



Together in faith: Migrant workers break their Ramadan fast while waiting for trains leaving for Jaunpur, Gorakhpur and Bhagalpur from Borivali station on Tuesday. ■ AADESH CHOUDHARI

CM seeks ideas for way ahead after lockdown

District collectors asked to share plans to curb spread of virus

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday asked district collectors and divisional commissioners to put forward their suggestions on containing the spread of the novel coronavirus with the third phase of the lockdown ending on May 17.

Mr. Thackeray, through video conferencing, interacted with the officials and took stock of the COVID-19 situation in the State. He said, "We have to plan the

way ahead after May 17. For that, all the district collectors and divisional commissioners may send their suggestions and expectations."

Borders won't open'

Mr. Thackeray said district borders will not be opened irrespective of the lockdown being extended or relaxed. He said, "All district collectors must ensure that the novel coronavirus does not spread beyond containment zones. Each and every restriction in place in these

zones must be observed strictly." Mr. Thackeray said since restrictions on movement of migrant workers and stranded citizens have been relaxed, district administrations must be more vigilant and ensure that the disease does not spread.

Mr. Thackeray said while all efforts are focused on breaking the chain of infection, district administrations must be prepared for the monsoon and the health challenges that come along with the season.

Markets closed, city's fisherfolk hit hard

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

The COVID-19 lockdown has severely affected Mumbai's fisherfolk as many of them have been rendered jobless and are finding it hard to sustain their livelihood since fish markets are lying closed.

Some of the busiest fish markets, including Sassoon Dock in Colaba, Crawford Market in south Mumbai, Bhaucha Dhakka, the Kasara fish market in Thane and others, which used to be bustling with activity and business every day, are shut.

Thousands of fishing boats are lying useless and the community members are staring at a financial crisis. Over one lakh fisherfolk, who were largely dependent for their livelihood on fish sale at these markets, are finding it difficult to survive.

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State police to give all personnel Camphora Im

Homoeopathic immunity booster to be supplied as preventive measure against spread of COVID-19

GAUTAM S. MENGLE
MUMBAI

With the number of COVID-19 cases in its ranks crossing the 1,000 mark, the Maharashtra Police are providing Camphora Im, a homoeopathic immunity booster, to all its personnel.

On Tuesday, an assistant sub-inspector posted with a police station in eastern Mumbai, became the latest victim, taking the death toll in the city to five and in the State to nine. The development came even as the Mumbai Police were celebrating the successful recovery of three personnel in a day.

The police said the move was just a preventive measure and acknowledged the lack of clinical studies to



Risky duty: Police personnel on duty near Jijamata Nagar in Worli, a COVID-19 containment zone. ■ FILE PHOTO

prove that homoeopathic medicines keep the novel coronavirus at bay.

Police officials said the booster was an alternative to

recommendation of the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH).

So far, 1,007 police personnel have tested positive. Additional Director General (planning and coordination) S. Jagannathan issued a circular on Monday describing the detailed dosage for Camphora Im, including for children below five years.

The circular directed all unit heads to inform the State police headquarters by Wednesday the quantity of drug their personnel require.

Mr. Jagannathan said, "We need to be clear that Camphora Im is being recommended as a prophylactic in consultation with homoeopathy experts. Strictly speak-

ing, there is no statistically validated study regarding homoeopathic medicines. But it is a fact that they do not have side effects. The experts we consulted have said these medicines can be taken even if other allopathic treatment is under way."

The State Reserve Police Force's Unit 1 in Pune will distribute the drug, while an officer in the Director General's office will handle queries on the initiative.

Mr. Jagannathan said, "There have been a lot of reports about which drug is more effective between Arsenicum Album 30 and Camphora Im. The circular only offers options to our personnel as neither medicine has adverse effects."

Special train with over 1,000 passengers leaves for Delhi

Some head home, some get closer to home

AJEEIT MAHALE
MUMBAI

A special train with 1,107 people on board was the first train to leave for Delhi from Mumbai Central at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday. While the destination for a majority of the passengers was New Delhi, for others it was a stop closer to home.

Shakir Hussain, who works in a salon in Ghatkopar (West), said he had been trying to go back home to Moradabad since the State government decided to issue permits. "I, along with three others, live in the salon and were being helped by our boss. The lockdown has hit his business too and there is no saying when the salon will reopen," he said, adding that

his boss had paid for his 3AC ticket. Mr. Hussain said he did not yet know how he would get to Moradabad from Delhi. "In the worst case, I'll walk," he said.

Mayank Dattaraya, a resident of Jaipur taking the train to Kota, said he was getting paid only 30% of his salary due to the lockdown. "Intra-State travel is not as hard as inter-State travel. I had come to the city earlier this year," he said.

Many were going back home to meet their loved ones. One such was Mamta Khatri, a resident of Airoli who was wearing personal protective gear. She was on her way to Gurgaon to meet her pregnant daughter.

Among other passengers was Krishna Kanodia, who had come from Ajmer to visit her daughter in Ghatkopar, and got stuck here. "We will get off at Kota and organise a taxi for



Heading home: Passengers waiting to board the train to New Delhi train at Mumbai Central on Tuesday. ■ SALMAN ANSARI

the three-hour ride to Ajmer," she said.

Imamuddin from Delhi said he had come to Mumbai for a business trip and had a reserved ticket on the Rajdhani Express leaving on March 23. "I was fortunate that my friend asked me to stay with him for a few days. Otherwise living in a hotel for a month would not have been financially possible," he said.

Western Railway (WR) had made adequate arrangements on Tuesday for physical distancing and queuing of people. In the concourse area of Mumbai Central, they had demarcated seats into two zones between which were the medical testing kiosks. On the platforms as well, people were asked to maintain distance.

G.V.L. Satyakumar, Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai, said they would have a queue on the platform next to the road so that people did not have to stand in the sun.

Joyride on Marine Drive turns fatal as 18-year-old loses life

Driver, also a teen, battles for life at south Bombay hospital

ABHA GOKHALE
MUMBAI

A joyride on the empty Marine Drive turned into a tragedy for two teenagers, after they lost control of their car and rammed into a stationary bus on Tuesday afternoon. While one lost his life in the accident, the other is battling serious injuries.

According to the police, the accident occurred around 4 p.m. at the BD Somani Chowk stretch of Marine Drive. The duo, identified as Shauryasingh Jain (19) and Aryaman Nagpal (18), were in a Maruti Ciaz when the incident occurred. The

police said Mr. Jain was driving, while Mr. Nagpal was in the front passenger seat, and the car crashed into the bus at a very high speed.

Eyewitnesses to rescue

Eyewitnesses immediately called the police and both teens were removed from the mangled remains of the car and rushed to Harkishandas hospital, where Mr. Nagpal was declared dead before admission, while Mr. Jain is admitted to the intensive care unit.

"It is not yet clear why the duo were out for a drive, considering the country is under lockdown. Details will be clear as the investigation progresses. We also have to keep the family in mind as they are still grieving the loss of their child," senior police inspector Mrityunjay Hiremath, Marine Drive police station, said.

Officers said both the teens were residents of Naupan Sea Road in south Mumbai. The police have for the moment registered an incident report and are examining CCTV footage and recording statements from eyewitnesses before deciding the further course of action.

Fed up of being away from home, engineer kills self

27-year-old hailed from Satara

RAINA ASSAINAR
NAVI MUMBAI

Fed up of being alone and away from his family, a 27-year-old engineer living in Koparkhairane ended his life on Tuesday.

Suraj Sakharam Surve, originally from Javalvi in Satara, worked with a private firm in Airoli. Surve, a bachelorette, lived with his married brother's family at Sector 4. Before the lockdown, his brother and family had gone to their hometown, leaving him alone at home during the lockdown.

On Tuesday afternoon, Surve's neighbours, who provided him with food, reached his house to find him dead with a suicide note left behind.

"The note had his phone password and said he had been feeling lonely and was missing his family terribly. Surve's note said he would think of them and weep daily. Though he spoke with them every day, it only

made things worse. It said he was depressed as he was unable to go out and was away from the family, hence he took the extreme step," senior police inspector Suzyakant Jagdale, Koparkhairane police station, said.

A case of accidental death has been registered.

Helplines

BMC mental health helpline:
022 24131212 (24x7)

Vandrevala Foundation:
18026662345/18002333330 (24x7)

I Call:
022-25521111
(8 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Monday to Saturday)

The Samaritans Mumbai:
8422984528/8422984529/8422984530
(3 p.m.- 9 p.m. all days)

WESTERN RAILWAY

ELECTRICAL REWIRING OF RAILWAY QUARTERS

Tender Notice No. and Date - EL 81766WA/2 Dated 12/05/2020 Name of Work - Mumbai Division - Improvement to railway quarters by electrical rewiring and strengthening of power supply system. Approx cost - ₹2,27,51,810 Cost of EMD - ₹2,63,800 Date and Time of Submission till 12.06.2020 15.00 hrs. Date and Time of Opening - on 12.06.2020 till 15.30 hrs. please visit our website www.irps.gov.in to download the tender document, corrigendum for further details.

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National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute (NABI)

(An Autonomous Institute under Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India)

Sector 81, Knowledge City, Mohali - 140 306 Punjab (INDIA)

Tel.: 91-172-5221300 Fax: 91-172-5221100 E-mail : purchase@nabi.res.in

e-Tender for supply of manpower on outsourcing basis and Annual operation and Maintenance Contract of Electrical,

Civil etc. of NABI - CIAB Campus and purchase of Equipment

E-tenders are invited on behalf of Executive Director, NABI (in two-bid system) from firms/companies providing manpower & security services to NABI & CIAB and purchase of Equipments viz., ED-XRF for NABI and Annual operation and Maintenance Contract of Electrical, Civil, firefighting, public health and allied services of NABI - CIAB Campus. The details of tender documents are available at NABI website (www.nabi.res.in) and CPPP website (www.eprocure.gov.in).

Any changes in this tender document relating to the submission of tender docs, due date & time and specifications etc. shall be available only on CPPP website and NABI website. Interested parties may see the CPPP website (www.eprocure.gov.in) and NABI website (www.nabi.res.in) before quoting the same. NABI reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason or to accept them in part or full.

Manager (Admin.)

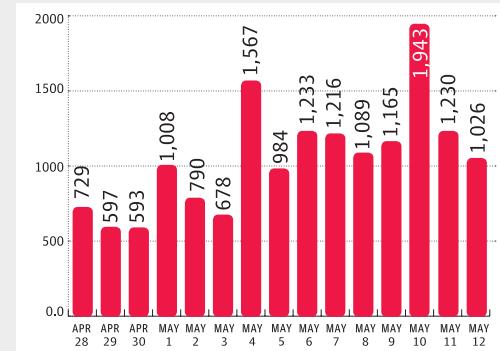
Maharashtra COVID-19 tracker

TOTAL CASES	NEW CASES	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERED	DEATHS
24,427	1,026	18,381	5,125	921

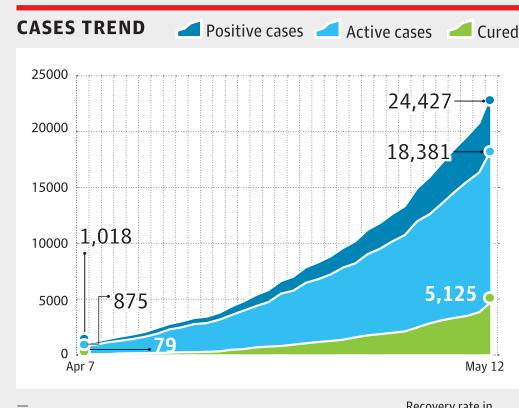
DISTRICTS AFFECTED: 34

DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS	DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Mumbai	14,947	556	Sangli	38	1
Thane	2,814	25	Nanded	46	4
Pune	2,937	164	Latur	31	1
Nashik	741	34	Buldhana	25	1
Aurangabad	653	15	Nandurbar	22	2
Palghar	301	12	Kolhapur	19	1
Raigad	275	10	Ratnagiri	55	2
Nagpur	268	2	Jalna	16	0
Solapur	317	19	Sindhudurg	6	0
Alkola	169	12	Chandrapur	4	0
Jalgaon	192	24	Osmanabad	4	0
Satara	123	2	Parbhani	2	1
Yavatmal	98	0	Washim	2	0
Amravati	89	13	Beed	1	0
Ahmednagar	64	3	Bhandara	1	0
Hingoli	61	0	Gondia	1	0
Dhule	63	6	Wardha	1	1

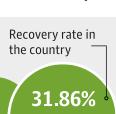
POSITIVE CASES OVER LAST 15 DAYS



426 (41.52%) of total cases are from Mumbai



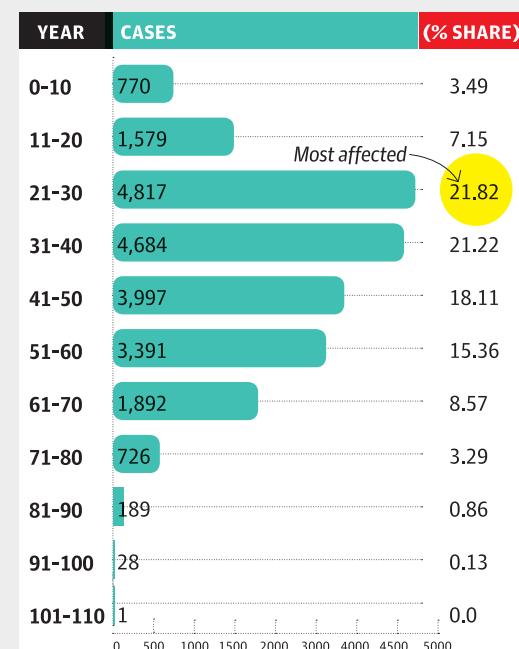
20.45% is the State recovery rate



MORTALITY RATE

Maharashtra	3.71%
India	3.24%

AFFECTED (AGE-WISE)



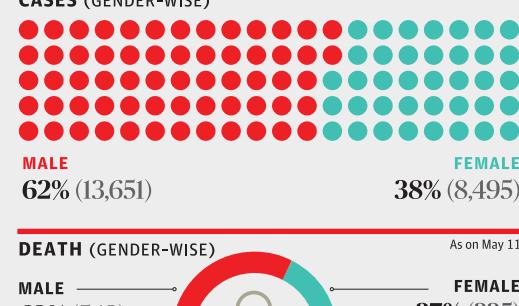
QUARANTINE NUMBERS

As on May 11

Home quarantine	Institutional quarantine
2,81,655	15,627



CASES (GENDER-WISE)



73% of deaths due to co-morbidities

HELPLINE NUMBERS

Toll free number: 104/1075
Maharashtra: 020-26127394
National: 1075/ 1800-112-545/011-2398046
State helpline email id: ssumaharashtra@gmail.com

CITY-WISE HELPLINE NUMBERS

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

Source: Public Health Department, Maharashtra, BMC

Mumbai sees highest single-day deaths; case tally touches 14,947

Among 28 casualties, 17 patients had underlying ailments; 203 patients discharged



A 60-bed quarantine facility for COVID-19 patients at Catholic Gymkhana. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

Dharavi reports 46 fresh cases

TANVI DESHPANDE MUMBAI

The number of COVID-19 cases in Dharavi inched closer to the 1,000-mark on Tuesday after it reported 46 fresh cases and one death. The tally of positive cases now stands at 962 while the death toll touches 31.

G North ward that consists of Dharavi, Mahim and Dadar has already reported over 1,000 cases.

The new cases include some from Matunga labour camp, Transcamp, Dharavi Cross Road, 90-Foot Road, and T junction among others. Mahim recorded six new cases on Tuesday.

93-year-old beats virus

A 93-year-old woman from Mazgoan was discharged from Saifee Hospital a fortnight ago. She is probably the city's oldest patient to go home after beating COVID-19. The woman was admitted on April 17 and remained hospitalised for nearly 12 days. Doctors said the senior citizen had multiple chronic health conditions and her recovery should give hope to many other patients to fight the disease.

Annasaheb Misal said that on Monday, the civic body had recorded the highest single-day positive cases at 105. "Even then, the good news is 171 people have recovered so far," Mr. Misal said.

As per the new discharge policy, Mr. Misal said people found positive with no symptoms would be discharged in 10 days. "If they have mild symptoms but after seven days of treatment, they do not show any symptom for three consecutive days, they will be discharged too." He, however, said that a person with co-morbidities would be discharged only after full recovery.

(With inputs from Raina Assainar)

Nair Hospital nurse walks home after 19 days in ICU

40-year-old had no underlying ailments: doctors

YOTI SHELAR MUMBAI

The civic-run Nair Hospital celebrated International Nurses Day on Tuesday in a unique way.

A 40-year old staff nurse infected with SARS CoV-2 was discharged from the hospital after battling for life for 19 days in the intensive care unit (ICU). Nurses from the hospital cheered for their colleague while she wiped her tears and promised to come back and serve at the hospital soon.

According to hospital dean Dr. Mohan Joshi, the staff nurse, a resident of Byculla, was admitted on April 23 after she developed symptoms and became extremely breathless. "She had to be immediately admitted to the ICU," said Dr. Joshi, adding the nurse was in a critical condition and was among the few patients



See you soon: The staff nurse who was discharged from Nair Hospital on Tuesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

PMC orders Thyrocare not to test swab samples

Civic body cites delays in test reports

RAINA ASSAINAR NAVI MUMBAI

Citing delays and discrepancies in COVID-19 test reports, the Panvel Municipal Corporation (PMC) has directed a private lab not to take swab samples from residents within PMC limits until further notice.

PMC Commissioner Ganesh Deshmukh issued the order in a letter addressed to the director of Thyrocare lab in Turbhe on May 9. The letter said though the lab was part of the Indian Coun-

cil for Medical Research's authorised list of labs, there were two cases within PMC limits of patients whom the lab had declared positive for COVID-19, turning negative. The letter said in many cases, there has been a delay of over 72 hours in receiving test reports.

The missive said, "Residents have had to face a lot of agony, which is unacceptable amid a pandemic. We direct you not to collect COVID-19 swabs within PMC limits from May 10."

INTERVIEW | VARSHA GAIKWAD

'Dharavi needs a special plan to cope'

Education Minister rues delays in redevelopment of Mumbai's largest slum

ALOK DESHPANDE MUMBAI

Education Minister Varsha Gaikwad, who represents the Dharavi constituency, is putting all her efforts into containing the spread of COVID-19 in Asia's largest slum, which has become a key infection hotspot in the city. In an interview with The Hindu, Ms. Gaikwad talked about why coping with the pandemic is a unique problem for Dharavi since its population density is higher than the rest of the city, with physical distancing a challenge and common toilets the norm. Edited excerpts:

What is the situation in Dharavi as of now?

Till Monday, Dharavi had around 916 positive patients. We have taken measures like awareness campaigns, community quarantine, and provision of food for the needy to ensure that the number does not go up. We are supplying dry ration as well as cooked food, which are being arranged by the Congress, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), and police. A central team had already visited the area while the State government is constantly monitoring the situation.

Despite all this, the number of cases is increasing. What could be the reason behind this spike?

Dharavi is a unique case.



Varsha Gaikwad ■ FILE PHOTO

started to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, we are sending migrants to Rajasthan by bus. Some wanted to go to Tamil Nadu, but sending them by bus is extremely costly. I am repeatedly making the demand that more trains start running from Mumbai. As many migrants as possible should be sent to their home towns, so that there will be less burden on the existing management system like providing food and putting up barricades. It will help us manage the situation better. I had even told the visiting Central team that States, especially Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, should give us permission to send their people home. I had even appealed to the healthy Marathi people from Maharashtra to check the possibility of going back to their native villages. Our aim is to bring Dharavi out of this

disease at the earliest.

Did the State administration fail to anticipate the threat to Dharavi in initial days?

I don't think so. We acted swiftly after the first case. But physical distancing is always the problem and only option I see is to reduce the population load by sending migrant workers to their home towns. Along with a special plan, I have also demanded that an IAS officer be designated for Dharavi to tackle this crisis. BMC officials are already overloaded with work. So we need someone for specific duties like coordinating transfer of workers and food distribution.

Dharavi hosts numerous small scale industries which are hurt due to COVID-19.

What is your roadmap to revive them?

Dharavi is a manufacturing

Pollution watch		
FORECAST TODAY (AQI*)		
Bhandup	60	■
Colaba	31	■
Malad	56	■
Mazagaon	37	■
Worli	45	■
Borivali	60	■
BKC	152	■
Chembur	76	■
Andheri	85	■
Navi Mumbai	68	■

*AIR QUALITY		

How Prashant Nair's latest anthology film, *Tryst With Destiny*, clinched the best screenplay award in the international narrative section

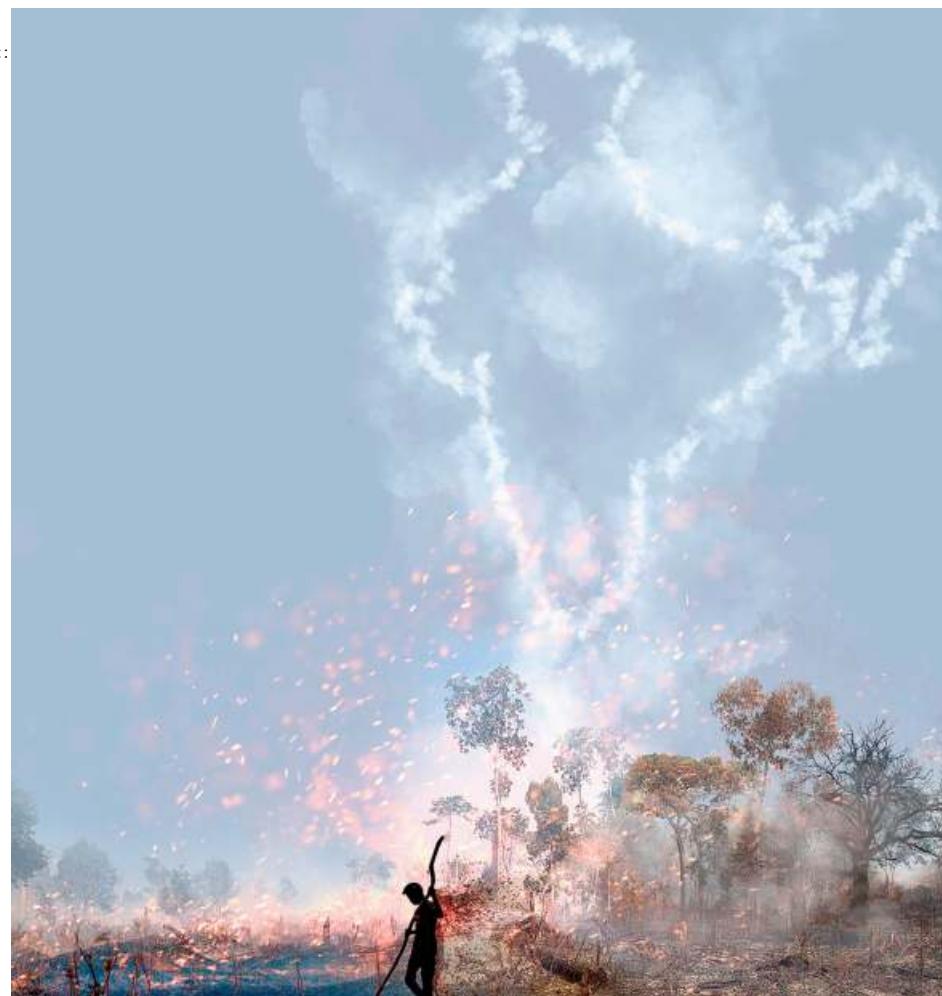
Triumph at Tribeca

■ NAMRATA JOSHI

Prashant Nair remembers visiting Village East Cinema in Manhattan during his engineering days, long before an overwhelming passion for cinema forced him to switch gears to filmmaking. One of New York City's last remaining Yiddish theatre buildings, the landmark has been one of the regular venues for the annual Tribeca Film Festival. It would have meant coming a full circle for Nair then, with his latest feature film, *Tryst With Destiny*, slated to have had its world première at the historic site on April 16 as part of Tribeca's international narrative competition lineup. "I used to frequent the theatre a lot in my early 20s and was excited at the idea of going back there with my own film," he tells us on a phone call from his countryside home in Mallorca island in Spain. That, unfortunately, was not to be in these Covid-19 afflicted times.

Festival circuit

The physical festival may have been cancelled, but the film was screened virtually for the festival jury. It also clinched the best screenplay award in the international narrative section. Jointly produced by Manish Mundra's Drishyam Films and French studio Backup Media, *Tryst With Destiny* was the only Indian film in the Tribeca programme this year. The jury comprised well-known names like Danny Boyle, Demian Bichir, Judith Godreche, Sabine Hoffman and William Hurt. Nair was on his guard the most when it came to Boyle who he says "knows India so well".



Three-in-one (Clockwise from top) The film's poster, a still from the movie and Prashant Nair



ience that taught him all. *Umrika* and *Tryst With Destiny* aside, he has also directed two episodes of Amazon Prime Video's *Made In Heaven*.

Back to 1947

A triptych with three sets of stories and characters, *Tryst With Destiny*'s roots lie in the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's landmark speech of 1947 on the eve of India's Independence (incidentally, Nair's first child was born on 14/11, Nehru's birthday, while he working on this film).

"I was moved by the promises made in the seminal speeches,

frustrated with several things and was evaluating how far we have come from the goals that we had set for ourselves," he says. The anthology film explores the inequalities endemic in our society, across the entire spectrum, financial and social, in matters of class, caste, gender, race.

One of them is about a billionaire in Mumbai who realises that money can't buy him everything. Then there is one about a lower-caste couple in rural Uttar Pradesh attempting to rebuild their lives, and the third is centred on a corrupt Mumbai cop trying to make his mistress' demand come true. All of them are seeking a better life, and each story also focusses on one colour of the Indian tricolour.

Nair, who started shooting the film in late 2018 has a strong ensemble of actors on board - Ashish Vidyarthi, Suhasini Maniratnam, Victor Banerjee, Lilette Dubey, Jaideep Ahlawat, Palomi Ghosh, among others. "Each story is provocative, and I was looking at generating discussion around the ideas. It was challenging for the actors as they had to push themselves," he says.

Up next

Coming up next is a web series with Endemol Shine India on the Uphaar Cinema tragedy. He is working on it, far away from the film industry, in Mallorca. Doesn't the distance act as a hurdle? No, he says; it helps him stay happy and content and gives him the freedom to pursue what he wants. Though "at times I miss the feel and energy of Mumbai," he admits. It may have made him miss out on opportunities, the films may have taken longer to make, but there is the quality of life, the green countryside and the beautiful sunsets that he wouldn't trade off for anything.

Though the award has generated buzz for *Tryst With Destiny*, the future, as for everyone now, is looking unclear. "There is no manual to consult... we are waiting to see what happens." Ideally he would like to screen the film in a couple of festivals before public screenings. Most important, however, is a screening for the cast and crew. "Watching your complete film with an audience for the first time is a magical experience," concludes Nair.

Recorded during quarantine

When independent artistes find hope and comfort by producing music in isolation

Spotify advantage
Across genres, from rapper DIVINE's song 'Salaam' (that offers a nuanced look at the crises born from the pandemic in India) to Shillong bluesman Rudy Wallang's 'Deny the Bogeyman' the idea is to raise awareness.

Mumbai-based singer-songwriter Maalavika Manjaka Mali has just released her new song 'Age of Limbo', off her upcoming al-

succour and hope, while praising frontline workers.

Caution to the Wind
While it was inspired by her disturbed state of mind over global strife, the song takes on a different meaning in the current situation.

She sings, "Welcome to the age of limbo, welcome to no man's paradise" over ominous string and synth work. "I wanted people to feel they were stepping into the unknown," she explains. Recently selected amongst 36 global artistes for Spotify's RADAR programme, Mali says, with some amuse-



(Clockwise from left)
Album art for *Sleep*; Aditi Ramesh, Mali; and Sounak Sen Barat •
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND SHWETA SHARMA

ment, "Right now, I have more listeners in Sydney than I do in Chennai, which is my hometown."

Finding joy
Meanwhile, The Bangalore Collective has launched a Hindi and English cover of

Michael Jackson's evergreen hit 'Heal the World.' Spearheaded by DJ Sasha Sammibi, who wrote the lyrics to the Hindi version, it has been produced by Brian C Bangera. Surprisingly, fashion designer Sounak Sen Barat (of House of Three) lends his voice to the Hindi version. While the initial objective was to create their own fund, they now work with the 'Feed the Needy' campaign by the National Restaurant Association of India and the Palresha Charitable Trust.

With a UK tour cancelled and studio time reduced, Mumbai-based singer-song-

writer Aditi Ramesh began (remotely) working on an all-new song, 'Heal'. The wavy track proclaims early on, "If you're hearing this song, you are privileged." Between her Carnatic vocal harmonies, there are very real spoken-word portions about social inequities and how we can take joy in the little things even if we have trouble making rent.

Some self healing
Self-healing is a growing theme among musicians. Pune-based post-rock band Aswekeepsearching surprised fans with a new ambient album called *Sleep*.

Though it was written much before the lockdown, as a means for frontman Uddipan Sarmah to try and recover from mental health struggles, the tender string section-aided album is an enveloping listen that can, in fact, help those messed-up sleep cycles.

Sarmah says, "Mental health and wellness is a serious concern. Most times, we regress inwards and are afraid to express. We made this album with the intent of providing a form of comfort with our music, and we hope it helps anyone in need to, at the very least, sleep peacefully."

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



PIL opposes State plan to place inmates in quarantine in Mahul

State seeks time to reply to plea filed by mother of undertrial at Arthur Road jail

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

The State government on Tuesday sought time till Friday to respond to a plea filed in the Bombay High Court challenging the State's plan to use buildings set apart for the rehabilitation of project affected persons in Mahul as quarantine centres for COVID-19 patients, including 184 positive inmates of Arthur Road Central Jail.

The local arms department of the Mumbai Police has already informed prison authorities that the buildings are unsuitable to quarantine affected inmates.

'Heavily polluted area'

The court was hearing a public interest litigation filed by Sharda Tevar, the mother of an undertrial at Arthur Road jail, and Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan, an NGO working for the rights of the homeless, slum dwellers and marginalised communities.

The plea said Mahul is unsuitable to quarantine COVID-19 patients as the area is



Breathing trouble: Petitioners have said Mahul is unsuitable to quarantine COVID-19 patients as it is heavily polluted due to the presence of industries. ■ FILE PHOTO

heavily polluted due to the presence of industries.

The petition said project affected persons who were rehabilitated in Mahul reported severe respiratory ailments like asthma and tuberculosis, soon after shifting to

the area. The plea said turning buildings in the polluted area into quarantine centres will be counter-productive as COVID-19 patients suffer respiratory problems.

The petition said three judicial forums have de-

clared the area uninhabitable owing to high levels of toxic pollution, and the High Court in September last year restrained the State government from shifting slum dwellers or project affected persons to the area.

BJP changes candidate for Council poll

Munde loyalist Ramesh Karad replaces Dr. Ajit Gopchade in surprise move

ALOK DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

In a surprise move, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday changed one of its four candidates for the May 21 biennial polls to the Maharashtra Legislative Council. The decision comes after it became clear on Monday that the election to the nine seats will be unopposed.

The BJP has asked Dr. Ajit Gopchade to withdraw his nomination to make way for Ramesh Karad as the party's candidate. Mr. Karad had filed his nomination as a dummy candidate on Monday, in the presence of Leader of Opposition in the Council Pravin Darekar.

Dr. Gopchade, who is from Nanded, heads the BJP's State medical cell and was announced as a candidate along with three others on May 8. He had filed his nomination papers the same day along with the other three: Gopichand Padalkar, Pravin Datke and Ranjitsinh Mohite-Patil.

A Lingayat from Nanded, his candidature was seen as the BJP's appreciation of cadre from the community. Mr. Karad and Sandip Lele

Ignored for Council poll, Khadse alleges conspiracy by State BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Eknath Khadse on Tuesday said the party not considering him for the May 21 Legislative Council polls was a conspiracy by certain leaders, and attacked State BJP chief Chandrakant Patil.

The BJP has been keeping Mr. Khadse at an arm's length since 2016, when he was made to resign as minister from the then government headed by Devendra Fadnavis over allegations of corruption.

He was denied a ticket in the Assembly polls last year from his home turf Muktinagar in Jalgaon dis-



Eknath Khadse

trict. Though the BJP fielded his daughter, she lost to a Shiv Sena rebel.

Mr. Khadse had hoped that he would be nominated for one of the four Council seats from the BJP's quota. However, the party did not nominate

him, nor other senior leaders like Pankaja Munde, Vinod Tawde and Chandrashekhar Bawankule.

Most of them are believed to be detractors of Mr. Fadnavis.

"This is a conspiracy against people like me who had served the party for 40 years by four to five State leaders who are misleading the Central leadership," Mr. Khadse said.

He also accused Mr. Patil of reneging on his promise of fielding former Kothrud MLA Medha Patkar in Council polls. She was denied a ticket in the Assembly polls to make way for Mr. Patil to contest from her constituency in Pune.

Mr. Karad and Munde belong, especially after Munde's daughter and former minister Pankaja Munde was denied a nomination for the Council polls.

NCR against Sambit Patra for comments against Nehru, Rajiv

Complaint by Youth Congress official

ALOK DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

A non-cognisable report (NCR) was registered against Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson Sambit Patra on Monday following a complaint filed against him by Maharashtra Youth Congress general secretary Brijkishor Dutt for defaming former prime ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajiv Gandhi, along with the Congress.



Sambit Patra

According to the complaint filed by Mr. Dutt at the Mahatma Phule Chowk Police station in Kalyan, Mr. Patra posted defamatory content against the Congress, Nehru and Rajiv Gandhi on his Twitter account.

The complainant said the tweets in Hindi claimed that "had corona happened at the time of Congress, then there would have been scams worth thousands of crores." "This person has a large number of followers on Twitter. Defaming a party without any evidence or deceased person who cannot counter the allegation is nothing but a criminal act. He not only used the name, but even the photographs of our two deceased leaders," Mr. Dutt said.

The NCR was registered against Mr. Patra under Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code, which stands for punishment for defamation.

"We are determined to take this legal battle to its conclusion. We will not let any person to abuse our leaders or party without legal impact," said Mr. Dutt.

'Uncalled for visit by police shocking'

Activist's wife writes to Parambir Singh

AJEET MAHALE

MUMBAI

Lawyer and activist Susan Abraham has written to Parambir Singh, the Commissioner of Police of Mumbai, expressing anguish over a recent visit by Crime Branch officers to her housing society. Ms. Abraham said in her letter that the officers sought the whereabouts of her husband, activist and writer Vernon Gonsalves, who is lodged at Taloja Jail. She termed the visit uncalled for amid a pandemic.

Ms. Abraham said, "My son Sagar and I were shocked and disturbed at this uncalled for visit at a time when the risk of transmission of COVID-19 between policemen and community members is high. Also, a visit by the police creates a stressful atmosphere in our society, when its members are already battling fears of the pandemic."

Mr. Gonsalves has been charged under sections of

the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act in the Bhima-Koregaon violence case, which is being investigated by the National Investigation Agency. The letter said two police officers visited her housing society on May 11 to make enquiries about the whereabouts of Mr. Gonsalves, who was arrested on August 28, 2018, and has been in judicial custody since then. The letter said his son had to sit for an hour outside the society's gate to record a statement that his father was in jail.

The letter said, "The police department is well aware that I am a practising lawyer and has my contact details. It would have served the purpose of enquiry to simply make a telephone call to me to ask where Vernon Gonsalves is."

She told *The Hindu* that the officers asked questions regarding another case involving Mr. Gonsalves, which was closed in 2013.

However, the order, issued by the Home Department, will come into effect only after guidelines are finalised in the next couple of days, said a senior official. Only those who have a permit for drinking can order home delivery. Liquor shops which have been allowed to reopen since May 5 will be able to take orders on phone, he said.

The decision comes in the wake of crowding outside liquor outlets when they opened early last week following relaxations in lockdown norms.

"The mode of payment has to be decided by the buyer and the seller. A person can order up to 12 IMFL bottles," the official said.

State allows home delivery of liquor; guidelines in two days

Order to come in effect after guidelines are announced

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government on Tuesday allowed home delivery of liquor to avoid crowding at shops amid the lockdown.

Asked about how long this provision would continue in the state, the IAS officer said, "[The] order is valid only till the lockdown period is in force because social gathering is prohibited."

Another IAS officer said, "The service will continue to operate on the lines of e-commerce platforms like Amazon where there will be some delivery charges."



Longer queues: The decision comes after crowding outside liquor outlets when they reopened last week. ■ FILE PHOTO

Two held for gutkha, tobacco smuggling

Truck had 'essential service' pass

GAUTAM S. MENGLE

MUMBAI

The Mumbai Police Crime Branch has busted another smuggling racket, where gutkha and tobacco products were being smuggled in vehicles that had permission to ply for supplying essential commodities. The police have arrested two people and seized contraband worth ₹39 lakh from Kandivali.

According to Crime Branch officers, police inspector Chimaji Adhav, in-charge of Unit XI, received a tip-off about the racket and laid a trap at Hindustan Na-ka on MG Road.

They intercepted an Ashok Leyland truck, which had a pass on its wind shield, allowing it to ply with essential supplies, on Monday. "However, a search revealed that it was carrying 18 jute sacks filled with gutkha and paan masala, worth ₹39.65 lakh," a Crime Branch officer said.

Inquiries indicate that they were supplying the contraband to retailers who were selling it despite the lockdown

CRIME BRANCH OFFICER

The officer said the driver of the truck, Musahid Sheikh (33), and cleaner, Amanullah Khan (25), were arrested.

"Inquiries indicate that they were supplying the contraband to retailers who were selling it despite the lockdown. Mr. Sheikh himself owns a paan-supperi shop in Malwan and we suspect he was using his network in the industry to procure and sell the contraband," the police officer said.

The duo have been charged with the Food Safety and Standards Act and the Disaster Management Act, and remanded in police custody till May 16.

18 more held in Palghar lynching case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Eighteen more people have been arrested by the State Crime Investigation Department (CID) in the Palghar lynching case, officials said on Tuesday.

The CID is investigating the incident in which three people, including two religious leaders and their driver, were lynched in Gadhinchile village in Palghar district on April 16.

With the latest arrests, the number of those held in connection with the case has gone up to 134. These include 24 arrested so far by the CID after it was handed over the case, a senior official from the agency said.

All those arrested by the CID were "actively involved in the violence and lynching", another official from the CID said.

Earlier, 110 people, including nine juveniles, had been taken into custody by the Palghar Police in the lynching case.

Lockdown leaves patients struggling for medical care in U.P.'s Sitapur

Doctors not always available due to COVID-19 duties; people forced to walk several kilometres for treatment; patients referred to Lucknow in absence of services

OMAR RASHID SITAPUR

It's around 3 p.m. and patients accompanied by their kin continue to trickle into the district hospital in Sitapur. Several police guards are stationed at the gate but no thermal screening is done for visitors. At the hospital, only the emergency services are running.

Some patients arrive in ambulances. At the entrance to the main hospital building, Nandlal Prajapati and a relative push a wheeled stretcher bearing his brother towards an ambulance.

The patient is suffering with an abdominal lump and has been referred to the Medical College in Lucknow, 90 km away.

This is the second time that

Mr. Prajapati's brother is set to be transferred to another hospital during the lockdown. A migrant worker in Delhi, he was brought to Sitapur in an ambulance after doctors in the national capital refused to operate on him as his family was not around. They could not travel to Delhi.

"He was brought home in an ambulance. Here [district hospital] they are telling us they can't treat him," said Mr. Prajapati.

He said the hospital told him there were not enough beds to admit his brother. Several other patients, including a father-son duo who had suffered injuries after a roof collapsed on them, narrated similar stories of being referred to Lucknow for treatment that they had expected to get at

the district hospital.

In another corner of the hospital compound, which was built in 1886, Kamruddin and his family are sitting under a tree, their heads bowed in grief.

A few hours earlier, his mother Raessa died of internal injuries she suffered after being run over by a tractor trolley in a field.

On Sunday evening, when a heavy thunderstorm hit parts of Uttar Pradesh, Mr. Kamruddin's mother was out visiting the family's goats as they grazed. Mr. Kamruddin alleged that after spending a night in the hospital when he stepped out for a cup of tea at 6 a.m., he was not allowed to re-enter the premises till 11 a.m., ostensibly to comply with social distancing



A family carries a patient on a stretcher before he is transferred to an ambulance. ■ OMAR RASHID

norms. His mother reportedly died at 8 a.m. Mr. Kamruddin alleged that the hospital lacked proper medical facilities. "You can complain as much as you want, but nothing happens," he said.

As he was speaking, Shubham Shukla, a student whose

family owned the tractor that hit Mr. Kamruddin's mother, tried to defend the hospital. He said the woman was provided all possible emergency services but was too badly injured to survive.

The lockdown curbs have compounded the problems of

the locals. Doctors are not always available at the community health centres due to COVID-19 duties, and residents, especially those from rural areas, are facing logistical inconvenience due to the travel restrictions.

Logistical inconvenience

A few metres away, Ram Het, his wife Neelam and her mother-in-law are sitting on benches, waiting for a motorcycle to arrive and take them home to Sarda, 50 km away. Neelam fell unconscious a few days ago following which she was brought to the district hospital in an ambulance. Her CT scan report came out fine, providing relief to the family. However, the family's journey back home appears cumbersome in absence of public

transport. "The bike will have to make two trips to take all of us. So I will call another bike. Till it arrives, I will walk," said Ram.

Many patients are even being forced to walk a few miles in the sun if their hospital is in the containment zone. A week ago, Shamsuddin's wife fell from the roof and fractured her hip. She was rushed to the district hospital from Khairabad, a sealed hotspot, in an ambulance.

"I have not been home for eight days. There is nobody else to stay here with her. They are not allowed to leave their area," he said.

The sealing of Khairabad has led to problems for many locals, including Rajendra Kumar, who runs a licensed medical shop in a village 6.5

km away. He is forced to travel 14 km to the district headquarters on a bicycle to get his supplies of medicines.

District Hospital Superintendent Ajay Shukla dismissed allegations and complaints by patients that they were being turned away and referred to Lucknow unnecessarily. "We are not rejecting anyone. We only refer those with neurological problems or those who cannot be treated here," he said.

When asked why there was no thermal screening at the hospital, he said only those people who came and reported that they were feverish were being screened. "This can't be done for everyone. It is for those people who are coming from outside," he said.

Opposition takes Punjab govt. to task

Congress MP Partap Bajwa seeks a probe into 'liquor mafia'

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

Amid the ongoing stand-off between Ministers and Chief Secretary Karan Avtar Singh in Punjab, not only the Opposition but even a Congress leader on Tuesday took the government to task by pointing fingers at the prevalence of "liquor mafia" in the State.

While the former Deputy Chief Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal said that the "ministers-bureaucrat con-

frontation" has led to a complete administrative paralysis in the State, Congress Member of Parliament Partap Singh Bajwa asked Chief Minister Amarinder Singh to initiate a probe into the allegations over "liquor mafia".

"Punjab government is at war with itself, leading to an utter collapse of the government machinery," said Mr. Badal.

He said, "...at the core of this collapse is a fight over grabbing liquor mafia benefits. Ministers should stop making a laughing stock of themselves by refusing to sit with this or that officer and come clean on what exactly is their complaint against the officer. But the issue seems

to be much more than ego. It is about corruption."

Mr. Bajwa took to Twitter on the issue and asked the Chief Minister to initiate an inquiry.

"Given that the Govt has constantly failed in meeting the Excise Deptt.'s revenue targets, the only answer is that there is something wrong within the Department. I fear a Govt-Contractor nexus has formed and this must be probed immediately," he added.

Aam Aadmi Party State president and MP Bhagwant Mann hit out at the Chief Minister, who, he alleged, was acting like a mute spectator in this hour of crisis looming large on the State leadership.

Many ice cream vendors battle hunger due to lockdown

SIDHARTH YADAV
INDORE

Unsure if the lockdown will ever be lifted, Suresh Chandra Rawat is driving his place of work back home in Rajasthan. Once a cherished dream, the *kulfati* counter, occupying half of the modified pick-up truck, is more of a white elephant now. His wife and daughter barely manage to slide behind the counter, atop which the helper is perched precariously.

"We were left with nothing to eat in Pune. So, we had to leave," said Mr. Rawat, 22, headed for Chittorgarh. "I sent my parents money. This time, I had to ask them for ₹7,000 to buy food and pay for diesel and toll tax," added Mr. Rawat, unsure of making it home with ₹1,500 left for the remaining journey from Indore.

Seated next to Mr. Rawat, who made around ₹2,500 a day, is Durgalal Kharol, who made ₹400 a day selling ice

cream. "2020 toh poora gaya (2020 is gone entirely)," he said morosely. The increased demand in the summer offered them an opportunity to make the yearly trip.

On the Mumbai-Agra highway are scores of ice cream and *kulfati* vendors from Rajasthan, who've lost out on a year's earning owing to the lockdown.

Only at roadside eateries offering food free do workers disgorge. And at one such eatery in Dhule in Maharashtra, the parked pick-up truck bearing the initials 'RJ', for Rajasthan, gave Mr. Kharol, 37, some hope. He had started walking back to Bilwara a week ago with his younger brother, who now sits at the

counter's edge in the truck.

"After registering with the local authorities in PUNE for transport back home, we waited for 10 days," said Mr. Kharol, who entrusted his cart to his landlord. "I told him I will return. There is no work back home."

However, Mr. Rawat will take to farming until next summer. "My earnings have been on the wane. Last year, we were shooed away from there. Now six-seven new vendors have come in my area. And now we face the lockdown," he said. Hoping to repay debt, his father had landed in PUNE seven years ago and bought a push-cart for ₹1,000. A part of the debt is still outstanding.

BJP leaders allege mismanagement in Meerut

'Patients are avoiding going to hospital because of lack of treatment and sanitation facilities'

ANUJ KUMAR
GHAZIABAD

With the cases of COVID-19 rising in western Uttar Pradesh, local BJP leaders are complaining against the local administration for mismanagement. After Agra Mayor Naveen Jain wrote to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Raja Sabha member Kanta Kardam has raised the issue of negligence in Meerut's Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial Hospital, in a letter written to the CM.

She said that patients were avoiding getting admitted because of lack of treatment, food, and sanitation facilities

in the hospital. She lamented the rising number of deaths in the district, including that of a BJP worker.

She added that in certain markets such as Delhi Road, Naveen Mandi and Lohiya Nagar, people didn't seem to have fear of getting infected despite a spike in the number of cases and the administration was not ensuring proper testing in those areas.

She also demanded closure of wine shops as the district was in the red zone and social distancing was not being followed at these outlets. A similar demand was made by Sahibabad MLA Sunil Ku-

mar Sharma. In a letter addressed to the CM, he demanded that if it was necessary to open wine shops, a COVID tax should be levied on liquor and it should be supplied only online.

Free hand to officials'

Sources in the party said that some leaders were agitated that the government was not listening to the party's voices on the ground and had given the bureaucracy a free hand. "Opening the wine shops and letting labourers walk is not good for the party's image," said a source requesting anonymity. "People would soon

start saying that the BJP is no different from other parties," he said.

On Tuesday, the video of a member of BJP's district committee Deepak Sharma went viral where he made allegations of corruption against the District Magistrate. A local journalist said one had to see who were raising the voice. "They could be those who had not been given their 'cut'."

Ms. Kardam told *The Hindu* that there was no division in the party. "We are fighting the battle against COVID together. Unlike the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj

Party, our cadre is working on the ground. However, there are certain officials

+ who are still living in the past and are not able to put the message of Narendra Modi and Yogi Adityanath into practice. I wanted to highlight the gaps in the process and the CM has taken note of my letter."

The party's U.P. vice-president said one could not control the virus but one could certainly provide proper facilities to the infected persons. "We can certainly prevent people from dying because of the virus by timely intervention."

Brawl over toilet use triggers violence in Hooghly district

SUVAJIT BAGCHI
KOLKATA

Communal violence, triggered by a minor brawl over use of a public toilet during the lockdown, has spread in parts of Hooghly district. On Wednesday, violence erupted in Bhadrashwar and bombs were sporadically hurled. A retired jute mill worker Sekh Shamsuddin, however, said that in Bhadrashwar, on the western bank of river Hooghly, they were protected by "Hindu brothers."

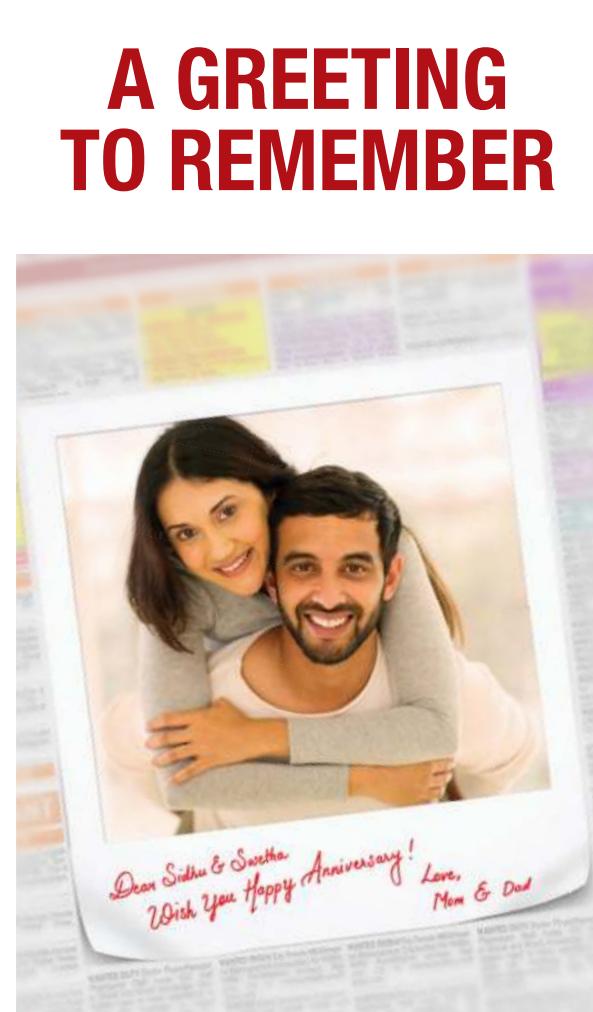
"Some men came from outside and attacked our houses, but the Goalas (mill traders) community, our neighbours, came out spoke to them and sent them back," Mr. Shamsuddin told *The Hindu*. Rajkumar Roy, a neighbour of Mr. Shamsuddin, said that those who came to "create a disturbance were outsiders who were not allowed to mobilise in the area."

He, however, indicated that the incident was "small".

But it was not as small about a kilometre further north in Telinipara, closer to the river. In Telinipara, tension started building since Monday evening as some members of a community were stopped from visiting a public toilet, fearing spread of the virus. Some locals argued that one family in the area was affected and thus the access to the toilet was blocked. The other community protested, resulting in a scuffle, locals said.

"Soon after clashes were reported, bombs were hurled, a few shops vandalised, vehicles set on fire. Thankfully No one was killed or even very severely injured," a policeman said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee issued a warning on Wednesday while blaming the Bharatiya Janata Party's leaders for the provocation.



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**OBITUARY &
REMEMBRANCE**

**DEATH
OBITUARY**

Shri V. S. Hariharan (Raasappan)
Attained Sivaloka Prapthi on
9th May 2020 in Chennai
Further details will be conducted when
COVID restrictions ease up.
Deeply mourned by
Wife - Indra, daughters Sangetha and
Sowmya & many loved ones.
Phone: +91 96653 88800

CM



People holding a candlelight vigil to express solidarity with the victims of gas leak in Visakhapatnam. ■ C.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

APPCB faces flak for ‘misleading’ press note

Regulator failed to do its job: activists

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

VISAKHAPATNAM
The Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB) has come under fire from several quarters over a ‘misleading’ press note it issued in the wake of the gas leak at LG Polymers.

A group of scientists and social activists criticised the APPCB over its stand on granting clearances to various industries, including LG Polymers.

An outfit, Scientists for People, said it was shocked to see the contents of the press release issued by the Regional Office of the APPCB in Visakhapatnam. “It is more in the tone of excuses reeled out by a student for not doing his homework. It is a highly irresponsible denial of responsibility vested in them to protect the environment and people,” the organisation said.

In a strongly worded response, former union secretary E.A.S. Sarma said the APPCB tried to absolve itself of any involvement in industrial units obtaining Environment Clearance (EC) under the Environment (Protection) Act, by saying that ECs for Category-A projects were issued by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests and ECs for Category-B projects by the State Expert Appraisal Com-

mittee (SEAC)/State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA).

“The APPCB should not have suppressed the fact that it acts as the Member-Secretary of SEAC and supports both SEAC and SEIAA,” Mr. Sarma said.

“Consent for Establishment [CFE] and Consent for Operation [CFO] cannot be given to unit without an Environmental Clearance [EC].”

“The consents handed out by the APPCB to LG Polymers are patently illegal. It is an imprudent attempt by the PCB to absolve itself of any responsibility for the disaster of May 7,” said V.S. Krishna of the Human Rights Forum.

Shifting of gas
Meanwhile, a special chemical team from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Pune, headed by Commandant Anupam Srivastava, is monitoring the shifting of styrene gas from the LG Polymers plant in Visakhapatnam.

NDRF 10th Battalion Commandant Zahid Khan told *The Hindu* on Tuesday that the gas tragedy was a major operation ever handled by the force in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu in the last few years. (With inputs from Vijayawada Bureau)

Three die of infection in Telangana, A.P.

Southern States focus on tests for migrants as thousands arrive in native districts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU
Two deaths and 51 fresh cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Telangana. Andhra Pradesh reported one more COVID-19 death and 71 fresh cases on Tuesday.

Karnataka witnessed a record increase of 63 fresh cases raising the State's tally of cases to 925.

The case total in Karnataka includes 31 COVID deaths, one non-COVID death and 433 discharged persons. Of the 460 active cases, 449 patients were stable and 11 in the ICU.

Primary and Secondary Education Minister Suresh Kumar, the COVID spokesperson, said all the Deputy Commissioners had prior information about inter-state returnees and they had been quarantined and tested.

With most people violating home quarantine, the government had decided to quarantine arrivals from other States and countries in institutional facilities.

The State Health Department issued a circular to isolate all COVID-19 suspected cases whose tests were inconclusive in isolation wards of dedicated Health Centers, till their repeat test result was known. They should not be kept in dedicated COVID hospitals, the circular stated.

In Andhra Pradesh 58 fresh cases were linked to hotspots in other States, the Health Department said.

Of the fresh cases, only 13 were due to local transmission.

Also, 930 migrant labourers returned from Kalyan near Mumbai and they transited Guntakal railway station en route to Kurnool, Nellore (9) and East Godavari

(1) were linked to the Koyambudlu market in Chennai. The remaining fresh cases were in Krishna (4) where a patient died, and Kurnool (9).

Of 63 cases, 33 had a history of travel to Ahmedabad and six to Mumbai - both COVID hotspots. In the last three days, 51 people who came from Ahmedabad tested positive. Of the three from Kolar, two visited Orissa and one, Chennai.

Out of four patients from Bengaluru, three were women from Padarayanapura, contacts of a previously infected patient. However, the source of infection in a 35-old-year male was unknown.

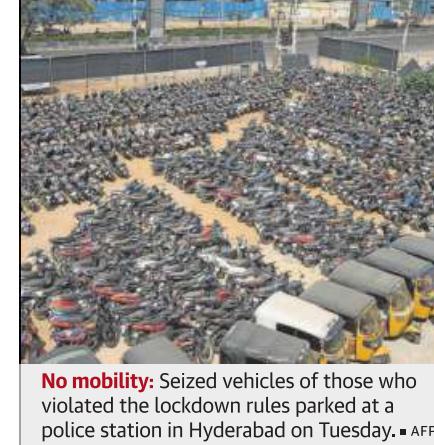
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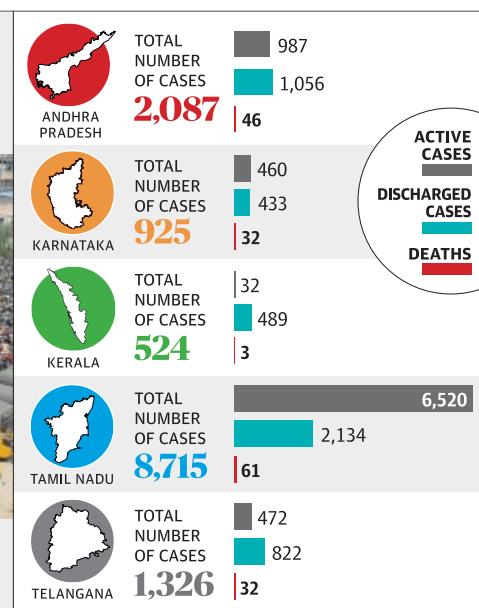
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Strict measures

The Telangana government is striving hard to make people follow rules and stay indoors to contain the spread of COVID-19



No mobility: Seized vehicles of those who violated the lockdown rules parked at a police station in Hyderabad on Tuesday. ■ AFP



approval for a clinical trial on plasma therapy.

Kerala was entering a new phase of COVID-19 containment as it grappled with the influx of non-resident Keralites from places where the disease transmission was intense. The situation could alter the dynamics of the epidemic. Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, said on Tuesday.

Five new cases were reported in Kerala, four of whom had come from the Gulf sector, while one had returned home from Chennai.

Three of these cases were at Malappuram and one each at Pathanamthitta and Kottayam.

In Telangana, two deaths and 51 fresh cases took the number of cases to 1,326.

With two deaths, the number of people who succumbed rose to 32, a bulletin said.

“We are testing all incoming persons especially those from Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat. So far about 8,000 have been tested,” he said. Plasma was being collected from patients in SVIMS, Tirupati and Kurnool GGH and AIIMS, Mangalagiri had received in-principle ap-

proval for a clinical trial on plasma therapy.

Among migrant labourers who returned to Vizianagaram and Srikakulam district, only a few positive cases were reported, he said.

“We are testing all incoming persons especially those from Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat. So far about 8,000 have been tested,” he said. Plasma was being collected from patients in SVIMS, Tirupati and Kurnool GGH and AIIMS, Mangalagiri had received in-principle ap-

proval for a clinical trial on plasma therapy.

Further, with bodies such as the Karnataka Employers' Association seeking a change in the Labour Department, the same person heading two departments will not lead to a congenial atmosphere.

‘Same person heading Industries & Labour Depts. is conflict of interest’

Presently, Industries Department is pushing for changes in labour laws, which Labour Department has opposed

SHARATH S. SRIVATS

BENGALURU

At a time when crucial labour laws in Karnataka are being looked into, the government's decision to put Principal Secretary, Commerce and Industries (MSME and Mines), M. Maheshwara Rao in concurrent charge as Labour Secretary has raised eyebrows. Trade unions are terming it conflict of interest.

Over the last fortnight, the Industries Department has been pushing for changes, which the Labour Depart-

ment has opposed so far. Under discussion are the crucial Factories Act, the Industrial Disputes Act, the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, and the Minimum Wages Act.

As MSME and Mines Principal Secretary, Mr. Rao suggested changes in the Factories Act to increase working hours per shift from the current 8 to 12 in line with the decision taken in Gujarat. He also sought postponement of implementation by one year of the revision notified under



Maheshwara Rao

the Minimum Wages Act, which was to have come into force from April 2020. Further, the MSME and Mines section in the Commerce and In-

dustries Department has sought exemption from paying rise in variable dearness allowance in wages during 2020-21 and defer the payment of PF and ESI contribution for three months. All these were termed to be anti-labour and opposed by the trade unions.

Changes opposed
In contrast with Mr. Rao's proposals, the Labour Department that he heads now, in a note put out recently, said if industries were given

exemptions, workers would be denied their legitimate facilities. The Labour Department studied the U.P. model of three years holiday, which is being considered in Karnataka, and said the proposal to provide would mean the workforce would be denied facilities. It wanted to discuss the matter with stakeholders before taking a decision.

M. Sathyanaanda, AITUC secretary, Bengaluru, said: “This is a clear case of conflict of interest. The Industries Department has put up

its wishlist. In industrial relations, the capital and wage are always in conflict and a tripartite mechanism is its cornerstone. With the same person now heading the Industries and Labour departments, it is not possible to have an unbiased view.”

Further, with bodies such as the Karnataka Employers' Association seeking a change in the Labour Department, the same person heading two departments will not lead to a congenial atmosphere.

Migrant workers from T.N. reach Srikakulam and Vizianagaram

The 926 workers have been sent to quarantine centres

STAFF REPORTER

SRIKAKULAM

With the operation of ‘Shramik Special’ trains, migrant labourers reached Andhra Pradesh from different parts of the country, including Tamil Nadu. As many as 889 labourers belonging to Srikakulam district and 37 from Vizianagaram district arrived at the Srikakulam railway station in the early hours of Tuesday.

Srikakulam in-charge Revenue Divisional Officer R. Ganapati and other officials received the workers. Later, buses were arranged to send them to various quarantine centres.

Mr. Ganapati said COVID-19 tests would be conducted on all the workers.

Srikakulam Collector J. Nivas directed the officials to follow the COVID-19 proto-



Back home: Labourers who arrived from Tamil Nadu at the Srikakulam station on Tuesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

col in letter and spirit since many of the migrant workers could have been affected by the virus.

Vizianagaram Deputy Collector for Land Acquisition Salman Raju welcomed the labourers and arranged special buses to take them to the

Parvatiapuram quarantine centre. “The cooperation of the labourers was sought to follow the COVID-19 protocol for their own safety and others staying in the quarantine centres,” he said.

(With inputs from Vizianagaram)

INS Magar arrives from Male with 202 evacuees

They included 91 people from Kerala

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI

INS Magar, carrying 202 Indians from the Maldives, arrived at the Kochi port a little before 5.45 p.m. on Tuesday as part of Operation Samudra Setu.

INS Magar, based at the Southern Naval Command in Kochi, is the second ship to repatriate stranded Indians from the Maldives. INS Jalashwa had brought 698 people on Sunday and is set to evacuate another batch of around 700 people on May 15.

Those who came on INS Magar included 91 people from Kerala, 83 from Tamil Nadu and 28 people from 13 other States and Union Territories.

The vessel is berthed at the BTP jetty of the Cochin Port Trust and the disembarkation procedures, in-

cluding examination and clearance by the Port Health Organisation, Customs and Immigration, were being carried out inside the terminal, said a communication from the Port Trust. Those with COVID-19 symptoms would be taken to the Karuvellipady Taluk Hospital or Government Medical College Hospital, Ernakulam, for treatment.

Meanwhile, Air India Express flight AI 1924 from Dammam landed at the Cochin international airport at 8.05 p.m. on Tuesday with 174 passengers.

Another flight, IX 485 from Singapore, is scheduled to land at 10.50 p.m.

An Air India flight, B777-300ER, carrying 180 expatriates from Dubai arrived at the Kannur international airport at 7.42 p.m. on Tuesday.

NIT-K develops low-cost, reusable face shield
It costs only ₹12 to make such a shield



Cheap and durable: A person wearing the face shield developed by NITK Surathkal. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The National Institute of Technology-Karnataka (NIT-K), Surathkal, has developed an economical, reusable and transparent face shield using locally available low-cost material to fight against COVID-19.

According to Arun M. Isloor, Professor and Head, Department of Chemistry at the institute, the production cost of each face shield will be a maximum of ₹ 12.

Mr. Isloor who supervised a team of volunteers who prepared the shield at the institute said that the Director of the institute K. Uma Ma-

shewar Rao handed over 300 such face shields to Sindhur B. Rupesh, Deputy Commissioner of Dakshina Kannada on Saturday. He said that during mid-March he saw his Malaysian collaborators wearing face shields made of an elastic band, which was not only expensive but inconvenient for long-time wearing. One evening he observed his son playing with his yoga mat, which made him to think that it can be used for making the face shield.

One of the important reasons for the rapid spread of the COVID-19 across the globe is lack of availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). The PPEs are out of reach of the common people due to high cost and limited supply, he said.

Kerala coir body plans to launch COVID mat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ALAPPUZHA

In a bid to prevent pathogens from entering houses, offices, shops, and institutions, the Kerala State Coir Corporation will soon launch ‘COVID Mat’ (disinfecting floor mat).

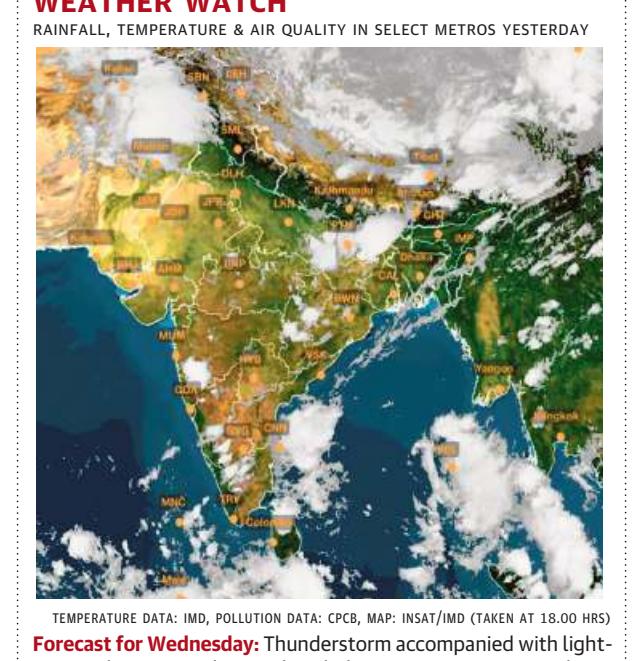
Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac said the mat would be made available across the country.

The new product is set to give a fresh lease of life to the coir industry, which is reeling under the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown.

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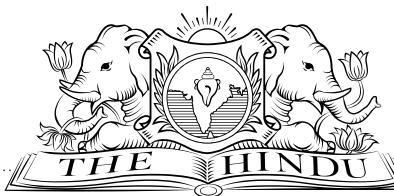
The new product is set to give a fresh lease of life to the coir industry, which is reeling under the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown.

WEATHER WATCH



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)
Forecast for Wednesday: Thunderstorm accompanied by lightning and gusty winds at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, east Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, east Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gangetic West Bengal, Odisha and Lakshadweep.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN



Perilous state

The Centre needs to help States financially so that they can fight the virus better

State finances are in a shambles. Every single State's, without exception, though the degree may vary. The COVID-19-induced lockdown has dealt State finances a triple whammy. Their own revenue sources – mainly from liquor sales, stamp duty from property transactions and sales tax on petroleum products – that account for half their total revenues, have collapsed. And their expenditure such as on interest payments, social sector schemes and staff salaries remains unchanged. Worse, they are now called upon to spend more on beefing up their health infrastructure and on COVID-19 measures, including testing, treatment and quarantining. So, it is not surprising that all of them, including the gold standard ones such as Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, are now pleading for funding support from the Centre and relaxation in borrowing rules by the RBI. And the Centre has been watching silently even as some States have gone ahead and cut salaries of their employees and pension benefits to rein in expenses.

It could be argued that by seeking consecutive extensions of the lockdown, which imposes tremendous strain on not just their finances but also that of the Centre, the States are wrong in their approach. Are they taking the easy option by seeking extensions and simultaneously demanding financial support from the Centre? Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Maharashtra, in their desperation, commenced liquor sales with outlets flouting all physical distancing norms. The fear is that this could seed fresh infections. The Centre is itself not in a happy place financially. But it at least has the means to replenish its finances through conventional and unconventional means. For instance, it appropriated almost all of the benefit of falling oil prices through increase in duties – ₹13 a litre on petrol and ₹16 a litre on diesel – in two tranches in March and again, last week. It recently announced an increase in its borrowing by half for this fiscal. The burden is on the Centre to find the resources to immediately release the dues of the States and also reimburse them for their COVID-19-related expenses. It should seriously consider relaxing the fiscal deficit levels of the States from the current 3% level to at least 4.5%, just as it should relax its own level too. The States should at least be able to borrow more. The Centre should also give States the freedom to restart economic activity based on their own assessment. Not all States are in the same virus-spread position and within each State, not all districts are the same. This has to be acknowledged while planning a phased lifting of the lockdown. Greater leeway in restarting economic activity will relieve some of the financial stress, not just on the States but also on the Centre.

Indelicate imbalance

By deferring again to the executive on Kashmir, the SC is abdicating judicial responsibility

The Supreme Court has failed to discharge a judicial duty it was called upon to perform. Its decision to send the question of restoring 4G connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir for a review to the very authorities who imposed the restriction in the first place is a clear abdication of responsibility. The mandate that the Court enjoys under Article 32 of the Constitution – to enforce fundamental rights – cannot be transferred to the executive. It is quite stark that the three-member Bench has resorted to this measure despite coming to the conclusion that the grievance of the petitioners merits consideration. The judgment is in consonance with a judicial trend that seeks ‘balance’ between rights and ‘national security’. In the J&K context, this approach inevitably results in unquestioning deference to any claim that the executive makes without scrutinising the nature and quality of the claim. The Court has not even pursued the attempt it made in *Anuradha Bhasin*, to lay down a set of rules by which authorities seeking to impose restrictions on fundamental rights must adhere to the doctrine of proportionality. In that case decided in January, the Court refrained from taking any view on the legality of the government’s imposition of a blanket communication lockdown in J&K in the wake of the abrogation of the special status enjoyed till then by the erstwhile State. However, it held that repeated resort to Section 144 of the CrPC to impose wide restrictions without territorial or temporal limits was unacceptable. It directed the authorities to review each one of them from time to time. In the present case, it has asked two Secretaries in the Union government and the J&K Chief Secretary to consider the case made out by the petitioners for restoring 4G services.

The Court acknowledges that it might be better and convenient to have better Internet facilities during a global pandemic and a national lockdown. It also notes that the entire Union Territory has been put under curbs that allow only 2G speed. However, it takes into account two claims by the government: one, that there ought to be limits on data speed to prevent terrorists misusing it to disturb peace and tranquillity; and two, that there has been a spike in incidents of terrorism – 108 incidents, in fact, between August 5, 2019 and April 25, 2020 – in the area. The Court also considered recent incidents including the encounter at Handwara. A question that it failed to ask was how these incidents could be linked to Internet speed when all of them took place while severe restrictions were in place. Without a judicial standard to scrutinise claims made in the name of national security, is it right to use them to dislodge fundamental rights? Further, the institutional discrimination against J&K that this approach causes is not taken into account at all. The delicate balancing the Court attempts is, in fact, no balance at all.

Getting cash transfers out of a JAM

For effective cash relief in response to the COVID-19 crisis, the government must think beyond the Jan Dhan Yojana



JEAN DREZE & REETIKA KHERA

For some years now, the so-called JAM trinity (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) has been propounded as a dream cash-transfer infrastructure for India. The term “trinity” itself gives a sense of the faith and fervour this project sought to inspire (why not “trio”?). It was born in chapter 3 of the Economic Survey 2015, titled “Wiping every tear from every eye: The JAM number trinity solution”. This early JAM promo humbly concluded that “nirvana today seems within reach”. JAM’s virtues were praised again in the following year’s Economic Survey.

An illusion and its fading

What JAM really means, in practical terms, is conveniently vague. The original formulation, in 2015, mentioned two possible incarnations of the trinity: mobile banking and post office payments. The second option never made much headway, perhaps because it did not have enough scope for private profit. So Aadhaar-enabled mobile banking became the supreme goal. In 2017, NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant predicted the imminent demise of all cash-transfer paraphernalia other than mobiles: “... in the next two-and-a-half years, India will make all its debit cards, credit cards, all ATM machines all POS machines totally irrelevant... because every Indian will be doing his transaction just by using his thumb in thirty seconds ...” This utopia was happily embraced by a familiar bandwagon of Aadhaar champions, fintech companies

and embedded economists.

The intoxication reached new heights as the JAM project latched on to another flourishing narrative – universal basic income (UBI). If you want to make cash transfers to everyone, what better platform can you have than Aadhaar, India’s unique biometric ID, doubling up as a financial address? An illusion emerged that India had developed an ideal infrastructure for UBI, ready to be deployed at any time.

It took the novel coronavirus crisis for the bubble to burst. In the early days of the crisis, JAM was often invoked as a possible tool of emergency relief. But when the time actually came to make cash transfers to the poor, JAM turned out to be of little use. For all the excitement it had generated, JAM had not gone beyond some fancy digital-payment systems for the privileged. Poor people, far from using the “thumb in thirty seconds” method to cash in, were still running from pillar to post to collect their meagre benefits from old-fashioned bank accounts (some also use the services of “business correspondents”, but those have little to do with JAM). Sure enough, long bank queues have started emerging, especially in rural areas where the density of banks is relatively low. The crowds are all set to swell further as and when the lockdown is lifted.

JAM enthusiasts may respond that the central government’s relief package does rely on Jan Dhan Yojana (JDY) – at least the J in the JAM, if not the entire trinity. Indeed, the lead cash-relief measure in the national relief package consists of monthly transfers of ₹500 to women’s JDY accounts. But is that a good idea?

One way to think about this is to compare women’s JDY accounts with another possible basis for cash transfers, at least in rural



areas: the list of households that have a National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) job card. The numbers of accounts are roughly comparable: about 14 crore for NREGA job cards, and 12 crore or so for women’s JDY accounts in rural and semi-urban areas. For purposes of cash relief, the JDY approach turns out to fare poorly on several counts.

Errors galore

First, JDY accounts are a mighty mess – the NREGA job-cards list is far more transparent and well-organised. During the frantic initial JDY wave, in 2014-15, banks opened JDY accounts en masse to meet the targets. Banking norms went for a toss: many accounts were opened without informed consent, duplicate accounts flourished, Aadhaar numbers were seeded without any safeguards, and so on. Later on, a large proportion of JDY accounts (40% in March 2017, down to 19% in January 2020) went “dormant” as customers were unable or unwilling to use them. Other accounts were blocked because the account holders were unable to complete timely ex-post biometric authentication (“e-KYC”) of the Aadhaar numbers that had been seeded into their accounts. It is not clear what proportion of JDY accounts are operational today, in the sense that a bank transfer to these accounts will actually reach the recipient.

pient in good time.

Second, cash transfers to women’s JDY accounts are likely to involve large exclusion errors. According to a recent Yale study, less than half of poor adult women have a JDY account. Consistent with this, a Dalberg study for 10 States finds that the proportion of poor households where at least one adult woman has a JDY account is just 57%. The NREGA job-card list is likely to have much better coverage of poor households. The natural complementarity between NREGA and social security pensions (covering more than four crore persons under the National Social Assistance Programme alone) would further help to reduce exclusion errors.

Third, inclusion errors are also likely to be larger in the JDY approach. Job cards are meant for rural workers, JDY accounts are for everyone. National Election Studies 2019 data show that JDY beneficiaries tend to be better-off than NREGA beneficiaries. Earlier survey data, analysed by Manuela Kristin Günther, suggest that the probability of having a JDY account is more or less the same for poor and non-poor households. Some of our middle-class female friends have already received SMS alerts informing them that their JDY account has been credited with ₹500 of relief money.

Back to cash in hand?

What about the respective reliability of NREGA and JDY payments? There have been significant issues (e.g. delayed, rejected, blocked or diverted payments) with NREGA payments, often related to Aadhaar. But then, numerous “direct benefit transfer” schemes (social security pensions, scholarships, maternity benefits, among others) have faced similar problems, also reflected in official transaction da-

ta. Both the Aadhaar Payment Bridge System (APBS) and the Aadhaar-Enabled Payment System (AePS) are shot through with technical glitches, possibly exacerbated by the recent surge in transactions, and especially unknd to the powerless. Transfers to women’s JDY accounts are unlikely to be more reliable than transfers to job-card holders.

In fact, as far as effective payment is concerned, there is a further argument in favour of the NREGA job-cards list: unlike JDY accounts, it lends itself to the “cash-in-hand” method (on-the-spot payment in cash, instead of bank payments) as a possible fallback. The reason is that the job-cards list is a transparent, recursive household list with village and gram panchayat identifiers. Cash-in-hand may seem like the antithesis of JAM, but this option may become important in the near future if the banking system comes under further stress. There are precedents of effective use of the cash-in-hand method, notably in Odisha for pension payments and in various States for NREGA wage payments. Several States (including Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Tamil Nadu) have already resorted to cash-in-hand for relief payments during the lockdown.

In short, there is nothing compelling about the use of women’s JDY accounts for cash relief. In fact, it is a bit of a shot in the dark. The central government would do well to consider other options, including a switch to the NREGA job-cards list in rural areas. As for the JAM trinity, it should come down to earth for a reality check.

Jean Drèze is Visiting Professor at the Department of Economics, Ranchi University. Reetika Khera is Associate Professor of Economics at IIM Ahmedabad

Italy, India and a common thread in partnership

Both countries have opportunities to support a multilateral system which would aid the battle against the pandemic



VINCENZO DE LUCA

May 4 is a date that unites Italy and India in the current COVID-19 scenario. It is the day when both countries courageously decided to strike a fine balance between the need to restore industrial activities and supply chains and the duty to continue protecting their citizens from the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Endeavour in a phase

What in India is commonly known as Lockdown 3.0 has been defined as “Phase 2” in Italy. Regardless of how we call it, the stage that both countries entered that Monday reflects the same endeavour: first, we needed to put our economies and societies on hold to contain the virus; now while still working to strengthen our preparedness and our response to this global challenge, we need to be able to look forward and give our citizens and our businesses a positive outlook in the immediate future.

Like India, Italy is also a country whose economy has a solid manufacturing base. That Monday, the

new measures adopted by the Italian government allowed 4.5 million people to go back to work: the heart of our economic system started pulsating again. Nearly 50 economic and industrial activities were allowed on a national scale.

In parallel, the government adopted new measures to make sure that the nearly three million people employed in the public sector would be able to develop digital processes and streamlined procedures so as to support the prompt resumption of activities by the private sector. It is something that we are also doing here in India, by developing the “Digital Embassy” project that will allow us to create many tools and processes to virtually interact and support our nationals, our businesses and our Indian counterparts.

The endgame in Italy is to allow our entire workforce (roughly 24 million people) to recommence their activities. This need not come at the price of safety: the relevant Italian institutions have already defined adequate directives for workplaces and public places. These are based on measures that will resonate with the reader: wearing of face covers; thermal scanning; frequent sanitisation; adequate distancing.

About the latter, I avoided the adjective “social” because I believe that it would be more appropriate to talk about physical distancing: sociality will be very much alive, just a little bit different than before.



safety nets for workers, businesses and sovereigns, amounting to a package worth €540 billion. The establishment of a recovery fund has also been agreed upon.

The lockdown adopted by the Italian government is paying off. The numbers related to COVID-19 in Italy still deserve our utmost attention and we will not lower our guard until this threat to public health is removed. And, of course, in case of a resurgence of the contagion, we stand ready to introduce restrictive measures again to counter it effectively.

Financial backing

The resumption of industrial activities happens in a framework where financial support to businesses and citizens has already been launched both at the national and the European Union (EU) level. In terms of national financial resources, the Italian government has already provided guarantees up to €500 billion to make sure that Italian businesses can have access to the necessary liquidity. It has also adopted measures to support families and small and medium enterprises through grants, loans, debt rescheduling and other forms of financial support. Furthermore, the Italian government was the first one to sign a protocol with trade unions for health safety at the workplace. The EU is also doing its part and has reached an agreement on three important sa-

engthening our partnership based on shared values, on our thriving creating industries, scientific knowledge and technological prowess; from the development of a rules-based international system to the promotion of just trade, inclusive growth and the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. In this endeavour we will support an effective multilateral system, which would be the best political accelerator to win our battle against the novel coronavirus and to promote a sustainable, equitable and durable recovery. In this process we will not lose sight of the fight against climate change, since Italy will co-host the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties, COP26, in 2021, together with the United Kingdom, and India is one of the world’s major responsible stakeholders.

In a nutshell, at both bilateral and multilateral levels, our dialogue will be based on the main tenets of innovation and sustainability. Innovation because this crisis has transformed the urge to develop new ideas, methods, processes and devices into the “new normal”; sustainability because, paraphrasing a popular saying: “we did not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrowed it from our children”. Vincenzo De Luca is the Ambassador of Italy to India

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.

Name of the game

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated large parts of the world and India is no exception. The corporate sector has borne the brunt of the lockdown as machines have ground to a halt and production has come to a standstill. The exodus of migrant labour is certain to leave its strong impact on several industries, notably the construction sector, as these workers have been contributing a great deal to the working of this sector over the years. It is a shame now that States, which have not cared to erase the perception that they have always been hand in glove with large industrialists, are now investing their time, in a shameful way, in devising ways and means to scuttle the rights of the labour force by suspending the operation of labour laws, and thereby depriving workers of their legitimate

rights. Extended working hours are in the offing and managements would be free to hire and fire workers, who in turn would not be able to take recourse to the law as the law itself would stand suspended. A grave assault on labour rights is on the anvil and it is the corporate sector that stands to benefit. The constitutionality of these moves is questionable. The total mishandling of the migrant labour issue by States and the Centre is an indication that there is all-round discrimination against the working class in the country. This is a disturbing trend as the rights of the labour class are enshrined in the Constitution; their abrogation would only usher in a situation where the working community would turn into putty at the hands of managements who in turn would be aided and abetted by State

governments. The Opposition parties should raise their voice. Workers’ unions too should not be caught napping. C.V. ARAVIND, Bengaluru

Still unsure

At the end of nearly two months, one would think that there would be some clear direction. However, the nation does not look confident at this crucial time. Actually, it looks uncertain and confused about what to do. A lack of unity of purpose is evident. There have been a number of arbitrary decisions, one of which is to run 15 pairs of long distance trains. What is the logic behind such a move in a crisis? It would be a difficult task for States to track and trace the number of passengers and their whereabouts. Without any public transport, how will the passengers move out or even reach railway

stations? The government’s failure to come out with a package for migrant labourers has only exacerbated their miseries. The mission “Vande Bharat”, aimed at bringing back Indians stranded overseas, is odd. How can it be even called a mission when an airfare is being charged? The government must take a broader view of the situation and show proper understanding of the challenges. VENU G.S., Kalluvathukkal, Kollam, Kerala

■ There is every reason for there to be much confusion. It is clear that the way forward will be in the form of relaxation of some rules. But, simultaneously, we are also alive to the danger of rising numbers of active COVID-19 cases, which only calls for more stringent implementation of a lockdown and more testing to be carried out. With some

rail services being permitted, there is bound to be a spurt in active cases. Migrant workers are also reaching their home towns after undergoing much trauma. It is a pity and a shame that they have not been guaranteed dignity and basic rights. No nation can afford to alienate such a big and productive section of its population. Now, the manufacturing section says it can gear up production and supply only after the return of the migrant workers. There is indeed much chaos. A.G. RAJMOHAN, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

A chemical concoction
The heading of a report, “Ayurvedic pharmacist dies after drinking concoction” (Chennai May 9, 2020), gives the impression that the pharmacist drank an Ayurvedic “concoction” made to treat COVID-19. The fact is that he drank a combination of nitric oxide

and sodium nitrate, which are not Ayurvedic ingredients. The report implicitly discredits Ayurveda. Ayurvedic texts deal with epidemics, fevers and contagious diseases at great length. This ancient knowledge should be made use of to find a way of tackling this pandemic. Incidentally, China seems to have brought the epidemic under control in Wuhan by bringing in, among other things, a couple of thousand doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) – it is similar to Ayurveda – to work along with allopathic doctors. However, we in India continue to view Ayurveda with scepticism. We ought to be using all our medical resources, from various schools of medicine, to end this epidemic.

PREETHA KANNAN, Mumbai

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Riding roughshod over State governments

Guidelines issued by the Centre to the States under the Disaster Management Act are unconstitutional



PRASHANT BHUSHAN
& SHYAM AGARWAL



"The Centre directs the State governments to scrupulously enforce every new set of guidelines, with the States only being allowed to increase and not dilute the restrictions." Andhra Pradesh CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy participating in a video conference with PM Narendra Modi on the COVID-19 situation. ■ PTI

The Central government has so far followed a mostly top-down approach in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. During lockdowns 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0, the Centre has issued guidelines from time to time, ostensibly under the Disaster Management Act of 2005, containing varying restrictions on public activity and commerce which the States are expected to enforce. The Centre directs the State governments to scrupulously enforce every new set of guidelines, with the States only being allowed to increase and not dilute the restrictions. This centralised approach is counterproductive, has put the federal structure of India under strain, and is in fact beyond the powers of the Central government.

Two examples show why this is counterproductive. One, the Central government, in its latest guidelines, has classified all districts in the country as red, orange or green zones in a bid to lift lockdown restrictions in an area-specific manner. Some States/Union Territories objected to the classification of certain areas/districts as red zones on the ground that these areas are very large. They pointed out that there was no need to keep economic activity on hold in an entire district when cases had been reported only from a small portion of that district. Two, Kerala, probably the best-performing State in terms of its response to COVID-19, was sent amissive by the Central government to refrain from relaxing restrictions in the State. The Kerala government had issued revised guidelines in mid-April following a near-perfect recovery rate and a steep fall in the number of cases. However, the Central government did not trust the wisdom and judgment of the State government in the matter.

This centralised approach, apart from leading to undesirable outcomes, may not be strictly legal. A study of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 as well as relevant provisions of the Constitution makes it clear that this practice of issuing gui-

dules and directions to the States is itself unconstitutional.

The federal scheme

Under the federal scheme, Parliament can legislate on matters under the Union List (List I), Stage legislatures can legislate on matters under the State List (List II), and both Parliament and State legislatures can legislate on matters under the Concurrent List (List III). The residuary power to legislate on matters that are not mentioned in either List II or List III vests with Parliament under Article 248 of the Constitution read with Entry 97 of List I. Furthermore, the rule of harmonious construction laid down by the Supreme Court in a number of judgments, including in *Godfrey Phillips v. State of U.P. & Ors* (2005), dictates that the entries in the legislative lists must be interpreted harmoniously, and in the event of any overlap between two or more entries, the specific subject matter contained in a particular entry must be deemed to have been excluded from another entry which may deal with a more general subject matter. Finally, as per Articles 73 and 162, the executive power of the Centre and the States is co-extensive with their respective legislative powers, which means that the Central and State governments can only take executive actions in matters where Parliament and State legislatures, respectively, have powers to legislate.

Disaster management as a field of legislation does not find mention in either List II or List III, nor does any particular entry in List I specifically deal with this. Thus, the Disaster Management Act could only have

been enacted by Parliament in exercise of its residuary powers of legislation under Article 248 read with Entry 97 of List I.

The question is, can the Act be applied at all for dealing with a pandemic. The Disaster Management Act allows the Centre to issue guidelines, directions or orders to the States for mitigating the effects of any disaster. The definition of 'disaster' under the Act is quite broad and, literally speaking, would include a pandemic too. Such a reading of the Act would vest the Central government with powers to issue directions and guidelines to State governments for dealing with the pandemic in their States, which is what the Centre has been doing. However, 'public health and sanitation' is a specific field of legislation under Entry 6 of List II. This would imply that States have the exclusive right to legislate and act on matters concerning public health. Thus, the Centre's guidelines and directions to the States for dealing with the pandemic trench upon a field of legislation and executive action that is exclusively assigned to the States – public health.

The Supreme Court has held time and again that federalism is a basic feature of the Constitution and although the Union enjoys many more powers than States, the States are sovereign. The Disaster Management Act, having been enacted by Parliament under its residuary powers of legislation, cannot be applied to pandemics in view of the fact that the power to legislate on public health is vested specifically and exclusively with the States.

At this juncture, an important ca-

veat must be pointed out. Under Entry 29 of List III, both Parliament and State legislatures are competent to legislate on matters involving inter-State spread of contagious or infectious diseases. Therefore, theoretically speaking, Parliament would be competent to pass a law that allows the Central government to issue directions to the States to prevent inter-State spread of a disease like COVID-19. That law is not the Disaster Management Act which is concerned with disasters in general, and not pandemics in particular. 'Prevention of inter-State spread of contagious and infectious diseases' being a specific legislative head provided in List III, the same must be deemed to have been excluded from Parliament's residuary legislative powers. Therefore, the Disaster Management Act, which has been enacted under Parliament's residuary legislative powers, cannot be applied to the prevention of inter-State spread of contagious and infectious diseases.

Applying another law

In fact, a law on this exists – the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, which has the objective of preventing "...the spread of dangerous epidemic diseases." However, under this Act, it is the State governments which have the prerogative to take appropriate measures for arresting the outbreak or spread of a contagious or infectious disease in their respective States. The Central government's powers are limited to taking measures for inspecting and detaining persons travelling out of or into the country. Even if that Act were to be amended, it would not empower the Central government to issue directions to the States to contain the pandemic within the State; it can only deal with inter-State spread of the disease. Therefore, instead of resorting to the Epidemic Diseases Act which gives powers to the States, the Centre has applied the Disaster Management Act, which has enabled it to ride roughshod over State governments. This is plainly unconstitutional. The States are not legally bound to observe the directions/guidelines being issued by the Central government and would be well within their rights to challenge them before the apex court.

Prashant Bhushan and Shyam Agarwal are advocates practising in the Supreme Court

COVID-19 and the path ahead

India needs to blend acute disaster management strategies with longer-term public health measures

K. KUMARAN, G.V. KRISHNAVENI, KUMAR G.S., & GIRIRAJ CHANDAK

early on in the outbreak and has not seen the surge that could potentially have been expected for a population of 1.3 billion people.

Easing of lockdown

If the epidemic does spread with generalised community transmission, the healthcare, social and economic implications will be significant. The lockdown in India has played a role in preventing an exponential surge in cases. However, a measured public health approach is critical in controlling this epidemic. Current approaches are largely urban-centric with little focus on rural dynamics. A decentralised approach is required to manage the large rural population, and the success in Kerala may serve as a useful model. Governments may consider mobilising and training a range of healthcare providers (including providers of primary care, and traditional healthcare systems) in responding to this situation. Crucially, the current practice of isolating all cases in hospital settings is not sustainable if cases increase.

As it would be impractical to test everyone with symptoms, a case definition based on symptoms and local epidemiological context may be used to diagnose suspected COVID-19 cases. Those with mild symptoms (and their household contacts) should be advised to stay at home. If cases cannot be managed at home, community centres may be deployed for isolation. This approach will ensure that hospitals are available to those who really need them. The lifting of the lockdown needs to be undertaken in a phased manner. One approach would be to ensure that the vulnerable (such as the elderly and the immuno-compromised) are protected beyond initial lockdown periods, while restrictions are lifted for the majority of the healthy population. The disease has generally been mild among most people affected in the subcontinent, and it is possible that herd immunity may develop through gradual exposure among healthy individuals. While lockdown measures are lifted in a controlled manner, government public health agencies need to continue to promote hygiene measures. Physical distancing will need to be continued. Public health messages need to be locally tailored and consistent. They require not only awareness, but also resources as these are largely middle-class concepts and not easy to practice in crowded areas where there is no running water. In conclusion, the approach to the management of COVID-19 needs to blend acute disaster management strategies with longer-term public health measures including economic measures.

K. Kumaran, G.V. Krishnaveni, Kumar G.S. are public health epidemiologists and Giriraj R. Chandak is a physician scientist

Reaffirm cooperative federalism

Responding effectively to the pandemic requires the Centre to view the States as equals

PRANAV VERMA & SUGHOSH JOSHI

Many exigencies have tested the foundations of our federal democracy, but none as harshly as this pandemic. And when India's success in defeating COVID-19 actively rests upon Centre-State collaboration, it is indeed its commitment to federalism that is under the most strain.

Federalism, K.C. Wheare notes, traditionally signifies the independence of the Union and State governments of a country, in their own spheres. However, there was nothing traditional about the circumstances in which India's Constituent Assembly met. Accordingly, even when its members carefully studied the Constitutions of other great federations like the U.S., Canada, Australia and Switzerland, they adopted 'pick and choose' policy to formulate a system suited uniquely to the Republic's need. As a result, India's Constituent Assembly became the first-ever constituent body in the world to embrace what A.H. Birch and others have referred to as 'cooperative federalism' – essentially defined by administrative cooperation between the Centre and the States, and a partial dependence of the States upon payments from the Centre. Accordingly, Indian constitutional law expert Granville Austin remarks that despite a strong Centre, cooperative federalism doesn't necessarily result in weaker States; rather, the progress of the Republic rests upon active cooperation between the two.

Fissures in cooperation

Nevertheless, some recent developments have revealed fissures in Centre-State cooperation. For instance, the zone classifications into 'red' and 'orange' has evoked sharp criticisms from several States. The States have demanded more autonomy in making such classifications. This is despite the fact that State consultation is a legislative mandate cast upon the Centre under the Disaster Management Act of 2005 (under which binding COVID-19 guidelines are being issued by the Centre to the States). The Act envisages the creation of a 'National Plan' under Section 11, as well as issuance of binding guidelines by the Centre to States un-

der Section 6(2), in furtherance of the 'National Plan'. The 'National Plan' then is a broader vision document while the binding guidelines are its enforcement mechanism. Now, Section 11(2) of the Act mandates State consultations before formulating a 'National Plan', and to that extent, when the binding guidelines are ultimately issued under it, they are expected to represent the views of the States. However, the Centre has not formulated the 'National Plan', and has chosen instead to respond to COVID-19 through ad hoc binding guidelines issued to States, thereby circumventing the legislative mandate of State consultations. In fact, the Home Ministry order ushering in lockdown 3.0 prohibited States from lowering the Centre's classifications. This selective application of the Act serves to concentrate all decision-making powers with the Centre.

Lack of funds

The Centre has also declared that corporations donating to PM-CARES can avail CSR exemptions, but those donating towards any Chief Minister's Relief Fund cannot. This directly disincentivises donations to any Chief Minister's Relief Fund; diverts crores in potential State revenues to PM-CARES; and makes the States largely dependent upon the Centre. Further, the revenue streams of several States have dried up because of the liquor sale ban; negligible sale of petrol/diesel; no land dealings and registration of agreements. States' GST collections have also been severely affected with dues still not disbursed by the Centre. All this has made it difficult for States to defray expenses of salaries, pensions and welfare schemes. As it is the States which act as first responders to the pandemic, supplying them with adequate funds becomes a pre-requisite in effectively tackling the crisis. This requires the Centre to view the States as equals, and strengthen their capabilities, instead of increasing their dependence upon itself.

Pranav Verma is a LL.M. candidate at the University of Cambridge and Sughosha Joshi is a 4th year B.A. LL.B. student at NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad



DATA POINT

Massive job losses

INCREASE IN HUNGER

% of households which reported having consumed less food during the lockdown than prior to it

Rural	70
Urban	80

ESSENTIALS ARE ELUSIVE

% of households without money to buy even a week's worth of essentials

Rural	34
Urban	61

DEBT RISES

% of respondents who took a loan to cover personal expenses

Rural	34
Urban	43

FALL IN EARNINGS

% avg. fall in earnings for self-employed non-agricultural workers compared to February

Rural	-92
Urban	-86

According to the Azim Premji University COVID-19 Livelihood Survey*, about 80% of urban workers lost their jobs during the lockdown. The average weekly earnings of those who were still employed fell by 61%. About 80% of urban households consumed less food in April-May compared to February, and 61% could not buy even a week's worth of essentials. Similar effects were felt in rural areas too, though to a smaller degree

FALL IN INCOME

% average fall in earnings for casual workers during the lockdown compared to February

Rural	-50
Urban	-46

FALL IN WAGES

% of wage workers whose salaries were reduced or who did not receive their salaries during the lockdown

Rural	43
Urban	57

MARKET MAYHEM

% of farmers who were not able to harvest or sell their produce, or sold it at reduced prices

Rural	88
Urban	91

JOB LOSS IN URBAN AREAS

% who were working in February but were not working during the lockdown

Self-employed	84
Casual	81
Regular salaried	76

JOB LOSS IN RURAL AREAS

% who were working in February but were not working during the lockdown

Self-employed	47
Casual	66
Regular salaried	62



Migrant workers on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad highway near Ghodbunder Junction on May 5. ■ AADESH CHAUDHARI

*The results are based on a phone survey of 4,000 workers across 12 States. The data were collected between April 13, 2020 and May 9, 2020. The respondents were selected through a sampling method to ensure diversity in location and type of work done. The sample is not representative of the States or the country

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 13, 1970

Co-operation in the North-East

The Bill to set up a council for the north-eastern region of India, adopted by the Lok Sabha on Monday [May 11], promises to open a new chapter in the development of that key part of the country. This area has so far been marked by differences between the tribal peoples and the plain-dwellers, and States like Nagaland and Meghalaya have had to be formed out of what was once Assamese territory. The objective behind the regional council is to bring about a co-ordinated approach to the security and development of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura. To begin with, the council will consist of representatives of these four units and the Tribal Areas Adviser to the Assam Governor. It is hoped Nagaland, which is now keeping out, will also join the council later. The success of this experiment will naturally depend upon how far the participating members are able to pull together in solving regional problems. The available funds will have to be used to the best effect and development plans formulated on a regional rather than on a parochial basis.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 13, 1920

Colour Prejudice.
(From second editorial)

In spite of all the pious wishes and innocent dreams of great idealists to make the world safe for Democracy and establish a universal Federation of Nations on the basis of self-determination and full equality, the hard realities obtained in the various countries of the world seem rather to accelerate racial animosities and widen the gulf between the white and the coloured inhabitants of the globe. The open refusal of racial equality to Japan in the League of Nations, the attempted effacement of the Ottoman power, the virtual subjugation of Egypt, Syria and Persia under the guise of protectorates, mandates and friendly treaties and the actual political domination of India, Africa and America as the result of exploitation, conquest and colonisation – all these monumental facts of history, past and present, must open the eyes of every thinking man to the enormous importance of the racial problem and the constant necessity of warning the statesmen of all countries against any careless or short-sighted handling of the imperial and international questions of racial significance.

Journalist held for news item on Gujarat CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

The Ahmedabad police have arrested a journalist, who runs an online portal, for publishing a speculative story on a change of guard in the State.

The portal "Face of Nation" carried a story that the BJP high command had summoned Union Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandavia and he was likely to replace Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis in the State.

The story was carried on May 7. Subsequently, all local media reported it, which prompted Mr. Mandavia to issue a clarification that the Gujarat CM was not being replaced.

On May 11, the journalist, Dhaval Patel, was picked up by the crime branch after a constable filed an FIR stating that the story was baseless and amounted to creating "in-stability and atmosphere of fear" in the State.

Decision on power project deferred

Dibang valley project delayed by 6 years

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

The Forest Advisory Committee, the apex body of the Environment Ministry tasked with deciding whether forest land can be diverted for industrial projects, has once again deferred its decision on a controversial hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh.

The 3,097 mw Etalin Hydropower project, in the State's Dibang Valley, has been delayed for over six years. This is because it required diverting 1,165 hectares of forest in a region of rich biodiversity.

Parliamentary panel questions dilution of labour laws

Standing Committee writes to States on changes brought in amid lockdown

SOBHA NAIR
NEW DELHI

The Parliamentary Committee on Labour has written to State governments demanding an explanation on dilution of labour laws during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Committee Chairman and BJD leader Bhartruhari Mahat said any amendments to the law would need legislative sanction. The issue will be taken up, whenever the committee next meets.

Need legislative nod

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Mahtab said, "We have written to the States seeking information related to the changes they have made in labour laws. They have utilised two instruments – using the executive order or ordinance. Whatever be the instrument, it has to get the sanction of the legislature and subsequently it will be



Taking advantage: Madhya Pradesh, U.P. and Gujarat have modified labour laws in a bid to attract investments.

scrutinised in the court of law."

The Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat State governments have modified labour laws in a bid to attract investments and restart economic activity hit by the nationwide lockdown. Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat have also amended their Factories Acts and increased the work hours from 8 to 12 hours a day or 72 hours per week.

Asked whether these changes by the States while the country is battling the COVID-19 pandemic and Parliament has not met since March 22, is a case of executive overreach, Mr. Mahtab said, "I would say as per the Disaster Management Authority Act, in this time of pandemic, executive takes precedence in the decision-making processes." However, he added, "But my only concern here is that

Parliament is not in suspended animation; legislators have a role to play both inside and outside Parliament and they can very well do that."

Revising laws

The Narendra Modi-led NDA government has been working to codify 44 existing labour laws into four codes. The Code on Wages Bill was cleared recently. The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Condition, Code on Industrial Relations and Code on Social Security are before the Lok Sabha.

Several Opposition parties have severely criticised the move by BJP-run States to suspend labour laws. Ten Central trade unions on Monday said they were considering approaching the International Labour Organization (ILO) against the move.

anticipatory bail

HC says offence of money laundering has serious ramifications

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday rejected two anticipatory bail pleas, filed by promoters of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DHFL), seeking that they not be arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in two separate cases.

Kapil Dheeraj Wadhawan and his brother Dheeraj Wadhawan had filed the pleas in connection with the Yes Bank fraud case, and in another case where provident fund (PF) savings of employees of Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) were allegedly diverted to DHFL.

A single judge Bench of Justice Bharati Dangre said, "It is an offence of money laundering which has serious ramifications and the potential to bring the swelling economy of the entire country to a standstill."

"The procedure of law must be followed and abided

by. A serious economic offence cannot wait for the pandemic to recede and the projection of applicants as not being healthy would not absolve them of being subjected to interrogation," Justice Dangre added.

Tricky transactions

Justice Dangre also observed that custodial interrogation, as sought by ED, was justified as the crime involved complicated financial transactions between several individuals, and companies.

In the Yes Bank case, the Wadhawan brothers have been accused of paying a kickback of ₹600 crore to Rana Kapoor, former managing director and chief executive officer of the bank, in the form of a loan to DoIT Urban Ventures (India) Pvt Ltd, a firm floated by Mr. Kapoor. In return, Yes Bank invested ₹3,700 crore in short-term debentures in DHFL which has not been redeemed till

date, argued additional solicitor general Anil Singh, opposing the anticipatory bail.

The court observed that only the applicants could throw light on the nature of transactions. The applicants will have to be confronted with various incriminating documents with respect to the loans sanctioned in its favour by Yes Bank, and the loans sanctioned by the DHFL to Mr. Kapoor, noted the judge.

Diverting PF

In the UPPCL case, the Wadhawan brothers have been accused of diverting nearly ₹4,122 crore of provident fund savings of employees of the State government firm to DHFL. The ED contended that funds were diverted from two trusts – Uttar Pradesh State Power Sector Employees Trust and Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Contributory Provident Fund Trust.

Gujarat Law Minister's poll win set aside

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI

The Gujarat High Court on Tuesday invalidated the election of Law and Education Minister Bhupendrasinh Chudasama to the Legislative Assembly. It held that he won the poll to the Dholka seat in 2017 based on "corrupt practices" and held his election as "unlawful" and "null and void".

The petition was moved by Congress candidate Ashwin Rathod, who challenged Mr. Chudasama's win with a slender margin of just 327 votes. Mr. Rathod said several malpractices were committed in the counting process.

Justice Paresh Upadhyay delivered the verdict, which was kept reserved for several weeks after several hearings. He held that the victory was achieved through "irregularities and malpractices" during the counting of votes.

Justice Upadhyay refused to stay the order to give time to Mr. Chudasama to avail further legal remedy by approaching the Supreme Court. As a result, Mr. Chudasama no longer stands to be a legislator unless and until he gets a stay from the SC. He also refused the petitioner's prayer that he should be declared victorious.

The Election Commission of India on Tuesday set up a three-member committee to examine the Gujarat High Court judgment.

'Defence think tank renamed unilaterally'

Govt. did not follow due process while changing the name of IDSA, executive council members say

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Due process was not followed while changing the name of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), leading members of the premier think tank have told the government during a high-level meeting held on May 8.

The *Hindu* has learnt that several members of the executive council (EC) of the renamed Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA) told Defence Minister Rajnath Singh that they should have been consulted before the

HC relief for minorities panel chief

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday ordered that no coercive action will be taken against chairperson of the Delhi Minorities Commission Zafarul Islam Khan, who is facing a sedition case over a tweet posted last month, until June 22.

The court order came on Mr. Khan's anticipatory bail plea. Mr. Khan, 72m said in his plead that he suffered from heart disease and hypertension and was highly susceptible to COVID-19 infection.



The institute was renamed after Manohar Parrikar.

tute calls for a proposal to be cleared by the General Body.

"The Minister took note of our dissatisfaction on this issue. We were quite clear that

changing the name of the premier think tank in this manner showed disrespect for processes that should have been followed meticulously as IDSA was conceived as a society and government can not just change its identity," said a member. The member said such decision-making affects the established identity of the Institute and casts a shadow on its autonomy.

Those who attended the meeting of the EC told *The Hindu* that they respect the contribution of the late Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar to the country's security but maintained that

attaching Mr. Parrikar's name to IDSA politicises a defence-related institute and sets a precedent that they do not approve of.

"It's not about the individual but the whole renaming itself. Defence institutions should not be named after politicians," said a member on condition of anonymity.

IDSA, which was set up in 1965, evolved to become the most famous think tank of the strategic affairs community in India over the years. In February, the government renamed the institute after the late Defence Minister and BJP leader Manohar Parrikar.

works" on Tuesday, with May 28 being the last date for submitting and opening bids. The tender document gives the contractor six months to finish the project, of which estimated cost is ₹10.30 crore.

A CPWD official said the formalities involved should be completed by the first week of June, giving the contractor till December to complete the work, which includes constructing roads in the complex. A pre-bid meeting through video conference would be held on May 20, the tender document said.

Work on Museum of PMs to begin

CPWD floats tender inviting bids; construction affected by lockdown

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The Central Public Works Department (CPWD) on Tuesday kicked off the process for the external works of the Museum on Prime Ministers of India by inviting bids, but building construction has been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown, according to officials.

The proposed museum on the Teen Murti Estate, the former residence of late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru that houses the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, was supposed to open by October this year, accord-



Behind schedule: The proposed museum on the Teen Murti Estate was supposed to open by October this year.

ing to officials of the Union Culture Ministry.

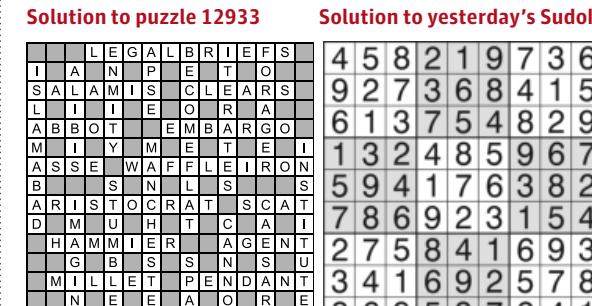
The CPWD, the agency of the Ministry of Housing and

Urban Affairs executing the project, floated a tender inviting bids for "external development and lighting" works



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 12933
Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



FAITH

Deeds and results

The law of karma binds one and all. Every being is born to experience the effects of one's past deeds, good and bad. None can escape from facing the fruits of one's actions. This truth clearly flashes in Dasaratha's mind when, having sent Rama to the forest, he is in the grip of extreme sorrow and also realises that his life is going to end in this fashion, pointed out Swami Paramasukhananda in a discourse. He is alone with Kausalya and seeks solace in her presence.

Accepting that he deserves every word of her harsh accusations, which clearly reflect her sorrow, the king pacifies her and very humbly asks her to refrain from committing any further sin of blaming her husband. He sees clearly that people easily commit sins when giving vent to their emotions like anger, desire, etc., unmindful of the terrible and fearful effects that quickly get attached to each one's individual karma account. The suffering experienced by individuals is not something targeted on them indiscriminately; it is their own earnings from their past deeds. He recalls the act of adharma that he had committed long back in his past life when he was young and unmarried.

He had gone hunting in the forest and did not get any prey on that day. Suddenly, he heard the sound of someone drinking water from a nearby pond and he presumed that it was an elephant. Skilled in aiming the target by sheer focus on the sound, he now sent an arrow that did not miss the target. But soon he heard an anguished cry and rushing to the spot found that he was guilty of killing an innocent man who had the sole responsibility of caring for his aged and blind parents. This crime is now chasing Dasaratha and he knows he has to endure the blind parents' dying curse ofputra soka he had incurred then.

CROSSWORD 12934 (set by Vulcan)

ACROSS

- 1 Ideal charity place possibly (12)
- 10 A team on leave (7)
- 11 Snake through in a way toward the centre of the ship (7)
- 12 Entertainer, a child keeping pet (6)
- 13 Continue to break support column (8)

DOWN

- 15 Disgusting, evil and super offensive (9)
- 16 Combined force employed (5)
- 17 Officer in charge gets stomachache (5)
- 19 Herb, without strength, exhausted (9)
- 22 A grand union for one with insight (8)
- 24 Very much at home having a meal (6)
- 26 Time's over – quickly starting to leave city (7)
- 27 Good man with heart regularly providing for mother (7)
- 28 A certain Lima could be a part of this (5,7)
- 2 Plan is to travel – apparently around Germany (4,3)
- 3 Chair duly designed to be operated by liquid (9)
- 4 Container smelled awful without lid (4)
- 5 Adaptation of Virgil – deep and rich (10)
- 6 Firm support for emergency committee in the UK (5)
- 7 A large stone used in sheds (4-3)
- 8 Duller substance (6)
- 9 Party a communist supported and admired (6)
- 14 Hollywood won't listen, sadly (10)
- 17 Simple course covering the origin of time (6)
- 18 Side next to one's left (7)
- 20 Stupid old jerk following one woman (7)
- 21 Name describing each box – basically it contains leaves (3,3)
- 23 Rule is to catch up daily (5)
- 25 Religious title held by him – a Muslim (4)

SCAN TO PLAY

<https://crossword.thehindu.com>

India may miss nutrition targets

Global Nutrition Report says it has highest rates of inequalities in malnutrition

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India is among 88 countries that are likely to miss global nutrition targets by 2025, according to the Global Nutrition Report 2020 released on Tuesday. It also identified the country as one with the highest rates of domestic inequalities in malnutrition.

In 2012, the World Health Assembly identified six nutrition targets for maternal, infant and young child nutrition to be met by 2025. These require governments to reduce stunting by 40% in children under five and prevalence of anaemia by 50% among women in the age group of 19-49, ensure 30% reduction in low-birth weight and no increase in childhood overweight, increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months up to at least 50% and reduce and maintain childhood wasting to less than 5%.

According to the Global Nutrition Report 2020, India



State of imbalance: India is among the three worst countries for steep within-country disparities in stunting.

will miss targets for all four nutritional indicators for which there is data available – stunting among under-five children, anaemia among women of reproductive age, childhood overweight and exclusive breastfeeding.

Underweight children
Between 2000 and 2016, underweight rates have decreased from 66.0% to 58.1% for boys and 54.2% to 50.1% in girls. However, this is still high compared with the average of 35.6% for boys and

31.8% for girls in Asia.

In addition, 37.9% of children under five are stunted and 20.8% are wasted, compared with the Asia average of 22.7% and 9.4% respectively.

One in two women of reproductive age is anaemic, while at the same time the rate of overweight and obesity continues to rise, affecting almost a fifth of the adults, at 21.6% of women and 17.8% of men.

India is identified as among the three worst coun-

tries, along with Nigeria and Indonesia, for steep within-country disparities on stunting, where the levels varied four-fold across communities.

Stunting level

Stunting level in Uttar Pradesh is over 40% and the rate among individuals in the lowest income group is more than double those in the highest income group at 22.0% and 50.7%, respectively. In addition, stunting prevalence is 10.1% higher in rural areas compared with urban areas.

The same applies for overweight and obesity, where there are nearly double as many obese adult females than there are males (5.1% compared to 2.7%).

Coming at a time the world is battling COVID-19, which has exposed different forms of socio-economic inequities, the authors have called for promoting equity to address malnutrition.

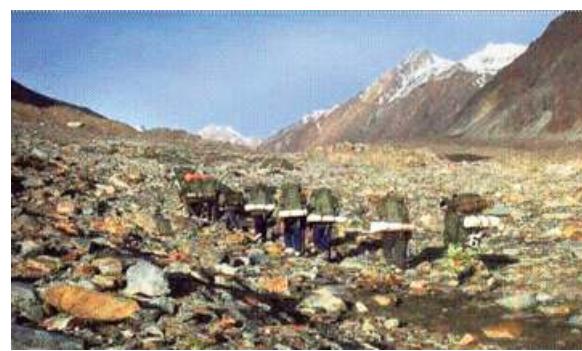
IAF 'traces' kin of 1968 crash victim

Warrant officer was among 102 personnel on plane that went missing in Himachal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has reportedly traced the family of one of its Junior Commissioned Officers who died in a plane crash in Himachal Pradesh 52 years ago.



Lost and found: A file photo of a search for the remains of the soldiers in the Dhaka glacier in Himachal Pradesh. •PTI

5,240 m in Himachal Pradesh two years ago.

"Some IAF officials paid a visit on May 7 and said tracing the family was their basic job. They said they would get back but we haven't had any official communication. We don't know if the body is in Delhi or anywhere else. How can we believe without seeing the body?" Ms. Bareh, 55, said from her residence in Jowai town, about 75 km from State capital Shillong.

But she said her mother, the late R.T. Bareh, would of-

ten tell her and her two brothers about their father and how he was captured and imprisoned by enemy forces.

At the time of the crash, she was three years old and Warrant Officer Bhattacharjee in his forties.

Delay explained

Officials at the Eastern Air Command near Shillong declined to speak on the development. But a member of an association of ex-service men in the northeast said Meghalaya's matrilineal sys-

An expedition by the Dogra Scouts under the Western Command, joined later by an IAF team, in July-August 2019 discovered more bodies trapped in the snow and major portions of the aircraft.

THE HINDU

OPPORTUNITIES

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT • JOBS • TECHNOLOGY

Priority for “layoff” resumes

Online job portals prioritise resumes of those who have been rendered out-of-work by the COVID-19 crisis

LIFFY THOMAS

“Layoff” is a term professionals would not want in their resumes. However, those who have lost their job due to COVID-19 crisis or those who fear losing it, have a strong reason to mention this fact prominently in their resume.

Here is why: A number of job portals have started prioritising resumes of job seekers who have been laid-off due to the present crisis.

Naukri’s microsite Step-Up (www.naukri.com/step-up-job-opportunities-during-coronavirus-covid-19), is prioritising access to resumes of those recently “laid-off and immediately available to join”.

People + Work Connect, a

platform launched recently by CHROs from Accenture, Lincoln Financial Group, ServiceNow and Verizon, bring together companies laying off or furloughing people with those companies that need to recruit people urgently. There is no cost for employers to join and participate in this cross-industry platform. The analytics-driven platform pools non-confidential and aggregated workforce information through categories based on location and experience.

Scikey, a talent commerce platform, has a section on its website where employers can list the details of their employees that they have laid off.

All registered customers can confidentially share the

resumes of the impacted employees on SCIKEY. After logging in, look for “Outplace Candidates” option on the dashboard menu. SCIKEY algorithms will position the matching candidates as its first choice for any new job opening, increasing their chances for any kind of hiring opportunity,” reads a note on the website.

Monster.com has an option on its home page asking visitors if there job is under threat due to COVID-19.

Binoy John Koshy, a recruitment manager with a Fortune 500 company, says “As long as they are not fired on disciplinary grounds or unethical acts, employees who have been laid-off will be seen as an active talent pool.” Koshy says an important search word that makes these laid-off employees employable is they are ready to join.

“All these years it was an

employees market and a candidate could choose from a range of job options as well as keep the recruiter waiting for at least a few months. Now, it's an employers' market,” says Koshy.

In-demand jobs

Most of these portals have special features to highlight jobs in sectors like healthcare, pharma, edutech, retail and telecom.

LinkedIn is helping job seekers find open roles by promoting them on its ‘Jobs page’. Doctors and nurses roles are automatically added to a list of ‘urgent’ jobs, which are surfaced to LinkedIn members with skills that qualify for these roles. The company is also offering free job posts for frontline roles till June 30.

Similarly, Naukri is offering a free service to recruiters in industries like healthcare, pharma and telecom.

“All these years it was an

New work terms to live by

The COVID-19 crisis is enriching the office lingo

PRINCE FREDERICK

‘Vpnning’ goes mainstream

When the lockdown happened, VPN got mainstream. In companies not entirely dependent on cloud platforms, VPN access to office resources and applications were being handed out to its employees, with an intensity paralleling relief packets being distributed to marooned flood-hit populations. Earlier, VPN access would be given as selectively as prescription drugs.

Corporate firms that need to ensure confidentiality of customer data and security of information are encouraging the use of VPN among its employees. As a full-fledged digital agency, we find it easy to work as all our customer data is on the cloud and current technologies offer extremely high levels of data security. Hence we have not felt the need for VPN. For large corporates, it makes sense for them to use as they need to comply with safety guidelines,” says Kiruba Shankar, social media entrepreneur on sudden rise of ‘vpnning’ among office-speak lingo.

GENERAL

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CM YK

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MT(HR)	2	2	1	-	1	6*
MT(Mktg)	1	1	1	-	-	3
MT(CC)	1	1	-	-	-	2

* includes 1-PWD-VH

Last date for On-line registration to UGC-NET-June-2020 is 16.05.2020.

Note: Candidates should log into www.nta.ac.in to apply online for UGC NET-June 2020 and also refer to www.ugcnetonline.in for syllabus.

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3	Dermatologist (Tenure based)	1 (UR) Female

General Information:

For detailed advertisement including required qualifications, experience, age limit, emoluments, mode of selection and other terms and conditions, please log on to our website www.vizagsteel.com under “Careers” icon. Eligible & Interested candidates on their own interest may refer to RINL website from time to time for further notification/amendment. No separate advertisement will be given.

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(Advt. No.KP/S/02/2020)



Wuhan to test entire population after new virus cluster emerges

Officials are charting out a plan to test 11 million people within a 10-day timeframe

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WUHAN

Wuhan plans to conduct COVID-19 tests on the Chinese city's entire population after new cases emerged for the first time in weeks in the cradle of the global pandemic, state media reported on Tuesday.

Officials have been ordered to submit plans to administer nucleic acid tests on all residents in the city of 11 million people, according to an official notice carried by news outlets.

"Each district should make plans and arrange-



Unsung heroes: Nurses reciting an oath during a ceremony marking International Nurses Day at Tongji Hospital in Wuhan on Tuesday. • AFP

Russia climbs to second spot in number of cases

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

million of them. Russia has been reporting more than 10,000 new cases per day for over a week.

Meanwhile, a fire at a hospital in Saint Petersburg on Tuesday killed five COVID-19 patients who had been attached to ventilators.

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov has also tested positive for coronavirus.

"Neighbourhoods without any cases don't need to screen every person," Mr. Wu said.

China has largely brought the virus under control, but it has been on edge about be-

ing hit by a second wave as it has lifted lockdowns and restrictions across the country.

Virus clusters have ap-

No new domestic cases in China

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China reported no new domestic coronavirus infections on Tuesday, after two consecutive days of double-digit increases fuelled fears of a second wave of infections. On Monday, China's National Health Commission reported 17 new cases.

Seven of the new cases were imported.

With the virus taking hold in other nations, China has barred most foreigners from entering the country. Wuhan has reported 3,869 deaths since the outbreak began.

Newborns among 13 dead in Kabul hospital attack

Blast at funeral in eastern Afghanistan kills more than 20

REUTERS
KABUL/JALALABAD

Gunned on Tuesday attacked a hospital in the Afghan capital Kabul, where the international humanitarian organisation Doctors Without Borders runs a maternity clinic, killing 13 people, including two newborn babies, officials said.

In a separate attack the same day, a suicide bomber struck the funeral of a police commander, attended by government officials and a member of Parliament, in the eastern province of Nangarhar, killing at least 24 people and injuring 68.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for either attack. The Taliban denied involvement in both.

The Islamic State militant

Double blow: A security officer carrying a baby after gunmen attacked a maternity hospital in Kabul on Tuesday. • AP

group operates in Nangarhar and has carried out a number of high-profile attacks in Kabul in recent months. On Monday, security forces arrested its regional leader in the capital.

In Kabul, the attack began in the morning when at least three gunmen wearing pol-

ice uniforms entered the Dasht-e-Barchi hospital, throwing grenades and opening fire, government officials said. Fifteen people were wounded in the attack, according to the Ministry of Interior. Security forces killed the attackers by the afternoon.

But with November's election less than six months away and traditional campaigning halted due to the coronavirus pandemic, Biden is in an awkward spot.

Biden ramps up digital footprint

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Joe Biden is rapidly scaling up his digital campaign as he scrambles to compete with Donald Trump's formidable online operation, but Democrats say the presidential hopeful must move beyond flat speeches delivered from his basement.

The Democratic Party's presumptive nominee is doubling the size of his digital team -- currently at a reported 25 people -- and his campaign said Monday it is launching a flood-the-zone approach across multiple online platforms.

The unrest came a day before U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is due in Jerusalem for discussions with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and incoming Defence Minister Benny Gantz. The meeting, a day

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JERUSALEM

The Israeli Army suffered its first fatality this year on Tuesday when a Palestinian stone thrower killed a soldier in the occupied West Bank, a day before U.S.-Israeli talks on annexation.

The Army said the 21-year-old soldier was hit in the head "during operational activity" in the village of Yaabud near the northern city of Jenin.

Palestinian security sources said that clashes erupted when Israeli forces raided the village.

The unrest came a day before U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is due in Jerusalem for discussions with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and incoming Defence Minister Benny Gantz. The meeting, a day

Palestinian kills Israeli soldier in West Bank

It comes a day before Pompeo's visit

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WEST BANK

before a new Israeli government is due to be sworn in, will focus partly on President Donald Trump's controversial West Asia peace plan.

Annexation plans

The plan, categorically rejected by the Palestinians, gives Israel the green light to annex Jewish settlements and strategic areas of the West Bank.

For much of the international community, such a move by Israel would amount to a grave violation of international law and crush hopes of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Under the terms of the new coalition agreements, West Bank annexation plans can be brought to Parliament or Cabinet from July 1.

INTERVIEW | YAN XUETONG

'A world without global leadership may last for a decade'

The increase of China-U.S. tensions is likely to drive India to adopt a hedging strategy toward both countries, says Chinese foreign policy thinker

ANANTH KRISHNAN

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic shows there is no single power that is capable and willing to show global leadership, says Yan Xuetong, one of China's leading thinkers on foreign affairs, professor at Tsinghua University in Beijing, and author of "Leadership and the Rise of Great Powers". China faces a great chance to reduce the power gap with the U.S. in 2020, says Mr. Yan, who explains why he is optimistic about the future of relations with India "as long as Donald Trump stays in power". Edited excerpts:

What has the pandemic revealed to you about the state of leadership among the major powers in the world today?

■ The pandemic shows the lack of global leadership today. A world without global leadership may last for a decade or more. First, there is no any single power that is both capable and willing to undertake global leadership by itself. President Trump has clearly stated that global

leadership is a wasteful burden to the U.S. Other major powers, whether motivated or not, do not have the resources for such leadership. Second, the competition between China and the U.S. prevents collective leadership of major powers. Therefore, although there is a vacuum for global leadership, no country seems ready to fulfil it in the near future.

In your writing, you emphasise the importance of a state's moral authority as opposed to only its national power in determining its ability to lead. If we can look at the U.S. first, how do you think the pandemic has affected its global standing?

■ First, people generally judge a government's responsibility in fighting against the pandemic according to the efficiency of its anti-pandemic policy, mainly in terms of the casualties. The COVID-19 casualty number in the U.S. is the largest in the world. Second, because the U.S. is the most powerful state in the world, it is the most expected state to undertake leadership in the global fight against COVID-19. Unfortunately, it failed to do so. Third, the international image of America's response to the COVID-19 crisis de-

pends on the views of the majority of the more than 200 existing political entities in the world. As of now, there are fewer countries holding positive views about the U.S.

China has a chance to reduce the power gap with the U.S. and enlarge the power gap with other major powers in 2020

than those with negative views.

China may have emerged faster from the crisis, but it has seen its global image taking a very big hit. Will the damage be long-lasting?

■ According to the same criteria, we can find that China did much better than the U.S. First, the pandemic casualty in China is much smaller than in the U.S. and major European powers. Second, China has provided medical aid to more than 80 countries, much more than what the U.S. did. Third, the list of countries holding positive views of China is much longer than those with negative views. Regarding the issue of the pandemic's origins, I would suggest my government to raise a proposal to the World Health Organiza-

'Hasty reopening will have consequences'

Anthony Fauci's warning comes even as Trump is pushing States to end lockdown

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

Leading U.S. infectious disease expert Anthony Fauci on Tuesday warned Congress that a premature opening of the nation's economy could lead to additional outbreaks of the deadly coronavirus.

The director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases warned a U.S. Senate panel that States should follow health experts' recommendations to wait for signs including a declining number of new infections before reopening.

More outbreaks'
President Donald Trump has been encouraging States to

end a weeks-long shuttering of major components of their economies.

"If some areas, cities, States or what have you jump over those various checkpoints and prematurely open up without having the capability of being able to respond effectively and efficiently, my concern is that we will start to see little spikes that might turn into outbreaks," Dr. Fauci said. "The consequences could be really serious."

Dr. Fauci, a member of Trump's coronavirus task force, told the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee that the nation's efforts to battle the deadly virus and the COVID-19 disease it trig-



Anthony Fauci testifying

remotely from his home in Washington. • REUTERS

gers should be "focused on the proven public health practices of containment and mitigation".

Dr. Fauci, 79, testified remotely as he self-quarantines after he may have come into contact with either of two members of the White House staff who were diag-

nosed with COVID-19.

Last week, Dr. Fauci was blocked by the White House from testifying to a Democratic-controlled House of Representatives panel. The White House had said such testimony by the infectious disease expert would have been "counterproductive".

"All roads back to work and back to school run through testing and what our country has done so far on testing is impressive, but not nearly enough," Lamar Alexander, the Republican chairman of the Senate committee, said in an opening statement to Tuesday's hearing.

Mr. Alexander is also self-quarantining in his home state of Tennessee.

China waives tariffs on more U.S. imports

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

China suspended punitive tariffs on more U.S. goods, including radar equipment for aviation, on Tuesday amid pressure from President Donald Trump to buy more imports as part of a truce in their trade war.

The Ministry of Finance said tariff increases on 79 types of goods, including radar sets, disinfectant and rare earths minerals, would be suspended for one year starting May 19.

Washington agreed in January to cancel additional tariff hikes and Beijing committed to buy more American farm exports. U.S. officials said China agreed to address complaints about its technology policies.

Mr. Trump threatened May 3 to terminate the agreement if China fails to buy more American goods.

Mr. Trump said earlier that Beijing agreed to buy \$200 billion of American farm goods and other exports. China resumed purchases of American soybeans but has yet to confirm the size of its commitment.

Mr. Trump's threat rekindled fears in financial markets of more U.S.-Chinese conflict and potential disruption of global trade even as countries are reeling under the pandemic.

Meeting commitments
The two sides have raised duties on tens of billions of dollars of each other's imports in a dispute over China's technology ambitions and trade surplus.

Slumping economic activity due to the virus has prompted suggestions that China might be unable to carry out commitments to boost imports. Tuesday's announcement was the third Chinese tariff cut since the January deal.

configuration may last for decades.

How do you think this trend of worsening China-U.S. relations, which the pandemic is amplifying, may impact China's relations with India?

The increase of China-U.S. tensions is likely to drive India to adopt a hedging strategy toward both countries, says Chinese foreign policy thinker

Recently this strategy becomes popular among middle powers such as Germany, Japan, France, and the UK. After the pandemic, middle powers will become more decisive on hedging because they realise that the bipolar

CMK

MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	31,371	-0.60
US Dollar	75.51	0.29
Brent oil	29.87	-2.96

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	291.50	+1.80
Asian Paints	1523.35	-46.25
Axas Bank	386.85	+7.30
Bajaj Auto	2628.85	+62.55
Bajaj Finserv	4668.20	+110.20
Bajaj Finance	2069.70	+54.65
Bharti Airtel	559.85	+23.65
BPCL	312.50	-2.30
Britannia Ind	3107.30	+53.35
Cipla	570.15	+15.90
Coal India	126.85	-1.60
Dr Reddy's Lab	3773.40	+88.60
Eicher Motors	14167.05	+121.90
GAIL (India)	88.70	-3.35
Grasim Ind	517.95	+13.50
HCL Tech	527.40	-0.15
HDFC	1674.10	+15.65
HDFC Bank	901.55	+14.25
Hero MotoCorp	2114.30	+25.65
Hindalco	121.10	+1.35
Hind Unilever	2011.55	+36.45
ICICI Bank	321.20	+1.05
IndusInd Bank	446.20	+12.80
Bharti Infratel	189.60	+6.00
Infosys	687.65	+4.75
Indian Oil Corp	74.90	-0.45
ITC	165.05	+6.60
JSW Steel	178.20	+3.65
Kotak Bank	1157.20	+31.25
L&T	814.80	+6.80
M&M	393.05	+2.95
Maruti Suzuki	4951.30	+13.50
Nestle India Ltd.	17461.95	+100.15
NTPC	91.65	+5.00
ONGC	76.30	-0.75
PowerGrid Corp	163.30	+4.50
Reliance Ind	1479.25	+97.55
State Bank	166.90	+1.45
Shree Cement	19127.20	+212.30
Sun Pharma	463.90	+0.05
Tata Motors	86.20	+0.10
Tata Steel	273.95	+2.25
TCS	1949.50	+14.20
Tech Mahindra	533.25	+3.05
Titan	846.45	+16.85
UltraTech Cement	3349.35	+11.40
UPL	374.55	+6.45
Vedanta	89.05	+9.45
Wipro	187.05	+2.35
Zee Entertainment	155.05	+0.35

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 12

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	75.30	75.62
Euro	81.55	81.93
British Pound	92.98	93.39
Japanese Yen (100)	70.07	70.40
Chinese Yuan	10.63	10.67
Swiss Franc	77.52	77.89
Singapore Dollar	53.18	53.42
Canadian Dollar	53.83	54.06
Malaysian Ringgit	17.38	17.47
Australian Dollar	49.04	49.25

Source: Indian Bank

Anil Agarwal plans to delist Vedanta

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Mining baron Anil Agarwal

plans to take the India-listed Vedanta Ltd. private

and delist it from the Indian stock exchanges at a price of ₹87.5 each, or a 9.9% premium over Monday's closing price of ₹79.6.

The company has received a letter dated May 12, 2020 from promoter group Vedanta Resources Ltd. (VRL) expressing its intention to either individually, or along with one or more subsidiaries, acquire all fully paid-up equity shares of the company that are held by the public shareholders of the company and consequently, voluntarily delist the equity shares from the BSE and NSE.

Vedanta shares closed up 12.19%, or ₹89.3, on the BSE, valuing the company at ₹33,194.5 crore.

Jubilant, Gilead ink pact for Remdesivir

Drug can be sold in India, 126 nations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Jubilant Life Sciences, through a subsidiary, has entered into a non-exclusive licensing agreement with Gilead Sciences Inc. to register, manufacture and sell Gilead's Remdesivir, a potential therapy for COVID-19 in 127 countries, including India.

Under the agreement, Jubilant Generics, the subsidiary, will have the right to receive a technology transfer of the Gilead manufacturing process to scale up production to enable expedited access of the medicine to COVID-19 patients upon approvals by regulatory authorities in the respective countries.

The list of 127 countries consist of nearly all low-in-



come and lower middle-income countries as well as several upper middle and high-income countries that face significant obstacles to healthcare access, a Jubilant Life Sciences statement said. Jubilant Life Sciences chairman Shyam S.Bhartia and co-chairman and MD Hari S. Bhartia said Remdesivir, based on initial data, showed promise as a potential therapy for COVID-19.

Indices yo-yo as banking stocks wilt

Amid lockdown extension concerns, rise in virus cases, foreign investors net sell ₹1,662 crore shares

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Indian benchmarks saw a highly volatile session with an underlying weakness on Tuesday with the Sensex moving in a range of almost 700 points as banking and financial stocks came under selling pressure amidst an overall weak global trend.

The 30-share Sensex, that opened lower by over 200 points, dropped further to touch 30,844.66, a fall of almost 720 points compared with Monday's close. It managed to recoup most of the losses to close at 31,371.12, down 190.10 points, or 0.60%. The losses in the Sensex were led by Reliance Industries, Asian Paints, HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Hindustan Unilever, among others. Earlier in the day all the banking consti-



tutes were deep in the red. "The index traded with a negative bias till noon as the banking and financial stocks corrected. However, in the latter half, the banking space recouped intraday losses and hence, Nifty, too, recovered from lows to end the day a tad below the 9,200 mark," said Ruchi Jain, Equity Technical Analyst, Angel

Broking. The broader Nifty ended Tuesday at 9,196.55, shedding 42.65 points, or 0.46%. Investor sentiments remained subdued due to an overall weak trend in Asian markets as fresh concerns emerged over the economic impact of COVID-19. The concerns were mainly due to indications that the nation-

wide lockdown may be extended even as some areas may see ease in restrictions. A fresh wave of cases in some countries also weighed in on investor sentiments.

"Global sentiments were weakened on growing worries about a second wave of COVID-19 infections after Wuhan again reported new cases since its lockdown was lifted. Even renewed trade tensions between U.S.-China added to the woes," said Siddhartha Khemka, head, retail research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, adding the market was cautious also on account of the Prime Minister's address.

Incidentally, the PM announced a stimulus package of ₹20 lakh crore, the details of which would be announced by the Finance Minister in the coming days.

"The package comes as a shot in the arm and we could see a strong opening today and any crossover of 9,500 levels would witness a broader positive move," said Vikas Jain, senior research analyst, Reliance Securities, while highlighting the fact that the package amount was almost 10% of India's gross domestic product (GDP).

Back on the bourses, the market breadth was extremely weak with over 1,400 stocks in the red on BSE against 870 that advanced. Foreign portfolio investors continued to offload Indian shares with Tuesday's net selling pegged at ₹1,662 crore.

Elsewhere in Asia, the benchmarks of Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, China and Singapore ended in the red on Tuesday.

Bandhan Bank net falls on COVID-19 provisions

₹690 crore additional provision made

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Private sector lender Bandhan Bank reported a 20.6% drop in net profit to ₹517 crore for the quarter ended March 31 due to COVID-19 related provisions.

In Q4, the lender made ₹690 crore additional provisions for standard assets on account of COVID-19.

"This provision is higher than the RBI minimum required provision. With this provision and additional standard assets provision that the bank is carrying in the micro-banking portfolio, total additional provision in books stands at ₹1,000 crore," the Kolkata-based bank said in a state-

ment. Other provisions for the quarter came to ₹138 crore compared with ₹154 crore of the same period of the previous year.

Net interest income (NII) for the quarter grew 33.57% to ₹1,680 crore, while non-interest income rose 28.87% to ₹500 crore during the period.

As Gruh Finance was merged with the bank in October, the figures for the current quarter are not exactly comparable with those of the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

Gross NPAs as on March 31, 2020 were 1.48% of gross advances compared with 2.04% a year ago and 1.93% on December 31, 2019.

Listed companies can conduct their annual general meetings (AGMs) through video conferencing while banks and insurance companies have been given the option of submitting only the standalone numbers instead of consolidated financials.

Further, norms related to sending physical copies of annual reports or publishing certain statutory advertisements have also been relaxed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the relaxations given to companies and market intermediaries, the Se

curities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) announced a fresh set of waivers on Tuesday. Incidentally, the relaxations in terms of conducting an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) was announced by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in April and was later extended to AGMs on May 5.

Meanwhile, the regulator has received representation from listed companies that banks and insurance companies as well as those that have banks and insurance subsidiaries are facing challenges in preparing consolidated financial results.

The regulator has made it voluntary for banking and insurance companies to submit consolidated results for June quarter though such entities still have to submit standalone numbers.

Attendance forms

Among other things, the regulator has waived the requirement of companies sending physical forms for proxy attendance if the meetings are held electronically.

The exemptions related to publishing certain statutory advertisements in newspapers till May 15 have been extended until June 30.



Favipiravir has been approved in Japan for the treatment of novel influenza virus infections. ■ REUTERS

Glenmark initiates phase-3 clinical trials of Favipiravir in India

DCGI nod came in late April

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Glenmark Pharmaceuticals has initiated Phase-3 clinical trials in India on antiviral tablet Favipiravir, for which it

received approval from India's drug regulator DCGI in late April, the company said in a statement.

Glenmark is the first company in India to initiate Phase-3 clinical trials on Favipiravir for COVID-19 patients in India, it said.

"We believe the study results will be significant as there is currently no effective treatment for the virus," she added.

"The data we get from these trials will point us in a clearer direction with regard to COVID-19 treatment and management," Ms. Tandon said. Stujesh Vasudevan, president, India Formulations, Middle East and Africa, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd., said, "Our effort is to launch a treatment for COVID-19 patients as soon as possible and control the spread of the pandemic."

"We will do all it takes to ensure accessibility of the product across the country if the clinical trials are successful," he said.

Jubilant, Gilead ink pact for Remdesivir

Drug can be sold in India, 126 nations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

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The list of 127 countries consist of nearly all low-in-



Maruti restarts Manesar plant operations

Toyota, Renault dealers reopen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Tuesday said it has resumed operations at its Manesar plant in Haryana after a partial shutdown due to COVID-19 lockdown.

A TMM statement said: "Closely adhering to the advisory issued by the Central and State governments, the company announced the partial reopening of 171 dealership outlets and 146 service outlets across the country."

Renault India opened its office and more than 194 showrooms and workshops. The remaining touchpoints will be opened in a phased manner, according to the company.

Vettel, Ferrari to part ways at the end of 2020

Seismic but not entirely surprising decision follows a fruitless, error-filled period for driver and team

FORMULA ONE

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

When Sebastian Vettel joined Ferrari in 2015, the excitement was palpable. Many thought the Italian marque could recreate the success it had had with German great Michael Schumacher in the early 2000s.

However, it was announced on Tuesday that Vettel – seen as Schumacher's successor – would leave the team at the end of 2020, without having won a title so far. What started with great promise, amid a yearning for a return to the glory days, has ended with a whimper – unless Vettel conjures up some magic if a shortened season is held this year.

A mess

The decision, as seismic as it is, is not entirely surprising, considering the German's recent career arc. Vettel and Ferrari made a mess of things and cleared Lewis Hamilton's path in 2017 and 2018, with a mix of reliability concerns and driver errors.

Balbir Singh Sr. remains critical

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Hockey legend Balbir Singh Sr on Tuesday suffered a cardiac arrest and his condition remains critical, his grandson Kabir said in a medical update.

The 96-year-old, a triple Olympic gold medallist, was hospitalised in Mohali on May 8.

"Nanaji was admitted on Friday, 8th May in a very serious multi-organ affected state. His condition had improved slightly but was, and is still, critical now. Doctors will be continuously assessing his condition over the next 24-48 hours," said Kabir.

Ministry sanctions aid for archer's treatment

Y.B. SARANGI
KOLKATA

The Union Sports Ministry on Tuesday sanctioned financial assistance of ₹5 lakh for the treatment of 16-year-old Pragati.

The Delhi-based archer, who competed in the World youth archery championship in Madrid last year, suffered a brain haemorrhage on May 5 and underwent surgery the following day. Since then, she has been on ventilator support.

According to sources, the treatment so far has cost around ₹16 lakh. Of the total expenses, ₹5 lakh has been paid from the Khelo India Games insurance.

IN BRIEF

German Cup final rescheduled for July 4

BERLIN
The German Cup final, scheduled to be held at the Olympic Stadium behind closed doors here on May 23, has been rescheduled for July 4. The German Football Association announced. DFB said the semifinals will take place on June 9 and 10. Holder Bayern Munich will host Eintracht Frankfurt while Bayer Leverkusen faces fourth-tier side Saarbruecken. DFB president Fritz Keller said the plans to reschedule the cup are still subject to approval by Angela Merkel's government. The Bundesliga will resume on Saturday when it becomes the first top European league to return. AFP



Joyless ride! Sebastian Vettel will bid goodbye to Ferrari after an underwhelming sojourn with the Italian giant. ■ GETTY IMAGES

In 2017, after having led the standings for a large part of the season, reliability issues in two races and Vettel's triggering of a multi-car collision in Singapore allowed Hamilton to pick up the pieces and seal the title.

There was also the brain-fade moment earlier in Baku when he deliberately drove

into Hamilton to make a point and received a big penalty.

String of errors

In 2018, Vettel's errors kept piling up: the now-infamous images of him crashing out from the lead in the German GP, the incident in France when he hit Valtteri Bottas,

the mistake when battling Hamilton in Italy and the failed move in Baku. All of them proved costly.

Last year was Vettel's nadir, with new teammate Charles Leclerc getting the better of him. The defining moment came in the Italian GP where Leclerc overcame a raging Hamilton and Bottas

to help Ferrari win its first home race in nine years while Vettel spun on his own, rejoined the track dangerously and drove like a rookie. With Leclerc signing up until 2024, the centre of power at Ferrari has shifted decisively.

The contrast with Schumacher is striking. After two close title fights in four seasons, Schumacher came back strongly to win five on the bounce (2000-04). Unfortunately for Vettel, it was not to be. The lack of success at Ferrari will reinforce the narrative that he was slightly fortunate to win the four titles he did with Red Bull in dominant cars.

It remains to be seen whether the 32-year-old Vettel, a father of three, will even stay in the sport after 2020. There is a possibility that former teammate Mark Webber's prophecy will come true.

"I think Seb will do everything early in life," Webber had remarked in 2014. "He's got his titles early, he's going to have a kid early and I think he'll retire early. He'll probably take a blast in the red car (Ferrari), then sayonara."

It is likely that Vettel will

Women's U-17 WC in Feb-Mar 2021

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, originally scheduled to be held later this year, has now been rescheduled to February 17-March 7, 2021.

The new dates were announced by FIFA as part of the decisions confirmed and approved by the Bureau of the FIFA Council after an assessment of the COVID-19 impact. However, the age eligibility for players is the same, making even those

turning 18 in this period eligible for participation since the organisers have decided to treat the tournament as the 2020 edition only.

The 2020 U-20 Women's World Cup, in Costa Rica / Panama, has also been rescheduled to January 20-February 6, 2021 while the 2020 Futsal World Cup would be held from September 12-October 3, 2021 in Lithuania. The tournaments, though, remain conditional subject to further monitoring of the pandemic.

"The BCCI is looking at a big revenue loss. In case the IPL does not take place, the loss would be close to ₹40 billion rupees (\$530 million), or even more," said

IPL cancellation will hit BCCI hard

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW DELHI

Scraping the money-spinning Indian Premier League this year because of the coronavirus pandemic would cost more than half a billion dollars, but cutting players' pay was not yet being considered, a top official has told AFP.

"The BCCI is looking at a big revenue loss. In case the IPL does not take place, the loss would be close to ₹40 billion rupees (\$530 million), or even more," said

Board of Control for Cricket in India treasurer Arun Dharmal. We are not sure whether we will be able to have it this year," he admitted.

"We will only be able to figure out the exact revenue loss once we are sure of how many games we have lost," said Dharmal.

But Dharmal, who joined the BCCI leadership last year alongside president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah, said that it was hoped to avoid pay cuts for players.

Manmeet Singh passes away

Ex-National TT champion also won junior, doubles titles

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Former men's National table tennis champion Manmeet Singh, 58, passed away in Montreal on Monday. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.

For the past two years, Manmeet was suffering from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), a neurodegenerative disease.

He was National junior champion, National men's doubles champion (with schoolmate and close friend Vinay Chopra), before winning the National singles title beating S. Sriram in Hyderabad in 1989.

Manmeet's senior colleague and former National champion Manjit Dua remembered him as "an extremely competitive and hard-working player".

Kamlesh Mehta, an eight-time National champion, recalled: "Manmeet was the



fondly recalled his caring ways.

"Manmeet was like an elder brother, always encouraging and motivating me. In Hyderabad, more than me, he believed I could become the National champion," she said.

Condolences

The news of Manmeet's passing away has cast a pall of gloom in the country's table tennis circles. Table Tennis Federation of India secretary M.P. Singh, advisor Dhanraj Choudhary, among others, expressed shock and grief at the passing away of a "fine champion".

As Kamlesh aptly summed up, "Manmeet was a fighter in the arena, very aggressive, but off the table, he was a great pal.

"We were of the same age and shared a lot. It's hard to believe Manmeet is no more."

We have to get local guys to play first: Sunder

Suggests that the sport may have to grow to become more popular

TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

It is hard for active sports persons to stay idle for long. Considering COVID-19's devastating impact, a lot of caution is required before sports can spring back to life.

"Everyone is keen to resume the sport. We have discussed what needs to be done to get players back on tennis courts. There are guidelines from the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and the USTA," said Sunder Iyer, secretary-general of the Maharashtra Tennis Association and executive member of the All India Tennis Association (AITA).

"We have to localise. We may have to keep crowds away. We may have to keep parents away."

"Even for the AITA, we



Ready for challenge: Sunder Iyer, seen with Rutuja Bhosale and Mahak Jain, is clear about the path ahead for the sport.

Having organised more than 1,500 tournaments at all levels, Sunder is clear about the path ahead.

"We have to get the local guys to play first. Starting

with restrictions to facilities for people of that area.

"Even for the AITA, we have worked out a plan, starting with local level tournaments so that there is not

much travel involved," said Sunder, in an Instagram conversation with coach M. Balachandran.

Sunder visualised players travelling by October, and getting into their groove before that with local events.

Ideal time

He suggested that tennis may have to grow, to be more popular. The fresh start could be the ideal time to tweak the norms.

"Most of the corporates are playing golf," said Sunder, about the need to keep tennis close to the hearts of the decision makers. It is hard on the fans. They cannot bring water or food. No walking, no talking in the stands. People are coming to watch sports to enjoy. As a sport, we may have to grow," he said.

GI tag for Sohrai Khovar painting, Telia Rumal

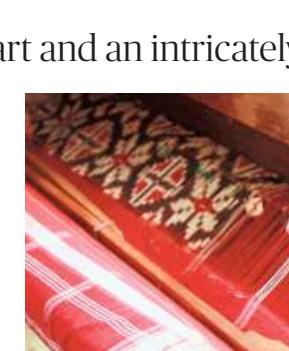
A ritualistic mural art and an intricately designed handloom cloth get their due

SANGEETHA KANDAEL
CHENNAI

Jharkhand's Sohrai Khovar painting and Telangana's Telia Rumal were given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag on Tuesday by the Geographical Indications Registry headquartered in Chennai. The application for the painting was made by Sohrai Kala Mahila Vikas Sahyog Samiti Limited while the application for Telia Rumal was made by the Consortium of Pottapaka Handloom Cluster-IHDS.

Local traditions

"The Sohrai Khovar painting is a traditional and ritualistic mural art being practised by local tribal women during local harvest and marriage seasons using local, naturally available soils of different colours in the area of Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand. Telia Rumal cloth involves



ing is primarily being practised only in the district of Hazaribagh. However, in recent years, for promotional purposes, it has been seen in other parts of Jharkhand.

Traditionally painted on the walls of mud houses, they are now seen on other surfaces, too. The style features a profusion of lines, dots, animal figures and plants, often representing religious iconography. In recent years, the walls of important public places in Jharkhand, such as the Birsa Munda Airport in Ranchi, and the Hazaribagh and Tatagarh Railway Stations, among others, have been decorated with Sohrai-Khovar paintings.

The Sohrai Khovar paint-

can only be created using the traditional handloom process and not by any other mechanical means as otherwise, the very quality of the Rumal would be lost.

During the Nizam's dynasty, Puttapaka, a small, backward village of the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh had about 20 families engaged in handloom weaving, who were patronised by rich Muslim families and the Nizam rulers.

The officers working in the court of the Nizam would wear the Chituki Telia Rumal as a symbolic representation of status. Telia Rumals are offered at the dargah of Ajmer Sharif in Rajasthan, with some devotees offering 50 or even 100 cloths. Telia Rumals were worn as a veil by princesses at the erstwhile court of the Nizam of Hyderabad; and as a turban cloth by Arabs in the Middle East.

AIFF nominates Jhingan, Bala Devi for Arjuna

NEW DELHI

The All India Football Federation has nominated Sandesh Jhingan and women's team striker N. Bala Devi for the Arjuna award, rewarding them for their consistency in recent years. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Ex-England star Wright reveals online racism

Former Arsenal and England striker Ian Wright, in pic, has been subjected to a barrage of racist abuse on social media. An Instagram user messaged Wright with racist taunts who took to Twitter to expose the abuse. Former Aston Villa forward Gabriel Agbonlahor was also a racist



message. Kick It Out called for those who targeted him and Wright to be punished. ■ GETTY IMAGES

CM YK

A B-MME