



J&K administration notifies amended domicile rules  
page 10



Actual stimulus package less than 1% of GDP: Chidambaram  
page 10



CBSE Class 10, 12 exams will now be held from July 1 to 15  
page 13



Xi defends China's virus response, offers vaccine when ready  
page 14

PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA  
State crosses 35,000 cases

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

Maharashtra reported over 2,000 new COVID-19 cases for the second consecutive day and breached the 35,000 mark on Monday. With 2,033 new cases, the State's tally is now 35,086.

This is the second-highest spike in cases after 2,347 cases were recorded on Sunday. Of the total cases, 25,392 are active. The State also recorded 51 new fatalities, pushing its death toll to 1,249.

Mumbai recorded 1,185 new cases, the city's second-highest single-day jump, pushing its tally to 21,335. Of the 51 fatalities, 23 were reported from the city, taking its death toll to 757. The case-fatality rate in the city and the State now stands at 3.5%.

Eight deaths were reported from Pune district, raising its toll to 205. Another eight fatalities were reported from Navi Mumbai, where the death toll is now 22. The toll in Jalgaon climbed to 33 with the district reporting three more deaths. Two fatalities each were reported from Aurangabad, Ahmednagar and Nagpur among other parts of the State.

According to State health officials, 749 patients were discharged on Monday, taking the tally of recoveries to 8,437.

**MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGES 3 & 11**

## India's virus tally crosses 1 lakh; fatality count mounts to 3,157

5,079 new cases recorded; Maharashtra, T.N, Gujarat report most cases, deaths

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India's tally of COVID-19 cases crossed the one lakh-mark on Monday, with 5,079 new infections taking the total to 1,00,734, according to data from the State Health Departments. Of these 58,360 are active cases, while 39,217 persons have recovered from the disease.

The country recorded 136 more deaths in the past 24 hours, taking the overall death toll to 3,157.

The average number of new cases everyday since May 11 has gone up to 4,077, while the average number of fatalities per day for the period is 115.

Maharashtra topped the

### COVID-19

nationwide tally with more than 35,000 confirmed cases and 1,249 deaths, followed by Tamil Nadu with 11,760 confirmed cases and 81 deaths. Gujarat has reported 11,746 confirmed cases, but its death toll is higher than Tamil Nadu at 694. Mumbai reported 1,185 fresh cases and 23 more deaths, taking the total cases in the city to 21,335 and fatalities to 757.

According to the Union

### Where India stands now

 Between May 11 and 17, India recorded 4,077 COVID-19 cases on an average, the fourth highest among all countries. Table lists nations with more than 1,000 average cases a day in this period. Cases doubled in India every 13.5 days as of May 17 (in the last week), among the fastest in the list. Table also shows that India has conducted 23 tests for each confirmed case in mid-May. This is two tests fewer per case compared to what was being recorded in mid-April. The cases data was sourced from Johns Hopkins University and testing data from ourworldindata.org

Country	Average new cases	Doubling time	Tests per positive case in mid-May	Change since mid-April
U.S.	22,500	41.3	8	2.4
Brazil	11,197	11.1	15	NA
Russia	10,295	17.3	25	-36.1
<b>India</b>	<b>4,077</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-2.0</b>
Peru	3,567	13.9	7	-3.5
U.K.	3,507	47.2	11	7.2
S. Arabia	2,243	14.5	11	NA
Chile	2,131	10.8	9	-2.9
Mexico	2,028	13.5	3	-4.8
Iran	1,799	42.9	6	1.6
Turkey	1,540	61.7	11	3.3
Qatar	1,441	13.1	5	-9.0
Pakistan	1,402	19.2	9	-3.9
Canada	1,177	43.7	17	0.2
Bangladesh	1,087	11.9	8	-3.9

Health Ministry, the country has now registered a jump of over 10,000 cases in the past two days – the highest so far in 48 hours.

"India currently has a recovery rate of 38.29%", noted a release issued by the Health Ministry, which added that in terms of confirmed cases per lakh population, India has so far about 7.1 cases per lakh population which indicates that aggressive and early measures ta-

ken so far have shown encouraging results.

The Ministry added that it has now issued new guidelines to the States for categorisation of red/orange/green zones as part of its lockdown easing measures. The new directive allows States to delineate the containment and buffer zones.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10**

**MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGES 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14**

### ICMR revises test strategy

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Monday released a revised COVID-19 testing strategy, which includes testing of all symptomatic influenza like illness (ILI) individuals with history of international travel in the past 14 days. ▶ PAGE 12

## Oxford vaccine fails to shield monkeys from virus

But it provides protection from pneumonia; tests to continue

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

A high-profile potential vaccine for COVID-19 being tested by researchers at Oxford University failed to protect vaccinated monkeys from being infected by the virus. However, the test animals appeared to be protected from pneumonia.

The vaccine candidate, ChAdOx1 nCoV-19, being tested is a weakened form of a common cold virus (adenovirus) that affects chimpanzees and carries the genetic material of the novel coronavirus that makes the spike protein.

**Plans for manufacture**

Reports of the candidate vaccine's performance in monkeys (rhesus macaque) have prompted researchers to test the vaccine's potency in humans. Its promise has also led to Indian vaccine manufacturer, the Pune-based Serum Institute announcing plans to manufacture a four to five million doses by May-end. It is one of seven global institutions that will manufacture the vaccine developed by the Oxford Vaccine Group.

However, detailed results of the trials in monkeys available on pre-print server bioRxiv suggest that, based on these results, the vaccine may not be the panacea to

protecting people from being infected and passing on the infection to others. The research paper is yet to be peer-reviewed.

Rajesh Gokhle,

faculty, National Institute of Immunology and former head of the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, who has read the paper, said that in an "ideal" world, no company would not continue testing the vaccine in humans based on the available data in monkeys.

They explain it as being possibly due to the unusually high amount of the virus that the monkeys were exposed to.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10**

## Odisha, West Bengal brace for Amphan +

Super cyclone likely to make landfall along the Bengal coast tomorrow

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The storm system in the Bay of Bengal, Amphan, developed into a super cyclone on Monday and is expected to make landfall along the West Bengal-Bangladesh coast on Wednesday, according to the India Meteorological Department.

Currently, Amphan is located about 730 km south of Paradip in Odisha, 890 km south-southwest of Digha in West Bengal and 1,010 km south-southwest of Khepupara in Bangladesh.

Windspeeds are expected to hit 240 kmph and extensive damage along the coast is expected in Odisha and West Bengal. Cyclone Phailin in 2013 and the super cyclone of 1999 – both of which hit coastal Odisha – have been the most powerful cyclones in the Bay of Bengal in the past two decades in terms of windspeed.

By the time it makes land-



The sea turned rough in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, on Monday, under the influence of Amphan. ▶ C.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

fall in West Bengal, Amphan is expected to tone down into a category 4 Extremely Severe Cyclonic (ESC) storm with wind speed of 165-175 kmph and gusting to 195 kmph.

Last year, Fani, which was an ESC made landfall in Odisha and ravaged the State, claiming at least 40 lives.

Amphan is expected to bring "heavy to extremely

heavy rainfall" over Gangetic West Bengal and heavy to very heavy rainfall over north coastal Odisha on May 19 and 20.

Storm surge of about 4-6 meters above astronomical tide is likely to inundate low lying areas of South & North 24 Parganas and about 3-4 meters over the low lying areas of East Medinipur district of West Bengal during

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10**

**Stimulus fails to cheer equity markets**

## 83 LCA-MK1A deal high priority: IAF chief

Second squadron of Tejas in Sular by the end of this month, says ACM Bhadauria

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will set up the second squadron of indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas by month-end, said Air Chief Marshal (ACM) R.K.S. Bhadauria on Monday, while the "high priority" deal for 83 LCA-MK1A jets was expected to be signed in three months.

Stressing on the effort to shift to indigenous production as much as possible, the IAF chief said the challenge was for the domestic industry to catch up.

"We will get the first LCA in Final Operations Clearance standard likely by next week. We are targeting formation of the second LCA squadron at Sular before the end of the month. We have already done the resurrection of the squadron but induction of aircraft and inauguration got stalled due to COVID," ACM Bhadauria said in an exclusive interaction with *The Hindu*.

### Tender for fighters

On the tender for 114 fighters to be built under Make in India, stating that it was a "different class" of fighter than the LCA which would be built in India and not imported, he said the global res-

ponses to the tender were being analysed after which they would go to the government for the grant of Acceptance of Necessity (AoN). "We will finalise the way forward on the I14 tender."

Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat had earlier said large imports could not be done and they had to be staggered.

On the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China which saw some

face-offs recently in Ladakh and Sikkim, ACM Bhadauria said that on the air side, they monitor developments closely, and if any aircraft was getting close to the LAC it gets monitored and if there was a need to respond it was decided in real time. "Whenever there is a requirement to respond, the response is there," he said without elaborating.

Elaborating on the 83 LCA-MK1A deal, estimated to cost around ₹39,000 crore, he said the deal had already been delayed. While the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) had done the ground work on development of the MK-1A variant, they could not work on incorporating additional capabilities till the contract was signed.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10**

soon. For that, we need to be self-disciplined and alert for the next few months."

Let's start a new era of industrialisation in the State."

### 'Meet labour shortage'

Mr. Thackeray also appealed to workers in the State to meet the labour shortage in industries caused due to the return of over five lakh migrant workers. "Let's fill the requirement, especially in green zones. Let's be *Aatma-nirbhar* [self-reliant]," Mr. Thackeray said.

The Chief Minister said the government is meeting the travel expenses of the workers. He said, "How can we charge these workers who live on daily wages? I appeal to all those walking home to please stay wherever you are and you will be taken care of. We have arranged transport facilities and we will drop you to your home States."

  
We will get the first LCA in Final Operations Clearance standard likely by next week. We are targeting formation of the second LCA squadron at Sular before the end of the month. We have already done the resurrection of the squadron but induction of aircraft and inauguration got stalled due to COVID  
R.K.S. BHADAURIA, Air Chief Marshal

# Marathi writer, playwright Ratnakar Matkari dead

A versatile writer with mastery over various art forms, he was synonymous with the suspense thriller genre

**AMOL KARHADKAR**

MUMBAI  
Ratnakar Matkari, a prolific writer-director, died late on Sunday after being diagnosed with COVID-19 at a city hospital. Matkari was 81.

After being hospitalised for a routine check-up at Godrej Memorial Hospital in Mumbai, Matkari was shifted to SevenHills Hospital once his COVID-19 test result came positive. He breathed his last around midnight on Sunday.

Matkari is considered one of the most versatile writers in the rich legacy of Marathi literature. More than the longevity of his artistic sojourn – with his first one-act play *Wedi Manase* having

aired on All India Radio in 1955 when he was a teenager – it's his wide range of mastery over various forms and stories that has been acknowledged by connoisseurs and readers/viewers alike.

For more than six decades, Matkari emerged as a stand-out writer who catered primarily to the Maharashtra middle-class, handling various forms of writing. While his mastery over thrillers (*goond katha*) earned him accolades, he remained a playwright at heart. He has more than 90 plays – of which more than 20 are children's plays – to his credit. His published literature also includes an array of short stories, compilations of essays and his theatre autobiography *Maaze Rangaprayog*.

From *goodh katha* (thriller stories) to light romantic plays, from social issues to *baalnatya* (children's plays), he had mastered all the art forms

**PRASHANT DAMLE**

Actor

tions of essays and his theatre autobiography *Maaze Rangaprayog*. Among his most popular works of art include plays like *Aranyak* (a blank verse-based format based on the concluding chapter from *Mahabharata*), *Lokakatha 78* (portrayal of Dalit life), *Dubhang*, *Ashwamedh*, *Jawai Maaza Bhala*, *Chaar Di-*

*was Premache*, *Ghar Tigh-anche Hawe*, *Khol Khol Paani* and *Indira*. Besides, his children's plays like *Alabya Galabatya* and *Nimma Shimma Rakshah* were recently revived.

Despite his success as a playwright, Matkari remained synonymous with the suspense thriller genre that he dominated with his stories and screenplays. *Gaire Paani* is considered a milestone in the genre in Marathi literature, both as a book and a television serial that he converted into. He took pride in admitting that since writing was his "profession", he would devote "eight hours a day, six days a week" to writing.

Actor Prashant Damle, who played a protagonist in four titles penned by Matkari, including *Chaa Diwas Premache* which clocked more than 1,000 shows, referred to the playwright as an "all-rounder".

"I am extremely fortunate to have been able to work with him in four plays of different forms. I consider working with him as one of the turning points of my acting career," Mr. Damle told *The Hindu*.

"His abundance of talent reflected in the fact that he could effortlessly switch between various art forms. From *goodh katha* (thriller stories) to light romantic plays, from social issues to

*baalnatya* (children's plays), he had mastered all the art forms. He was indeed a true all-rounder. With his demise, not only Marathi, but Indian theatre fraternity has lost a prolific writer and a pillar of support," he said.

He has received several awards over the years. His film *Investment* won the National Film Award for the best Marathi feature film. Besides, he belongs to the select band of artistes to have been honoured by the Sangeet Natak Akademi and the Sahitya Akademi.

He is survived by his wife Pratibha, an actor-producer; daughter Supriya Vinod an actor; and son Ganesh, a writer-critic.



Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam presenting the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award to Ratnakar Matkari for his contribution to Marathi literature in 2004. ■ FILE PHOTO

## Family alleges bodies mixed up at hospital

# 100 babies born to COVID-19 moms at Nair

None of the newborns infected; second hospital in city to reach century mark after Sion hospital

**RAINA ASSAINAR**

NAVI MUMBAI  
The Vashi police on Monday found that the body of the 29-year-old migrant from West Bengal, which had gone missing from the morgue at the Vashi general hospital, was allegedly mixed up with that of an 18-year-old girl from Digha.

The girl, Kajal Suryawanshi, died of jaundice on May 4. Hospital authorities told her father they would get in touch after a COVID-19 test is done. "On May 14, they told us the test is negative and we can take the body. We did so and went directly to the crematorium. We opened the face cloth just once. The face looked a little different, but we thought it must be due to the 10-day gap," Dashrath Suryawanshi, the father, said.

On Sunday evening, Mr. Suryawanshi said he got a call from the Vashi police, who sent him a photo, which he identified as his daughter. He was called to the police station on Monday. "I have been told that my daughter's body is still lying in the morgue," he said.

Meanwhile, the shocked relatives of Umar Farooque Shaikh are clueless as to what they can do now. "They say the body is gone. How do we pay our last respects now? The NRI police had taken the body to the morgue, it was their responsibility to get it back," Abdul Kareem, his cousin, said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone 1, Pankaj Dahane, said, "It is the hospital's internal matter. The hospital has started an internal inquiry. No FIR can be registered."

Prashant Jawade, superintendent of the Vashi general hospital, did not respond to attempts to contact him.

medical officer, Dr. Sarika Chapane, said COVID-19 has become a new normal for them. "We are learning to deal with the virus every day by innovating and plugging the gaps. These babies are a testimony to that," she said.

This is the city's second hospital to achieve such a feat. The civic-run Sion hospital reached the 100 mark last week and has now carried out over 140 such deliveries. "We had seven babies testing positive for the virus, but none of them had any symptoms. Three of them have already tested negative," said Dr. Arun Nayak, head of gynaecology at Sion hospital.

### Not infected in womb

He said the babies are tested 24 hours after birth.

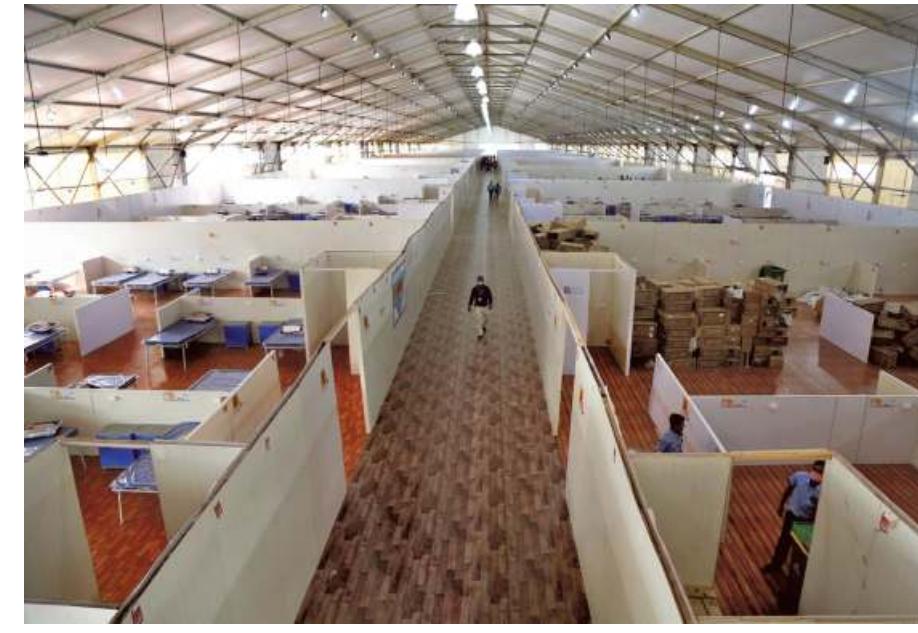
"These don't seem like cases of intrauterine mother-to-child transmission. To establish that, we may have to test the placental tissue and other factors. These infections are most likely due to the contact after birth," said Dr. Nayak.

He said they try to minimise the spillage as much as possible and the PPEs and face shield protect doctors from splashes of fluids. "To protect the mother and baby, we rigorously disinfect the areas," he said.

Doctors at both the civic hospitals have closely watched the babies and have not noticed anything peculiar due to their mothers' COVID-19 status. "The babies are the same as those of non-COVID-19 mothers," said Dr. Malik.

**New normal**  
So far, one woman has had triplets, while another has had twins, Dr. Malik said. There was also one stillbirth, while one baby died after a premature birth.

Nair Hospital's assistant



**Much-needed:** The hospital at BKC will also have a pathology lab for blood tests, an ECG machine, and rooms for doctors and nurses. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

## MMRDA hands over 1,000-bed hospital

**TANVI DESHPANDE**

MUMBAI

Mumbai added another 1,000 beds to its dedicated COVID-19 facilities on Monday, with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) handing over a new hospital built at Bandra-Kurla Complex to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

The BMC has already appointed staff for the hospital, which will become operational soon for mild to severely symptomatic patients. Spread over 1.25 lakh sq.ft., the hospital was constructed in less than 15 days.

Doctors at both the civic hospitals have closely watched the babies and have not noticed anything peculiar due to their mothers' COVID-19 status. "The babies are the same as those of non-COVID-19 mothers," said Dr. Malik.

The MMRDA had deployed 70 employees and

350 workers for the job. The MMRDA grounds at Bandra-Kurla Complex are typically used for concerts or fairs and hence did not have critical facilities such as sewage lines, water and electricity connections, all of which have now been provided.

### Non-critical patients

The hospital will treat non-critical COVID-19 patients. Of the 1,026 beds in the hospital, 504 have oxygen support. The hospital also has 10 mobile ICU beds. The BMC has appointed 13 doctors, eight nurses and 14 ward boys, and may increase the number of personnel as per requirement.

It will also have a pathology lab with facilities for blood tests, an ECG machine in an enclosure, and rooms for doctors and nurses.

### Monsoon ready

The hospital is housed in a waterproof 'German tent' (a hangar-like structure), 235 m in length and 40 m in width. MMRDA officials said it was designed to be operational through the monsoons. It has said that if required, the facility can be expanded to accommodate 5,000 beds.

The hospital was handed over to the BMC on Monday in the presence of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

## Health minister takes some tips from Kerala

Tope talks to Shailaja on pandemic

**ALOK DESHPANDE**

MUMBAI

In a display of much-needed camaraderie between States in these times of crisis, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope on Monday held a videoconference with his Kerala counterpart K.K. Shailaja to understand the measures taken by her to tackle the pandemic and to flatten the curve of rising cases in her State.

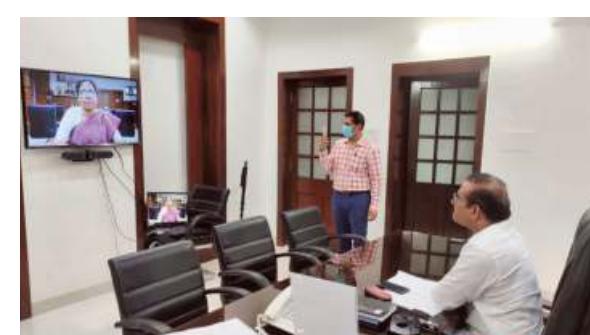
Kerala was one of the first States to detect a positive case in the country, after which it swung into action with its people-centric measures and effective communication modes, making it possible to flatten the curve.

Maharashtra, on the other hand, is handling the largest number of patients in the country. Mumbai, especially slum areas such as Dharmavati, is reporting large numbers of patients.

The issues discussed between the ministers ranged from ensuring physical distancing, setting up quarantine facilities, and treatment to ensure minimising deaths. Mr. Tope also discussed Kerala's progress in plasma treatment.

He tweeted, "I interacted with Kerala's Health Minister to understand the measures taken by that State to control the disease. It was an extremely useful discussion as we will surely try to implement few of the measures by them."

Ms. Shailaja, tweeting from her official Twitter handle @shailajateacher said, Mr. Tope lauded Kerala's efforts in providing best quarantine system. "The minister shared that the challenge in Maharashtra is the inability to ensure social distancing in places like Dharmavati," she tweeted.



**In conversation:** Rajesh Tope interacting with his Kerala counterpart K.K. Shailaja on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

# 50 migrant workers from Chembur duped, stranded in M.P.

Truck driver hired to take them home to Bihar, Jharkhand leaves them midway



**Waiting game:** Students and migrant workers queue up outside Lokmanya Tilak Terminus to catch trains to Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar on Monday. ■ ARUNANGSU ROY CHOWDHURY

strict. We have no money for food or transport. We managed to get some food from a small dhaba," he said.

The workers later found out that they were nearly 200 km from the border. The local police have also been unable to help and have asked them to take some other truck passing by. To make matters worse, the group has had to face rain in the region and don't know if they can even walk

under such conditions.

Mr. Ansari said he and 29 others are from Bhagalpur district in Bihar, while 20 others are from a neighbouring district in Jharkhand. They all lived around Chenna Nagar in Mumbai and worked in garment units on PL Lokhand Marg.

"Our boss said he could no longer pay us, as there was no business. We had begun to run out of our savings and the money our families had

sent," he said. The group paid ₹2.14 lakh for the trip and has no money left.

Mr. Ansari said they had submitted an application to get train tickets, but there was no indication that trains to Bihar or Jharkhand would run.

"We even made enquiries in the local police station. We didn't want to run out of money and be stranded in Mumbai, so we took such a drastic step," he said.

## State sets up committee to help migrant travel

It will help police compile lists

**ALOK DESHPANDE**

MUMBAI

The State government on Monday formed a committee to help the police compile lists of migrants who want to travel home during the lockdown.

The committee will provide additional manpower to assist local police stations in Mumbai to compile, collate, upload and process data on the National Migrant Information System portal of the Government of India, and for other related work.

**Deploying manpower**  
An order issued by Chief Secretary Ajay Mehta to this effect said that the committee will requisition and deploy manpower under the age of 40 from Mantralaya, and other field officials of various departments, as required.

The work of the committee has also been listed as an emergency essential service till May 31, and all heads of departments have been asked to assist and provide manpower as required.

The committee will be headed by Amitabh Gupta, principal secretary (special) in the Home Department. Other members are Vinay Choubey, Joint Commissioner of Police, Mumbai; and Rahul Kulkarni, deputy secretary, General Administration Department.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has allowed movement of stranded migrant workers, students and pilgrims and issued a standard operating procedure for smooth intra/ inter-State movement along with a National Migrant Information System.

**Mumbai Weather** max mi Mumbai Airport 34 26 Pune 36 26 Mumbai City 34 26

**Mumbai Today** 34°C The weather will be warm with cloudy sky. Chances of light rain and thundershowers.

**Mumbai Tomorrow** 34°C A comfortable morning turns warm day with cloudy sky. Short spell of light rain is a chance.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019. All rights reserved.

**THE HINDU**  
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy their own satisfaction before responding to any publication in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Owner, Publisher, Printer & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or insertion or for any of its products and services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Director, Editor, or any employee of this newspaper/ company be held responsible/ liable in any manner whatsoever for claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

**WESTERN RAILWAY CANCELLATION NOTICE**  
1. Tender No. BCT/19-20/441 dt.17.03.2020 which was due for opening on 22.05.2020, 2. Tender No. BCT/19-20/440 dt.17.03.2020 which was due for opening on 22.05.2020, 3. Tender No. BCT/20-21/29 dt.13.04.2020 which was due for opening on 22.05.2020. Due to technical reasons the above tenders should be treated as Cancelled. For more details please visit our website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).  
Like us on [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://facebook.com/WesternRly)

**WESTERN RAILWAY CANCELLATION NOTICE**  
1. Tender No. BCT/20-21/47 dt.27.04.2020 which was due for opening on 02.06.2020. 2. Tender No. BCT/20-21/48 dt.27.04.2020 which was due for opening on 02.06.2020. Due to technical reasons the above tenders should be treated as Cancelled. For more details please visit our website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).  
Like us on [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://facebook.com/WesternRly)

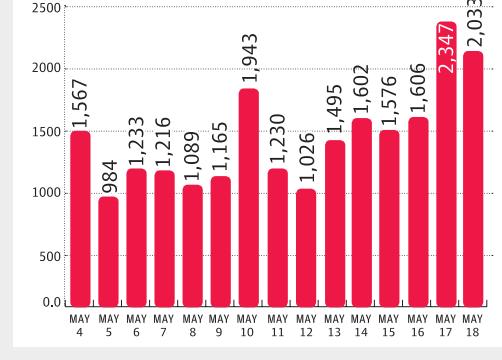
## Maharashtra COVID-19 tracker

TOTAL CASES	NEW CASES	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERED	DEATHS
35,086	2,033	25,400*	8,437	1,249

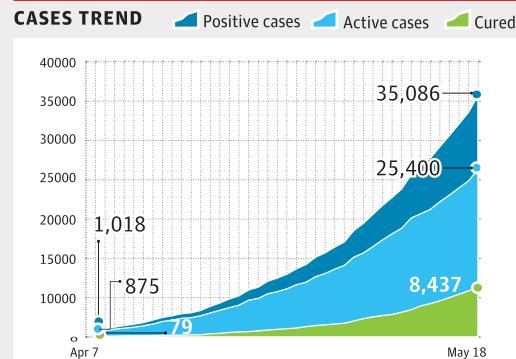
## DISTRICTS AFFECTED: 34

DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS	DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Mumbai	21,335	757	Sangli	53	1
Thane	4,402	57	Nanded	78	4
Pune	3,821	197	Latur	50	2
Nashik	851	35	Buldhana	30	1
Aurangabad	939	31	Nandurbar	25	2
Palghar	437	14	Kolhapur	52	1
Raigad	472	16	Ratnagiri	101	3
Nagpur	375	4	Jalna	36	0
Solapur	429	25	Sindhudurg	10	0
Akola	275	14	Chandrapur	5	0
Jalgaon	292	33	Osmanabad	11	0
Satara	140	2	Parbhani	7	1
Yavatmal	100	0	Washim	3	0
Amravati	115	14	Beed	3	0
Ahmednagar	84	5	Bhandara	3	0
Hingoli	104	0	Gondia	1	0
Dhule	83	8	Wardha	3	1

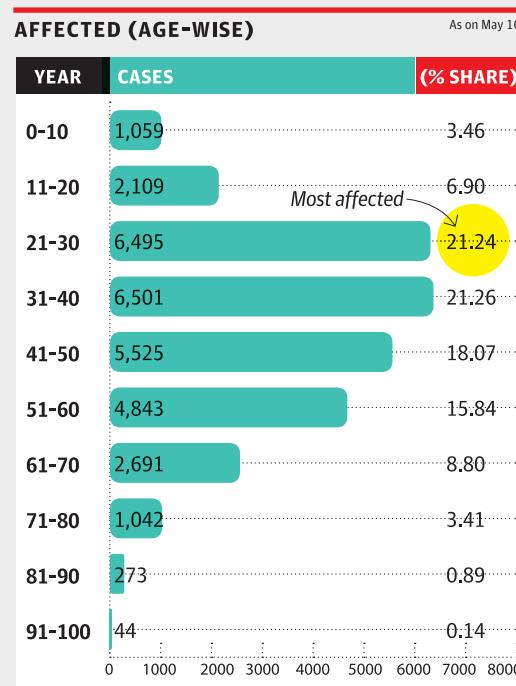
## POSITIVE CASES OVER LAST 15 DAYS



1185 (58.28%) of Monday's cases are from Mumbai



23.25% is the State recovery rate



71% 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: ssumaharashtra@gmail.com

## CITY-WISE HELPLINE NUMBERS

Mumbai city: 022 22664232 Palghar: 02525 297474

Mumbai suburbs: 022 26556799 / 26556806 Raigad: 02141 222118

Thane: 022 25301740 Ratnagiri: 02352 226248

Sindhudurg: 02362 228847

\*As per The Hindu's calculation, there were eight more active cases on Monday. The total active cases were 25400.

Source: Public Health Department, Maharashtra, BMC

## With 1,185 cases, Mumbai breaches 21,000-mark

Death toll touches 757; BMC says entire building should not be sealed after a positive patient is detected

JIOTI SHELAR  
MUMBAI

Mumbai reported 1,185 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, the second-highest single-day jump, pushing its tally to 21,335. The city also recorded 23 deaths, taking the toll to 757. Nearly 61% of Maharashtra's cases and deaths are from Mumbai.

The city's case fatality rate stands at 3.5%, which is the same as that of the State. Of the 23 patients who succumbed to the infection, 18 were men and five were women. Thirteen of them had co-morbid conditions like diabetes, hypertension and asthma. While three patients who died were below the age of 40, nine were between 40 and 60 years and 11 were

above 60 years.

Experts said about 3%-5% infected patients require critical care. Recovery has been difficult in patients who have uncontrolled underlying ailments - for example, a diabetic who has not been on medication to control the blood sugar level, or a hypertensive patient whose blood pressure has not been under control for long.

## 'Don't seal buildings'

The Brihamumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Monday said an entire residential building or a housing society should not be sealed if a patient was found positive. In the revised protocol issued by the civic body, only that particular floor can be

sealed. While the positive patient can be shifted to a facility as per the availability of the bed, if the patient has no symptoms, they can be in home quarantine.

"The contacts of positive patients can be home-quarantined depending on the availability of space and toilets. The disinfection should be carried out in the house of the patient along with the common areas, lifts, staircase, etc. It can be done either by a private agency or the BMC," said a civic official, adding once the particular floor, wing or building has been sealed, the BMC will hand over the declaration of the sealed area to the office-bearers of the society and explain the precautions to be

taken by them. Some of the precautions are strict use of mask, physical distancing, no maids, vendors or service providers in the contained area, ensuring local vendors, medical stores and online

merchants deliver supplies at society boundary, and delivery of essential supplies to home-quarantined asymptomatic patients.

The civic body has also said that medical professionals living in the building should sensitise residents and in case someone develops symptoms, the BMC should be notified and gui-

dance should be taken from 1916 helpline. The civic body has urged the citizens to not stigmatise or discriminate against positive patients.

## 85 cases in Dharavi

Dharavi reported 85 new cases on Monday, taking the total number to 1,327. The area has recorded 56 deaths so far. Majority of the fresh cases were reported from Matunga Labour Camp and Kumbharwada, both falling in containment zones.

## Navi Mumbai at 1,264

The Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation on Monday reported 74 positive cases and six deaths. The total number of cases now stands at 1,264, which include 483 recovered

patients and 37 casualties.

Of the six deaths, two are APMC traders and one is the grandmother of an APMC trader. The 74 new cases include 22 from Turbhe, three from Airoli, 12 from Nerul, eight from Vashi, six from Ghansoli, and four each from Koparkhairane and Belapur.

As many as 9,929 people are in home quarantine in Navi Mumbai, while 11,198 have finished the quarantine period. Of the 8,586 people tested till now, 6,585 have been found negative and 737 reports are pending. The Panvel Municipal Corporation recorded 12 positive cases and two deaths.

(With inputs from Tanvi Deshpande and Raina Assainar)

## Goa: from zero to 35 cases in five days

13 passengers from MMR test positive

ADITYA ANAND  
MUMBAI

The number of COVID-19 cases in Goa rose overnight to touch 35 on Monday, even as the State ramped up testing to cover all those entering its borders by rail or road. Of these, 20 came to Goa by train and the rest by road. Only two of the 35 patients are symptomatic.

Health Minister Vishwajit Rane said 13 people who had arrived by train from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region had tested positive. Another woman, who had arrived by road on Sunday, also tested positive along with an industrial worker associated with the Goa State Industries Association, who was under quarantine. "The results of a few samples sent to the virology lab are awaited," Mr. Rane said.

Goa has gone from zero to 35 cases in five days. Between April 3 and May 13, the tourist State did not report a single case. Prior to April 3, Goa had seven cases all of whom are since cured.

"Contamination has begun in Goa. I suspect that there are many carriers already in the State who have gone untested and the results of which will be seen in a few weeks," Mr. Khaunte said.

Former deputy chief minister Vijai Sardesai said the trains were bringing back not just Goans but everyone. People with connections to the high and mighty in Delhi's Aam Aadmi Party are also getting permission to travel to the State, he said. "Some are sneaking in and enjoying Goa. Cancelling the halt in Goa of one train alone won't help," Mr. Sardesai said.

The opposition leader also demanded the postponement of the board examinations for Classes X and XII.

due to be vigilant with our strategy to fight this pandemic," he said.

However, Opposition parties criticised the government's handling of the crisis. Leader of Opposition Digambar Kamat said, "It is shocking to see reports of our own elderly Goan travellers being kept at Fatori stadium and awaiting test reports without food, water and safety gear. This is disturbing. I demand immediate intervention of the CM to ensure that this is not repeated again."

**'Non-Goan travellers'**  
Rohan Khaunte, Independent MLA from Porvorim and former minister, said the trains from Delhi were carrying a lot of non-Goans who had been granted permission to travel by the State. Mr. Khaunte said hotels and guest houses in Goa had accepted bookings for May 20 and 21 from people arriving in the State.

Former deputy chief minister Vijai Sardesai said the trains were bringing back not just Goans but everyone. People with connections to the high and mighty in Delhi's Aam Aadmi Party are also getting permission to travel to the State, he said. "Some are sneaking in and enjoying Goa. Cancelling the halt in Goa of one train alone won't help," Mr. Sardesai said.

The opposition leader also demanded the postponement of the board examinations for Classes X and XII.

## Three cases in Gadchiroli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GADCHIROLI

Three people tested positive for novel coronavirus on Sunday night in Gadchiroli district, till now a green zone as per the Centre's outbreak intensity classification. The three had returned from Mumbai and were in institutional quarantine, an official said on Monday.

## TO ADVERTISE

## PLEASE CONTACT

Mr M.Bala

Ph: 022 - 22021099

mumbaimaterial  
@thehindu.co.in

THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

PM10 PM2.5 AVG.

Mumbai 79 46 83

Delhi 215 103 242

Pune 54 36 58

Ahmedabad 107 62 93

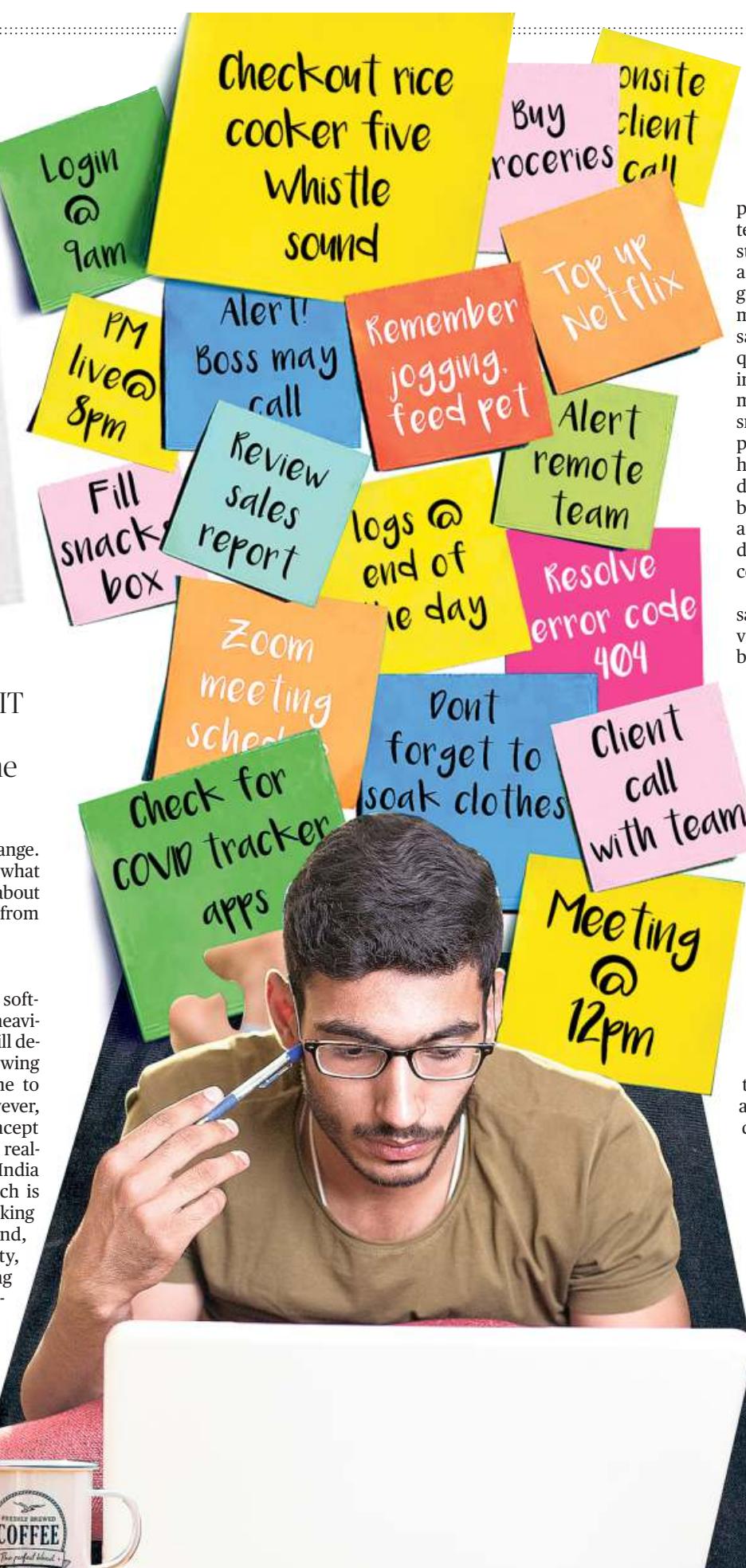
Surcharge: Ahmedabad - Rs. 5.00

THE HINDU

Surcharge: Ahmedabad - Rs. 5.00

THE HINDU

Surcharge: Ahmedabad - Rs. 5.00



Is working from home, a familiar concept in the IT industry, sustainable for the long run during the COVID-19 pandemic for the rest of the working nation?

■ DHIRAJ SHETTY

As we begin preparing to take advantage of the relaxation in lockdown to resume work, revive our businesses, or resurrect our social lives, companies and employees are trying to visualise the future of the workplace.

The ongoing lockdowns to flatten the COVID-19 curve, changed the way people work, especially those in the organised sector. A majority of employees in the organised sector continued to work during the lockdown, but from home (WFH). While the IT sector is familiar with the concept, this is a first for employees in other sectors. Working from home is attractive to professionals, as they save time and money on the daily commute, eat home-cooked meals and stay close to their loved ones, but it has not really taken off in a big way in India.

Typically, when IT employees work from home, a significant number continue to operate from the office. Employees of a few companies did work entirely from home, but the number was not significant compared to the size of the organised sector. The lockdown changed all of this.

This has given companies an opportunity to evaluate the pros and cons of this concept from a relatively long-term perspective and sparked off speculation

that the workplace is likely to change. *The Hindu* set out to understand what employers and employees learnt about their work and about working from home during the lockdowns.

#### Tech at the centre

Pratik Kumar\*, a veteran of the software sector, believes companies heavily leveraging the cost advantage will definitely look at the option of allowing more people to work from home to save on real estate expenses. However, he warns that while this concept sounds good in conversations, the reality is something else. For one, India lacks reliable power supply, which is not conducive for companies working on mission-critical projects. Second, data leaks are a distinct possibility, and hence, a deterrent to allowing employees to work from home. Data security and client privacy issues are deal-breakers for companies in the banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector. The lockdown posed a huge challenge for companies operating in or catering to this sector.

Danske IT, a subsidiary of Denmark-headquartered Danske Bank, is among the com-

■ IMAGING M ARIVARASU

panies that claim to have passed this test with flying colours. Their 1,400-strong team, comprising technologists and people in support functions, began working from home. Deval Shah, managing director (India), Danske IT, says, "A crisis is a real test for how quickly companies can adapt to evolving situations. Even as we managed to make sure operations continued smoothly, the lockdown gave us an opportunity to relook the work-from-home option. We observed that productivity was not affected. Work-life balance improved for some colleagues, and the company contributed to reducing traffic congestion. We also successfully on-boarded new recruits."

Senior HR professional Paul Simon\* says, "Most tasks can be accomplished virtually using technology: hiring, onboarding, training, etcetera."

While one would expect that such success stories and positive feedback would prompt more companies to consider offering the work-from-home option to employees, many are, on the contrary, wary of the concept. Kaushik Dasgupta, from Accenture India, explains, "WFH has always been a taboo in India. It is believed that employees working from home are not as committed to the organisation as the ones who are working in an office. As a result, WFH policies in most companies are often rigid. Often, you are allowed to work from home only if you have an urgent need to be at home at that time."

Another concern is of employees taking up a second job or freelance assignments, which could bring down their productivity. Paul\* says, "There is a feeling of isolation in teams where close collaboration is required. Office culture, the energy and the vibe when coming together in the office space, is missing. Plus, there is a possibility of meeting fatigue over video calls when compared to meeting in person, especially with larger teams."

Big picture: a company thrives on a shared goal, ideals and work culture. These are highly motivating factors for an employee. Large companies invest a lot of time and effort in creating a work culture that brings out the best in employees. This cannot be created, or sustained, when employees work from home.

Successful companies can go to great lengths to perpetuate their work culture. One global software giant with operations in India is known for offering a fun and progressive workplace that is considered a benchmark in the IT sector. The company engages many vendors in India. To make sure that vendors do not compromise on the quality of the work place in their quest to squeeze the maximum revenue out of each contract, the company insists on one condition: all employees of the vendor working on the company's projects must be based in its campuses for the duration of the projects.

**The right space**  
Rutwik Datta\*, a manager in a US-based insurance company, which has teams in various parts of India, shares, "Metrics show that people are more productive at home. At the same time, there are question marks over compliance requirements and privacy issues when it comes to employees working from shared apartments." He sees an oppor-

**Data leaks are a distinct possibility, and hence, a deterrent to allowing employees to work from home. Data security and client privacy issues are deal-breakers for companies in the BFSI sector**

tunity to reduce a company's carbon footprint and possibilities of savings in real estate, which can be better used for employee engagement.

He suggests why Indian youth may prefer to work from offices: "Young people in India, especially those outside metropolitan cities, want to work in offices. Possibly because they are not comfortable working with the family looking over their shoulder, they like the atmosphere in an office, the facilities and team activities are a novelty for them and they have AC all the time," he says. So post-lockdown, one can expect some major overhauls, such as the framework of office spaces' design may evolve to suit physical distancing and easy disinfection routines, or even a change in the number of people on-site versus WFH. The IT industry paved the way for this shift, and it is best we remain vigilant of the nuances to keep the COVID-19 curve flat.

\*Names changed to protect identity

## The way we are

Bengaluru-based Assamese author Jahnavi Barua's latest book, *Undertow*, deals with the nuances of family ties

■ RUTH DHANARAJ

Whether we like it or not, as human beings, we are moulded by the relationships in our lives – the good, the bad and the ugly ones. People tend to credit family and friends for positive influences, often glossing over the contributions of other 'supporting actors' in our lives.

In *Undertow*, Jahnavi Barua explores the fine web of human lives with a deft



touch. Though the story is set in Bengaluru and Guwahati, it is a tale every Indian will relate to.

Jahnavi who hails from Assam, but has lived in Bengaluru for the past 28 years, feels, "A place or a geographical location adds flavour to the story, though it isn't a necessity."

Jahnavi's first book was a collection of short stories called *Next Door*, followed

by *Rebirth* – a monologue of a woman talking to her unborn child – which was shortlisted for the Man Asian Literary Prize and the Commonwealth Book Prize.

*Undertow* (published by Penguin; ₹499) deals with

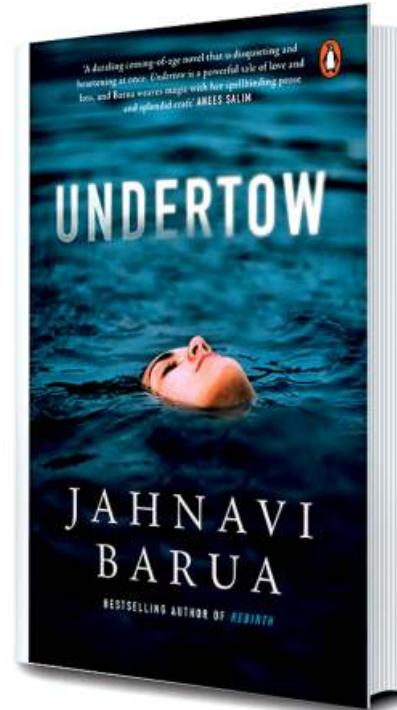
how relationships undergo a sea change when a family member defies societal norms and parental wishes to marry an 'outsider'. "The story is universal and the reader will relate to it because it is the story of people around us. I wanted to explore what happens when reconciliation doesn't happen," says Jahnavi, adding, "*Undertow* deals with the many small things that make up a whole where relationships are concerned – how old hurts, grudges and ego get in the way as do new anxieties."

"What fascinates me are the not-so-obvious interactions in relationships; what flows under the surface. So-

metimes your mother could be your principal antagonist, your father an ally and a mother-in-law your best friend."

"We learn how to deal with other human beings right from childhood and within our families. While we learn about love, trust, loyalty, honesty, ambition, hard work and politics in an extended family, we also learn about rejection, betrayal and selfishness," she says, adding, "I think we go out into the world with what we learn in a family. The tangible and intangible ways we respond to people depends on what we learned growing up."

While the essence of the book is about relationships, a



#### Universal appeal

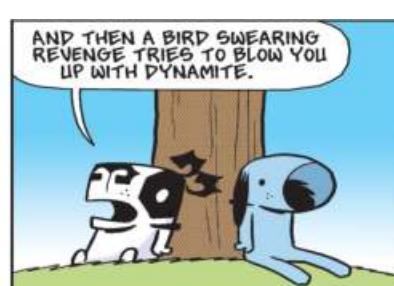
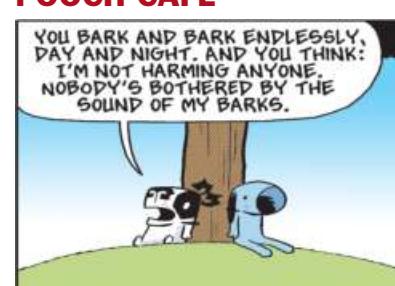
Jahnavi's previous book, *Rebirth*, was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

lot of it is also about second chances and how one should seize it when it comes round.

"For me, the core of the book is what it is to be human and a lot of it depends on being self-aware. An individual should know his own flaws and strengths and what he is going to do next. There is a kind of positivity, acceptance and tolerance in knowing what you want and getting it in a good way, without stepping on someone else's toes."

"It may not always work out, but you'll only know when you try it. So this book is really about that and I'm hoping readers will take that away from *Undertow*," she says.

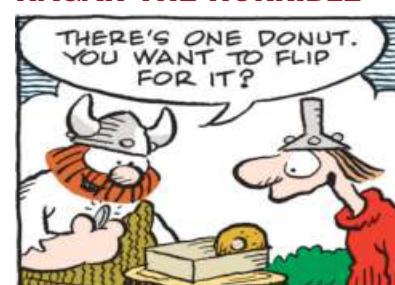
## POOCH CAFE



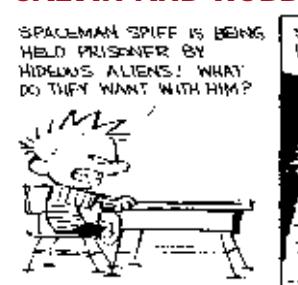
## PEANUTS



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



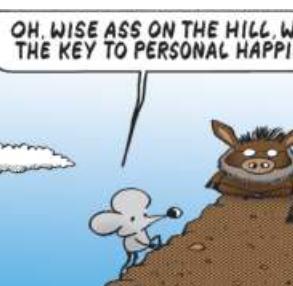
## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## TIGER



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



# 'Staff shortage weighing down SMEs'

Industry representative says exodus of migrant workers has hit industrial units in Pimpri-Chinchwad

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE

Though around 4,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pune district's Pimpri-Chinchwad area resumed operations with 33% staff on Monday, industry representatives say the units are facing severe shortage of labour owing to the exodus of migrant workers.

Sandeep Belsare, president, Pimpri-Chinchwad Small and Medium Scale Industries Association, said labourers have returned to their hometown not only in other States, but also to other districts of Maharashtra. He said, "After SMEs and industrial operations came to a standstill on March 22, about 95% employers paid salaries for March and April. However, over 60% workers in small industrial units in Pimpri-Chinchwad had left for home by then."

Mr. Belsare said around 4.5 lakh workers were employed in 11,000-odd SMEs spread across Pimpri, Chinchwad, Bhosari, Chikhli and other industrial areas. "Through police records, we estimate that around three lakh of these workers, who include labourers from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and other States, and Vidarbha and Marathwada regions within the State, left for their hometowns during this period," he said.

**'Staggering losses'**  
Mr. Belsare said the daily turnover of these 11,000 companies was around ₹500



**Lone ranger:** A worker arranges jaggery in a unit on Solapur highway. Most people work in jaggery units are migrants from U.P. Their exodus has led to a lack of manpower. ■FILE PHOTO

crore. He said, "This translates to staggering revenue losses of ₹28,000 crore during the 56-day lockdown. With big firms like Tata Motors, Mahindra and John Deere reeling under the lockdown, smaller units with less shock-absorbing potential stare at a bleak future." He said with all units shutting shop in Mumbai, sourcing raw material for steel and iron units has become a major challenge.

Mr. Belsare said units should have been allowed to open at least 10 days earlier and owners were encumbered with filling online applications to resume operations. He said the directive prohibiting employees to use two-wheelers to reach workplaces was posing problems.

Mr. Belsare said it is ludicrous to expect owners of small units to arrange 'dedicated transport' and ferry three or four staffers in a car.

#### Ferry staff in buses'

He demanded the government to make provisions to ferry workers in State Transport buses and drop them near MIDCs. He said, "The owners of many small industrial units themselves have only two-wheelers. Also,

working in units in Pimpri-Chinchwad but residing in Pune city, half of which is a containment zone.

He said despite assurances by Industries Minister Subhash Desai and Guardian Minister Ajit Pawar, the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company (MSEDCL) has hiked tariffs.

#### 'Unfair tariff policy'

He said, "The MSEDCL has only cut demand charges, but is calculating power bills based on average consumption in pre-lockdown months. If an industrial unit's average power bill was ₹2 lakh before the lockdown, the owner has to shell out that much even though no electricity was used for the last 56 days."

## Five more die in Pune, toll crosses 200

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE

Pune district reported 159 new COVID-19 cases over the last 24 hours with the cumulative tally (including deaths and recoveries) climbing to 4,177 cases. Five deaths were reported on Monday taking the fatalities to 211 so far, according to authorities.

Pune Divisional Commissioner Deepak Mhaisekar said the total case tally in Pune division (which also includes Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur and Solapur districts) had risen to 4,798 while the death toll, including Pune's fatalities, climbed to 241.

"Twenty-six deaths have been reported from Solapur two from Satara, and one each from Kolhapur and Sangli. A total 2,275 people have been discharged so far," he said.

Pune had recorded consecutive single-day high spikes on Saturday and Sunday, reporting nearly 450 cases (220 cases each on both days) over a 48-hour span and more than 20 deaths in this period.

Of the 4,177 cases in Pune district, 1,957 are active while 2,014 people have been discharged, Dr. Mhaisekar said. As many as 166 are critical, he said.

# Private hospitals push govt. to relax cap on treatment rates

'State should take over pricing of a certain number of beds'

JYOTI SHELAR

MUMBAI

Private hospitals have been pushing the Maharashtra government to relax its April 30 order that capped the cost of medical treatment during the ongoing pandemic.

While the State has remained firm so far, a decision is likely to be announced by Tuesday following a series of meetings by representatives of private hospitals with the government.

Municipal Commissioner I.S. Chahal, in the meantime, held a meeting with major private hospitals in Mumbai on Monday since the State has proposed taking over all private hospital beds in the city.

As regards the rates, private hospitals' demand was under consideration, said Dr. Sudhakar Shinde, CEO of the State Health Assurance Society. "They have suggested that the government take over the pricing of a certain number of beds, while some beds should be left for them to decide the costs," he said.

In the April 30 notification, the State had invoked the Epidemic Diseases Act, Disaster Management Act, Maharashtra Essential Services Maintenance Act, Mumbai Nursing Homes Registration Act and the Bombay Public Trusts Act to get private hospitals to comply with the reduced rate of treatment packages.

## State takes over beds in private hospitals

TANVI DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

The State government has decided to take over 80% of the general beds and all ICU beds in private hospitals in Mumbai in its fight against COVID-19. However, private hospitals had expressed reservations about the move, fearing it would hamper the treatment of non-COVID-19 patients.

At the meeting with the Municipal Commissioner,

the hospital managements were told the beds are not only for COVID-19 patients but also for others. The move will bring about effective bed management, the BMC said.

Several patients have died in Mumbai after they did not get beds in time. There has been a growing demand to create a dashboard of all hospital beds, which will be accessible to citizens.

in the city, have been in the forefront of negotiations with the government. The AOH consists of top hospitals like Jaslok, Breach Candy, P.D. Hinduja, Bombay, Nanavati, Hiranandani, Lilavati, Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani and H.N. Reliance Foundation, among others.

Chief executive officer of Breach Candy Hospital, N. Santhanam, who is the chairman of AOH, said they expect the government to come out with a comprehensive notification. "There is a lot of speculation. We will have to wait till the government comes out with the final document in a day or two," he said.

## Minor fire in Mazgaon building

ABHA GOKHALE

MUMBAI

A minor fire broke out in a residential building in Mazgaon on Monday afternoon. The fire brigade rescued nine people and no casualties were reported.

According to fire brigade officers, the blaze at Shirin Manzil building in Tadwadi was reported to the control room around 12.20 p.m.

"The fire was confined to two flats on the sixth floor. Two people were rescued from the fifth floor and brought to safety through the staircase. Seven others, stranded in a seventh floor flat, were also rescued," Chief Fire Officer Prabhat Rahangdale said.

Mr. Rahangdale said the blaze damaged wiring, electric installations, household articles, air-conditioning units, documents, ornaments and other valuables in a sixth floor flat.

WESTERN RAILWAY ELECTRICAL WORKS AT JRH				
1. e-Tender No.: EL 4/1/WA/3 Dt.18.05.2020. Work & Location: Mumbai Central Jagjivan Ram Hospital-Modification of Air conditioning arrangement for negative in SICU, CVTS ICU, CVTS OT, Cath Lab OT & Labour Room in connection with treatment of COVID 19 pandemic patients. Approx. Cost: ₹ 2, 52, 17, 547/- EMD: 2,76,100. 2. e-Tender No.: EL 4/1/WA/4 Dt.18.05.2020. Work & Location: Mumbai Central Jagjivan Ram Hospital-Provision of noise free central vacuum system and central compressor medical air system, in connection with treatment of COVID-19 pandemic patients. Approx. Cost: ₹ 38,25,000/- EMD: 76,500. Date & time of submission: on 01.06.2020 till 15.30 Hrs. Date & Time of opening: on 01.06.2020 till 15.30 Hrs. Note: Please visit <a href="http://www.irps.gov.in">www.irps.gov.in</a> to download the tender document, corrigendum and further details.				
Like us on: <a href="https://facebook.com/WesternRly">facebook.com/WesternRly</a>				
2. e-Tender No.: EL 4/1/WA/4 Dt.18.05.2020. Work & Location: Mumbai Central Jagjivan Ram Hospital-Provision of noise free central vacuum system and central compressor medical air system, in connection with treatment of COVID-19 pandemic patients. Approx. Cost: ₹ 38,25,000/- EMD: 76,500. Date & time of submission: on 01.06.2020 till 15.30 Hrs. Date & Time of opening: on 01.06.2020 till 15.30 Hrs. Note: Please visit <a href="http://www.irps.gov.in">www.irps.gov.in</a> to download the tender document, corrigendum and further details.				
Like us on: <a href="https://facebook.com/WesternRly">facebook.com/WesternRly</a>				

## Western Railway various works at Virar-Surat section

Divisional Railway Manager(WA), Western Railway, 6th floor, Engg. Deptt. Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008. invites E-tender as per details given as follows.

Sr. No.	Executive	Tender Notice No. & Date	Work and location	Approx. cost of work in ₹	EMD ₹
1	Sr. DEN(North) BCT	BCT/20-21/94 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 8A- Virar-Surat Sec- General repairs in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Dahanu Road between km 60.76 to km 145.130 km between Virar (excl) and Umbergaon (incl).	35,00,000	70,000
2	Sr. DEN(North) BCT	BCT/20-21/95 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 8B- Virar-Surat Sec Painting white washing colour washing distempering, polishing etc in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Dahanu Road between km 60.76 to km 145.130 km between Virar (excl) and Umbergaon (incl)	5,00,000	10,000
3	Sr. DEN(North) BCT	BCT/20-21/96 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 9A - Virar-Surat Sec- General repairs in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Valsad between km 145.130 to km 212.5 km between Umbergaon (excl) and Joravasan (excl), valsad & Vapi station (excl) and Valsad Colony (excl)	70,00,000	1,40,000
4	Sr. DEN(North) BCT	BCT/20-21/97 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 9B- Virar-Surat Sec- Painting white washing colour washing distempering polishing etc in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Valsad between km 145.130 to km 212.5 km between Umbergaon (excl) and Joravasan (excl)	20,00,000	40,000
5	Sr. DEN(North) BCT	BCT/20-21/98 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 9C - Virar-Surat sec- General repairs painting white washing colour washing distempering & polishing etc in Loco shed, C&V depot at Valsad	12,00,000	24,000
6	DEN(C)BCT	BCT/20-21/99 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 10A- Virar-Surat Sec- General repairs in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Bilmora between km 212 to km 250.59 between Joravasan (incl) and Sachin (incl) and Bilmora-Waghali narrow gauge section (km 00 to 62.50) Bilmora (excl) & Waghali (incl)	35,00,000	70,000
7	DEN(C)BCT	BCT/20-21/100 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 10B- Virar-Surat Sec - Painting, white washing colour washing, distempering, polishing etc, in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Bilmora between km 212 to km 250.59 between Joravasan (incl) and Sachin (incl) and Bilmora-Waghali narrow gauge section (km 00 to 62.50) Bilmora (excl) & Waghali (incl)	6,00,000	12,000
8	DEN(C)BCT	BCT/20-21/101 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 11A- Virar-Surat Sec-General repairs in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Surat between km 250.59 to km 268.89 between Sachin (excl) and Surat(inc)	75,00,000	1,50,000
9	DEN(C)BCT	BCT/20-21/102 dt.18.05.2020	Zone 11B - Virar-Surat Sec- Painting, white washing colour washing, distempering, polishing etc, in jurisdiction of SSE/W/Surat between km 250.59 to km 268.89 between Sachin (excl) and Surat(inc)	11,00,000	22,000

Date & time of submission : on 10.06.2020 till 15.00 hrs. Date & time of opening: on 10.06.2020 till 15.30 hrs.

Regarding detailed nature of work, containing cost of tender document (non-refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, similar nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in). Manual offers will not be considered.

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://facebook.com/WesternRly) Follow us on: [twitter.com/WesternRly](https://twitter.com/WesternRly)

## Western Railway miscellaneous works

Executive: Sr. DEN(Es)N/MMCT. 1. e-Tender No.: BCT/20-21/103 Dt. 18.05.2020. Work & Location: Khar-Jogeshwari Secon: Improvement of corroded water pipe line of staff quarters.

Approx. Cost: ₹ 2,43,84,608.50. EMD : ₹2,71,000/- 2. e-Tender No.: BCT/20-21/104 Dt. 18.05.2020 Work & Location: STC-VR. Down take pipe, storm water drain at station. Approx. Cost: ₹ 12,73,560/- EMD : ₹ 25,500/- Date & Time of submission: on 10.06.2020 till 15.30 hrs. Date & Time of opening : on 10.06.2020 till 15.00 hrs. Note: Regarding detailed nature of work, containing cost of tender document (non refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, similar nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in). Manual offers will not be considered.

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://facebook.com/WesternRly)

## Uddhav, eight others take oath as MLCS



Uddhav Thackeray greets Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari after taking oath as MLC on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Monday took oath as a Member of the Legislative Council at a function at Vidhan Bhavan.

Council chairman Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar administered the oath to Mr. Thackeray and others who were elected on May 14.

The others elected are Council deputy chairperson and Shiv Sena leader Neelam Gorhe, four candidates of the Bharatiya Janata Party – Ranjitsinh Mohite Patil,

## Driver trying to smuggle alcohol in BEST bus held

He had bought liquor worth over ₹30,000

AJEET MAHALE

## Punjab rules out inter-State buses till May 31

Local bus services to start in non-containment zones soon, says Chief Minister Amarinder Singh

VIKAS VASUDEVA  
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday directed the transport department to draft standard operating procedures for resumption of local bus movement in all but the containment zones, but ruled out inter-State bus services till May 31.

Terming the danger of COVID-19 spread due to mixing of people with the start of the relaxations as the real test, the Chief Minister directed all departments to ensure close monitoring and strict adherence to all advisories. He asked the police department to be tough in ensuring social distancing and other necessary COVID-19 prevention protocols and to fine those stepping out without masks.

### Stringent protocol

At a videoconference to review the novel coronavirus and lockdown situation in the State, the Chief Minister instructed the transport de-



Migrant workers in Amritsar on Monday queue up for medical screening before going to the railway station to board a special train to Raebareli. ■ AFP

partment to put in place stringent protocols for handling daily passengers taking point-to-point inter-State buses that will start plying after May 31.

While making it clear that inter-State movement will be allowed only on special and Shramik trains at least till May 31, Capt. Amarinder said intra-State buses will start plying in a phased

manner.

Referring to the continued entry of migrants, NRIs and others via special trains and flights, the Chief Minister reiterated his earlier directions for strict adherence to quarantine rules. So far, 60,000 Punjabis had registered for return to the State, he said, adding that 20,000 NRIs were also expected to return.

More than 2 lakh migrants out of the 11 lakh who had registered on the special por-

## Haryana eases curbs, buses to ply from today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday said restrictions under Lockdown 4.0 will be limited to containment zones across the State and inter-State and intra-State movement of buses will resume from May 19.

He said in line with Union Ministry of Home Affairs gui-

elines, the State government has decided to ease restrictions, which will now be limited to only containment zones. "The scope of relaxations has further been widened. While restrictions will continue in the containment zones, other areas will be considered as orange zone and all non-restricted activities will resume there," he said.

Capt. Amarinder said while Punjab was willingly sending back people, including migrants, from other States, spending ₹7.5 lakh per train, other States were not responding likewise and asking his government instead to arrange for ferrying Punjabis back from there.

More than 2 lakh migrants out of the 11 lakh who had registered on the special por-

tal created by the government have left the State, the Chief Minister said, and as many as 20 trains are departing from Punjab every day, with 15 scheduled for Uttar Pradesh and 6 for Bihar on May 18. He said while more trains were needed for Bihar, the State was not willing to take in people at this stage as their quarantine facilities were full.

## Rajasthan to reopen shops

The govt's new guidelines will remain in force till May 31

MOHAMMED IQBAL  
JAIPUR

The Rajasthan government on Monday allowed reopening of shops, including those of barbers, salons, beauty parlours and sweetmeats, besides offices, factories and commercial establishments and plying of taxis, cabs and auto rickshaws, except in the containment zones, as well as inter-city bus services on routes permitted by the Home Department.

In the guidelines for lockdown 4.0 issued here, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajeev Swarup said government and private offices would open with the strength of 50% staff in the red zone and two-third in the orange zone districts.

Taxis and cabs will carry two passengers each and auto rickshaws one passenger in the orange and green zones.

As many as 15 districts, including Jaipur, Bhilwara, Ajmer, Udaipur, Kota and Bikaner, are in the red zone. The Centre had also left it to the States to demarcate

areas in different zones for resumption of activities.

A large number of panchayat samiti areas across the State were classified as red zones with their migrant population testing COVID-19 positive after the influx of workers from other States.

**Parks to remain closed**

The guidelines stated that public and community parks in the red zones would remain closed and no passenger transport, unless specifically permitted, would be allowed there. Work from home will be encouraged in service establishments.

While inter-State movement of passenger vehicles will be allowed with the mutual consent of other States, the movement of buses within the State will be permitted on routes identified by the Home Department. Mr. Swarup said city bus services would be permitted only in the green zones.

No relaxation permitted in the guidelines will be ap-

plicable to the containment areas of hotspots, clusters and curfew-bound localities, including Jaipur's Walled City area. Mr. Swarup said any subsequent relaxation would be given in these regions only if it was specifically stated in the orders.

The Additional Chief Secretary said a maximum of 50 guests would be allowed in marriage-related gatherings and 20 persons at funerals. Persons above 65 years and children below 10 years, pregnant women and persons with comorbidities will stay at home, except for essential and healthcare purposes.

Wearing of face cover will be compulsory at all public and work places, while spitting in public will be punishable with fine.

Failure to observe the social distancing norms will also be punishable and the consumption of liquor, paan, gutka and tobacco at public places will be strictly prohibited, according to the guidelines.

## Rapid test kit results not satisfactory: Vij

"Trying to talk to South Korean manufacturer to find out about shortcomings"

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij on Monday said the COVID-19 tests being conducted by rapid testing kits of a South Korea-based company were not delivering satisfactory results.

"This may be on account of malfunctioning of the kit or there may be a difference in the way we conduct the test. We are trying to talk to the company to find out what could be the shortcoming so that it could be resolved," he said.

**Increased testing'**  
"Rapid testing kits can certainly be very useful. We have increased our testing through the Rapid Test Polymerase Chain Reaction

and around 3,000 per million tests are being conducted daily in the State. If Rapid Testing Kits start delivering correct results then the number of tests could be escalated further," he said.

Mr. Vij said the State has a recovery rate of over 62%, which is far higher than 15% of the all-India rate, he said at a meeting with officials of the health department and members of the medical association.

Speaking on the migrant labour issue, Mr. Vij that if the States concerned issue

NOCs for receiving their people, Haryana can send the migrants to their homes within four days.

### Coming from Punjab'

"Migrants are coming to Haryana from Punjab and it is the responsibility of Punjab to stop them and facilitate them. We have increased the number of police personnel on roads bordering Punjab," he said.

Mr. Vij, added that he has, however, directed the Director General of Police to ensure that no force was used on migrants.

## Kolkata grapples with nurse exodus

Manipur govt. offering better pay, claims Association of Hospitals of Eastern India

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

At a time when the entire health apparatus of West Bengal is trying to contain COVID-19, hospitals in Kolkata and adjoining suburbs are facing a fresh challenge with the mass resignation of about 300 nurses. The nurses have reportedly given up their jobs to return to their homes, particularly in the Northeastern States.

A few days ago, the Association of Hospitals of Eastern India, an association of 17 private hospitals in the city wrote to State Chief Secre-

tary Rajiva Sinha, saying that the flight of nurses will not severely disrupt our services but "could lead to collapse of the private healthcare delivery machinery in Kolkata". The letter dated May 16 states that on May 14, 2020, around 185 nurses from different private hospitals left Kolkata and 169 more nurses were planning to leave the city.

"Although the exact reason behind this is not known, we have gathered from other nurses still on duty that the State government of Manipur is offering them lucrative stipend to return

home. We have also come to know that more nurses from States like Tripura, Odisha and Kerala are also planning to go back home," the letter said.

On Monday, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee raised the issue and said that she had directed the Chief Secretary to look into the matter. Ms. Banerjee said the State government is open to the private hospital appointing staff with a short training who can do basic duties. "The private hospitals are helping us in this time. We are taking over a number of them and pro-

viding them money for their services," she said.

Meanwhile, the State recorded six COVID-19 deaths and 148 new cases in the past 24 hours.

Five deaths were recorded in Kolkata and one in South 24 Parganas district. The total number of deaths increased to 250, of which 72 are due to comorbidities. The total number of cases increased to 2,825 and active infections stood at 1,575. The discharge rate of the State stood at 35.61% and the samples tested in the past 24 hours was 7,614.

## No grains, matchmaking for Saharias in Madhya Pradesh during lockdown

Migration in April-May opens up the prospect of finding partners for the particularly vulnerable tribal group

SIDHARTH YADAV  
POHRI (SHIVPURI DISTRICT)

Surely, Neeraj Adivasi's family lost out on wages and grains as the lockdown gnawed away at the harvest season. But the 16-year-old is unversed for another reason, insoluble even if enough jobs are provided locally.

"Now, I will have to wait until the next year to marry," he said.

Each spell of migration in April-May to closer districts of Morena and Bhind in Madhya Pradesh and Kota in Rajasthan opens up the prospect of match-making for Saharias, a particularly vul-

nerable tribal group which marries outside the village. The enduring restriction on movement has denied them three-four months worth wheat they earn from the migration and frayed familial bonds, breaking in on a pivotal social function performed during the yearly sowing.

**Ready for marriage**  
At Dangar village, around 22 boys and girls are ready for marriage. But for the lockdown, clutches of workers, with only the old, infirm and toddlers left behind, would have set out for the fields hav-

ing a high labour demand – but offering low wages – and where Saharias from other districts and States would also arrive. "Neeraj ka rang aa gaya tha shaadi ke liye (Neeraj was ready for marriage). Putting it off will only dampen his prospects," said Surendra Adivasi, 25, whose marriage was decided on a similar trip in 2014.

Usually, a common connect, most likely a relative, takes up the matchmaking. "They tell us if a boy or girl is good enough, match heights and maturity based on their appearance. And we trust them, and marry our children off upon return," explained Mr. Surendra, idling with other men at the village square.

"I want to marry off my

daughter as early as possible so that she doesn't have an affair or does anything stupid," said Parvati Adivasi, mother of Kavita, 15, who she believes is ready for marriage.

Barely anyone is sure of their date of birth, not even a factor during the matchmaking.

Most within the tribe – beset by alarming malnutrition levels – are married off,

not make his wife do labour. A marriageable girl must be able to take care of the family's needs," said Sukhsingh Adivasi.

During the trip, a group of workers earn a quintal of wheat for each bigha they harvest, besides a nominal wage, which sustains families back home for months. "Not being able to go this year has caused a food security crisis. So, workers are living on wheat procured from the public distribution system and taking loans from moneylenders at an interest of 3-5%. In case of non-payment, moneylenders make them work on fields locally as payback."

At Ahera hamlet of Eswaya village, 12 boys and girls are ready for marriage. "The boy must have land and should

turned during the lockdown which has created a labour supply beyond the demand locally. Rajesh Adivasi, of Ahera hamlet, was paid ₹250 a day in Morena district before he returned.

"Here, we are paid ₹100 a day and there are no industries and alternative livelihoods. So, we have to work for any wage to feed families," said Mr. Rajesh.

According to a survey of 50 returned migrant workers in seven villages, including the two, in Pohri block, 35 said they would not step outside their village for work any time soon.

"Most said they battled hunger there and are left with no money," said Mr. Yadav, who conducted the survey.

## New technique for lung treatment of newborns launched in Jaipur

The LISA procedure has yielded encouraging results

MOHAMMED IQBAL  
JAIPUR

A recent medical technique, known as less invasive surfactant administration (LISA), has been started at J.K. Lon Government Children's Hospital here for treatment of lung disease or respiratory distress syndrome among premature babies. The procedure, started initially for newborn children with the birth weight of less than 1,500 grams, has yielded encouraging results.

Most of the premature babies admitted to the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit had the problem of less mature lungs, resulting in difficulty in breathing at the time of birth. They needed ventilatory support with surfactant administration via endotracheal tube placed in air pipe for treatment.

Hospital's Medical Superintendent Ashok Gupta told *The Hindu* on Monday that the ventilatory support was

removed after the procedure, while the baby is on the CPAP machine. Dr. Gupta said the new technique's main objective was to minimise damage to the fragile premature lungs.

LISA has been developed as a lung protective strategy for respiratory management and ventilation in view of the mechanical ventilation causing damage to the preterm lungs of newborns. Infants considered suitable for LISA are those being managed with primary CPAP or high flow with the evidence of increasing respiratory distress and with a rising oxygen requirement.

The procedure was applied to a preemie by resident doctor Vijay Jhajharia under the supervision of Assistant Professor Vishnu Panesar at the hospital. Dr. Gupta said the regular application of LISA would turn out to be very useful and help save the lives of premature babies.



A premature baby being treated with LISA in Jaipur.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

gradually weaned and babies were put on non-invasive ventilation like continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) after maturation of lungs.

"We have been giving the directly administered medication in windpipe for treating breathing problems, but this has its own side effects," Dr. Gupta said. LISA technique had been found to be very helpful in minimising the side effects, he added.

The surfactant is administered via a thin feeding tube, instead of endotracheal tube, which is immediately

## Forest biodiversity being destroyed, allege tribals

'Commercial plantation being forced upon us'

SIB KUMAR DAS  
BERHAMPUR

Tribals of Pidamatha village in Daringbadi block of Odisha's Kandhamal district have alleged that without the consent of their gram sabha, Forest Department officials were trying to destroy the biodiversity of traditional community forest near their village.

About 90 tribal families living in Pidamatha protect the community forest near their village. The forest has been providing livelihood to these tribals as it contains fruit-bearing trees as well as several other forest produce.

According to 'Jungle Adhikar Committee' of the village, in the recent past officials from the Brahmanigao forest range arrived in their village to press them to support commercial plantation in the community forest.

The villagers alleged that

## Zero FIR filed in migrant's death case

STAFF REPORTER  
BERHAMPUR

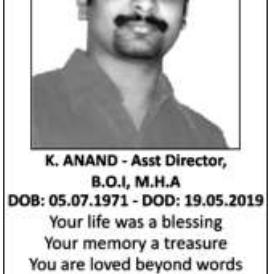
A zero FIR regarding death of an Odia migrant worker, Satyaban Swain, due to alleged assault by personnel of Amroli police station in Gujarat's Surat was filed at Bhanjanagar police station in Odisha's Ganjam district.

The FIR was lodged on Sunday by Santosh Swain, the brother of the deceased. According to Bhanjanagar police station inspector in-charge Sudipta Sahu, this FIR will be sent to Amroli police station in Gujarat for investigation.

As per Mr. Santosh, his brother used to stay at Anjani Industrial Estate area in Surat. On May 14, Satyaban and two others went to collect train ticket, where they were allegedly lathi-charged by police. Later, a police team reached Satyaban's room and beat him up. Satyaban was shifted to a local hospital, where he was declared dead.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES



1st year anniversary

K. ANAND - Asst Director, B.O.I., M.H.A.

DOB: 05.07.1971 - DOD: 19.05.2019

# Highest single-day spike of cases in Karnataka

Of A.P.'s 52 new cases, 19 linked to Koyambedu market; expats add to Kerala numbers; 41 more test positive in Telangana

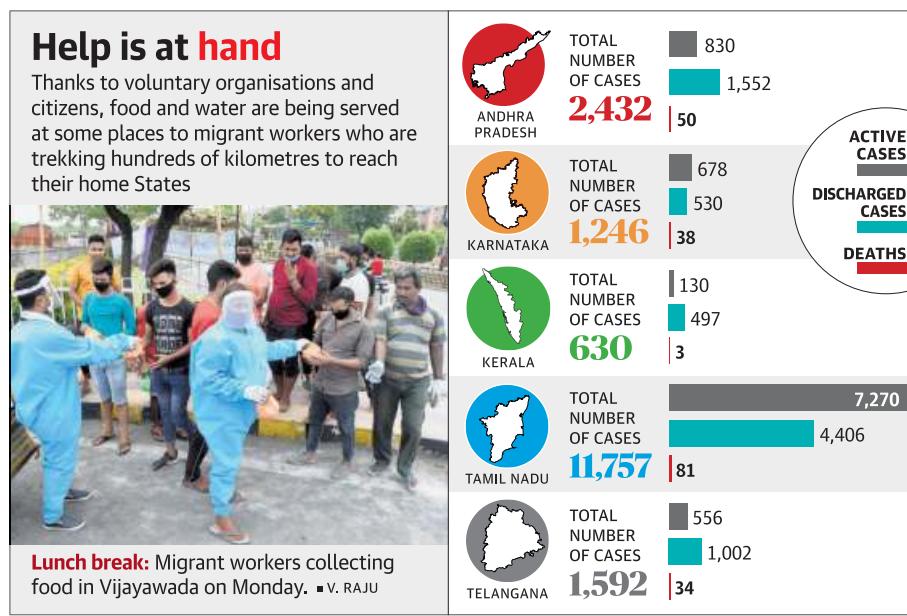
## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU  
Karnataka reported the highest number of new COVID-19 cases in a single day on Monday at 99. Andhra Pradesh registered 52 new cases, while Kerala recorded 29 cases, mostly from expatriates and non-resident Keralites.

In Telangana, the total number of cases touched 1,592 as 41 more tested positive.

The Karnataka Health and Family Welfare Department said on Monday that 68% of the 99 cases recorded had a travel history to other States, a majority of them to Maharashtra. A few others returned from Tamil Nadu.

According to the department's media bulletin, 64 patients had reported a travel history to Maharashtra. A majority of them were quarantined in institutions after their return to the State and



were later tested. Four patients have a travel history to Tamil Nadu.

A senior official in the Health Department, who acknowledged the rise in the

number of cases, attributed this to the State's decision to ramp up the tests.

Monday saw Raichur and Koppal, where not a single case of COVID-19 was detected before, reporting cases.

Six cases were reported from Raichur and three from Koppal district.

A day after witnessing just 25 cases, one of the lowest

ed before, reporting cases.

Chennai and their contacts.

daily tallies, Andhra Pradesh registered 52 new cases on Monday, taking the overall tally to 2,432, including 150 migrant cases.

The number of recoveries continues to increase with more patients getting discharged in various districts. As many as 96 patients, including two migrants, have recovered. So far, 1,552 patients have recovered taking the recovery rate in the State to 63.8%, while 34.1% of the positive patients are currently undergoing treatment. No new deaths were reported.

Meanwhile, cases related to the Koyambedu wholesale market hotspot continue to come up in various districts. Of the 52 new cases, 19 are those who visited the market in Chennai and their contacts.

## 29 cases in Kerala

In Kerala, expatriates and non-resident Keralites from

other States made up almost all of 29 cases reported on Monday, as it has been since May 7 when NoRks began returning home.

While 21 of the new cases were people who had returned from the UAE and other Gulf nations and the Maldives, seven were who had come from Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. One lone case of infection was picked up from the community by a health care worker in Kannur.

Of the 41 new cases in Telangana on Monday, 26 are from the GHMC area, three from Medchal, and 12 migrants. Besides, 10 people were discharged. Of the total 1,592 cases, 556 are active cases, 1,002 were discharged and 34 have died. On the whole, 69 migrants tested positive for COVID-19.

(With inputs from Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Telangana Bureaus)

# Woman 'harassed' in Dubai returns

Police book agent on her complaint

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU  
A 25-year-old woman who had gone to Dubai after being promised the job of a baby sitter was forced to leave the country, unable to bear the alleged harassment of her employer.

The victim said that her ordeal only continued as her employer also started harassing her. She then escaped and reached the Indian embassy seeking help. The embassy got her an emergency passport and a flight ticket to Bengaluru.

After reaching Bengaluru on Sunday, she approached the Shivajinagar police with a letter issued by the Protector of Emigrants seeking action against Kumar.

The Shivajinagar police have charged Kumar under the Immigration Act and with criminal intimidation and outraging the modesty of a woman.

# Public transport back in Karnataka today

More shops to be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU  
Buses, autorickshaws and cabs are set to return to roads in Karnataka from Tuesday, after a gap of nearly two months, with some conditions in place. More commercial establishments will also reopen.

The State government has further eased lockdown restrictions in many areas by allowing Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) buses to provide services by fixing the passenger strength at 30 from Tues-



**Ready for work:** Transport corporation employees relaxing at the Majestic Bus Stop in Bengaluru on Monday. ■ PTI

day. Wearing masks will be mandatory for all passengers.

All activities, businesses and buses will be allowed only between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. till May 31. However, Sundays

rations and private operators will provide bus services. Though the government has announced that trains will ply within the State, the nod of the Railways is awaited.

"The condition on resumption of bus services is that only 30 passengers will be allowed to travel in one bus to ensure social distancing," Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa said after discussing the Centre's lockdown 4.0 guidelines for nearly two hours with his Cabinet colleagues and officials.

While auto rickshaws and taxis will be allowed to operate from a driver and two passengers, maxi-cabs (six passengers) will have a driver and three passengers. Wearing of masks is mandatory for drivers and public.

# Telangana relaxes restrictions

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD

In line with the Centre's decision to enforce lockdown till May 31, the Telangana government on Monday extended the same by two days from May 29 and opened shops and establishments all over the State, except Hyderabad, from Tuesday morning.

The night curfew in the State from 7 p.m. will remain. Shops will open on alternate days in Hyderabad as per a schedule.

Except Hyderabad, the Road Transport Corporation will ply buses all over the State but will not cross inter-State borders.

# Kerala set to allow public transport, outdoor activity

Public parks, gyms, beaches to remain shut

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala appeared poised to gradually reverse COVID-19 lockdown restrictions on Monday with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan permitting the limited resumption of outdoor activity, public transport, retail trade, and sale of alcohol.

Mr. Vijayan did not specify when the relaxations would kick in. When pressed, he merely said "soon".

The relaxation of regulations in the fourth phase of the lockdown, albeit rather sparsely, offers the prospect

of some measure of social freedom to citizens who have remained mostly cooped up indoors since March 24.

People could now get back to work, open their businesses, go for morning walks, cycle, shop in supermarkets, visit beauty parlours and hair salons, travel on buses, taxis and auto rickshaws within their district, and buy liquor as takeaways from bars, private member clubs and State-owned outlets.

However, gyms, public parks, beaches, weekend leisure destinations, swimming pools, cinema halls, malls, dine-in facilities at restaurants, and team sports, would remain shut until further notice.

Mr. Vijayan said a surge in persons eager to savour the long-denied outdoors would not augur well for the State's containment strategy.

Kerala feared new flare-ups as more people from the State arrived from abroad and other regions in the country. Hence, it would impose the lockdown restrictions mandated by the Union government strictly, he said.

# Yellow alerts in 9 districts of Kerala

Thunderstorms likely till Thursday

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued yellow alerts in nine districts for Tuesday, indicating that the pre-monsoon showers would continue to be active over Kerala.

Yellow alerts signal the possibility of isolated heavy rainfall (6.4 cm to 11.5 cm in a 24-hour period). The alerts have been issued for Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Idukki, Thrissur, Palakkad, and Malappuram.

The other districts can expect light to medium rainfall, according to a Monday evening update by the IMD.

The IMD has reiterated its warning that thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are likely in the State till May 21. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea as there is a likelihood of strong winds blowing from the northwesterly direction along and off the Kerala coast and Lakshadweep.

The IMD had forecast that the pre-monsoon showers



**Heavy rain lashed Kochi on Monday.** ■ H. VIBHU

are likely to last till May end in Kerala. From March 1 to May 14, Kerala has received its normal quota of summer showers.

For Monday, the national weather agency had issued yellow alerts in 13 districts except Thiruvananthapuram.

By evening, Thiruvananthapuram, which too had received copious showers, was added to Monday's list.

# Centre notifies Karnataka judge's appointment

Krishna Bhat's appointment was delayed owing to a complaint

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Law and Justice on Monday notified the appointment of P. Krishna Bhat as an additional judge of the Karnataka High Court, almost four years after his name was first recommended by the Supreme Court collegium.

A Law Ministry notification said Mr. Bhat has been appointed for two years. Additional judges are usually appointed two years before

being elevated as a permanent judge in the High Court. The Supreme Court collegium had first recommended Mr. Bhat, then a District and Session's Court judge, in 2016. However, the government did not act on the recommendation as a woman law officer gave a written complaint against him to the then Chief Justice of India (CJI), T.S. Thakur.

Justice Thakur got an inquiry done by the then-Karnataka High Court Chief Jus-

tice Subhro Kamal Mukherjee, who found the complaint to be 'without any basis.' The Law Ministry, however, again wrote back to the then CJI, Dipak Misra, for a 'fair and proper inquiry' after the woman law officer alleged she was being summoned to Mr. Bhat's residence at 'odd hours' on the pretext of official work.

In October 2019, the Collegium reiterated its recommendation and the government accepted it.

## WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

**Forecast for Tuesday:** Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning and gusty winds very likely at isolated places over Bihar; with lightning and gusty winds at isolated places over Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, coastal Andhra Pradesh, south interior Karnataka, Lakshadweep and Kerala and with lightning at isolated places over Jharkhand, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, coastal Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	37.1...	27.0	Kozhikode	—	22.5...	25.4
Ahmedabad	—	41.5...	28.6	Kurnool	—	41.9...	28.2
Aizawl	—	31.2...	19.2	Lucknow	—	40.8...	25.8
Altahabab	—	43.5...	26.4	Madurai	—	2.2...	27.4
Bengaluru	—	31.4...	21.2	Mangaluru	—	55.4...	23.6
Bhopal	0.2...	40.5...	24.8	Mumbai	—	33.7...	27.8
Bhubaneswar	—	38.7...	26.0	Mysuru	—	25.2...	22.2
Chandigarh	—	37.7...	22.5	New Delhi	—	41.8...	23.8
Chennai	—	38.5...	29.0	Patna	—	40.0...	26.6
Coimbatore	11.6...	29.3...	22.9	Port Blair	—	31.2...	27.8
Dehradun	—	36.7...	19.2	Puducherry	—	38.0...	27.8
Gangtok	2.7...	22.6...	16.9	Pune	—	37.0...	25.1
Goa	—	33.9...	28.3	Raipur	—	39.5...	27.6
Guwahati	—	34.1...	23.0	Ranchi	—	37.8...	25.0
Hubballi	—	35.0...	24.0	Shillong	—	42.5...	—
Hyderabad	—	37.2...	25.0	Shimla	—	24.8...	15.3
Imphal	—	34.2...	19.8	Imphar	—	20.5...	12.0
Jaipur	—	40.3...	27.5	Thiruvananthapuram	3.9...	32.7...	24.6
Kochi	5.8...	33.4...	25.4	Tiruchi	5.8...	35.2...	24.4
Kohima	—	26.0...					



## A matter of relief

Strategy of promoting supply without helping boost demand may force a relook later

**W**ith the announcement of the final tranche of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, the COVID-19 relief package, a pattern to the government's approach is visible. And that is to give a strong supply-side push by boosting availability of capital on easy terms, keep income and wage support schemes to the minimum, empower constituencies ranging from farmers and workers to businesses, and finally, the most important, keep the damage to the fisc as low as possible. The fiscal impact of the ₹20-lakh crore package is estimated by economists at between 2-3% of GDP and that includes drawals from provisions already made in the Budget for this fiscal. The pillar on which the package rests is liquidity support so that businesses can crank up again and set the economic cycle back in motion. The option of a demand-side stimulus through a resort to deficit financing seems to be reserved for a future date if the infection does not subside or a second wave begins prompting another lockdown. The problem with this approach is that there is a desperate need for demand stimulus now. A strategy to drive consumption by, say, suspending GST for a couple of months or at least cutting rates temporarily, combined with a liquidity boost may have worked better under prevailing conditions. The Centre's problem is that its revenues are a fraction of what it would have been in normal situation but even given this handicap, a fiscal stimulus could have been fitted into the overall package. After all, there is something to be said for the strategy of cutting taxes and riding on the ensuing consumption boost that could bring in revenues to compensate for the cut.

The government has done well in increasing the budget for MGNREGA by two-thirds, adding another ₹40,000 crore. With migrants now returning to their villages, MGNREGA can be leveraged to keep them occupied with meaningful work. The demand of States for higher borrowings limit has been granted but with clear reform milestones that they have to meet. It remains to be seen if States are enthused to fall in line. The government has also used the opportunity to unleash some much-needed reforms in agriculture marketing, open up more sectors for private participation, enhance foreign direct investment in defence, corporatise the monolithic Ordnance Factory Board and so on. How much of these announcements of intent are followed through seriously will have to be watched. In sum, the package has several notable features not all of which are COVID-19 relief. While it is impossible to satisfy all sections of society, especially in a pandemic situation, it has to be said that the government has taken a huge gamble by refusing to borrow and spend more on boosting demand. If the strategy of boosting supply works, it is fine. But if it does not, the government will be faced with a bigger problem down the line.

## Faking danger

Use of sedition law to fight fake news is an attempt to suppress inconvenient reports

**T**he frequency with which journalists have been arrested since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic is quite disturbing. The reasons given by the police across India for arresting reporters and editors of news portals indicate that special provisions enacted to prevent the spread of rumour during disasters are being used to suppress reporting on political developments and possible governmental corruption. The most egregious case involves a criminal provision that governments invariably fall back upon to suppress dissent. The arrest of Dhaval Patel, editor of a news portal in Gujarat, on the serious charge of sedition, is a shocking instance of misuse of criminal laws to intimidate journalists. The case concerned an article speculating that State Chief Minister Vijay Rupani may be replaced by the BJP for his alleged inept handling of efforts to combat the pandemic. The report had even named a possible successor. It is befuddling how such a report could amount to sedition, regardless of whether the speculation is true. Oftentimes, the source of such speculation is a disgruntled section of the ruling party itself, and it is excessive to punish reportage with inadequate verification with arrest and prosecution for sedition. Mr. Patel has also been charged under Section 54 of the Disaster Management Act for allegedly spreading panic through a false alarm concerning a disaster.

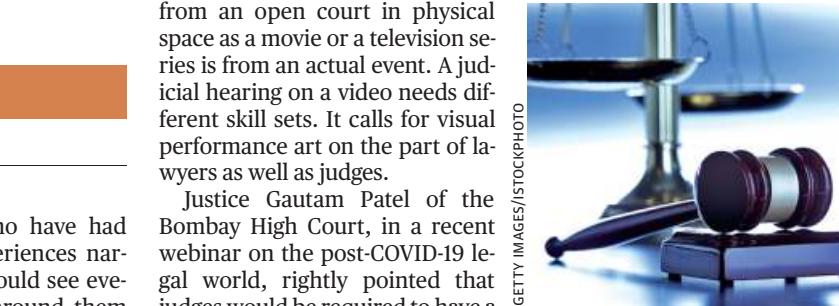
The Editors Guild of India has seen a "growing pattern" in the misuse of criminal laws to intimidate journalists. The concern is not misplaced. In the Andamans, a reporter was arrested for a social media post claiming people who had contacted a COVID-19 positive patient over phone were also being quarantined. In Coimbatore, police arrested a news portal founder following a report on alleged corruption in food distribution as part of the local administration's efforts to handle the fallout of the pandemic. In Delhi, a reporter was summoned in response to a report that claimed that an audio clip purportedly containing a speech by the head of the Tablighi Jamaat was doctored. While asking a journalist to join the investigation may not by itself be illegal, the police should not use the power of summons to intimidate reporters or extract details of the source. There ought to be greater restraint while invoking special provisions relating to handling disasters and epidemics. Section 54 only penalises the spreading of panic relating to the severity or magnitude of a disaster – claiming falsely, for instance, that a dam had breached – and does not extend to mere incorrect reporting. In normal circumstances, the authorities ought to be content with getting their version or response to be carried by the news outlets concerned, and not seek to use the pandemic as an excuse to curb inconvenient reporting.

# Social distancing from the powerless

Judicial abnegation by the top court is not healthy for an institution trusted as being the protector and enforcer of rights



SANJAY HEGDE



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

from an open court in physical space as a movie or a television series is from an actual event. A judicial hearing on a video needs different skill sets. It calls for visual performance art on the part of lawyers as well as judges.

Justice Gautam Patel of the Bombay High Court, in a recent webinar on the post-COVID-19 legal world, rightly pointed that judges would be required to have a great deal of patience. We are not going to be able to evolve an absolutely perfect system to replace or substitute the earlier system. In adapting video conferencing apps for virtual courts, we have taken something for corporate work and used it for a court's workflow, which it was not designed to handle.

As someone with some experience of visual media, it seems to me that in a virtual courtroom, judges and lawyers should not only do justice to the matters before them but also be seen to be doing justice after a measured consideration of the issues before them. They must bear in mind that their display of measured consideration is transmitted instantly to the world at large through three court reporters, who are allowed to cover the video feed from the journalists' lounge of the Supreme Court. The reporters' instant tweets amplify a routine dismissal or issuance of notice in a petition into an oracular pronouncement from the highest constitutional court to be debated at 9 p.m. in the cacophony on television every day.

**Home-bound migrant labour**  
In the case of the walking migrants, the petition was presented by an advocate who had even earlier during the novel coronavirus pandemic filed and presented public interest litigations (PILs). These petitions, on different issues had been dismissed and he had been threatened with the imposition of costs. According to the Solicitor General's submission, the lawyer appeared to be combating COVID-19 unemployment by creating work for himself.

While presenting the case, the lawyer referred to the fact that some days earlier, a petition by Prashant Bhushan raising similar issues had been declined by the Court. The dismissal was after a statement of the Solicitor General that there were no migrant workers walking home on the roads for hundreds of kilometres. He wanted that statement of the government to be enforced in a manner that the migrants would not be required to walk endlessly on the road.

It is against this backdrop that the judges asked what they could do in the matter. The petitioner advocate mentioned the case of migrants who had been run over by a train in Aurangabad, Maharashtra earlier this month while walking back home. The Bench responded that it could not prevent people from walking anywhere they wanted. That observation, when taken out of context, looks like a Marie Antoinette moment for the institution.

Thereafter, the advocate (of PIL fame) sought to persist and stood his ground. The Bench gave short shrift to the matter and imposed costs of ₹1 lakh to deter further arguments. I later overheard the presiding judge instruct the stenographer to delete the line imposing these costs. The microphone of the petitioner lawyer was muted and he was locked out of the hearing. Before the next matter was called, the Bench did ask the Solicitor General if anything could be done concerning the issue of the migrant workers. He indicated that not much seemed possible, according to his instructions.

This brief encounter may have

not caused comment in normal times as a physical hearing in an open court. It may then have been seen as yet another petition with publicity in mind, where the Court had preferred either not to be drawn into political thickets or to not take over administration in an area where it lacked expertise. However, these are no ordinary times.

On March 31, 2020, a different Bench had been persuaded by the Solicitor General's submission that migrants had ceased to walk home. At that time, the judges may have been ignorant of the fact that one of their brethren (on March 30, 2020) had stepped out on the roads of Delhi to deliver food packets to migrants walking home.

Over 40 days later, on May 15, when the second petition came up, the continuing exodus of an increasingly hungry, tired and desperate citizenry, walking like the living dead on an uncertain way homewards, is something that the top court ought not to have ignored.

The dismissal of the issue earlier was not a binding precedent. In social action litigation, procedure is but handmaiden to justice. Irrespective of the messenger or the form of the message, the issue deserved careful consideration.

### A retreat that is jarring

Former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao had once rationalised, "It is not that I do nothing, I think about it and decide that nothing can be done."

The appearance of even thinking about doing something was given short shrift by the top court. This attitude of judicial abnegation, of being more executive-minded than the executive, is not healthy for an institution rooted in public trust derived from a constitutional mandate of being the protector and enforcer of the rights of all citizens.

Post the Emergency years, the Court had redeemed its earlier surrender to the executive by embarking on an expansion of social action litigation. In recent years, while the judiciary has retreated

from expansive jurisdiction, it has still played a significant role in nudging the executive, without necessarily ordering it around. But never has it hitherto socially distanced itself from the powerless.

### High Courts show the way

In contrast, on that very day, the same Court granted some modicum of relief to the real estate industry in respect of its loans. By another order, industries with unpaid wages during the pandemic were protected from prosecution. The contrast was only heightened when the High Court of Madras and the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, on the same day eloquently voiced their concern over migrant labour walking back. The High Court of Madras even sought responses and status reports on the issue from the central and State governments.

In our constitutional scheme, High Courts are on a par with the Supreme Court in the enforcement of the fundamental rights of the citizen. The Supreme Court does exercise an appellate jurisdiction but it is final not because it is infallible. It is infallible because it is final. During the Emergency, several High Courts ruled in favour of the citizen only to be overturned by the Supreme Court in *ADM Jabalpur*. It remains to be seen whether on the issue of the walking migrants, the Supreme Court will be now be moved against the orders of the High Court of Madras and the High Court of Andhra Pradesh.

If such a petition is indeed moved by the Solicitor General, I do hope that somewhere in the Court, there exists a person who remembers Bob Dylan singing: "Yes, 'n' how many ears must one man have/Before he can hear people cry?/Yes, 'n' how many deaths will it take 'till he knows/That too many people have died?/The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind/The answer is blowin' in the wind".

Sanjay Hegde is a senior advocate of the Supreme Court

# A jolt to national energy security

The amendments to the Electricity Bill will only burden States and erode the concurrent status given to electricity

SUDHA MAHALINGAM,  
TEJAL KANITKAR & R. SRIKANTH

**F**inance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's proposal for reform of power tariff policy – announced as part of the stimulus package following the pandemic – is of a piece with the recent comprehensive proposal to amend the Electricity Act 2003; put together, they erode the concurrent status accorded to electricity in the Constitution. If implemented, they will not only weaken the control of States over an industry supplying a basic human necessity such as electricity but also arm the Centre with a pincer-like weapon which could choke the distribution utilities/companies (DISCOMS) and jeopardise the country's energy security.

### DISCOM troubles

These proposals have to be seen in the context of a continuing centralisation of control over the sector whose main impact in the last 25 years has been to drive up the cost of power purchase to 80% of the total costs of State DISCOMS. At the core of DISCOM woes is the two-part tariff policy, mandated by the Ministry of Power in the 1990s at the behest of the World Bank. As more private developers came forward to invest in generation, DISCOMS were required to sign long-term power purchase agreements (PPA), committing to pay a fixed cost to the power generator, irrespective of whether the State draws the power or not, and a variable charge for fuel when it does.

The PPAs signed by DISCOMS were based on over-optimistic

projection of power demand estimated by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), a central agency. The 18th Electric Power Survey (EPS) overestimated peak electricity demand for 2019-2020 by 70 GW. The 19th EPS published in 2017, by 25 GW, both pre-Covid 19. In the event, DISCOMS locked into long-term contracts end up servicing perpetual fixed costs for power not drawn. NTPC Limited's Kudgi, in Karnataka, alone received ₹4,800 crore as idle fixed costs during 2018-19, operating at a plant load factor of only 22%. Due to the CEA's overestimates, the all-India plant load factor of coal power plants is at an abysmal 56% even before COVID-19.

### Factor of renewable energy

From 2010, solar and wind power plants were declared as "must-run", requiring DISCOMS to absorb all renewable power as long as there was sun or wind, in excess of mandatory renewable purchase obligations. This means backing down thermal generation to accommodate all available green power, entailing further idle fixed costs payable on account of two-part tariff PPAs.

Second, power demand peaks after sunset. In the absence of viable storage, every megawatt of renewable power requires twice as much spinning reserves to keep lights on after sunset. DISCOMS, especially in the southern region, have had to integrate large volumes of infirm power, mostly from solar and wind energy plants which enjoy must-run status irrespective of their high tariffs (₹5/kwh in Karnataka and ₹6/kwh in Tamil Nadu for solar power) even



as the demand growth envisaged in the 18th EPS failed to materialise.

Third, in 2015 the Centre announced an ambitious target of 175 gigawatts of renewable power by 2022, offering a slew of concessions to renewable energy developers, and aggravating the burden of DISCOMS. Incidentally, China benefited by as much as \$13 billion in the last five years from India's solar panel imports.

### The fine print

It is against this backdrop that we must examine the proposals in the Electricity Act 2020.

First, the amendment proposes sub-franchisees, presumably private, in an attempt to usher in markets through the back door. Going by past privatisation experiments, private sub-franchisees are likely to cherry-pick the more profitable segments of the DISCOM's jurisdiction. The Electricity Bill 2020 containing the proposed amendments is silent on whether a private sub-franchisee would be required to buy the expensive power (averaging out the idle fixed costs) from the DISCOM or procure cheaper power directly from power exchanges. If it is the first, the gains from the move are doubtful

since the room for efficiency improvements is rather restricted in the already profitable regions attractive to sub-franchisees. If it is the second, DISCOMS will then be saddled with costly power purchase from locked-in PPAs and fewer profitable areas from which to recover it.

Second, the amendment proposes even greater concessions to renewable power developers, with its cascading impact on idling fixed charges, impacting the viability of DISCOMS even more.

Third, and the most controversial amendment proposed, seeks to eliminate in one stroke, the cross-subsidies in retail power tariff. This means each consumer category would be charged what it costs to service that category. Rural consumers requiring long lines and numerous step-down transformers and the attendant higher line losses will pay the steepest tariffs. Disingenuously, the proposed amendments envisage that State governments will directly subsidise whichever category they want to, through direct benefit transfers. Cross-subsidy is a fact of life in even private industries, soap, newspapers, or even utilities such as telecom. There is undoubtedly a case for reducing the steep cross-subsidies in electricity. But eliminating them in one stroke when State governments are already struggling with direct power subsidies is bound to be ruinous to their finances, not to mention the myriad problems with Direct Benefit Transfer. Without going into the political arguments relating to subsidies, and the impact of COVID-19 which has not been factored in, this proposal is practical-

ly infeasible; if forcibly implemented, it will lead to chaos.

Fourth, State regulators will henceforth be appointed by a central selection committee, the composition of which inspires little confidence in its objectivity, jeopardising not only regulatory autonomy and independence but also the concurrent status of the electricity sector.

Finally, the last claw in this multi-pronged pincer is the establishment of a centralised Electricity Contract Enforcement Authority whose members and chairman will again be selected by the same selection committee referred to above. The power to adjudicate upon disputes relating to contracts will be taken away from State Electricity Regulatory Commissions and vested in this new authority, ostensibly to protect and foster the sanctity of contracts. This is to ensure that States saddled with high-priced PPAs and idling fixed costs, yet forced to keep increasing the share of renewables in their basket, have no room for manoeuvre.

When the country is reeling under the economic impact of the novel coronavirus crisis, the Electricity Bill 2020 is indeed a disingenuous document drafted to shift the burden imposed by the short-sighted policies of the Centre onto hapless States, with serious consequences for the nation's energy security.

Sudha Mahalingam, Tejal Kanitkar and R. Srikanth are, respectively, Raja Ramanna Chair Professor, Associate Professor and Dean in the Energy and Environment Program at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



faiths and it is only politicians who want to drive a wedge between them to achieve their political goals. It is time that everyone thinks that despite the different faith one follows, it is the peaceful coexistence that we should try to achieve, as the two friends showed.

A.J. ANJULABEEN,  
Chennai

## 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.

**Teaching medicine**  
I write to comment on some of the aspects of medical education and training of our medical graduates. As one who has had the privilege of being a medical teacher for nearly 30 years in government service and another 30 years later in private institutions, I am anxious that our medical graduates must get the best teaching. The recent proliferation of medical colleges is well

intended but good teachers, especially in the basic sciences, anatomy, physiology, etc., should be available to lay the foundation for medical knowledge. Recalling retired teachers may be considered if need be. Good teachers can inspire and bring out good students and medical graduates. In some countries, student evaluation of teachers is in vogue. This is not entirely

satisfactory for an evaluation of competence of teachers. The acid test of good teaching is the response and performance of students and achievements thereafter. Recent introduction of modern electronic devices in diagnosis and treatment is impressive. Telemedicine in diagnosis and advising management have come to stay. But still, the time-honoured method of Hippocrates with suitable

adaptations for our conditions must be followed. Medical practice is a person-to-person interaction – two humans in flesh and blood – the physical suffering as also mental agony of one requiring the "balm" of the medical person.  
D.K.V. THIRUVENGADAM,  
Chennai

### True friend

The tale of two friends who were heading from Surat,

Gujarat, to their village in Uttar Pradesh (Inside pages, "On unforgiving road, till death did them part", May 18) was moving. The care and comfort the friend gave to his sick roommate is unparalleled and reminds me of many scenes in films in which a mother would care for her son. The story reiterates that down at the ground level there is a humanitarian approach among people of various

# Accountability can't be placed under lockdown

The BJP government at the Centre owes the country many answers on its handling of the pandemic



DEREK O'BRIEN

As it moves from a stringent nationwide lockdown to disaggregated and differentiated lockdowns, India has much to think about. It is coming out of a gruelling, bruising two months. This experience holds lessons for the rest of the long battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. It also reveals a lot about governance and planning, Centre-State relations, and the care and dignity that government policies accord citizens.

The hardest questions will, of course, be for the Bharatiya Janata Party government in New Delhi. It declared a total lockdown giving just a four-hour notice to the citizens, without consulting State governments. How should we judge it?

Language provides a clue. Any institution – a company, a cultural organisation, a political party or a government – is identifiable by its trademark vocabulary, by the words and phrases it uses most often. For the BJP government, these are “masterstroke”, “surgical strike”, “shock treatment” and “secrecy”. It thrives on sudden, dramatic moves – never mind the absence of planning.

A little over a decade ago, the author-activist Naomi Klein wrote a book called *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. It was a warning against ill-conceived shock actions for restructuring society, and how these could lead to disaster. Those promoting the “shock doctrine” take advantage of a crisis situation and of a benumbed population desperate for answers and trusting of those in charge. Yet the trust is never really repaid. Ever since that 8 p.m. lockdown announcement on March 23, I have thought so often of Ms. Klein and her book.

#### Delayed response

And it need not have been this way. The first three weeks of March were wasted by the Central government. On March 5, the Trinamool Congress wrote and urged that parliamentary committees be convened for emergency meetings to plan for COVID-19. On the same day the West Bengal go-



“The Centre has been oblivious to the suffering of migrant workers.” Children of migrant workers rest in Ghaziabad as they wait to board buses to Bihar.

• REUTERS

vernment began creating isolation wards for future COVID-19 patients. The following day, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee set up quick response teams.

The Centre did nothing. It spoke perfunctorily about social distancing but ignored its own warnings. Repeated appeals to adjourn Parliament were ignored. After two weeks of trying, an exasperated Trinamool Congress finally withdrew its MPs from both Houses. In West Bengal, Ms. Banerjee had already initiated a partial lockdown when the Central announcement came.

#### The issue of guest workers

Since the BJP government acted so late in the day, it was expected that a detailed blueprint was in place. The issue of guest workers, for example, was an obvious one. In fact, on March 26 itself, Ms. Banerjee wrote to counterparts in other States requesting that they take care of stranded guest workers from West Bengal and promised reciprocal treatment for workers living in the State. In the following days, West Bengal sent ₹1,000 to each of the 4,00,000 stranded workers across the country, without noise.

What did the Centre do? On guest workers, it remained in denial. It used the National Disaster Management Act of 2005 to override State governments but ignored key provisions of the National Disaster Management Plan. The Plan clearly emphasises the critical importance of social inclusion during a disaster, to ensure the well-being of vulnerable

groups such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the differently abled, the elderly, women and children, and of course migrant workers (many of whom are covered by the other categories).

The Union Finance Ministry held three press conferences displaying insensitivity to human dignity. The Supreme Court has held that the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution is not merely a physical right; it includes the right to live with human dignity. The treatment extended to many underprivileged citizens, especially guest workers, was in complete violation of human dignity. The Central government told the Supreme Court that there were no guest workers on the roads and highways. This was at the very time that social media (and only one or two brave television channels) were full of visuals of workers trudging miles and miles. Guidelines for inter-State travel of guest workers were issued almost a month into the lockdown. It was all very callous.

We all know of the tragic Aurangabad incident that saw a goods train mow down 16 migrant workers. They, like millions of others on highways, were walking to their villages and collapsed in exhaustion on the railway tracks – too exhausted to hear the train coming. The Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Railways Minister have been all but absent during this monumental crisis during which millions of poor guest workers have been abandoned. All this while the Minister was presiding over the Indian Railways with its

daily ferrying capacity of 23 million people.

On May 1, the migrant worker trains began with much fanfare. Here too the Centre showed a cold heart. It sought to charge migrant workers, passing on the responsibility of collecting the fares to State governments. The State governments showed greater responsibility. West Bengal paid to bring home those stranded in Kota, Vellore, Chennai, and other parts of India. We welcomed back 1,50,000 of our people and did so ungrudgingly. All along the Railway Ministry was quibbling and haggling over money, blaming the State governments and sanctimoniously declaring that matters should not be politicised. It was surreal.

One would have thought the Centre was short of funds and State governments were awash with money. That is far from true. The sudden lockdown didn’t give the States a chance to prepare, and their revenues collapsed. In addition, the Centre, which already owes the States money, has been unwilling to help. The Central government owes West Bengal ₹61,000 crore, ₹36,000 crore of which is backlog dues. There is no sign of any money coming; only empty press conferences. How are States expected to pay for the reopening and repair of their devastated economies?

The examples I have cited have been focused: the Centre showed delay in waking up to the COVID-19 situation and preparing for it; remained oblivious to the suffering of migrant workers; valued money over lives; did not support the States for even basic and essential welfare programmes; and ignored the dignity of ordinary, decent, hard-working and troubled people. The Centre has also not procured equipment such as test kits and not allowed States to do so. It finally sent test kits that didn’t work and needed to be withdrawn; bullied States and mangled federalism; and introduced a contact-tracing app without explaining it, without wider consultation, and without an ordinance or enabling legal provision. On all of these the Central government has to provide answers and has to be held to account. After all, in a democracy, accountability cannot be placed under a lockdown.

Derek O’Brien leads Trinamool Congress in the Rajya Sabha

# A post-pandemic world order

Dogma, ideology and notions of power could either impede or accelerate the recovery process of nations



ARJUN SUBRAMANIAM

As the world starts recovering from the debilitating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, nations will draw on all their reserves to ensure that their place in the global pecking order is largely maintained. Among many factors, dogma, ideology and notions of power merit serious attention as non-quantifiable national characteristics that could either impede or accelerate the recovery process.

#### Ideological and civilisational beliefs

Dogma has traditionally been linked to religious beliefs. Since World War II, however, it has incorporated several strains of ideological and enduring civilisational beliefs. Take the case of China, for example, which is attempting to upstage, or at least match, the U.S. as the principal global hegemon. Realising that mere ideology was not enough to propel it to that position, Mao Zedong’s successors have drawn on two civilisational markers from Chinese history that have troubled the Chinese people for centuries: the ‘Middle Kingdom’ syndrome and ‘the Century of Humiliation’. While the first marker builds on the glory of the Ming Dynasty (late 14th century to mid-17th century) and the centrality of the Han people in a world order that saw China as the most prosperous nation in the world, it also reminds the Chinese people of the dangers that lurk around its periphery. Chinese leaders often draw attention to the Mongol rule (late 13th century to mid-14th century) and over two centuries of misrule by the Manchus and the Qing Dynasty (mid-17th century to early 20th century) as examples of this. The second marker draws on the stripping of China of its honour and resources by multiple colonial powers during the ‘Century of Humiliation’ from the mid-19th century to the time of the emergence of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. These markers from Chinese history have gradually become dogma and seen as a blot on Chinese history that need resolution.

Realising in the 1980s that Maoist ideology no longer appealed to the Chinese people, Deng reintroduced Confucianism as a much-needed intellectual and ethical prop to China’s push for ‘great power’ status. Sun Tzu re-emerged as China’s answer to Clausewitz and for a few decades it appeared that these would soften traditional Chinese dogma. It also raised hopes that China would largely play by the existing rules and bide its time.

Jinping, however, has been a leader in a hurry. In the process, he has perpetuated the deepened hurt of the Chinese people to an extent that it has become embedded dogma. He has abandoned Confucianism and the ethical pursuit of power, and fallen back on hard-core communist ideology. Hard power and muscular nationalism coupled with a neo-colonial and mercantilist attitude towards vulnerable nations seems to be the new strategy to compete with the U.S. While this strategy seemed to be working at a time when the U.S. appeared to be looking inwards and showing signs of strategic fatigue, President Xi’s ambitious Belt and Road Initiative demonstrated an overreach that had the potential to backfire as it created a sense of fear, rather than respect for, China. Then came the pandemic and it is worth pondering over whether holding on to historical dogma, ideology and notions of power will hold the same potential in the accumulation of power, or whether nations which are willing to live in the moment and be sensitive to the global environment will fare better. China will be worse off should it prefer the former course. Its continued aggressive posture along the Line of Actual Control only confirms this rigid position.

The U.S.’s recovery will be impeded by embedded notions of power which have resulted in a strategic oversight and fatigue of sorts. The pandemic has tested the U.S. state’s capacity, capability and competency. However, the U.S.’s economic resilience, restless people, institutional robustness and intellectual reserves will help it pull through.

#### Demonstration of flexibility

India is neither afflicted by unreasonable expectations of power, ideological dogma, or haunted by accentuated perceptions of historical hurt. Despite its own centuries of conquest and exploitation by invaders and colonial powers, it has demonstrated resilience, learnt to let go and embraced the good that emerged from the centuries of darkness. That is a demonstration of flexibility, which is good in troubled times such as these. Yes, it does have societal fissures and serious issues of compliance, but those can be mendied with national resilience and improved public discipline and good leadership. If India weathers the entire pandemic cycle as it has coped with the initial storm, it should be better placed than the two leading powers to recover. It will be a fascinating global strategic landscape to observe as a post-COVID-19 world order emerges, and for sure, India could play an important role in its possible transformation.

Arjun Subramaniam is a strategic analyst and military historian

# Preparing for a syndemic

Innovations in population health surveillance are important as COVID-19 could become a syndemic

#### CHIRANTAN CHATTERJEE

The World Health Organization has announced that COVID-19 will likely never go away. Experts warn that there will be a second wave of infections.

Meanwhile, some people have also raised the alarm about diseases like dengue and malaria emerging with the upcoming monsoon season in tropical South Asia. Therefore, going forward, could COVID-19 become even more problematic by becoming a syndemic? A syndemic is a situation when two or more epidemics interact synergistically to produce an increased burden of disease in a population, a situation first described by medical anthropologist Merrill Singer in the mid-1990s. Stephanie Shau and co-authors published a peer-reviewed journal article last month documenting this as a distinct possibility in people living with HIV.

#### Increased burden of disease

The 1957 Asian influenza pandemic, for example, showed that deaths then could be not only due to the primary viral infection, but also due to secondary bacterial infections among influenza patients; in short, they were caused by a viral/bacterial syndemic. Meanwhile, researchers have shown that in Kisumu, Kenya, 5% of HIV infections are due to higher HIV infectiousness of malaria-infected HIV patients.

Some also say that we need to watch out for secondary bacterial infection in those with weakened immunity due to COVID-19. Given that antibiotics resistance across the world is already a problem, the medical community needs to be aware of co-morbidities, especially if COVID-19 deepens as a syndemic in populations with antibiotic resistance.

If that happens, along with large-scale population testing, societies around the world will also have to consider innovations in population health surveillance technology and develop creative business models at a scale potentially unheard of in recent times. MIT alumnus Inder Singh’s startup, Kinsa, makes smart thermometers that are already making waves in the U.S. Many argue that

Kinsa thermometers could be the key to constantly monitoring temperatures.

Another solution is to monitor oxygen levels in the brain daily through a pulse oximeter. It turns out that COVID-19 is causing happy hypoxia, where lack of oxygen in the brain is going undetected till things become too late. However, some say that this should not crowd out other important strategies like aggressive population-level PCR and antibody testing.

Overall, we can expect that this emerging market of technologies in population health surveillance will move towards similar discussions like global optimal pricing of Remdesivir, or faulty testing kits by Abbott or by Chinese firms. There will be the lure of speed of entry, quality concerns on the margin, and intellectual property battles.

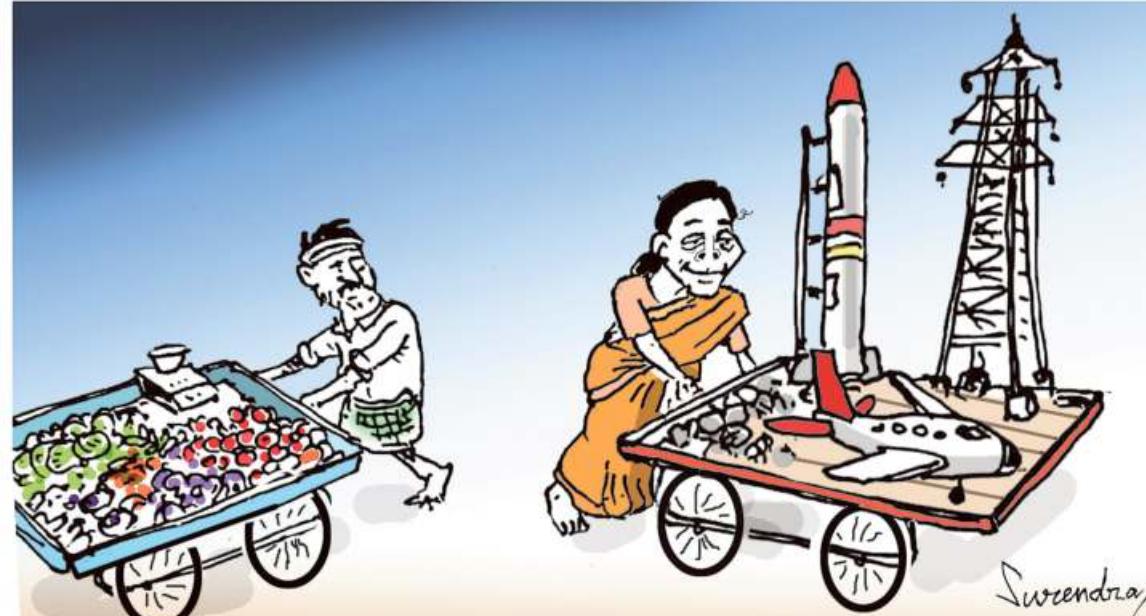
But broadly, societies with resource-constrained settings, where even an economical pooled testing strategy might be difficult to enforce due to financial reasons, should evaluate innovative population health surveillance technologies to complement testing. This is especially important as there is a rising likelihood of COVID-19 becoming endemic and also probably syndemic.

#### New ways of thinking

With India’s ongoing migrant crisis, we cannot rule out COVID-19 becoming syndemic given large-scale urban-to-rural chaotic migration. Added to this is the complexity of the upcoming dengue and malaria season. Closing State borders, discriminating against migrants returning to their home States, and quarantining them in public locations may not be a viable option going forward if India is peaking on the COVID-19 curve. India recorded the largest single day spike just a few days ago. The time has come to look at testing/tracing/isolating as well as ideas to deploy population health surveillance technologies like smart thermometers and oximeters.

Are the policymakers listening?

Chirantan Chatterjee is a faculty member at IIM Ahmedabad and Visiting Fellow at Hoover Institution, Stanford University



#### DATA POINT

## Unsafe mode

**HOW TO READ THE TABLE** | The table lists government-backed apps of 19 countries based on five technology principles and whether the app adheres to them. ‘Y’ indicates compliance while ‘N’ indicates non-compliance. ‘NA’ indicates that there were no data available

Country	Voluntary	Limited	Data destruction	Minimised	Transparent
China	N	N	N	N	N
Turkey	N	N	N	Y	N
India	N*	N	Y	Y	N
Mexico	Y	NA	N	N	N
Norway	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Australia	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
UK	Y	N	NA	Y	Y
Germany	Y	NA	NA	Y	N
Austria	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Czech	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Iceland	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Israel	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Italy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Singapore	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cyprus	Y	NA	Y	Y	Y
North Macedonia	Y	NA	Y	NA	Y
Poland	Y	NA	Y	Y	Y
Switzerland	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA
Finland	Y	NA	NA	Y	Y

\*On Sunday, the Ministry of Home Affairs said all employers “should on best effort basis” ensure that the contact-tracing app is downloaded by all employees who have “compatible mobile phones”

**According to a database maintained by MIT Technology Review, Aarogya Setu, India's contact-tracing app to combat COVID-19, poses significant risks to the privacy of the user compared to similar apps in other countries. Though there is little clarity on the design and security of the app, it has been made mandatory in some places. The apps in China and Turkey pose greater risks for user privacy than Aarogya Setu**

**Voluntary:** Whether the use is by choice or mandatory

**Limited:** Are there limitations on how the data get used?

**Data destruction:** Whether the data are deleted automatically after a certain amount of time

**Minimised:** Whether only necessary information is collected

**Transparent:** Whether the app is built on clear and publicly available policies and its design has an open source code

#### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE TABLE

- India is among the three countries to make the app mandatory
- India is among the four countries to not have limitations on the use of data
- Aarogya Setu's code is not open sourced thus hampering transparency. Concerns surrounding the code have been highlighted in the public domain recently

#### The Hindu

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 19, 1970

Keep pace with the times, says PM

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi has initiated discussions – on a strictly personal basis – with the leading princes who are being called to Delhi one by one to meet her on the abolition of their purses and privileges. She has already met more than 20 top ranking princes and the Maharaja of Mysore will be seeing her to-morrow [May 19]. The Nizam also is expected to be summoned after she has done the necessary spade work for coming to grips with the question of compensation.

In her talks, Mrs. Gandhi has been taking the line that the princes should appreciate the compelling political circumstances that led to the decision to abolish their privy purses. She has also been trying to impress upon them that in their own interest they should fully co-operate with her in ensuring that there was a strong Government at the Centre which was capable of taking a generous attitude on the question of compensation in the face of political opposition.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 19, 1920

The truth about non-co-operation. (From an editorial)

Our Anglo-Indian contemporaries, both in the Presidency

## FROM PAGE ONE

## India's COVID-19 case tally crosses 1 lakh

As per the latest guidelines States have been asked to categorise districts/municipal corporations, or if warranted subdivision/ward or any other administrative unit as red/orange/green zone as per field assessment.

"States have been told to ensure stringent implementation of the containment plans in these containment zones," the latest guidelines said.

In her letter to the States and Union Territories, Health Secretary Preeti Sudan said States could categorise areas using the broad guideline issued the Central Health Ministry.

Ms. Sudan's letter said the demarcation of the zones would be based on total active cases, cases per lakh population, doubling rate calculated over a seven-day period, case fatality rate, testing ratio (number of tests per lakh population)

and sample positivity rate. The Health Ministry, however, noted that the benchmarks or thresholds for critical and desirable levels are dynamic and may be revised by the Centre as per the evolving situation at the field level.

## Doctors' plea

Meanwhile, the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA), India has on Monday written to the Health Ministry stating that many doctors at the frontline, even after taking adequate precautions, are contracting the infection in different parts of the country.

In their letter the doctors note that the government should take a relook at its guideline for "Quarantine of Healthcare Workers" to ensure that adequate protection is available to this section.

## Vaccine fails to shield monkeys from virus

Unusual, in that human beings were unlikely to be ordinarily exposed those quantities of the virus.

The researchers, led by Sarah Gilbert of The Jenner Institute, University of Oxford and Vincent Munster of the National Institutes of Health, United States, argue that the presence of virus was significantly reduced in BAL fluid (collected from the lungs) and lung tissue of vaccinated animals than in the animals that were not vaccinated.

Moreover, virus specific neutralising antibodies were detected in those macaques vaccinated and no such antibodies were seen

## Odisha, West Bengal brace for Amphan

The evacuation process has been initiated in low-lying areas along coast.

District authorities have started evacuation from the low lying coastal areas in West Bengal as well. "We now have three types of crisis – COVID, the cyclone, and migrants returning home," Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said. She however, maintained that necessary precautions like social distancing will be maintained during the evacuation process.

Fishing had already been suspended because of lockdown. Police officials have started announcements in the low lying coastal areas of the State, particularly the low lying Sunderbans and areas closer to Digha in Pur-

ba Medinipur asking people to leave mud houses and move to safer places.

Ahead of the monsoon's arrival in Kerala, the month of May typically sees intense tropical storm activity in the Bay of Bengal.

From 1965 to 2017, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea collectively registered 46 "severe cyclonic storms". More than half of them occurred between October and December. Seven of them occurred in May and only two (in 1966 and 1976) were recorded in April, according to data from the India Meteorological Department's cyclone statistics unit. Before Fani, only one of them (in 1966) had actually made landfall over India.

## 83 LCA-MK1A deal high priority, says IAF Chief

It would also boost the industry which had already been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

Similarly, the IAF is about to place orders for over 200 Astra indigenous Beyond Visual Range (BVR) missiles and emphasised on the need for adhering to time line and quality. "These are high risk decisions. We go indigenous and they fail to produce on time and we run out of missiles, it is very tricky. So we have to balance. They really have to meet deadlines in terms of time and quality," ACM Bhadauria said.

In the capital component, the immediate attention was on some critical weapons and technologies such as BVR missiles, guided Air to Ground weapons, networking and data linking issues, he said. In addition, international exercises had been stopped till the year end as also all large-scale planned exercises.

tronics, networking issues, some weapons and also the indigenous HTT-40 basic trainer under development.

"So for any trainer of this class, we will not go out," he added.

To mitigate budgetary constraints, the IAF is looking to prioritise its revenue and capital expenditure and some priority areas have been identified while some others would be deferred.

"Our initial focus is the revenue expenditure and target is to prioritise it so we save 20-25% there," ACM Bhadauria said.

In the capital component, the immediate attention was on some critical weapons and technologies such as BVR missiles, guided Air to Ground weapons, networking and data linking issues, he said. In addition, international exercises had been stopped till the year end as also all large-scale planned exercises.

## Cong. slams economic package

'Allocation hopelessly inadequate'; it is less than 1% of GDP, says Chidambaram

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

**C** We express our thorough disappointment and request the government to reconsider the stimulus package and announce a revised and comprehensive fiscal stimulus package of not less than ₹10 lakh crore of real additional expenditure equivalent to 10% of GDP

P. CHIDAMBARAM  
FORMER UNION FINANCE MINISTER



lent to 10% of GDP," he said.

Lashing out at the government for the migrant worker crisis, he said it had "completely mismanaged, misjudged the situation" resulting in a monumental error.

"I think the government is living in an echo chamber. They listen to their own voices, their own opinion," Mr. Chidambaram said.

**Parliament sidelined**  
The Congress leader said the government was being 'opportunistic' to use the COVID-19 pandemic to push for reforms, bypassing stakeholders and parliamentary institutions.

"The true value of the fiscal stimulus package will be known when we know what is the Additional Borrowing in 2020-21 to finance the Additional Expenditure over and above the Expenditure Budget of ₹30,42,230 crore. The truth cannot be hidden for long," Mr. Chidambaram said.

"We express our thorough disappointment and request the government to reconsider the stimulus package and announce a revised and comprehensive fiscal stimulus package of not less than ₹10 lakh crore of real additional expenditure equivalent to 10% of GDP," Mr. Chidambaram said.

Many of the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcements were just frontloading of previously budgeted expenditures, he

said. He said there could be no stimulus package without additional borrowing, but noted that Ms. Sitharaman had acknowledged "additional expenditure must be financed by additional borrowing".

"In our view, a fiscal stimulus of ₹1,86,650 crore amounting to barely 0.91% of the GDP will be totally inadequate given the gravity of the economic crisis and the dire situation in which people find themselves. Most analysts, rating agencies and banks have placed the size of the fiscal stimulus at between 0.8 to 1.5%," Mr. Chidambaram said.

Addressing an online press conference, Mr. Chidambaram said the government should announce a revised package of ₹10 lakh crore or 10% of the GDP as the current package had left several sections such as the poor, migrants, farmers, labourers, workers, small shopkeepers and middle class high and dry.

"In our view, a fiscal stimulus of ₹1,86,650 crore amounting to barely 0.91% of the GDP will be totally inadequate given the gravity of the economic crisis and the dire situation in which people find themselves. Most analysts, rating agencies and banks have placed the size of the fiscal stimulus at between 0.8 to 1.5%," Mr. Chidambaram said.

Many of the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcements were just frontloading of previously budgeted expenditures, he

ANALYSTS PEG STIMULUS AT 1% OF GDP ■ BUSINESS PAGE

## Pawar calls out lack of provisions for farmers

'Standing crops lost due to lockdown'

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI



Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief and former Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar has said that the package announced by the Centre would not bring any immediate relief to the distressed farmers.

"The package does not make any provisions for compensating the crop losses incurred due to the lockdown conditions," Mr. Pawar said in an open letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 16.

The ₹20 lakh crore package would not bring any immediate relief to the distressed farmers. "Standing crops have perished due to lockdown causing great losses to the farmers. In turn, they are facing a cash crunch & need immediate support to undertake ensuing kharif season activities."

Mr. Pawar said the condition of the farming com-

munity was worsening by the day. On the threshold of the monsoon season, the farmer was not prepared to initiate agricultural activities.

"In terms of outlay, the agriculture aid and reforms announced by FM of ₹1.63 lakh crore is approximately 8% of the total package for a sector that provides the highest employment and ensures food security of the nation. Since these allocations are mainly supply-side oriented, it will take a long time for the ground level implementation of the same..." He said.

The ₹20 lakh crore package would not bring any immediate relief to the distressed farmers. "Standing crops have perished due to lockdown causing great losses to the farmers. In turn, they are facing a cash crunch & need immediate support to undertake ensuing kharif season activities."

Mr. Pawar said the condition of the farming com-

## Rival States targeting BJP party workers'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

In a strongly worded series of tweets, BJP president J.P. Nadda on Monday accused the Opposition parties of 'unfairly' targeting his party's workers for criticising the handling of the COVID-19 crisis in States where they are in power.

"In the last few days, it has been observed that in the Opposition-ruled States, the state machinery has been used unfairly to target BJP workers. In a vibrant democracy, this is unacceptable," he said.

## Trespassing by India made China respond'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Chinese state media on Monday said that their border troops bolstered "border control measures and made necessary moves" in response to India's "illegal construction of defence facilities" in the Galwan Valley. Sources said after China mobilised troops and equipment, India too moved its troops.

## BJP gearing up for Bihar elections amid pandemic

Polls were originally scheduled to be held in Oct.-Nov.

NISTULA HEBBAR  
NEW DELHI

The BJP's Bihar unit is preparing to face the Assembly polls which, under the pre-COVID-19 calendar, were scheduled to be held in October-November.

Senior BJP office-bearers told *The Hindu* that "apart from the relief work" necessitated due to the pandemic, the party was slowly completing some of the organisational requirements to face polls.

"The most basic building block of the organisational work is by completing our booth-level network. We have a total of 72,727 booths and we are in the process of completing our exercise in constituting them," said a senior State-level office-bearer.

Party State chief Sanjay Jaiswal has been regularly holding video meetings on the issue.

The party, he said, was operating on the *saptarishi* principle, that is, a seven-member booth committee in each booth, with a chief, a deputy chief, compulsory representation of women, Scheduled Castes and Most Backward Community mem-

bers in the group.

"The exercise for completing the constitution of our mandal level committees, around 1099, is complete, and below that are our 'shakti kendras' [just above booth level], around 9547, which are also almost done," he said.

Office-bearers in charge of various Assembly seats have been registering their lists with names and numbers of those on the *saptarishi* and other committees.

**Poll prospects**  
When asked about the poll prospects, he said the party was, like others, in the dark about it.

"Whenever it happens, however, our organisational machinery will be ready for it."

There were still areas where it was difficult to form a full booth committee, but that the party was persisting.

He dismissed suggestions that the party was concentrating on poll preparedness while the country was facing a pandemic plus the humanitarian situation with regard to the movement of inter-State migrants.

## Relief work

"At least 90% of our workers are involved in relief work, while the rest are engaged in organisational work. If you bother to get in touch with our MLAs, you will see that they and other workers have been actively involved in making sure quarantine centres etc are set up and are in good order. We have to report daily to party president J.P. Naddaji on the relief work that has been done, including photographs of quarantine centres etc. We have received over 20 lakh inter-State workers who belong to Bihar so far," he said.

While the dates of polls are uncertain, BJP seems to be the first off the block on preparedness.

Since the lockdown was first imposed on March 24, the Centre invoked provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, which is binding on all States.

District magistrates and Superintendents of Police are personally liable for the implementation of the or-

## J&amp;K notifies rules for domicile certificates

Eligible non-locals can also apply

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

The J&K administration on Monday notified the J&K Grant of Domicile Certificate Procedure Rules, 2020 and set a fast-track process in motion to issue the certificates within a stipulated time of 15 days.



Rohit Kansal

nalised ₹50,000. The amount would be recovered from his salary, Mr. Kansal said.

"All Permanent Resident Certificate holders and their children living outside J&K can apply for the certificates by simply producing their Permanent Residence Certificate (PRC), ration card copy, voter card or any other valid document."

"Bonafide migrants can apply with the Relief and Rehabilitation department by providing documents like electoral rolls of 1988, proof of registration as a migrant in any State in the country or any other valid document," Mr. Kansal said.

He said applicants can apply electronically and get a certificate online too.

## 'Stimulus plans another gimmick'

Yechury calls it a 'recipe for large-scale privatisation, impoverishing the poor'



Measly figures: The CPI(M) chief says the allocation is too little to meet the needs of migrants on the streets. ■ PTI

the government when it failed to provide one-time loan waiver for farmers. Instead of providing monetary help, the government had put the entire onus on banks by taking the loan route. "Which bank is going to give loan, when they have been told to cut down on NPAs," he asked.

**Dip in demand**

The basic problem with the economy was a dip in demand. "Unless you increase the purchasing power of people, you can't revive the economy. Now that can be increased only if there is massive dose of public investment to build our much-needed infrastructure, which in turn will generate jobs."

Instead, he said, the government was trying to delegate it to the private sector. With a high gestational lag in such projects, private entities would not want to invest. The economic package did not have any announcements in this direction.

## Centre drops order on wages during lockdown

Action taken after SC ruling on firms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has dropped a crucial order that required all employers – shops, industry and commercial establishments – to pay wages to workers for the period the units were shut during lockdown. The order that has now been dropped also called for action against landlords who forced students and migrant workers to vacate the premises during the lockdown.

Several companies had moved the Supreme Court against the order last week and the apex court asked the government to not take any coercive action against them.

"Save as otherwise provided in the guidelines annexed to this order, all order issued by the NEC under Section 10(2)(I) of the Disaster Management (DM) Act, 2005, shall cease to have effect from 18.05.2020," the May 17 order said.

Since the lockdown was first imposed on March 24, the Centre invoked provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, which is binding on all States.

District magistrates and Superintendents of Police are personally liable for the implementation of the or-

ders issued under the DM Act.

The National Executive Committee that issues the order is chaired by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla.

Clause III of the March 29 order said, "all the employers, be it in the industry or in the shops and commercial establishments, shall make payment of wages of their workers, at their workplaces, on the due date, without any deduction, for the period their establishments are under closure during the lockdown."

It also said, "wherever the workers, including the migrants are living in rented accommodation, the landlords of those properties shall not demand payment of rent for a period of one month. If any landlord is forcing labourers and students to vacate the premises, they will be liable for action under the Act."

A CM YK

# A medley of emotions as uprooted workers gather at Ramleela Maidan

Chaos and confusion reigned in Ghaziabad as thousands gathered in the hope of finding transport home only to find a melee building up

**ANUJ KUMAR**  
GHAZIABAD

Migrant workers began reaching the Ramleela Maidan here on Sunday, hoping to find conveyance that would take them home to Bihar and the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Word had got around on the possibility of securing transport although the district administration was only using the sprawling ground as a designated stop for boarding buses to the railway station on the other side of the road in a densely populated area. By Monday, the crowd of anxious workers, many of whom had started on their long journey home by foot, had swollen to thousands.

**Meagre shelter**  
As the Ramleela Maidan turned into a stage for their struggle, the meagre shelter available at the Ashok Vatika, named after the mythical forest, was hardly enough for workers waiting

under the scorching sun. The food being prepared at the Ram Bhavan also did not hold appeal.

"We are here to go home, not eat meals," said Mohammad Salim, who worked as a cook at a restaurant in Ghaziabad. "I want to go to Kishanganj and have been asked to change lines for the third time since morning. Sometimes they say go here, sometimes there," he added. Under the media's gaze, the centre stage was held by administrative officials struggling to manage the sudden spurt in numbers with a common refrain: "What to do?"



**Push and shove:** Migrant workers at the Ramleela Maidan on Monday. ■ ANUJ KUMAR

As the workers rushed closer to the stage, officials could be heard talking down, "We will break your leg," followed by the request that they sit under the shade and wait for their turn. But the two available tents were hardly big enough to hold more than 25 persons in them.

Officials were polite and

workers were encouraged to ask questions in the presence of the media. There were some feeble cries of "Murdabad", but as Additional District Magistrate (City) Shailendra Kumar Singh listened to their grievances, there followed shouts of "Zindabad". However, Mr. Singh had no answer when a worker asked him why they were being made to wait

without social distancing.

The announcements from the public address system were not always helpful. An official announced that people without passes for trains could board buses. This created confusion as lines formed in front of buses that were meant to take people with passes to the railway station. The official who made the announce-

ment was censured by his superiors and the public address system was switched off.

## Trains and buses

District Magistrate Ajay Shankar Pandey told *The Hindu* that the administration was treating the workers as "bona fide passengers". "We have arranged three trains for Patna, Muzaffarpur and Raxaul in Bihar, and three for Varanasi, Azamgarh and Gorakhpur in eastern Uttar Pradesh. They will take around 9,000 workers daily to their homes. Those who are left will be sent by buses."

The rush, he said, arose because only 25% of those who had gathered were registered on the Jansunwai portal. "The rest are all those who were walking home and were picked by the U.P. police from different borders because the Chief Minister has said no worker should be found

walking. Word has spread in neighbouring States that, somehow, just reach Ghaziabad [to get conveyance for the onward journey]," Mr. Pandey said.

"We are trying to streamline the process. Those who left for Bihar by trains today will be sent by 50 buses [to the railway station]. No pass will be required to board the bus. A list will be prepared that will be sent to the district administration of the destination," he said. The way out, he said, was more trains and buses. "If all of them have to be sent, we should consider starting the regular service," he said.

The Ghaziabad police have also become more cautious about bringing people walking on highways to shelter homes after the Station House Officer of Indirapuram was suspended and an explanation was sought from the Circle Officer when it was found that 16 workers in the Auriyya accident had

boarded the vehicle from a place that fell under the jurisdiction of Indirapuram Police Station.

The phrase "their medical has been done" appeared loosely applicable. "It means their temperature has been taken and they have been asked about symptoms. But by now everybody comes after taking paracetamol," said Sudip Kumar, a member of the Health Department team.

The situation improved by evening with the National Disaster Response Force arriving at the Ramleela Maidan. But soon, migrants workers were seen queuing up for passes for the next morning.

Meanwhile, the district administration reiterated that only persons registered on the Jansunwai portal should turn up at the Ramleela Maidan. Otherwise, their presence would be considered a violation of the lockdown.

## IN BRIEF



**30 migrants injured in two U.P. accidents**

LUCKNOW  
At least 30 people were injured in two accidents of vehicles carrying migrant workers in Uttar Pradesh on Monday. In Ayodhya, 21 were injured after a pickup carrying them from Mumbai to Siddharthnagar collided with a truck on NH-28. In Hamirpur, a State bus carrying migrant workers from Noida to Mahoba overturned near Badanpur village, said police. Eleven persons sustained minor injuries, said Hamirpur SP Shlok Kumar. The bus was carrying 31 passengers.

## 35 deaths in Gujarat; State govt. eases curbs

AHMEDABAD  
Amid a spike in the mortality rate, with 35 deaths on Monday increasing the toll to 694, the Gujarat government has relaxed lockdown norms allowing the reopening of shops, State buses, autos and private cabs. Chief Minister Vijay Rupani on Monday said that in non-containment zones, shops, private offices, buses, service stations and barber shops would be allowed to reopen from Tuesday. On Monday, 366 new cases and 35 deaths were reported, taking the case tally to 11,746 and 694 deaths.

## Odisha govt. turns TMCs into containment zones

Bhubaneswar  
The Odisha government on Monday said all temporary medical centres (TMCs), COVID-19 care centres and hospitals will be treated as containment zones apart from those that would be declared in the aftermath of the detection of new cases. Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said the boundary area of the zones will be decided by local authorities and administered through the Panchayati Raj institutions during the fourth phase of the lockdown till May 31. Meanwhile, 48 new COVID-19 cases were detected in the State, taking the total to 876.

## 55 policemen, 5 doctors among fresh cases in J&K

SRINAGAR  
Fifty-five policemen and five doctors were among the 106 fresh cases of the COVID-19 infection in Jammu and Kashmir. Two more deaths have pushed the toll to 15. "Out of 106 new cases, 12 were detected in the Jammu division and 94 in the Kashmir division. The total number of positive cases in J&K is 1,289," said a government spokesperson. Out of the 1,289 positive cases, 665 were active and 609 have recovered. "Till date, 1,14,788 travellers and persons in contact with suspected cases have been identified for surveillance," the spokesperson added.

# Will extend lockdown, won't impose night curfew: Mamata

Bengal CM, however, urges people not to venture out between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m.

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said the State would extend the lockdown till May 31 following the notification of the Centre, but would not impose night curfew.

Speaking to prespersons at the State Secretariat here, she urged people not to venture out of their homes between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. and warned of police action. Curfews were imposed under extreme circumstances such as riots and her government would not impose night curfew as directed by the Centre, she said.

Ms. Banerjee announced that apart from the 105 trains requisitioned, her government would request the Railways for another 120 Shramik Special trains in the next few days to bring back migrant workers. "Already, 16 trains have arrived and about 2.5 to 3 lakh workers have returned by trains and buses. We are planning for



**Safety first:** Workers spraying disinfectant in an area where a patient had tested positive for COVID-19 in Siliguri. ■ AFP

10 trains to arrive every day, but it cannot be done at once. The State needs time for planning."

Containment areas, she said, would be further divided into three categories – affected, buffer and clean zones. Accordingly, relaxations would be allowed, she said. All shops, except in shopping malls, and district buses would be operational from May 21. A committee of civic and police officials would look into the resumption of roadside shops and those in markets. The com-

## First flight arrives

The Chief Minister said the first repatriation flight from Bangladesh arrived in Kolkata on Monday. The flight, with about 169 passengers, arrived from Dhaka at 12.30

p.m. The passengers, including students and stranded tourists, would have to go to institutional quarantine for a stipulated time.

While emphasising that there was muted celebration for 'Poila Boishak' (Bengali New Year) this year because of the lockdown, Ms. Banerjee urged the faithful to avoid any gatherings during Id-ul-Fitr.

Referring to the economic package by the Centre, the Chief Minister said that it had not been of any help to the State. On the Centre's decision to increase the borrowing limit of States from 3% to 5% of the gross State domestic product (GSDP) in 2020-21, she said that it came with a number of riders where the States had to "give up on its autonomy".

West Bengal would not give up its autonomy, the Chief Minister said.

"We have not got anything from the Centre to help us in the management of COVID-19," she added.



**Tight control:** The police detaining migrants after a clash with security personnel in Ahmedabad on Monday. ■ PTI

# Migrant workers and police clash in Gujarat

Workers gather at IIM's new campus

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT AHMEDABAD

Gujarat continues to see clashes between restless migrant workers who want to return to their native places and the police.

The police said that they rushed to the spot following complaints about workers throwing stones on the road in front of the new campus of the prestigious business school. More than 50 workers have been detained.

On Sunday, violence broke near Rajkot in an industrial area where police and migrant workers clashed over the issue of being sent back to their native States. Ever since the lockdown was imposed, Gujarat has seen around a dozen incidents of violence between migrant workers and the police in Surat, Gandhidham, Rajkot and Ahmedabad.

Nearly 100 migrant workers gathered near the construction site and started demanding food, wages and that they be sent back to

**PARADIP PORT TRUST**

e-Tender-cum-e-Auction Notice

A e-Tender-cum-e-Auction Notice invites for "Allotment of Port land about 58 acres on 60 (sixty) years long term lease basis for setting up of Port based capital intensive industries including Tank Farms as a part of MMLIP/ under Paradip Smart Industrial Port City Plan." The date of availability of documents in the website is from 14.05.2020 to 24.06.2020. For details please log on the website : <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

Dy. Secretary  
PPT/PR/17/20-21  
Dt : 14.05.20

**ONGC Petro additions Limited**

Reg. office: 4th Floor, 35, Nutan Bharat Co-operative Housing Society Limited, R.C. Dutta Road, Alkapuri, Vadodara - 390007, Gujarat, Ph.: 0265 6192600, CIN No.: U2320952J2006PLC060282

**TENDER NOTICE**

ONGC Petro additions Limited (OPAL) invites the sealed tender under Two Bid System for following: Tender Number : 2020C00213, Tender Description : Procurement of critical/single line L.T. motor for OPAL, Dahej complex. Tender sale period : 15.05.2020 to 09.06.2020 till 14.00 Hrs. Closing date and time for bid Submission : 09.06.2020 at 14:00 Hrs.

The tender document can be downloaded from [www.opalindia.in](http://www.opalindia.in). For other details of this tender including corrigendum if any, Bidders should regularly visit OPAL website ([www.opalindia.in](http://www.opalindia.in)) for the latest information in this regard. In case of exigencies OPAL at its option may decide to extend tender sale bid closing/ opening date/ time in future, which will be posted on the above referred website for information.

**idco** **ODISHA** **Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

No. IDCO/HO-MIS/A-10019/04/2019/V-1/ 7342 Date : 14.05.2020

IDCO invites Request For Proposal (RFP) from the eligible bidders to participate in the tendering process for rendering Consultancy Service for development of Online Land Management System and Automated Building Plan Approval System in IDCO. The interested bidders can download the RFP documents from IDCO website [www.idco.in](http://www.idco.in) from 20.05.2020 to 16.06.2020 up to 5.00 P.M. Response to RFP should be sent by Registered Post / Speed Post only so as to reach the Dy.General Manager (MIS), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Janpath, Bhubaneswar-22 on or before 18.06.2020 up to 5.00 P.M.

SI.	Name of the Work	Cost of Tender Paper	EMD
1	Consultancy Service for Online Land Management System and Automated Building Plan Approval System in IDCO	Rs.11,800/-	Rs.2,00,000/-

IDCO reserves the right to accept / cancel / reject any or all the Response to RFP without assigning any reason thereof.

Dy. General Manager (MIS)  
OIPR-14003/11/014/2021

**KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.**

(Department of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of Kerala)

THYCAUD P.O., THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 695014, Tel: 0471-2945646, 2945600 Fax: 2945647 website: [www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in](http://www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in), e-mail: [mj@kmscl.kerala.gov.in](mailto:mj@kmscl.kerala.gov.in) CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616

**QUOTATION NOTICE**

In view of the Covid - 19 pandemic Online Quotation are invited for the supply of Drugs per the quantity mentioned in Annexure -I on behalf of Karunya Community Pharmacy, Kerala Medical Services Corporation Limited.

Quotation documents and Annexures related to the bidding process can be downloaded from the website [www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in](http://www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in).

Last Date of Online Submission : 26.05.2020.

Sd/- Managing Director(Tender Inviting Authority)

**RAIL WHEEL FACTORY**

Yelahanka, Bangalore - 560 064  
Website: [www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in)

**E-Auction Notice No. RWF/GSD/Sales Section/2020-21/01 Dated: 13-05-2020**

On behalf of the PRESIDENT OF INDIA, Principal Chief Materials Manager, RWF invites E-Auction for the sale of scrap items (Ferrous/Non-Ferrous/Miscellaneous and Others), online through the website <http://www.ideps.gov.in>. E-Auction dates are given below: 29.05.2020, 10.06.2020, 20.06.2020, 30.06.2020, 10.07.2020, 20.07.2020, 30.07.2020 E-auction catalogue can be viewed on our website [www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in) or [www.ideps.gov.in](http://www.ideps.gov.in), before 7 Days (Seven Days) from the date of E-auction. For detailed tender notice, please refer RWF website.

DY.CMM/DEPOT

**Government of Kerala**

Published Tenders from 11-05-2020 to 17-05-2020

Directorate of Medical Education

**Tender ID: 2020 DME\_356745\_1 \* Principal, Government Medical College, Kollam \* Providing Facility Management Service For The Operation And \* Closing Date: 30-May-2020 \* PAC: Rs13107840**

Visit <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in> for more details.

Ro.No:11-17/May/2020/PRD(N)11

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)/ REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)**

**KERALA STATE TRANSPORT PROJECT - II (KSTP - II)**

Consulting Services for Technical Assistance for Enhancing climate resilience of Kerala's road network

Ref-No: BMZ 201865266/KFW505312

**Prequalification Ref:** International, open Tender for Consulting Services for Climate-Resilient Reconstruction after Flooding in Kerala

**Project Measures:** The heavy monsoon of 2018 brought widespread flooding to several district of Kerala damaging about 2,000 km of state highways and 13,000 km of major district roads across 14 districts. PWD is considering developing a more sustainable and climate resilient asset stock in medium to long term. For that purpose, approximately 700 km of roads will be selected following prioritization study and Detailed Project Reports preparation. The "building back better" principles will be applied for the rehabilitation of these roads.

**Requested Services:** The services requested under this assignment concern the technical assistance including: Vulnerability Assessment of Kerala's Core Road Network, Climate Resilience Audit of Road Engineering Design, Integrating Road Maintenance Management System with Climate Data, Climate Resilience and Disaster Planning Strategy and Design Standards for Climate Works, Development of Guidelines for "Vulnerability Assessment and Work Program of Priority Measures" for Road Network & Training and Knowledge Dissemination.

The Project Director, KSTP now invites eligible Consultants to indicate their interest in providing services. The prequalification of experienced Consultants is subject to the regulations contained in the "Guidelines for the Assignment of Consultants in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries" (see [www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de](http://www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de)). The contract will be awarded to an independent Consultancy Firm or association of independent Consultancy Firms with proven experience in similar assignment. The Consultant, or lead Consultant in case of association, must show a annual turnover of 100 million INR (over the last 3 years). Each member shall have an average (over the last 3 years) current ratio above 1.03.

**The Application of prequalification must be delivered to the address below by 20th June 2020 – 16 00hr.**

The applications received by the above time will be opened on the same day at 16 30 hr in the office.

The Project Director, Kerala State Transport Project (KSTP), Project Management Team, T.C. 11/39, Sree Balaji Building, Keston Road, Nanthancode, Kowdiar P.O., Thiruvananthapuram – 695003 Tel: 0471-2318985/8946 Email: [pdkspt@gmail.com](mailto:pdkspt@gmail.com), [cepmtkstp@gmail.com](mailto:cepmtkstp@gmail.com)

The RFA/EoI documents will be available in our websites [www.keralapwd.gov.in](http://www.keralapwd.gov.in) or [www.kstp.org.in](http://www.kstp.org.in). For further information and to obtain the Prequalification documents, interested Consultants are invited to contact the PD, KSTP Email: [pdkspt@gmail.com](mailto:pdkspt@gmail.com) & [cepmtkstp@gmail.com](mailto:cepmtkstp@gmail.com) with a copy to Mr Michael Nogues, Email:

INTERVIEW | PETER HOTEZ

## 'Moving into summer months, India could get hit very hard'

U.S. virologist expresses concern about India's crowded urban areas in low-income neighbourhoods where people are forced to live in proximity

NARAYAN LAKSHMAN

*As the world continues to grapple with the debilitating human toll and economic consequences of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Peter Hotez, Dean for the National School of Tropical Medicine and a Professor at the Departments of Paediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, speaks about the state of play in the battle against the novel coronavirus.*

What is the current situation in the U.S., where President Donald Trump recently said fatalities could reach 1,00,000. Why did the numbers spin out of control this way and is there hope that the curve can be flattened?

■ There is quite a bit of concern here. It really took off because the virus probably entered the U.S. earlier than we suspected. A national emergency was not declared until the middle of March. It is likely that the virus en-

tered the U.S. in early February, back-tracing it. That means that transmission went on for about six weeks before any efforts for social distancing were implemented. We know from the models that it produces tragedy and makes the difference between having thousands of patients in your intensive care units and local hospitals, versus having just a handful.

What treatment options could have a scalable impact? We are hearing

hopeful accounts of Remdesivir...

■ Vaccines offer the greatest promise for protecting large populations at risk, like in India. The problem with vaccines is also that they are the highest bar to achieve because with a vaccine you are generally injecting healthy individuals to prevent them from getting sick. So, you have to be absolutely pristine, in not only showing that the vaccines work, but also your safety profile. That is what takes time. In the meantime, there are some new, promising treatments on the horizon.

I am very excited, for instance, about convalescent plasma. It is a relatively low-tech solution which involves identifying individuals who have recovered from their COVID-19 and have antibo-



Vaccines offer the greatest promise for protecting large populations at risk, like in India

dies. The problem is that it is hard to scale because it requires you having a base of patients with the illness.

In India, while the number of infections continue to rise, the government moved aggressively to impose a nationwide lockdown.

Could the fact that we are not seeing the sort of fatality numbers that you did in the U.S. be down to India facing a different coronavirus strain?

■ I do not think it is going to turn out to be a coronavirus strain issue. It is possible that this is a new virus pathogen. But I think it is most likely because India did implement some social distancing early on. So, India may have mitigated the worst aspects of this.

But I would say that we should not be complacent, because I am still worried for India. The reason for that is that you are moving into the summer months and we know that sometimes in tropical countries, the global south, or in places like South Asia, Africa, Australia and South America, sometimes

for influenza the seasonality is inverted. I think you have to assume the potential for things to get much worse as you head towards July and August. I am particularly worried about India's crowded urban areas in low-income neighbourhoods, where people are forced to live in proximity, including in Mumbai. I am holding my breath because I still do think India could get hit very hard.

Should we be worried about reports from New York about COVID-19-positive children succumbing to symptoms that resemble Kawasaki disease?

■ It caught us a bit off-guard because in China we did not hear much about paediatric syndromes. Our understanding was that children were mostly handling the virus

pretty well, not getting very sick, with the exception of about 10% of infants. These symptoms first came out of the United Kingdom and then we saw them in New York, a syndrome that looks like vasculitis, an inflammation of the blood vessels, linked to this virus, maybe later on in the course of the illness. This Kawasaki-disease-like syndrome is still not common – there have been about 100 cases in New York.

We are also seeing, unfortunately, a lot of cases in the U.S. among adults, of clotting defects, which we are trying to understand. We are seeing lots of different types of thromboses, or clotting of the blood, leading to blockage, which in turn lead to strokes, pulmonary emboli, and may be associated with coronary artery thrombosis, giving people heart attacks.

If there is one broad lesson of the COVID-19 pandemic for developing countries such as India, is it to be better prepared for future events of this sort in terms of creating a sufficient pandemic preparedness?

■ This is not unique to India. Every nation on the planet has to learn some lessons from this. But things will change after this pandemic. India has an enormous amount to offer. I continue to be impressed by the quality of some of the universities in India.

I am impressed with its capacity for innovation, especially around vaccines. India is an example of what a country can do even despite its levels of poverty, in terms of over-achieving and having an impact in terms of pandemic preparedness.

## Centre warns States against diluting curbs

Follow benchmarks in declaring infection zones: Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has asked the States not to dilute the restrictions imposed by the Ministry in fresh guidelines, asserting that certain other activities may be prohibited or other restrictions imposed as deemed necessary on the basis of a ground-level analysis of the situation.

In a letter to all States, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said despite widespread relaxations in lockdown restrictions under the revised guidelines, the States and Union Territories could not dilute the restrictions imposed in the Ministry's guidelines.

"They may prohibit certain other activities or impose restrictions, as deemed necessary on the basis of



Safety marks: Railway officials stamping a Delhi returnee for 'home quarantine' in Secunderabad. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

ground level analysis of the situation," it said.

Further, it was communicated that States must take into consideration the benchmarks and thresholds indicated in the revised guidelines issued by the Health Ministry, while delineating zones at local level.

Considerable relaxations were allowed in the MHA guidelines for Lockdown 4.0 that will be in force till May 31. Schools, malls, metro and air services remain suspended while special trains have been allowed.

Centre and respective State guidelines at local level for the convenience of the public.

The development came soon after the Assembly convened in Geneva where the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the global body will look into the lessons of the COV-19 pandemic.

## Call for WHO probe into virus origin

African group of nations extends support for India-backed resolution at the WHA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

An India-backed draft resolution at the 73rd session of the World Health Assembly received a big boost on Monday when the African group of nations extended support for the motion which seeks global investigation into the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The development came soon after the Assembly convened in Geneva where the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the global body will look into the lessons of the COV-19 pandemic.

"I will initiate an independent evaluation at the earliest appropriate moment to review experience gained and lessons learned to make recommendations to improve national and global pandemic preparedness and response," said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, WHO.

WHO D-G Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus addressing members at the opening of the World Health Assembly in Geneva. ■ AFP

The assurance, however, is at variance from the draft resolution, which was earlier backed by WHO's 62 countries and sought to identify scientific "events" that could have contributed to the spread of the novel coronavirus and the consequent COV-19 pandemic. The recommendation is part of the text jointly conceived by Australia and the European Union. It aims to evaluate possible food and animal-re-

lated sources that could have led to the spread of the deadly pandemic. Informed sources said that given the growing number of co-sponsors, the likelihood of a vote on the motion was lessened. The language of the motion seeks to delve deep into the origin of the virus.

The Seventy-third World Health Assembly requests the Director General to ... identify the zoonotic source of the virus and the route of

introduction to the human population, including the possible role of intermediate hosts, including through efforts such as scientific and collaborative field missions, which will enable targeted interventions and a research agenda to reduce the risk of similar events," says the draft motion that *The Hindu* has seen.

**Impartial evaluation**  
The draft resolution also calls for "impartial, independent and comprehensive" evaluation into the "WHO-coordinated international health response" to the COV-19 pandemic.

The language of the resolution reflects the diplomatic tug of war that has taken place since the pandemic began in early 2019. This tension was visible on Monday when Taiwan protested at not receiving a formal invite from the WHO Secretariat for the 73rd Assembly.

Central govt. offices to work at 50% strength

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Personnel Ministry has said in an order all Central government officers shall ensure 50% work strength and officers at the level of Deputy Secretary and above shall attend office on all working days.

The revised work guidelines were issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) on Monday.

"For regulating the attendance of officers and staff below the level of Deputy Secretary, all Heads of the Department shall prepare a roster to ensure that 50% of officers and staff attend office on every alternate day. Those officers/staff who are not required to attend office on a particular day shall work from home and should be available on telephone and electronic means of communications at all times," it said.

## ICMR revises viral testing strategy

All symptomatic, high-risk persons to be tested within five to 10 days

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Monday released a revised COVID-19 testing strategy, which includes testing of all individuals with symptomatic influenza-like illness (ILI) with a history of international travel in the past 14 days.

The other key groups that have been listed as high priority for testing include the frontline workers involved in containment and mitigation of COVID-19, all hospitalised patients who develop ILI symptoms and all returnee and migrants with such symptoms within seven days of illness.

The other group in the category includes asymptomatic direct and high-risk contacts of a confirmed case to be tested once between



Essential steps: A health professional collecting swab from a boy in a residential area in Kolkata, in this file photo. ■ REUTERS

day five and day 10 of coming into contact.

The new guidelines warn that no emergency procedure (including deliveries) should be delayed for lack of test, but samples can be sent

for testing if a patient shows symptoms or the doctor finds him/her fitting into the categories, according to a senior ICMR official.

The ICMR said in a release that it had so far tested 23,02,792 samples.

with acute respiratory infection with 38 degree Celsius fever or more than that and cough, while SARI was acute respiratory infection with 38 degree Celsius fever or more than that and the patient requiring hospitalisation.

### PCR test only

The ICMR said all testing in the categories mentioned in the guidelines, was recommended by real-time RT-PCR test only.

In the previous set of guidelines issued on April 9, the ICMR cleared testing only for symptomatic health care workers. The changed strategy allows testing also for migrant labourers and those being brought back into India from abroad.

The ICMR said in a release that it had so far tested 23,02,792 samples.

## Fasting, feasting



No tasting: Bakers wearing protective gear prepare cookies ahead of Id celebrations in Srinagar on Monday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

The devices will arrive in May and June, but the final delivery schedule will be notified next week

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

India will take delivery of 200 ventilators donated by the U.S. within the next month, government sources said on Monday.

The ventilators, which will be paid for by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), will arrive in May and June and the final delivery schedule notified next week, the sources said.

While the government has not commented on the value of the donation, it is likely to be funded by an additional grant of \$3 million that the



Timely aid: The ventilators were built for use in the U.S. but are now being repurposed to India. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

USAID made last month. In a statement on April 16, the U.S. government said the funds through USAID would help "mitigate the spread of COVID-19" and focus on financing healthcare access.

The ventilators, which were built for use in the U.S., are being "repurposed" for

donations to several countries, including India.

### Modi thanks Trump

"India has been a great partner to us for quite some time, and I'm encouraged here about the ventilators to India. It's one of the several countries I noted that will be getting ventilators, because, you know, this President has done so well on ventilators – 100,000 [manufactured] in 100 days – that we are able to repurpose them and then send them around the world," White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said on Saturday.

(With inputs from Bindu Shajan Perappadan)

Thanking Mr. Trump, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "More power to the India-US friendship. In such times, it's always important for nations to work together and do as much as possible to make our world healthier and free from COVID-19."

According to the Health Ministry, India has 18,855 ventilators for COVID-19 patients at present, while the government's Empower group tasked with COVID-19 response said about 60,000 more had been ordered.

(With inputs from Bindu Shajan Perappadan)

## U.P. accepts Priyanka's offer to ply 1,000 buses for migrants

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government on Monday accepted Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's offer of 1,000 buses to transport stranded migrant workers to their homes in the State.

In an order signed by Awanshi Awasthi, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department, the government communicated to Ms. Vadra's personal secretary Sandeep Singh that her proposal had been accepted. The government's deci-



Yogi Adityanath

sion came two days after Ms. Vadra had written to CM Yogi Adityanath, requesting him to allow the Congress to run 500 buses each from the Ghaziabad border in Ghaziabad and the Noida border to

transport migrant workers to their native places.

"All costs will be borne by the All India Congress Committee," she wrote.

However, the government maintained silence and did not give her the required permission even as 500 buses from Bharatpur and Alwar in Rajasthan reached the Bahadur-Goverdhan border near Mathura.

Meanwhile, Mr. Singh wrote to Mr. Awasthi, informing him that the buses can start plying from Wednesday and that details of drivers have been provided.

## Uber unveils set of safety features

STAFF REPORTER  
MUMBAI

Uber on Monday announced a series of new safety features across their various product offerings in view of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

The key policy that the company announced for India would be the requirement to wear masks or face covers for both driver and riders. This would be implemented through features on the ride hailing app.

Among the new features is a photo-based verification of drivers every time they log in. Drivers will be required to click a photo wearing a mask and the new technology does not allow the photo to be clicked unless the camera detects the mask. Sachin Kansal, Global Senior Director, Product Management, Uber, said that they had recently developed this technology and it would help ensure that there is enforcement of their policy. "This will have to be done every time they log in and go online," he said.

The other notable feature is that rides can be cancelled by either the driver or the rider if the other is not wearing a mask. The option has been added among the reasons for cancelling a trip. Even while rating a driver or a rider, not wearing a mask or face cover has been listed among reasons for a poor rating, if either removes the mask during the journey.

UberPool will continue to remain suspended.

## CBSE exam timetable released

Class 12 exams were affected by lockdown and Class 10 tests by Delhi riots

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

**Testing time:** In this photo dated March 6, 2020, students waiting at a CBSE exam centre in New Delhi. • BIBEK CHETTRI

The Class 12 examinations of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) postponed nationwide because of COVID-19 and Class 10 exams in northeast Delhi affected by riots will be held from July 1 to 15.

Issuing safety instructions for the candidates, the CBSE said they should carry hand sanitiser in a transparent bottle, cover the mouth and nose with a mask or cloth and follow physical distancing norms. Parents should guide their children about the precautions to be taken and also ensure they are not sick.

The Class 12 exams across the country will start with home economics on July 1, Hindi elective and Hindi core on July 2, informatics practices and computer science

(both old and new) and information technology on July 7, business studies on July 9, biotechnology on July 10, geography on July 11 and sociology on July 14. For north-

## Unknown sources funding parties'

ADR report says 54% of the income of 23 regional entities is from such donors

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Biju Janata Dal received 85% of its income from electoral bonds, the highest among regional parties. Only parties with an income of over ₹30 crore were considered

Party	Total income (₹ cr.)	Donations from electoral bonds (₹ cr.)	Donations from electoral bonds (%)
BJD	249.3	213.5	85.6
JD(S)	42.9	35.3	82.2
YSRCP	181.1	99.8	55.1
Shiv Sena	135.5	60.4	44.6
TDP	115.0	27.5	23.9

ports, the ADR said. The total income declared by the 23 parties was ₹885.956 crore, of which ₹257.14 crore or 29.02% came from known sources (donations declared

to the ECI and Rs.147.54 crore or 16.65% came from other known sources such as membership fees, bank interest etc.

A total of ₹481.27 crore or

east Delhi district, the Class 12 physics exam will be held on July 3, accountancy on July 4, chemistry on July 6, English elective-a, English elective-c and English core on July 8, political science on July 14, and mathematics, economics, history and biology on July 15.

The Class 10 exams in northeast Delhi will start on July 1 with social science. The exams for science theory and science without practical will be held on July 2, Hindi course-a and Hindi course-b on July 10, and English communicative and English language and literature on July 15.

The fire also enveloped

## 7 killed as fire breaks out in Gwalior apartment complex

Four women and three children were among the victims

STAFF REPORTER  
Bhopal

**Rescue mission:** Fire department personnel outside the gutted building in Gwalior on Monday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Four women and three children were killed in a fire that broke out in a three-storey apartment complex in Gwalior on Monday. Two children were injured.

The building houses a paint shop on the ground floor.

"The cause of the fire in

Inderganj, which broke out

at 10 a.m., is yet to be ascer-

tained. The paint shop and a

godown inside the building

had caught fire," said Saten-

dra Singh Tomar, Additional

Superintendent of Police,

West Gwalior.

The fire also enveloped

the main entrance to the

building. "People were

trapped as there were no

other gates or windows," Mr.

Tomar said.

Ten fire tenders, includ-

ing those from an Air Force

station nearby, were moved

to the spot. "It took more

than a hour to tame the fire,"

he said. The condition of the

injured children was stable.

Chief Minister Shivraj

Singh Chouhan wrote on Twitter, "I pray that God gives the departed souls a place at his holy feet and the family of the deceased gets the strength to bear the deep sorrow."

## Sanitation and health workers felicitated

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

Health and sanitation workers were felicitated by a group of residents in south Kolkata for their untiring service during the lockdown and the CO-VID-19 pandemic.

Phalgumi Mandal, an accredited social health activist (ASHA), said she has "never been so happy as [I] was never felicitated [before]."

Health activist Tapash Pramanik; Rekha Singh, who cleans roads, and Animesh Dey, who works for the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, were among those felicitated by the residents of Mandeville Gardens area.

"They are special as they did a special job," said Bharti Biswas, a resident. "While we are relaxing at home, they are working outside risking their lives," said Ms. Biswas.

The residents of ward number 68 gave sweets and red roses to the health and sanitation workers, and garlanded them.

Elriedy residents, who could not come out of their apartments, showered them with marigold petals from the balcony or rooftops.

"Everybody in Mandeville Gardens came out, participated in the felicitation one way or the other, acknowledging the relentless service of these women and men, who serve us throughout the year but particularly now when we all are in dire straits," said ward councillor Sudarsha Mukherjee.

## Venkaiah calls for change in attitude to survive pandemic

Vice-President says adopting a new normal is the answer

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Welcoming the latest relaxations for lockdown 4.0 announced on Sunday, Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, in a long reflective note on his social media account, has said life can't be lived for long in confinement and just as people are living with HIV virus that has no vaccine by bringing in behavioural changes, we need to learn to live with coronavirus too by bringing in attitudinal changes.

"What if the present coronavirus is going to stay with us for longer than expected as is being suggested by some experts and senior officials of the World Health Organisation? Adopting a new normal is the answer. HIV virus has been around for a



Venkaiah Naidu

long time without a vaccine and people are coping with it by changing habits," Mr. Naidu wrote in a long piece on Facebook.

Mr. Naidu said the pandemic should be used as a course corrector: "Stacked with better tools to fight the epidemics than when the pestilence struck humanity earlier and empowered with gene editing, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data etc, man was seeking to play God."

He has also stressed on the need to avoid prejudices against fellow citizens.

This outbreak, he said, had shaken the fundamentals of living by oneself and highlighted the need for living in harmony with nature and fellow humans. He observed that "The invisible microbe once again proved that life can change very quickly. It brought into full play the uncertainty that can co-sail with life."

Mr. Naidu stressed that the corona challenge is more a civilisational issue than that of individual lives. He suggested a 12-point new normal of living during the "Corona Times," including behavioural changes such as wearing a mask and maintaining physical distance and hygiene.

As per various industry estimates, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) owes between ₹1,500 crore and ₹1,800 crore to various media companies.

## 'Govt. must pay up advertising dues'

INS tells SC that employers' plight could result in breakdown of media industry

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Newspaper Society (INS), the central organisation for the Press in the country, has told the Supreme Court that governments should pay up the hundreds of crores of rupees it owes in advertisement money to newspapers.

It also blamed the governments for issuing "hypocritical and discriminatory" advisories asking private establishments to pay full salaries to their employees during the COVID-19 lockdown, especially when the State – a "model employer" – had itself cut salaries at a time of calamity of global proportions.

As per various industry estimates, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) owes between ₹1,500 crore and ₹1,800 crore to various media com-

panies. A large chunk of this, ₹800-900 crore is owed to the print industry alone. Such amounts have been outstanding for several months and there is little prospect of realising the same any time soon," the INS said.

The newspaper industry organisation, which was replying to petitions from journalists' unions objecting to some media houses' introduction of salary and job cuts during the lockdown, blamed the government for the "drastically reduced advertising much prior to the crisis". In fact, the INS sub-

mitted there had been "calls by political parties to stop government advertising altogether in order to save money".

**Broadcasters' plea**  
"There have been no packages or measures announced for news broadcasters by the Government, even as their business has collapsed," the National Broadcasters Association (NBA) submitted to the apex court, in a separate affidavit.

Both the INS and the NBA were criticising advisories by the Union Ministries of Home and Labour and some

State governments that private employers should continue to pay full wages to their employees during the lockdown. The issue came up in the apex court when a joint petition was filed by the National Alliance of Journalists, Delhi Union of Journalists and Brihanmumbai Union of Journalists challenging salary cuts and even sacking of employees by some media organisations.

Observing that the advisories only cast a moral or humanitarian obligation and not a legal liability on media houses, the INS argued that through these advisories, the governments had overreached and unduly assumed authority not granted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

Disaster Management Act, 2005. Both the INS and the NBA were criticising advisories by the Union Ministries of Home and Labour and some

residents of ward number 68 gave sweets and red roses to the health and sanitation workers, and garlanded them.

Observing that the advisories only cast a moral or humanitarian obligation and not a legal liability on media houses, the INS argued that through these advisories, the governments had overreached and unduly assumed authority not granted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

Disaster Management Act, 2005.

Both the INS and the NBA were criticising advisories by the Union Ministries of Home and Labour and some

## Faith

### Kindness of Azhvars

Only if we have knowledge about something can we become attached to it. If we have jnana about the Supreme One, we develop bhakti towards Him. So, knowledge about the Supreme One is the first step towards liberation, said Kidambi Narayanan in a discourse. Can samsaris impart this knowledge to us? They are themselves ignorant. How then can they tell us about the Paramatma?

Vedanta Desika gives an example to explain this. Suppose a man falls into a well, and finds himself at a depth of 36 feet. He calls out to his companion for help. His friend says, "I have also fallen in. But I am only at a depth of 30 feet." The fact that one of them is about six feet above the other does not mean that he is going to be able to help the other. Likewise, one samsari cannot help another to acquire jnana. Pillai Lokachariar in his Mumukshuppadi, says samsaris do not know themselves; they do not know God; they do not know anything about serving God. And they are unaware that they do not know any of these things!

God is the only who can liberate us. Imagine two men in prison. Can one of them let out the other? But if the king decides to free them, he can, because he alone has the power to do so. In the same way, it is Lord Narayana who grants us moksha. And Azhvars, who had the blissful experience of bhakti, wanted everyone to have the same experience. So, they composed verses which are full of advice for us. Although we have not asked them, they have voluntarily given us advice out of kindness through their works. To advise, one must have had experience. Azhvars are competent to advise us. Namamazhvar sets us an example when he commands his heart to worship the Lord always, showing the importance of keeping our thoughts turned towards Him constantly.

**CROSSWORD** + 12939  
(set by Afterdark)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9		10				
11		12				
13	14		15			
16		17	18			19
21		22	23			
24			25			
26		27				

**ACROSS**

- About to leave Reverend confused in the city (6)
- Some returning, almost with scare to the capital (6)
- Sour love? Essence of it becomes a menace (4)
- Annoying personality; no love in interactions (10)
- Letters from Rambo got accessed at the city (6)
- Leave out, 40% of motor gone in the lift (8)

Are you a cryptic lover or a quick solver? Find out Now!

@ <https://crossword.thehindu.com>

SCAN TO PLAY



## SUDOKU

5	6		4	1	

# Xi defends China's 'open' virus response

President pledges to make any potential vaccine developed by the country a 'global public good'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

GENEVA  
Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Monday that Beijing has been "transparent" throughout the COVID-19 crisis, and offered to share a vaccine as soon as one was available – as well as \$2 billion in aid.

Governments including the U.S. and Australia have called in recent weeks for an investigation into the origins of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which has become a flashpoint in deteriorating tensions between Washington and Beijing.

Both U.S. President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have accused China of a lack of transparency over the issue, and repeatedly pushed the theory that the virus leaked from a Chinese maximum-security laboratory.

## COVID-19

Addressing the first-ever virtual gathering of the WHO's annual assembly, Mr. Xi said China has "always had an open, transparent and responsible attitude", and had shared information on the virus in a timely manner. Chinese scientists have said the virus emerged from a market that sold wild animals in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December, though officials have more recently cast doubt about its origins. Authorities in Wuhan have come under fire for reprimanding and silencing doctors who raised the alarm about the virus late last year. China is also accused of having delayed confirmation that the virus was transmissible between humans.

China has strenuously denied accusations of a cover-

WORST-HIT COUNTRIES \*As of Monday evening

U.S. 14,86,742

### In the grip of virus

As the COVID-19 pandemic is spreading across the world, devastating economies and disrupting social lives, UN chief Antonio Guterres has said the outbreak should be seen as a "wake-up call" to the world which must be more united in responding to the crisis

#### Around the world

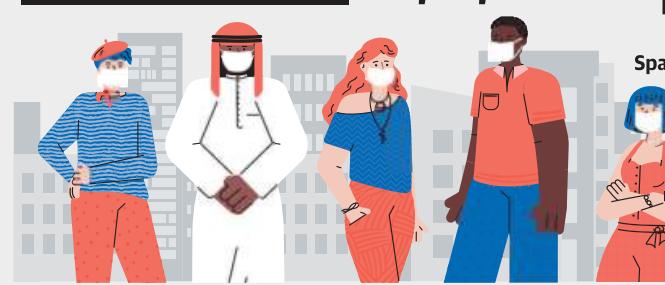
■ Australia's Foreign Minister welcomed international support for an independent coronavirus pandemic investigation, which has been condemned by China

■ The EU has drafted a resolution, co-sponsored by dozens of countries, including Australia, which calls for an evaluation of the origin of the pandemic and responses to the virus

The SARS-CoV-2 virus has killed at least 315,620 people since the outbreak first emerged in China last December

Total number of infections\*

47,37,300



NO. OF CASES

89,564

Britain 2,44,995 34,716

Italy 2,25,435 31,908

France 1,79,693 28,111

Spain 2,30,698 27,563

Deaths  
3,15,620



SOURCE: JOHNS HOPKINS CORONAVIRUS RESOURCE CENTER & AFP

up, insisting it has always shared information with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other countries in a timely manner.

The assembly was set to discuss a resolution tabled by the EU that calls for an "impartial, independent and comprehensive evaluation" of the international response to the coronavirus crisis.

#### WHO-led probe

Speaking via videolink with a painting of the Great Wall in the background, Mr. Xi said China supports a "compre-

hensive evaluation" of the global response to the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

The inquiry should "sum up experiences and improve shortcomings" and "adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness", Mr. Xi told the World Health Assembly.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pledged at the assembly to launch an independent probe to review the pandemic response "at the earliest appropriate mo-

ment". With the world racing to find a drug to stop the pandemic after it "has been brought under control" and that the probe should be led by the WHO.

## MARKET WATCH

	18-05-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	30,029	-3.44
US Dollar	75.91	-0.44
Brent oil	35.09	11.22

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	293.30	-15.95
Asian Paints	1501.10	-51.85
Axis Bank	358.80	-29.75
Bajaj Auto	2477.45	-186.15
Bajaj Finserv	4465.45	-257.80
Bajaj Finance	1938.60	-147.85
Bharti Airtel	538.05	-16.05
BPCL	294.05	-24.15
Britannia Ind	3109.55	-16.10
Cipla	600.45	30.15
Coal India	121.70	-7.90
Dr Reddys Lab	3679.15	-55.95
Eicher Motors	12988.20	-1111.40
GAIL (India)	81.00	-4.80
Grasim Ind	495.80	-22.05
HCL Tech.	510.75	-0.50
HDFC	1512.05	-121.75
HDFC Bank	836.65	-51.50
Hero MotoCorp	2070.55	-123.00
Hindalco	115.35	-3.90
Hind Unilever	2005.25	-26.85
ICICI Bank	298.50	-24.20
IndusInd Bank	376.75	-41.95
Bharti Infratel	207.10	-4.60
Infosys	663.90	-11.60
Indian Oil Corp.	71.55	-3.95
ITC	164.75	0.10
JSW Steel	163.25	-11.05
Kotak Bank	1113.65	-64.65
L&T	813.35	-51.05
M&M	377.20	-4.10
Maruti Suzuki	4720.95	-379.45
Nestle India Ltd.	16240.35	-203.45
NTPC	88.90	-1.95
ONGC	72.90	-3.25
PowerGrid Corp	154.50	-5.30
Reliance Ind	1440.75	-18.65
State Bank	155.30	-11.10
Shree Cement	18152.70	-1027.80
Sun Pharma	440.70	-7.90
Tata Motors	80.65	-3.70
Tata Steel	266.60	-6.85
TCS	1945.60	-52.70
Tech Mahindra	504.05	-6.50
Titan	817.30	-28.30
UltraTech Cement	3307.80	-275.35
UPL	375.80	-3.10
Vedanta	92.50	-0.45
Wipro	182.20	-1.60
Zee Entertainment	149.50	-14.70

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 18		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	75.71	76.03
Euro	81.79	82.13
British Pound	91.67	92.07
Japanese Yen (100)	70.58	70.87
Chinese Yuan	10.64	10.68
Swiss Franc	77.78	78.15
Singapore Dollar	53.06	53.30
Canadian Dollar	53.80	54.03
Malaysian Ringgit	17.32	17.41
Australian Dollar	48.79	49.04

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



**Tata unit to buy PepsiCo stake in JV NourishCo**  
NEW DELHI  
Tata Consumer Products Ltd. (TCPL) said it would acquire PepsiCo's stake in their joint venture NourishCo Beverages. The size of the deal was not disclosed by the company. The move is an effort by the Tata Group firm to widen its portfolio in the growing food and beverages space, TCPL said. NourishCo operates in the healthy hydration space. PTI

**Dr. Reddy's unveils Ocaliva generic in India**  
HYDERABAD  
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories has launched FXR, a therapeutic equivalent generic version of Ocaliva (obeticholic acid), in India. Ocaliva is a trademark of Intercept Pharmaceuticals. The drug is indicated for the treatment of primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) in combination with ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA) or as monotherapy in adults. "FXR will be an important addition to our hepatology portfolio," according to M.V. Ramana, chief executive officer of branded markets (India and emerging markets), Dr. Reddy's Labs.

**Maruti delivers 5,000 cars in past few days**  
NEW DELHI  
Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Monday said it has delivered over 5,000 cars in the past few days with over 1,350 showrooms operational across the country at present. The company has put in place comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs) for all its dealerships, MSI said.

Over 1,350 Maruti Suzuki showrooms and over 300 True Value outlets are operational now, it added. "MSI has put in place comprehensive norms to ensure that their car-buying experience is completely safe," said MSI MD and CEO Kenichi Ayukawa. PTI

# 'Stimulus to cost only about 1% of GDP'

Package may fall short of mitigating near-term existential crisis for businesses, workers: Nomura

MANOJ SAHA  
MUMBAI

The much-hyped ₹20-lakh crore economic package announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will have a minimum impact on the fiscal cost, estimated at about 1% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

According to estimates by several brokerages, the Centre's fiscal burden is seen ranging between 0.8% and 1.2% of the GDP. Mr. Modi had pegged the size of the economic package at 10% of the GDP.

**Regulatory in nature**

"The government has aimed for the maximum bang [with] the minimum buck, with most of the relief either regulatory in nature or reflecting in its contingent liabilities rather than explicit budgetary support," Nomura said

## Big bang, small buck

Estimates by	Fiscal cost (as % of GDP)
UBS Securities	1.2
BofA Securities	1.1
SBI	1
HSBC	1
IIFL	1
Edelweiss Securities	0.85
Nomura	0.8
CLSA	0.8
Citi	1



in a report, while acknowledging that the pandemic had been used as a cover to plough through long-pending politically-sensitive structural reforms.

"As a result, the package may fall short of mitigating the near-term existential crisis for businesses and work-

ers, but is better designed to improve India's medium-term growth potential and attract long-term risk capital," said Nomura, which had pegged India's GDP growth for 2020 at minus 5%.

The government has faced flak from the Opposition parties for not putting money in

the hands of the poor who face an existential crisis with the lockdown, which is now over 50 days, destroying their livelihoods.

**Guarantees, credit lines**

"Within the fiscal constraints of government, extensive use of guarantees and credit lines to provide breathing space to MSMEs, economically weaker sections, farmers and NBFCs, as well as creating long-term changes in some other sectors, is an appreciable move but this may not be seen as enough to solve the immediate COVID-19 challenges (sic)," CLSA said in a report to its clients.

UBS Securities, which had pegged the fiscal cost at 1.2% of the GDP, said credit guarantees are unlikely to impact the budget balance of the current financial year as

the likely impact of the deficit could only emerge once the losses materialise.

"The headline stimulus number seemed impressive, at ₹20 trillion (\$267 billion), corresponding to roughly 10% of India's FY21 [estimates] of GDP, much higher than market expectations," said Tanvee Gupta Jain, economist, UBS Securities India, in a report.

"However, looking at the breakdown, the liquidity support and credit guarantee measures accounted for almost three-fourths of the economic support package, followed by monetary measures at 15% and fiscal support at only 10%."

"Notably, the upfront, direct fiscal cost this year from the COVID-19 support package announced so far is quite limited (1.2% of GDP)," Ms. Jain said.

# Auto industry left out of economic package: SIAM

'Measures could have helped demand'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The government's recently announced ₹20-lakh crore economic package has left the automobile sector out,

Rajan Wadhra, president of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), said on Monday. He pointed out that the industry has been in dire need of an immediate stimulus to boost demand and stop job losses.

He added that the sector, already facing a challenge with the 18% contraction last year, could see a further shrinkage in the range of 22-35% in various industry segments such as passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and commercial vehicles, in 2020-21, if India's GDP growth ends up at 0-1%.

The industry body said the package for the agri sector may indirectly benefit the auto industry. It said dealers needed urgent help with improving liquidity and that they ought to be included under the MSME Act by changing its definition.

forward to some direct fiscal measures which could have boosted demand for the sector and stopped job losses."

He noted that SIAM has had several engagements with the Centre at various levels, where specific suggestions had been made to stimulate demand, including a cut in base GST rates from 28% to 18% for a limited period and an incentive-based vehicle scrappage policy. This would have "made it a less painful revival and kick started the industry," he said.

The industry body said the package for the agri sector may indirectly benefit the auto industry. It said dealers needed urgent help with improving liquidity and that they ought to be included under the MSME Act by changing its definition.

# Markets find little to cheer

Indices shed 3.4% in reaction to Centre's economic package

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Indian benchmark equity indices lost more than 3% each on Monday with the Sensex shedding more than 1,000 points as the stimulus package announced by the Finance Minister failed to cheer the markets, with a further extension of the nationwide lockdown till May 31 acting as a catalyst in dampening sentiments.

The 30-share Sensex lost over 10% on Monday, stocks such as ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC and Bajaj Finance, all lost over 7% each.

The overall market breadth was extremely weak with more than 1,700 stocks in the red against less than 600 gainers. As many as 272 stocks hit their lower circuit.

Meanwhile, the broader

Nifty settled the day at 8,823.25, down 313.60 points, or 3.43%. The India VIX index surged a little over 7.5% on Monday after laying low for the past few days.

Further, the Nifty Bank and Nifty Private Bank were the biggest losers among sectoral indices, shedding almost 7% each. Incidentally, the fall was largely on account of domestic factors as most of the Asian markets gained ground on Monday.

"Indian indices ended lower as details of the ₹20 lakh crore stimulus package announced by the Finance Minister over Wednesday and Sunday disappointed listed corporates and market participants," said Deepak Jasani, head, retail research, HDFC Securities.

Meanwhile, the broader

## IN BRIEF



## Michael Jordan sneakers sell for \$560,000

A pair of Air Jordan sneakers worn in a game by Michael Jordan sold for \$560,000 at Sotheby's auction house, an all-time record for basketball shoes. The white, black and red shoes, made for Jordan in 1985 and autographed by the NBA legend, dethroned the reigning "Moon Shoe," one of Nike's first sneakers, a pair of which sold in July 2019 for \$437,000. AFP



## 'Singapore F1 behind closed doors impossible'

SINGAPORE Singapore F1 organisers on Monday said it was "not feasible" to hold the race behind closed doors, threatening further problems for the coronavirus-ravaged season. The Singapore Grand Prix, scheduled in September, is a night-time street race around the city-state's waterfront. AFP



## Time right for Mortaza to retire: Gibson

DHAKA Bangladesh bowling coach Ottis Gibson doesn't see a role for Mashrafe Mortaza (in pic) in the 2023 ODI World Cup and feels now is the time for the former skipper to bid adieu to international cricket. The 36-year-old Mortaza, who claimed just one wicket in eight matches in last year's World Cup, has in the recent past often faced questions on his retirement. PTI

## Rugby India's TRY Series quarterfinalists spotted

MUMBAI Delhi Lions, Jaipur Bulls, Chhattisgarh Bulls, Black Archers Hyderabad, Kerala Rugby Warriors, Ace Foundation, Young Rugby Club and Black Dot have entered the quarterfinals of Rugby India's TRY Series online tournament.

## Irfan Pathan live!

Catch T20 World Cup winner and former India allrounder Irfan Pathan in a live chat on Sportstar's Instagram handle (@sportstarweb) on May 19 (Tuesday) at 8 p.m. IST.

## Gorkhas demand Amazon's Paatal Lok drop sexist slur

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Members of the Gorkha community in India have taken strong offence at the use of a sexist slur in the second episode of Amazon's *Paatal Lok* original series that dropped on Amazon Prime Video on May 15.

An online petition, initiated by the community on Monday and addressed to the Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry, the Minister Prakash Javadekar, Amazon Prime Video and series producer Anushka Sharma, asserted that the slur portrayed the community's women in poor light and demanded that Amazon should mute the slur, blur the subtitles and upload edited video along with an unconditional apology and a disclaimer.

The Bhartiya Gorkha Yuva Parisangh contended in its petition that the second episode of *Paatal Lok* had certain scenes, particularly the one that slips in at 3:41,

## Sports ministry approves opening of stadia

Many NSFs, however, have preferred to adopt a cautious wait-and-watch mode

UTHRA GANESAN  
NEW DELHI

A day after the Home Ministry advised restricted opening of sports complexes and stadia, the sports ministry has given its go-ahead to the proposal.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, on Monday, confirmed the resumption of sporting activities and training, subject to the central and State-specific guidelines.

## Follow guidelines

"I'm happy to inform sportspersons and all concerned that sports activities will be conducted in sports complexes and stadia strictly in accordance with MHA guidelines and that of the States in which they are situated. However, the use of gyms & swimming pools are still prohibited," Rijiju tweeted.

The ministry's approval would help Sports Authority of India centres to resume training of athletes, following



**Wait ends:** With sporting complexes opened up, the Indian women's hockey team would like to get back to serious training. ■ FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) designed by the SAI and individual federations.

Most NSFs, however, have preferred to adopt a cautious wait-and-watch mode, waiting for detailed instructions and clarifications before kick-starting their training and

competition schedules.

While Hockey India is awaiting further suitable guidelines and approvals on restarting the national camps for men and women — who have been restricted to SAI Centre, Bengaluru for the past two months — the AFI is unsure how the order im-

pacts the premier NIS in Patiala, where the athletes and weightlifters are.

"Hockey India today submitted the pitch training requests for the men and women core probables and are awaiting approval and confirmation on the same," the federation said, having submit-

ted its hockey-specific SOP to the ministry on April 11.

## Better safe than sorry

AFI president Adille Sumariwalla too has been waiting for government approval for a month. "We submitted our plan way back and are waiting for a go-ahead. Also, as per my understanding, the NIS in Patiala is an educational institution and so remains closed even in the new order.

"We have asked for clarification but honestly, given the situation, I think it's better to be safe than sorry.

"A couple of days delay in training is better than putting the athletes' health to any risk," Sumariwalla told *The Hindu*.

The NRAI too has decided to proceed slowly, with president Raninder Singh assuring that a firm plan for training and competitions would be drawn up soon once protocols for opening up shooting ranges are finalised.

## Saliva ban recommended

ICC panel does not bar use of sweat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The ICC's Cricket Committee has recommended the prohibition of the use of saliva to shine the ball to mitigate the risks posed by COVID-19 when the sport resumes.

However, the committee has not barred the use of sweat. It has not allowed any external polishing material.

The committee, chaired by former India captain and coach Anil Kumble, has also proposed that local umpires be appointed for matches in the short term to deal with international travel restrictions during the pandemic. It has also recommended an increase in reviews per innings through DRS for this.

The proposals are set to be formalised during the Chief Executives' Committee (CEC) meeting next month. The possibility of preventing the use of saliva had been discussed during



Anil Kumble. ■ FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

last month's CEC, but since the matter had to be brought up and discussed by the Cricket Committee, Monday's meeting was convened via a video-conference call.

"We are living through extraordinary times and the recommendations made today are interim measures to enable us to safely resume cricket in a way that preserves the essence of our game whilst protecting everyone involved," Kumble said in an ICC statement.

## Carlsen, Lagno take honours

P.K. AJITH KUMAR  
KOZHIKODE

Magnus Carlsen romped home with a round to spare, while Kateryna Lagno had to play 152 moves in her final game as they emerged the champions at the Steinitz Memorial online blitz tournament.

The tournament was organised by FIDE, in association with chess24.com, as a tribute to the first official World chess champion Wilhelm Steinitz of Austria, whose 184th birth anniversary fell on May 17. The men's and women's events featured 10 players each.

**Final standings:** Men: 1. Magnus Carlsen (Nor) 12; 2. Daniil Dubov (Rus) 10; 3. Peter Svidler (Rus) 9.5; 4. Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze); Jeffery Xiong (US) & Quang Liem (Chn) 9; 7-8. Bu Xiangzhi (Chn) & Anton Korobov (Ukr) 8.5; 9. David Anton Guijarro (Esp) 7.5; 10. Alexander Grischuk (Rus) 7.

**Women:** 1. Kateryna Lagno (Ukr) & Lei Tingjie (Chn) 12; 3. Zhansaya Abdumalik (Kaz) 11.5; 4. Alexandra Kosteniuk (Rus) 10.5; 5. Tan Zhongyi (Chn) 10; 6-7. Sarasadat Khalidmalsharieh (IRI) & Antoaneta Stefanova (Bul) 9; 8. Marie Sebag (Fra) 8.5; 9. Elizabeth Paethz (Ger) 4.5; 10. Deysi Cori (Per) 3.

## BOXING

Y.B. SARANGI  
KOLKATA

World boxing championship medallist Manish Kaushik is focusing on adding power to his punches during the lockdown.



Manish Kaushik.

in March to book a quota place for the Tokyo Games, wants to make the best use of the time.

"Time flies. Before we realise, the 2020 Olympics will be upon us. We have to utilise each day to get better."

"I am very proud to be the third World championship medallist from Bhawani district after Vijender Singh and Vikas Krishan. Now, I want to replicate Vijender's Olympic medal-winning feat."

Manish, who has been enjoying a longer stay at home after eight years, is excited about the relaxation in the lockdown.

"It's good to spend some time at home but the camp is the best place to train, though. Coaches are there to analyse and tell where you are going wrong. I hope our camp resumes soon," said Manish.



Kateryna Lagno.

## EPL: clubs agree for group training

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Premier League clubs will return to training in small groups from Tuesday after the latest stage of "Project Restart" was approved on Monday.

Doctors continue to assess and monitor his condition and attempt treatment for the new complications, he added.

Three-time Olympic gold medallist Balbir (1948-1956) is considered one of the best centre-forwards of all times and was also the manager of the only World Cup-winning Indian side in 1975.

the chat show by August, Bhupathi said "prime time TV", as Raja has managed to host it with considerable professionalism, poise and lively tempo.

Bopanna gave two out of 10 for AITA's financial transparency. He also named Devvarman as a future Davis Cup team captain. Bopanna himself thought would opt for physio if there was a toss up between captain and physio for the team.

Bopanna also chose M.S. Dhoni as company for star-studded, the Prime Minister for lunch and Amitabh Bachchan for desert, saying that he could then discuss sport, politics and entertainment with them.

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together," said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"

said Bhupathi on his love-hate relationship with Leander Paes for more than 20 years, and qualified it further saying, "digitally".

Asked about the future of

Bhupathi then put the potential of Karman Thandi at No. 75 in terms of rank.

"One last roar together,"