI



Silva and Cavani to leave PSG

PARIS

PSG sporting director Leonardo has confirmed that Thiago Silva and Edinson Cavani will not stay with the French champion with their contracts due to expire this month. "Yes, we are coming to the end," Leonardo told the *Le Journal du Dimanche*. "It has been a very difficult decision to reach. These are players who have marked the history of the club and you wonder if you should carry on a little longer together or if it's best to avoid staying a year too long."

# Barcelona back in action with a bang

Messi excels with two assists and a strike; Bayern on threshold of retaining crown

## EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MADRID

Lionel Messi returned without a beard and with a goal and two assists as Barcelona resumed its LaLiga title challenge on Saturday with a thumping 4-0 victory over Real Mallorca.

Barca exploded into the lead with just 64 seconds played when Arturo Vidal headed in before Martin Braithwaite struck first-ever goal for Barcelona, from a Messi-headed assist.

**Fan intrusion**  
Jordi Alba latched onto a Messi pass to add a third but not before play was briefly stopped by a pitch invader, who was able to run on, despite the match being closed to fans.

Messi then scored a fourth in injury time for his 25th goal of the season.

Clean shaven, and without any sign of the thigh problem that prevented him from training earlier this month, Messi played 90 minutes and looked like he had



Centre of attraction: Martin Braithwaite, centre, notched up his first-ever goal for Barcelona, while Lionel Messi, left, netted his 25th of the season for the champion. ■ AFP

never been away. "I'm happy because starting like this is an enormous boost for what's to come," said Barcelona coach Quique Setien.

Diego Costa scored his first goal since October but Atletico Madrid missed the chance to move into the top four by drawing 1-1 away at Athletico Bilbao on Sunday.

In the Bundesliga, Bayern Munich moved to within just one win of an eighth straight Bundesliga title as a late Leon Goretzka goal sealed a 2-1

victory over Borussia Monchengladbach in Berlin.

Teenage striker Joshua Zirkzee put Bayern ahead before Benjamin Pavard's own goal levelled for Gladbach, but Goretzka netted his third goal in five league games with four minutes remaining.

Victory at relegation-threatened Werder Bremen on Tuesday will confirm Bayern as German champion for the 30th time in Hansi Flick's first season in charge.

Bundesliga: Mainz 0 lost to Augsburg 1 (Niederlechner 1); Saturday: Bayern Munich 2 (Zirkzee 26, Goretzka 86) bt Borussia Monchengladbach 1 (Pavard 37-og).

**The results:** LaLiga: Athletic Bilbao 1 (Munain 37) drew with Atletico Madrid 1 (Costa 39);

Saturday: Celta Vigo 0 lost to Villarreal 1 (Trigueros Munoz 90+1); Leganes 1 (Rodriguez 84+pen) lost to Valladolid 2 (Unal 2, Alcaraz 54); Real Mallorca 0 lost to Barcelona 4 (Vidal 2, Braithwaite 37, Alba 79, Messi 90+3).

Bundesliga: Mainz 0 lost to Augsburg 1 (Niederlechner 1);

Saturday: Bayern Munich 2 (Zirkzee 26, Goretzka 86) bt Borussia Monchengladbach 1 (Pavard 37-og).

# Schauffele pulls ahead

Five players one stroke behind him

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
FORT WORTH

Xander Schauffele closed with a birdie for a four-under 66 and a one-stroke lead after Saturday's third round of the Charles Schwab Challenge. The 26-year-old American stood at 13-under 197 after 54 holes, with five rivals deadlocked behind him on 198.

South Africa's Branden Grace and Americans Gary Woodland, Justin Thomas, Collin Morikawa, Jordan Spieth were second, with Americans Daniel Berger and Harold Varner one adrift on 199.

"All of us, everyone, it's



Birdie man: Xander Schauffele has made 16 birdies and only three bogeys through the first three rounds. ■ AFP

# Harikrishna finishes second

P.K. AJITH KUMAR  
KOZHIKODE

P. Harikrishna justified his billing and finished second at the Sharjah World Stars online chess tournament. Azerbaijan's Mamadyrov Shakhriyar emerged champion.

The top seed scored 7.5 points from 10 rounds and was the only unbeaten player in the double round robin tournament. Harikrishna finished with 6.5 points.

The top two seeds had come face to face in the eighth round. That game was drawn but the Indian was able to keep his hopes alive after defeating Salem Saleh in the ninth round. He, however, lost his final-round game to Wojtaszek, while Shakhriyar survived anxious moments before overcoming Saleh.

**Final standings:** 1. Mamadyrov Shakhriyar (Aze) 7.5; 2. P. Harikrishna (Ind) 6.5; 3. Radoslaw Wojtaszek (Pol) 6; 4. Rustam Kasimdzhanov (Uzb) 5.5; 5. Salem Saleh (UAE) 3; 6. Bassem Amin (Egy) 1.5.

# Might quit if pools don't open for training: Khade

Delay will put Indians at a disadvantage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Frustrated at not being able to resume training, Asian Games bronze medallist Virdhawal Khade on Sunday said he may consider retiring from the sport if swimming pools continue to remain shut due to restrictions.

Khade said the delay in resumption of training would put the Indian swimmers at a huge disadvantage ahead of Tokyo Olympics.

**No news'**  
Khade tweeted: "Might have to consider retiring from swimming. No news or communication of any sorts for being able to start swimming again. Wish swimming was treated the same as other sports in India."

"Person shrugging @IndiaSports @RijijuOffice @KirenRijiju @swimmingfederal @Nihar44190177."



Virdhawal Khade. ■ FILE PHOTO

# India needs a pro-league: Walsh

Garcia feels drills should be made more dynamic

S. DIPAK RAGAV  
CHENNAI

Former Indian women's coach Francisco Garcia and renowned coach J.D. Walsh, who has conducted clinics across the country, headlined a coaches conclave, organised by the Integrated Basketball Players Association (IBPA) in association with the Indian Basketball Association.

Garcia, who was at the helm of the women's team from 2013-15, spoke about coaching techniques to improve the standard of the sport in the country. "Focus should not be on more number of drills but on concentrated drills," said the Spaniard.

"When correcting players, too much information should not be put in their head. Players should be told about their faults in a precise way so that they have concrete information to process. Drills should also be made more dynamic."

Walsh, who has run numerous camps across 25 Indian cities, urged coaches to work on sharpening the athletes' skills like dribbling, passing and catching as it is a skill-based sport.

The American said: "Basketball is a game of skill and more than drills, the focus should be on skill and endurance training. Consistency and a good skill development programme can prove beneficial in creating world-class talent in India."

Walsh added that the

# Chhetri has glorified Indian football: Stimac

'He always raises the bar in training'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

National team head coach Igor Stimac on Sunday hailed Sunil Chhetri, saying the talismanic captain was one of those who "glorified" Indian football with his dedication in the 15 years of his illustrious career.

The 35-year-old Chhetri on Friday became only the second Indian after legendary Bhaichung Bhutia to complete 15 years in the Indian jersey. He made his debut in a friendly against Pakistan in Quetta in 2005, scoring in the 1-1 draw.

According to Stimac, Chhetri is someone who always goes the extra mile, which encourages youngsters to emulate him.

"I see him as someone who always pushes the bar in training and never compromises