



Sonia launches scheme to help farmers as 'tribute to Rajiv Gandhi'
page 9



Maharashtra govt. erred in handling COVID-19 crisis, says Fadnavis
page 9



₹20 lakh crore package is holistic: BJP leader Bhopendra Yadav
page 10

China planning Bill that could limit opposition activity in Hong Kong
page 12



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

NEARBY



With 571 cases, Delhi records highest surge

NEW DELHI
Delhi reported 571 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total to 11,659, said the government health bulletin released on Thursday. This is the biggest single-day jump in the number of cases so far.

CITY ▸ PAGE 3

Notice to Centre, State over woman's detention

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court has issued notices to both Centre and city government over continued detention of a 25-year-old woman involved in anti-CAA protest under UAPA when special courts which can extend her custody have not been functioning due to lockdown.

CITY ▸ PAGE 2

Amphan kills 72 in West Bengal, brings life to a halt

■ Deaths have occurred in eight districts, including 15 in Kolkata

■ I haven't seen such a disaster in my entire life: Mamata Banerjee

■ Casualties were due to falling of trees, electrocution, house collapse

■ PM to survey Bengal, Odisha today; Mamata sets up ₹1,000 crore fund



Extensive damage: A bus that got crushed after a tree fell on it when cyclone Amphan swept through Kolkata. ▸ PTI

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

The death toll in Super Cyclone Amphan in West Bengal increased to 72, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Thursday. Fifteen of the deceased were from Kolkata, she said.

Ms. Banerjee, who met senior officials at the State Secretariat to take stock of the damage, said she had not seen such a disaster in her life. "I haven't seen such a disaster in my entire life. I will ask the Prime Minister to visit the State and see it for himself."

She said Union Home Minister Amit Shah had called her up, and she informed him of the enormity of the disaster. She said the impact of the cyclone was so severe that Nabanna, the State Secretariat building, shook. Deaths were reported from eight districts. South 24

Parganas recorded the maximum of 18 deaths, followed by North 24 Parganas with 17 deaths. People also died in Howrah, Hooghly, Purba Medinipur and Nadia. The deaths were mainly due to the falling of trees, electrocution and the collapse of poorly built houses.

Such areas as Kakdwip and Namkhana in South 24 Parganas and Minakha and Hingalganj in North 24 Parganas were the worst affected.

FULL COVERAGE PAGE 11

ed by the cyclone, which made landfall near Sagar Island. Damage has been reported from eight districts, but the maximum damage has occurred in the coastal districts, including South and North 24 Parganas. Thousands of 'katcha' houses were damaged in the two districts and a large part of

the Sunderbans police district was inundated because of the storm surge, which was four-five metres above the tide level.

Ms. Banerjee said she would visit the affected areas after three to four days, once connectivity was restored. "There is no telephone connection and there is no electricity in these parts of the State." She said the government had set up a ₹1,000-crore relief fund. The government has evacuated five lakh people and kept them in cyclone shelters.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to West Bengal and Odisha on Friday to take stock of the situation, the Prime Minister's Office said. "He will conduct aerial surveys and take part in review meetings," the PMO said in a tweet.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

PLA blocking Indian patrols in Ladakh, Sikkim, says MEA

India rejects China's claims of trespass into its territory

SUHASINI HAIDAR
DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

New Delhi on Thursday rejected Beijing's claim that Indian troops trespassed into Chinese territory, and accused the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of "hindering" patrols by Indian soldiers.

In the first such statement after weeks of a stand-off between Indian and Chinese soldiers at four points along the boundary in Sikkim and Ladakh, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) also told China that "peace and tran-



Anurag Srivastava

quility in border areas" is an "essential prerequisite" to developing bilateral relations.

"Any suggestion that Indian troops had undertaken activity across the LAC [Line

of Actual Control] in the Western Sector or the Sikkim Sector is not accurate. Indian troops are fully familiar with the LAC alignment in the India-China border areas and abide by it scrupulously," said MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava.

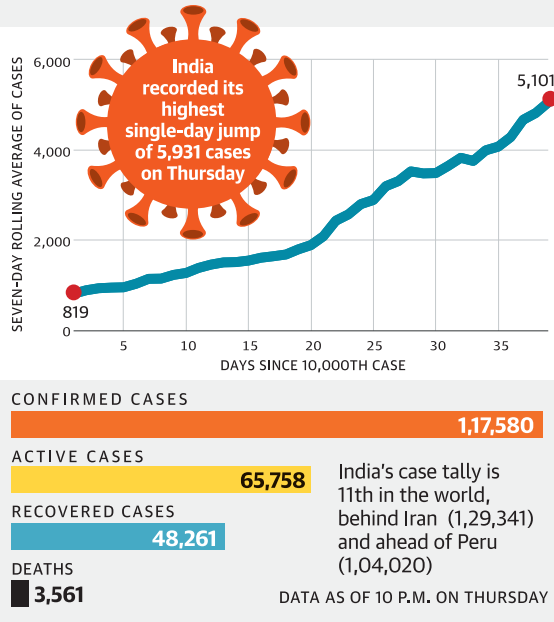
"All Indian activities are entirely on the Indian side of the LAC. In fact, it is the Chinese side that has recently undertaken activity hindering India's normal patrolling patterns," he observed.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

EDITORIAL ▸ PAGE 6

Worrying rise

On an average, over 5,000 COVID-19 cases have been recorded daily in the last seven days, 1,200 more than the previous week's average



Govt. announces price range based on duration of flights

Travellers must check in online before reaching the airport

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday set a price range for air tickets, which would be a function of the flight duration when commercial airlines resume operations on May 25. The scale has been divided into seven categories, with the lowest range defined for flights of less than 40 minutes and the highest category set for the longest domestic flights of up to 210 minutes.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation, which announced the price range as part of the guidelines prepared ahead

Fare game
The fares for each sector, classified on the basis of duration of flight, are as follows

Sectors	Minimum fare	Maximum fare
A	₹2,000	₹6,000
B	₹2,500	₹7,500
C	₹3,000	₹9,000
D	₹3,500	₹10,000
E	₹4,500	₹13,000
F	₹5,500	₹15,700
G	₹6,500	₹18,600

of the resumption of flights, laid down several other norms, including a mandatory check in by travellers either online or on the

phone before reaching the airport.

Medical details must

They would be allowed to complete the check-in only after providing medical details either through the Aarogya Setu app or a self-declaration form. A senior official said passengers would be "nudged" to use Aarogya Setu. To start with, airlines would operate 33% of flights, with operations increasing based on the experience of airlines, airports and other stakeholders.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

ICICI offers FD scheme for senior citizens

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Private sector ICICI Bank will offer 6.55% on fixed deposits of 5-year to 10-year tenure for senior citizens, which is 80 basis points (bps) higher than the ordinary deposits. Typically, banks offer 50 bps more to senior citizens for fixed deposits.

"Named 'ICICI Bank Golden Years FD', the scheme offers senior citizens an interest rate of 6.55% per annum for deposits up to ₹2 crore with a tenure of more than five to 10 years," the bank said in a statement.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Five men arrested for carrying chicken meat granted bail by HC

U.P. govt. counsel concedes it is an exempted commodity

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday granted bail to five persons jailed on the charge of carrying chicken meat allegedly in violation of lockdown norms.

Asjad Gazi, Irshad Raza, Nihaluddin, Mohd. Aqeel and Mohd. Shahid had been in jail since April 13 after they were found carrying 3 quintals (300 kg) of chicken meat in a truck in Lucknow. They were booked under several sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, and the Disaster Manage-

ment Act, 2005.

In his submission before Justice Rajeev Singh of the Lucknow Bench, the defence counsel argued that the Joint Secretary, Union Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, had asked the States on March 30 to include live chicks, eggs and meat in the list of commodities exempted from the lockdown.

Essential items

The Director of Animal Husbandry, Uttar Pradesh, clarified on April 3 that these were essential items.

The State government's

advocate opposed the bail saying the accused persons were carrying the meat with a forged pass. But he conceded that both State and Centre had clarified that chicken meat was an exempted commodity.

"Considering the rival submissions of learned counsel for parties, material available on record as well as totality of fact and circumstances, and without expressing any opinion on the merits of the case, I am of the view that the applicants are entitled to be released on bail," Justice Singh said.

HC tells police to pay ₹75 lakh to motorist

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed the Delhi Police to pay ₹75 lakh as compensation to the parents of a man who is in a vegetative state after his motorcycle rammed into an unmanned and poorly lit police barricade five years ago.

Justice Navin Chawla said that the victim was entitled to damages for the negligence of police in discharging their duty. As per rules, all barricades must have fluorescent paint and blinkers so that they are visible from a distance.

DETAILS ON ▸ PAGE 2

Pidawa, an unheralded success

Rajasthan town sets example in COVID-19 battle

MANVENDRA SINGH

The picturesque road to Pidawa crosses streams, lush farmlands, rolling hills, and the former 'badlands' which are the border areas between Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Pidawa is a small town in the middle of the sliver of Rajasthan that thrusts into Madhya Pradesh. And like many of the habitations in this part of the country, Pidawa too

benefitted over the last couple of centuries from a 'black gold' rush.

Unlike the better known hydrocarbon of the same name, this 'black gold' is extracted from a plant, *Papaver somniferum*, and is then processed to make opium and its many derivatives. In fact these 'badlands' hosted a part of the production facilities that provided the fuel which ignited the Anglo-Chinese Opium Wars of 1839-42 and 1856-60. But those days are long gone, and what is now grown is largely legal, although a portion does slip through



Screening for COVID-19 under way at the Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Pidawa, Rajasthan. ▸ T.R. SIRVI

the system to reach consumers on the western side of Rajasthan.

It was another kind of slip through the system that

set off a major scare in Pidawa during early April and resulted in the imposition of a stringent curfew across the town. The slip would

have gone undetected but for an alert Dr. Raees at the Pidawa Community Health Centre, where Khalida Bi died on April 4.

Those were the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak, and the contagion had yet to enter this isolated corner of Jhalawar district, in Rajasthan. On an impulse, Dr. Raees decided to test the family members who had handled the body before burial. They were asked to go to Jhalawar on April 5 to be tested but proved elusive.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 11

VICCO®
— TRUSTED AYURVEDA —
SINCE 1952

Mazboot daant trusted ayurveda — ke saath —

VICCO® VAJRADANTI
18 HERBS AND BARKS

Daant Gungunaye

VICCO® VAJRADANTI
AYURVEDIC MEDICINE FOR GUMS AND TEETH

So your teeth remain happy all the time.

POWDER | REGULAR | SAUNF | DALCHINI | SUGAR FREE

Available across all medical stores
www.viccolabs.com • Like us on /ViccoLabs • Shop online at www.viccostore.com • Customer Care Call No. 0712-2420890

Timings DELHI			
FRIDAY, MAY. 22			
RISE	05:27	SET	19:10
RISE	05:13	SET	18:51
SATURDAY, MAY. 23			
RISE	05:27	SET	19:10
RISE	05:50	SET	19:48
SUNDAY, MAY. 24			
RISE	05:27	SET	19:11
RISE	06:32	SET	20:45

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	43	25
Safdarjang	43	25
Palam	44	23

Delhi Palam Today
43°C A dry and hot day is likely. The winds will be warm and dusty with moderate speed. Night will be comfortable.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
45°C Heat wave like conditions are possible with mainly clear sky conditions. Night will be comfortable.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THE PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

IN BRIEF

DCW issues notice to social media platforms
NEW DELHI
The Delhi Commission for Women on Wednesday issued notice to social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok seeking details of standard operating procedures put in place to curb and deal with content which incite violence and harassment. The social media platforms have been asked to respond to the women's commission by May 25.

High Court directs police to pay motorist ₹75 lakh compensation

Motorcycle rammed into unmanned barricade, leaving rider in vegetative state

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has directed the Delhi police to pay ₹75 lakh as compensation to the parents of a man, who is in vegetative state, after his motorcycle rammed into an unmanned and poorly lit police barricade five years ago. Justice Navin Chawla said that the victim was entitled to damages for the negligence and failure of the Delhi police in discharging their duty. The court remarked that placing of barricades, though, may be for valid security reasons, also casts a duty on the police to ensure that they do not cause accidents due to their non-maintenance. As per rules, all barricades must have necessary fluorescent paint as well as blinkers so that they are visible from a



long distance. The rules also mandate that the barricades, under no circumstances, should be left unmanned. The alignment of the barricades should be done to ensure that the traffic halts for checking, but at the same time, is able to negotiate through them. The High Court noted that chaining of such barricades was not permissible. On December 5, 2015,

Dheeraj Kumar (21) had gone to attend a marriage function in the vicinity of Paschim Vihar in Madipur Village. Around 5 a.m., a constable from the nearby police station informed the family that Mr. Kumar had met with an accident. He had suffered severe injuries on his body and head. He was discharged from the hospital while he was unconsciousness, on January 14, 2016. He has been in the same state since. Meanwhile, an FIR was registered against Mr. Kumar by the police for rash and negligent driving. The Delhi police had stated that he seemed to have tried to slip through the gap in between the barricades and due to the speed at which his vehicle was travelling, he was unable to spot the chain linking the barricades.

The victims's family disputed the above assertions and placed on record photographs of the site to show that the barricades were placed at a spot which was not well-lit and therefore, was not visible from afar. The High Court came to the conclusion that "the chains tying the barricades could not be visible to a motorist from far". "Merely because no helmet was shown to have been recovered from the site, cannot lead to a conclusion that petitioner no.1 [Mr. Kumar] was not wearing a helmet or was driving at a high speed or rashly," the court added. The court also held that Mr. Kumar was entitled to claim of damages for the negligence and failure of the police to discharge their duty.

Anti-CAA protest: notice to Centre, State over woman's detention

Special Courts which can extend her custody not functioning: plea

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has issued notices to both the Centre and the Delhi government over continued detention of a 25-year-old woman, involved in anti-CAA and NRC protest, under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) when the Special Courts which can extend her custody have not been functioning due to COVID-19-induced lockdown. A Bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rajnish Bhatnagar posted the case for a detailed hearing on May 29. The High Court order came on a habeas corpus petition by Aqil Hussain, seeking direction to produce his sister Gulfisha Fatima, an MBA student, who has been under continued detention since she was arrested on

April 9. Ms. Fatima, along with others, were initially arrested over an FIR lodged in Jafraabad police station for allegedly instigating a crowd to block the road near Jafraabad metro station on February 22 to protest against the CAA and the NRC. Later, stringent provisions under the UAPA were invoked against her in a separate FIR, which is under investigation by the Crime Branch. The Delhi Police had earlier opposed her bail application before the trial court, saying that her conduct was "attributable to anti-national activity". Mr. Hussain stated that even though his sister was granted bail in the initial FIR at Jafraabad police station, she remains in custody due to the alleged charges

against her under the UAPA. As per the National Investigation Agency Act, offences under the UAPA can be tried only by a Special Court constituted under the NIA Act only. The petition pointed out that the Special Courts empowered to extend the judicial custody of Ms. Fatima have not been functioning since March 23, when the first lockdown began. "This constitutes a deprivation of the liberty of Ms. Fatima without due process, and therefore violates her fundamental right to life and liberty secured under Article 21 of the Constitution of India," the plea said. The plea said that her continued detention was without authority of law, and urged the High Court to released her immediately.

CISF adopts no-touch policy for passengers entering airports

Ticket, ID will be checked via camera; no more pat-downs

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) said they have adopted a "no-touch policy" for passengers entering airports, said a senior CISF officer on Thursday. The officer said that to ensure safety of passengers and CISF personnel, they have adopted the policy to prevent spread of COVID-19.

"Passenger entering the airport have to undergo thermal screening and their ticket and ID will be checked by security personnel via a camera. A CISF personnel will check the ID by sitting in a glass cabin at the entry point," said the officer. He added that they have provided masks, gloves and alcohol-based sanitisers to all their personnel. Infra-red

thermometers have also been arranged for screening at building entry points and at access control places. "At frisking point, passenger will cross Door Frame Metal Detectors. If any metal object is detected in possession of passengers then an extended hand-held metal detector will be used to frisk. There will be no pat-downs," said the officer.

Student held for JMI violence booked in riots case

He has been charged under UAPA for being part of a 'larger conspiracy' behind riots

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Days after Asif Iqbal Tanha, a Jamia Millia Islamia student, was arrested by the Crime Branch in connection with the "violence" in the Jamia area in December last year, the Delhi Police Special Cell has booked him under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for being part of a "larger conspiracy" behind the riots that broke out here in February, police officers said on

Thursday. The police have alleged that Mr. Tanha is a member of the Students Islamic Organisation and was part of the Jamia Coordination Committee (JCC), a public organisation, which spearheaded protests against the CAA. "We have evidence and he was wanted in a case that we were investigating. So we arrested him on production warrant on Tuesday. We have been granted seven days of custody," an officer

said. A city court on Wednesday sent Mr. Tanha to a seven-day police custody. Earlier, the Delhi police charged JCC members Safoora Zargar and Meeran Haidar, Jamia Alumni Association president Shifa-Ur-Rehman and "suspended" AAP Councillor Tahir Hussain under the UAPA. The Crime Branch had arrested Mr. Tanha recently in a case registered at Jamia police station on December 16 last, in connection with "violence" in the

Jamia area in which he was named an accused, a senior police officer had claimed. On December 15, 2019, buses and police vehicles were torched as the police and protesters clashed in New Friends Colony during an anti-CAA demonstration, leaving at least 40 people injured. Communal clashes had broken out in north-east Delhi on February 24 leaving at least 53 people dead and around 200 injured.

‘BOIS LOCKER ROOM, A REFLECTION OF AN EXISTING MINDSET’

Psychologists stress the need for open and constructive conversations on sex and sexuality at home for teenagers to understand banter from abuse

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

The controversy triggered by leaked lewd chats from 'Bois Locker Room', an Instagram group run by some teenagers, and the death of a 17-year-old boy in Gurugram, allegedly in connection with the incident, have raised serious questions about the mindset of youngsters, their use of social media and the way forward. The Hindu spoke to a few psychologists, specialising in adolescent counselling, who narrowed down the reasons to lack of proper sexual education and gender sensitivity among teenagers. "There are multiple episodes – the Bois Locker Room, a 17-year-old ending his life, and the Snapchat screenshot. Though we may feel they are all different, what comes out is that there is a complete lack of sex education, gender sensitisation and sensitivity among teenagers," said Mahalakshmi Rajagopal, a psychologist who works as a consultant with some Delhi schools.



'Forbidden topic'
According to Dr. Rajagopal, while girls are imparted with some amount of sex education when they start their menstrual cycle, for boys sex is often a "forbidden topic". "The reason you have a boys room locker, where all these discussions are taking place, is because at that age they are curious and they haven't been given healthy sensitisation about sex, women and things related to sexual health. Nothing has been provided," she said. Roma Kumar, a counselling psychologist at Sir Ganga Ram

Hospital, echoed Mr. Rajagopal's views. She said it is common and natural to be curious about sex, especially when it is hushed up, and stressed on open and constructive conversations about these topics. Dr. Kumar said misogyny is rampant in society, illustrated by "how people like to sexually objectify women and laugh on sexist jokes". She said boys should be educated about the thin lines that separate banter and abuse. Even social media chat groups are fine, she said, if the members don't slander each other and turn abusive. "As long as they are talking about sexual stuff, it should be fine because everybody talks about these things. We talk in a different manner, children are learning differently. But there should be some rules," she stressed. Taking the instance of even special needs children exploring their sexuality, Dr. Kumar said, "We can't stop them, and we shouldn't stop them because it's a sexual energy that you are born with. But somebody has to be able to talk to these children in that manner, connect with them and also engage in conversations related to sexuality," she said.

Learning from adults
In the absence of proper sex education, children are observing adults at home and accordingly developing their attitudes and patterns of behaviour, counsellors said. "A 17-year-old doesn't suddenly start objectifying women. It builds up over time. Such children are either coming from homes where they listen to parents using these kinds of words casually, or they see and observe their extended

'JUVENILES SHOULD BE TREATED WITH CAUTION, SOFT HANDS'

POLICE OFFICERS SAY CARELESS REACTIONS, ACTIONS IN CASES INVOLVING MINORS CAN HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Police, civil society and government authorities should be more careful while commenting or reacting in cases involving juveniles because their actions can have serious consequences, said a senior police officer. The way people commented on the 'Bois Locker Room' incident, which involved many juveniles, was an example of carelessness, said the officer. Amid the outrage on social media on the issue, a girl came out with an Instagram post accusing a boy of molesting her two years ago. Fearing police action and social media trial, the teenager ended his life, he said. "Juveniles should be treated with soft hands and caution, they have their future. They can't be treated like criminals," said the officer. DCP (Cyber Crime) Bhisham Singh said whenever they deal with any case involving juveniles, they exercise extra caution in their probe.

SOFTER APPROACH
While investigating cyber-crime cases involving juveniles, they follow a standard operating procedure. The investigating officer remains in plain clothes when meeting the juvenile; he/she is never called to a police station and is counselled only in the presence

SUICIDE PREVENTION HELPLINE: SANJIVINI, SOCIETY FOR MENTAL HEALTH, 011-4076 9002, MONDAY-SATURDAY (10 A.M.-7.30 P.M.)

families engaging in such casual exchange. So the children grow up thinking it is okay to objectify women. This then gets reinforced with their peers," said Dr. Rajagopal. Damini Grover, another counselling psychologist, agreed. "It's a reflection of an already ex-

isting mindset," she said. She also pointed out the role of Bollywood movies that engage in similar conversations between men about women. This, she said, comes from a "sense of superiority, an assertion of masculinity which involves thinking and talking about women

casually". Taking the example of asking for consent, Dr. Kumar said, "We don't take consent in our homes. We just order. It's how we communicate to our children also. And they learn from the environment, how a man or the father is talking to the wife. And

of parents or NGO members, a police officer revealed. "We get a lot of cases where juveniles get involved in cyber-crimes like morphing picture, cheating or any other mischievous activities. In most of the cases, juveniles admit their mistake and both parents [of the complainant and accused] settle the issue among themselves and withdraw the complaint. The juvenile gives a written assurance to the police that he/she will not get involved in any such activities," said a police officer. The officer said they give a chance to the juvenile as an FIR can spoil the child's entire life and career. He/she will never be able to return to the mainstream. The warning helps and most of them never repeat the crime, the officer said.

ARDUOUS TASK
The police face several hurdles when investigating cases that involve social media platforms. Retrieving information, an officer admitted, is not easy as most of the platforms have their servers in the U.S. and China. A long set of questions have to be answered before they release the information. In the meantime, they have to deal with the public pressure to arrest or identify the people behind cyber-crime.

how the wife is connecting to the in-laws or to the husband."

Still a stigma
Stigma attached to sex and sexuality has been a hindrance, observed counsellors. Dr. Grover said there is reluctance among parents to talk about sex and

sexuality to their children. Because of it, a volley of topics, like exploring one's sexuality, sex and its consequences, ideas of masculinity and femininity, consent, building relationships and treating partners are left undiscussed, she said. Removing the sense of taboo is the first step, said Dr. Rajagopal. "We as a society must be comfortable to sit down and talk about the sexual act. We give the impression that it is a big secret and something bad. Even today the minute there is an intimate scene in a movie, parents tell their children to get up and leave. We have to get out of that sort of mindset. We should be able to have a healthy and open conversation," she said. "If somebody's asking about masturbation or oral sex, talk about it. Tell them," said Dr. Kumar, adding that parents too need to learn to deal with their children. "They shouldn't stop children, but guide them," she said.

'Sexual' education
Looking forward, Dr. Kumar said that there is a need for sexual education and not just sex education among children. Dr. Rajagopal stressed that apart from proper sex education and gender sensitivity among children, it is important to teach parents about such concerns and ensure a positive environment at home. Dr. Grover asserted the need for social media education, given a complete lack of any kind of sensitivity training to children either in schools or at home. "It is part of a new way of living and there is a need to develop some rules around it. Future generations will continue to use these platforms and we need to understand how to use them responsibly," she said. Restricting the use of social media is not an option, she argued. As individuals grow older, the focus has to be on creating a sense of responsibility when using social media, she said. The 'Bois Locker Room incident' should act as a tale of caution.

IN BRIEF

Govt. not doing enough for migrant labourers'

NEW DELHI
The Delhi unit of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) on Thursday said that the government's efforts to provide food to the migrant and stranded labourers were not enough and this was the primary reason that the labourers were reverse-migrating to their homes. The CITU Delhi-NCR committee said that it would highlight the situation on May 22 with protests at several places in Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Delhi and a joint protest at Rajghat.

Air Quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	147	Gurgaon	123
Ghaziabad	187	Faridabad	218
Noida	136	Greater Noida	146
Good 0-50 Satisfactory 51-100 Moderate 101-200 Poor 201-300 Very Poor 301-400 Severe >400			
Air Quality Index at 4 p.m. yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) Source: CPCB			

Jama Masjid cleric issues advisory ahead of Id

NEW DELHI
The Deputy Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid, Syed Shaban Bukhari, on Thursday issued an advisory for celebration of Id and Ramzan in the light of the COVID-19 lockdown. He has asked people to refrain from any mass gathering, religious or celebratory, at any time during the holy month of Ramzan.

With 571 COVID-19 cases, Delhi records biggest 24-hour surge

Third successive 500-plus day takes case count to 11,659, even as 18 die

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

As many as 571 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 11,659, according to the Delhi government health bulletin released on Thursday. This is the biggest single-day jump in the number of cases in the city so far.

Tuesday and Wednesday had also recorded the biggest single-day increase till then. Also, 18 more deaths have been reported, taking the total number of deaths to 194, though the bulletin said that all the deaths did not happen in the past 24 hours.

Of the 11,659 cases, 5,567 people have recovered, whittling down the active cases to 5,898. The recovery rate pleased Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. "Am so proud of our team of doctors and nurses who have provided the best possible treatment to our COVID patients. Delhi will soon have more recovered patients than the number of active cases [sic]," he tweeted.

Meanwhile, Lok Nayak



A girl rides her mother back home after medical treatment during the nationwide lockdown on Thursday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Hospital, which has asked healthcare workers who are on quarantine to vacate the accommodation the hospital had provided, handed them a week's extension. In an order issued on Wednesday, Dr. Suresh Kumar, Medical Director of Lok Nayak Hospital, asked workers to vacate by Thursday noon.

'Quarantine not needed' Mr. Kumar issued the order following a Delhi government order, dated May 18, which said that "regular quarantine of healthcare workers after performing duty in

COVID-19 areas is not warranted". The Delhi government issued the order following a Central government order on the same on May 15. Before the order, all the healthcare workers in Delhi who were on COVID-19 duty were quarantined for 14 days after working for the same tenure. Under the new guidelines, only high-risk workers will be quarantined for 14 days. "We have given them a week's time to vacate the accommodation," Dr. Kumar stated.

However, it entails considerable risk. "Under the cur-

rent guidelines, almost no one would be eligible for quarantine after 14 days of work. This would risk healthcare workers infecting family members and society," Parv Mittal, president of the Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) of the hospital said.

New amendments

The RDA has urged the Union Health Minister to amend the new guidelines, but the Minister is yet to respond.

The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association India (FORDA) too had written to Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain, urging him to make amendments to the new guidelines for the quarantine of healthcare workers.

"Many patients do not show any symptoms and by not quarantining healthcare workers, we expose their family and friends to the virus. We will be holding a black ribbon protest tomorrow [Friday] and doctors will be wearing a black ribbon to work," FORDA president Shivaji Dev Barman said.

'End DMC chief's removal process within 2 weeks'

HC tells govt. to act under ambit of law

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday directed the city government to conclude the process of removal of Zafarul Islam Khan, chairperson of Delhi Minorities Commission (DMC) in accordance with law within two weeks.

A Bench of Justices Manmohan and Sanjeev Narula said, "Respondents No.1 [Delhi government] and 2 [L-G] to conclude the process under Section 4(4)(f) of the Delhi Minorities Commission Act against respondent No.3- Mr. Zafarul Islam Khan in accordance with law within two weeks".

The sections provide for removal of the DMC chairperson after giving him a

proper hearing.

The High Court's order came on a plea by a social worker, Vikram Gahlot, challenging the constitutionality of the DMC Act and seeking removal of Mr. Khan from the post of the chairperson.

Advocate Dhananjai Jain, who represented Mr. Gahlot, argued that despite the previous order of the High Court, no show-cause notice has been issued to Mr. Khan till date.

The L-G had in April written to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal highlighting a social media post by Mr. Khan, the content of which prima facie appears to have the potential of disturbing communal harmony in the city.

Deputy superintendent of Mandoli jail tests positive

Officer is under home quarantine, says prison management

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Mandoli jail reported its first case of COVID-19 as its deputy superintendent tested positive, prison officials said on Thursday.

Director General (Prisons) Sandeep Goel confirmed the development.



An assistant superintendent of Rohini jail had tested positive for COVID-19 earlier this week. ■ FILE PHOTO

'Was on leave'

"The officer is posted at Mandoli jail. He was on leave since May 11 as he had fever. Later, he got tested for COVID-19 at Ganga Ram Hospital and the report came positive on Wednesday," a senior jail official said.

Officials said that the deputy superintendent lives in Sarai Rohilla and is currently under home quarantine. Contact tracing exercise is being conducted, they said.

An assistant superintendent of Rohini jail had tested

positive for COVID-19 earlier this week. At Rohini jail, 15 inmates were tested positive when they underwent examination after an inmate they had come into contact with was tested positive about 10 days ago.

Police officers infected

Meanwhile, seven Delhi Police officers, including an ASI and six HCs posted in the control room of West Dis-

trict, tested positive on Thursday after which a rigorous sanitisation drive is underway and senior officers are planning on how to "work things out".

DCP West office in Rajouri Garden will also undergo a sanitisation drive from Saturday to Monday during the long weekend. Seven affected officials have been quarantined, a senior officer said.

Two arrested for ferrying migrant workers illegally

NEW DELHI
Two persons have been arrested for allegedly ferrying migrant labourers on a forged e-pass from south east Delhi's Govindpur, police said on Thursday. Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) R.P. Meena said that the accused have been identified as Manish Kumar Jha, a resident of Prem Nagar, and Sharvan Kumar, a resident of Govindpur. The police said that the bus and the e-pass have been seized. Fifty one workers were there on the bus with no medical fitness certificate, said Mr. Meena.

Wait's over



Former Union Minister and Congress leader Anand Sharma cycling at Lodi Garden in the Capital on Thursday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

HC rejects plea seeking removal of DCW chief

Petitioner told to be careful in future

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court rejected a public interest petition (PIL) seeking removal of Swati Maliwal as the chairperson of the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW), saying it appeared to be "nothing but a vested interest litigation".

A Bench of Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Subramonium Prasad, while allowing the petition to be withdrawn, cautioned the petitioner Archana Sharma, an advocate, "to be more careful in future while filing petitions as PILs."

The petition had sought directions to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights to initiate an

inquiry against Ms. Maliwal and to remove her from the post on the ground that she is disqualified to be a member of the statutory authority.

Vested interest

The plea also sought direction to the Delhi Police to register a case of abetment of suicide against her. "At the outset, we have indicated to learned counsel for the petitioner that the present petition appears to be nothing but a vested interest litigation rather than a public interest litigation," the court remarked.

The counsel for the Delhi government informed that this is the second attempt to target Ms. Maliwal.

Too early to direct DMRC to resume services, remarks HC

'There is adequate public transport in the Capital as of now'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has remarked that it is too early to urge through petition that the Delhi Metro must be directed to resume operation immediately since there is "adequate public transport" in the Capital as of now.

A Bench of Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Subramonium Prasad said on Wednesday that, "it has been just two days since the new rules and regulations [for lockdown] have come into force".

"It is too early in the day to urge that there is an inadequate supply of public transport for insisting that



DMRC [Delhi Metro Rail Corporation] must be directed to operate immediately," the Bench said.

The court said, "As of now, there is an adequate public transport that has been permitted to be operated by the Government of NCT to meet the requirement of the public at large".

Social distancing

"As and when the lockdown is further relaxed, the DMRC shall also be permitted to operate the Metro Rail in terms of the directions that may be issued by the respondents

[government] subsequently," it added.

The court, further, said that it shall be the duty of the DMRC to ensure that adequate steps are taken to maintain social distancing once it is permitted to function, particularly, since DMRC has become the lifeline for the residents of Delhi and the NCR region and invariably, the compartments are packed to the gills, which can be dangerous in the current COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The court disposed of a petition seeking directions to operate all the public transport, including Delhi Metro in all districts of the Capital.

Economics dept. teachers express concern over DU open book exams

Students may not have regular access to Internet, they say

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

About 170 teachers of the economics department from across Delhi University wrote to the head of that department raising issue with the university's decision to conduct open book examinations, on Wednesday.

"Based on strong student feedback and our own experience of the unsatisfactory

and limited scope and coverage of online classes, we feel that there are very serious hindrances to time-bound online open book examinations in the pattern suggested by the university," the teachers wrote.

Among issues they highlighted, they said that many students may not have regular access to Internet, adding that the issue may be worse

for those staying in containment zones who wouldn't be able to access internet outside their homes, apart from facing issues with scanning and uploading answer sheets.

It raised concerns about the ability of students who even have smartphones to be able to read question papers or upload high quality answer sheets.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

STATE DEVELOPMENT POLICY COUNCIL

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR EMPANELMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR CONTENT WRITING SERVICES &

EMPANELMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR DESIGN AND LAYOUT

The State Development Policy Council (SDPC), on behalf of the Planning and Development Department, Government of Tamil Nadu proposes to empanel 1. Service Providers for Content Writing Services and 2. Service Providers for Design and Layout.

Those who are interested must send RFP separately for each in the prescribed format and they will be processed as per Tamil Nadu Transparency in Tenders Act 1998, (TT Act) latest and TT Rules 2000 there under.

The details can be downloaded from the websites www.tenders.tn.gov.in and www.spc.tn.gov.in from 22.05.2020.

The RFQ document must be delivered in the office of Member Secretary, State Development Policy Council (SDPC), Ezhilagam, 5th Floor, Chepauk, Chennai - 600 005 on or before 3.00 PM, 09.06.2020.

Member Secretary,
STATE DEVELOPMENT POLICY COUNCIL

DIPR/ 514/ DISPLAY/ 2020

BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
(Deemed to be University u/s 3 of UGC Act 1956)
Mesra, Ranchi- 835215

GLORIOUS 65 YEARS of EXCELLENCE in Technical Education

Admissions 2020

M.Tech, MUP, M.Pharm, M.Sc & IMSc Programs at Ranchi (Mesra Campus)

- M.Tech. Automated Manufacturing System
- M.Tech. Biotechnology
- M.Tech. Civil Engineering (Soil Mechanics & Foundation Engineering)
- M.Tech. Civil Engineering (Structural Engineering)
- M.Tech. Environmental Science & Engineering
- M.Tech. Computer Science & Engineering
- M.Tech. Information Security
- M.Tech. Information Technology
- M.Tech. ECE (Wireless Communication)
- M.Tech. ECE (Microwave Engineering)
- M.Tech. ECE (Instrumentation)
- M.Tech. Mechanical Engineering (Heat Power Engineering)
- M.Tech. Mechanical Engineering (Design of Mechanical Equipment)
- M.Tech. Energy Technology
- M.Tech. Computer Aided Analysis & Design (CAAD)
- M.Tech. Electrical Engineering (Control System)
- M.Tech. Electrical Engineering (Power System)
- M.Tech. Electrical Engineering (Power Electronics)
- M.Tech. Remote Sensing
- M.Tech. Space Engineering & Rocketry (Aerodynamics)
- M.Tech. Space Engineering & Rocketry (Rocket Propulsion)
- M.Pharm. (Pharmacognosy)
- M.Pharm. (Pharmaceutical Quality Assurance)
- M.Pharm. (Pharmaceutical Chemistry)
- M.Pharm. (Pharmaceutics)
- M.Pharm. (Pharmacology)
- MUP (Master of Urban Planning)
- M.Sc. (Geoinformatics)
- M.Sc. (Mathematics) & I.M.Sc. (Mathematics and Computing)
- M.Sc. & I.M.Sc. (Physics)
- M.Sc. (Biotechnology)
- M.Sc. & I.M.Sc. (Chemistry)
- I.M.Sc. (Food Technology)

M. Tech. Programs at Patna Campus

- Computer Science and Engineering
- Electronics and Communication Engineering (Wireless Communication)

M. Tech. Program at Noida Campus

- Computer Science and Engineering

MCA at Mesra, Jaipur, Noida and Lalpur Campuses

LAST DATE FOR SUBMITTING ONLINE APPLICATION

M.Tech: 20 June M.Sc: 20 June	M.Pharm: 20 June I.M.Sc: 30 July	MUP: 20 June
--	---	---------------------

Consult Admission Office at Mesra and refer website www.bitmesra.ac.in for details of eligibility and application procedure.

Contact: 0651-2275868; Mobile No: 9508050840, 9431939630, 9431382703
Email: admissions@bitmesra.ac.in, dean.aac@bitmesra.ac.in

Restrictions on entry of house helps, visitors relaxed

Entry into Gurugram housing complexes for visitors is permitted except in containment zones

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM**
The district administration on Thursday issued guidelines to the Residents Welfare Associations for the fourth phase of the lockdown, allowing the entry of domestic workers and all visitors, both family and non-family. The administration left it to the

discretion of the residents to allow the domestic staff within the premises of the society with certain restrictions. Issuing detailed guidelines on various subjects, it said that domestic workers were allowed subject to the condition that they do not come from the containment zone. It is strongly advised that

they undergo thermal screening at the gate and are provided masks and gloves. The guidelines, however, said it was preferable that full-time maids were employed, with one maid-one house system in place to avoid unnecessary movement. The entry to the complex

for all visitors is permitted other than for containment zones. However, they should be subject to adequate social-distancing protocols. Similarly, delivery of utilities such as milk packets, newspapers can be made subject to due caution, social distancing and other norms. However, the guidelines insisted on

keeping the non-essential activities, such as renovation, to a minimum. "All deliveries from courier, Amazon, Flipkart, and any other e-commerce website permitted to operate shall be delivered at building lobbies from where residents have to collect the said package," said the guidelines.

In Gurugram village, gram sabha meeting goes online

Residents discuss locality-related issues via videoconferencing

**ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM**

In a first-of-its-kind venture, residents of Gurugram's Nayagaon held a gram sabha meeting through a videoconferencing app to discuss their issues of cremation ground, post office and women security, among others.

Helmings the conference was Sunil Jaglan, a two-time Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar winner who had adopted the village, which is in the Sohna Block.

Mr. Jaglan, who struck fame with his "Selfie With Daughter" campaign three years ago, said he had been getting calls and messages from the villagers on the issues they have been facing for the last few weeks. They wanted to hold an urgent meeting, but couldn't as gatherings were prohibited due to the lockdown.

A pioneer

However, a pioneer in several technological initiatives in his Bibipur village in Haryana's Jind district, Mr. Jaglan, himself a former Sarpanch, decided to host the meeting through a videoconferencing app. He is no stranger to such novelties,

SINIL JAGLAN
Two-time Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar winner

Since participation of 10% of people is necessary for the quorum, three separate meetings were conducted, which included the families of the participants

having live-streamed a gram sabha sometime ago as well.

Procuring the contacts of the villagers from various WhatsApp groups, run by Sarpanch Surgyan Singh, was the first step. Another group was then created and a link for downloading the videoconferencing app was posted, along with the meeting ID and a password. Thereafter, he called them and explained the procedure. To avoid last-minute hiccups, a mock meeting was conducted before the actual one on May 20.

"Since participation of 10% of people is necessary for the quorum, three separate meetings were conducted, which included the families of the participants. A proceedings book was prepared noting down the

views of the villagers," said Mr. Jaglan, also an advisor in Pranab Mukherjee Foundation.

The proceedings book along with the recordings would be sent to the higher-ups.

Gram sabha, a village assembly comprising all adult members of a village, approves the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development of a village before the Panchayat takes it up for implementation.

Unique experience

One of the villagers, Vinay Kumar Dubey, who is stranded in Lucknow, described his experience as "unique". He raised the issues of drinking water supply and ration cards.

Mr. Singh said the gram sabha meeting, required to be held every four months, was due in May, but the Panchayat could not think of a way to conduct it because of the restrictions in place.

He added that the online meetings would also put an end to the practice of fake gram sabha meetings and bring greater transparency in the working of the Panchayats.

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:

www.thehinduads.com

011-43579738 • 43579797

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Mr. Udal Singh is availing housing loan from LICHL, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi to purchase the Flat No. 5-3 on Upper Ground Floor, having its area 400 sq. ft. 'Aarav Apartment' built on Plot No. 4454 situated at sector-4, Vasthi, Ghaziabad, U.P. from Mr. Ashok Kumar Gang being the owner of the said property by virtue of Sale Deed Regd. on 18/04/2013 in his favour Mr. Ashok Kumar Gang has lost The Original Sale Deeds (1) Sale Deed registered on 10/11/2004, Document No. 23048, Vol. No. 4847, Page No. 53/114 in favour of Mr. Shyamal Ghosh (2) Sale Deed registered on 22/09/2006, Document No. 20077, Vol. No. 7363, Page No.208/226, in favour of Mr. Manju Singh (3) Sale Deed registered on 10/01/2007, Document No. 467, Vol. No. 7286, Page No. 113/135 in favour of Mr. Shubh Narayan (4) Agreement to Sale registered on 20/02/2009, Document No. 3688, Vol. No. 12450, Page No. 243/256 in favour of Mr. Hari Kishan Sharma (5) Sale Deed registered on 22/03/2010, Document No. 6810, Vol. No. 14043, Page No. 120 in favour of Hari Kishan Sharma have been lost and misplaced. If anybody found the same may return to the undersigned. If anybody misuses the same, the same shall be at his/her own risk. If anybody has any objection, claim, right, interest in the said flat shall also inform within 15 days to the undersigned on Telephone No. 91204146364, 98911919161 & 98911919162 as the applicant is mortgaging the above property to LIC Housing Finance Ltd.

S.C. Varshney (LICHL PANEL ADV.)

R-14/178, Raj Nagar, Ghaziabad-201002

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) has issued a Letter of intent for setting up of CNG Station at the site located at following location and to be operated by following Operator having received such Application from the Operator and conducting due diligence and following due process.

Name of Applicant: Mr. Vijay Kumar

Address of proposed station: Kharsa No. 12/18, (2-07) situated in the revenue estate of village-- Mungeshpur, Sub Division Narela, North West, Delhi-110039.

However, if any person has any objection or claim regarding the setting up of CNG Station at the said site kindly contact us within 7 days from the publication of this notice with the relevant and appropriate proof to substantiate the objection/claim failing which it shall be deemed that there is no objection/claim for the setting of CNG Station at said site.

Contact us: IGL Bhawan plot No.4 community center R.K. puram sector-9 New Delhi-110022 cngproject@igll.co.in

Pavneet Singh Batra GM (BD & Projects)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Vinod Kumar S/O Late Shri. Raja Ram Resident of 6/13, Ground Floor, Punjabi Bagh Extension, New Delhi -110026, hereby disown my Son namely Vishwender and his wife Mrs. Sonam from all of my assets including movable and immovable properties in Delhi as well as outside of Delhi with immediate effect. Public at large is informed that I shall not be liable for any acts committed by my son and daughter in law. Anyone dealing with them shall be doing at their own risk and consequences.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that our clients customer, Mr. Sudheep Pathak intending to purchase the 1st Floor without roof rights, property no. 138, admeasuring 31.89 sq. mtrs. in Block A Pocket-A, Sector-6, Rohini, New Delhi from Smt. Sunita Gupta who acquired the same vide sale deed dated 21.02.2019 as doc. no. 2025 from Smt. Saranjay Sukesh, Smt. Veena Mittal, Mrs. Kiran Devi & Ms. Garima Gupta who acquired the same vide sale deed 14.06.2018 as doc. no. 6505 from Sh. Manmohan Puri who acquired the same vide conveyance deed dated 13.06.2019 as doc. no. 712 and also claiming the ownership by way of succession after death of his father late Mr. Rajender (acquired the same vide sale deed dated 15.03.1987 and the said property is being mortgaged with LIC Housing Finance Limited at B/12, 1st Floor, Main Jail Road, Near Hari Nagar Bus Depot, Janakpur, New Delhi after execution of the sale deed in favour of our clients customer. If any including other legal heirs of late Mr. Rajender, & the banks or financial institutions, or any parties, having any claim, demand, rights, in respect of or against the said property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, assignment, mortgage, charge, lien, possession, or otherwise, know or otherwise, are hereby required to make the same known in writing with documentary support to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication, failing which the said claim of such persons, if any will be considered as waived and settled and not binding upon my clients customer.

Mr. Samir Kumar (Advocate) Ms. Excel Law Group, OIR- 87-D, 3rd Floor, Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka, New Delhi

U.P. RAJKIYA NIRMAN NIGAM LIMITED

(U.P. Government Undertaking)

Visheshwariya Bhawan, Vibhuti Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010, Website : <http://www.uprnn.co.in>, Fax 05222720846

Notice no.- 270/APMHC-IT, Hostel/Arch. Tender/TC/RNN/20 Dt. 20.05.2020

NOTICE FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

For and on behalf of Managing Director, U.P. Rajkiya Nirman Nigam Ltd., Project Manager, High Court Unit-I invites online offers in two bids system from eligible Architectural firms for Providing Architectural Consultancy services for "Construction of Transit Hostel 04 Tower (G+12) in New Police Line, Kalli Paschim at Lucknow". Interested eligible Architectural firms may furnish their EOI online, on or before 05.06.2020 by 02:00 PM, other details are available on web portal <https://etender.up.nic.in> for any changes/corrigendum please follow UPRNN website www.uprnn.co.in & <https://etender.up.nic.in> regularly.

Project Manager

PLUCKING RIGHTS OF KEWRA

- It is intended to issue plucking rights of KEWRA from the garden consisting of trees standing on the defence land at Gopalpur Military Station for the period upto 14 Apr. 2021.
- Interested parties may collect the Offer Form and Terms and Conditions Documents from 'Q' Branch, Headquarters Army Air Defence College between 0900 hours to 1300 hours on all working days from 08 Jun 2020 to 13 Jun 2020 at the cost of Rs 500/- (Rupees five hundred only).
- Offer forms collected by interested parties during previous invitation of bids for the award of plucking rights, but not utilized by them, will not be acceptable for the current invitation of bids.
- Offer Forms will be deposited in a sealed envelope, "BID FOR PLUCKING RIGHTS OF KEWRA" duly marked on top, addressed to Headquarters Army Air Defence College, PIN 928992, C/O 99 APO.
- Offer Form may be put in a sealed box in 'Q' Branch, Headquarters Army Air Defence College between 0900h to 1300h from 16 Jun 2020 to 20 Jun 20 or can be sent by registered post so as to reach Headquarters, Army Air Defence College by 1300 hours on 20 Jun 2020 along with Bank Draft as security deposit.
- Security Deposit in the form of bank draft and as per Terms and Conditions will be enclosed along with the Offer Form before posting or putting the Offer Form in the sealed box in 'Q' Branch, Headquarters Army Air Defence College.
- The Offer Forms will be opened at 0900 hours on 22 Jun 2020 by a Board of Officers.

Colonel Q

Headquarters Army Air Defence College C/o 99 APO

MODERN COACH FACTORY, RAEBARELI

Tender No.: CAMC-ET-2020-21-02, Due on: 18.06.2020
Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/M&P, Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli, for and on behalf of President of India, invites ONLINE open tender based on single packet system from reputed firms through Indian Railways portal www.ireps.gov.in for Tender notice no. CAMC-ET-2020-21-02, Due on: 18.06.2020 on prescribed format for the under mentioned work-

Description of work	Approx Value (in ₹)	Earnest Money rounded off to nearest multiple of 100 (in ₹)
Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (including spare parts) of 07 nos. of Traversers for 03 years.	₹ 45,31,729.00 (₹ Forty Five Lakhs Thirty One Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Nine Only)	₹ 90,600.00 (₹ Ninety Thousand Six Hundred Only)

Completion period from the date of commencement of work: 36 Months (03 Years) • Date & Time of closing of tender: 18.06.2020 at 15:30 hrs. • Detailed Tender Notice, Eligibility criteria, Terms & conditions are available in tender document at Indian Railways portal: www.ireps.gov.in Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer (M&P) Serving customers with a smile

Office of The Director General, Medical Health & FW, Danda Lakhound, Sabasthradhara Road, P.O. Gujra, Dehradun, Uttarakhand e-mail:dghealth.uttarakhand@gmail.com, Phone No.0135-2608736, Fax No. 0135-260874

Bid Identification No. 15P/Store/37/2016/6714 Dated 19-05-2020

Government of Uttarakhand "e" procurement e-tender Notice

- Name of the Work: (1) Supply of Equipments for Mahatma Gandhi Satabdi Netra Chikitsa Vigyan Kendra, Under State Budget, as per details given in tender notice on <https://ukenders.gov.in> portal.
- Date & time of availability of bid documents in the portal:23-05-2020 at 3:00 PM.
- Last Date and Time for receipt of bids in the portal: 15-06-2020 at 3:00 PM.
- Name and Address of the Officer Inviting the Bid: Director General, MH & FW Uttarakhand, Dehradun.
- Details of subsequent addendum/corrigendum/cancellation etc. may be obtained from the website <https://ukenders.gov.in>
- Portal Registration: The contractor/bidder intending to participate in the bid is required to register in the portal using his/her active personal official email id as his/her login id and attach his/her valid digital signature certificate (DSC) to his/her unique login id.

For any other queries the bidders are asked to contact through e-mail cmsd.uk@gmail.com

Director General Medical Health & FW Uttarakhand, Dehradun,

DIPR UK 11640

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

e-Procurement Notice

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

- The Executive Engineer National Highway Division HPPWD, Theog Distt. Shimla H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of tender	Time Limit	Eligible class of contractor
1.	Construction of U-shape Covered Drain including foot path Dhalli Tunnel to Mashobra Junction on Kalka-Shimla-Wantoo Road NH-22 (New NH-05)/Cutting earth work Construction of Breast wall Construction of Covered Drain along with foot path from km 153/180 to 153/765 against Smart City Project.	1,59,26,294/-	209000/-	5000	12 Months	B
2.	Construction of Steel Foot Path on Kalka-Shimla-Wantoo Road NH-22 (New NH-05) in various reaches between km 153/180 to 153/765 against Smart City Project.	1,66,72,280/-	217000/-	5000	12 Months	B
3.	Construction of U-shape Covered Drain including foot path Dhalli Tunnel to Mashobra Junction on Kalka-Shimla-Wantoo Road NH-22 (New NH-05)/Cutting earth work Construction of Breast wall Construction of Covered Drain along with foot path from km 153/765 to 154/500 against Smart City Project.	1,75,60,534/-	226000/-	5000	12 Months	B
4.	Construction of U-shape Covered Drain including foot path Dhalli Tunnel to Mashobra Junction on Kalka-Shimla-Wantoo Road NH-22 (New NH-05)/Cutting earth work Construction of Breast wall Construction of Covered Drain along with foot path from km 154/500 to 154/760 against Smart City Project.	81,25,999/-	141300/-	2000	12 Months	B
5.	Construction of U-shape Covered Drain including foot path Dhalli Tunnel to Mashobra Junction on Kalka-Shimla-Wantoo Road NH-22 (New NH-05)/Cutting earth work Construction of Breast wall Construction of Covered Drain along with foot path from km 154/760 to 155/045 against Smart City Project.	1,23,46,989/-	173500/-	5000	12 Months	B
6.	Construction of R/wall from Dhalli Tunnel to Mashobra Junction on kalka-Shimla-Wantoo Road on NH-22(New NH-05)/SH-Construction of R/wall between km 153/725 to 153/785 and km 154/310 to km 154/361) against Smart city Project.	1,62,91,706/-	213000/-	5000	12 Months	B
7.	Construction of R/wall at RD 24/180 To 24/250 and U-shape Drain between km 24/00 to 24/240 on Shimla Bye Pass NH-22(New NH-05) on Kalka-Shimla-Wantoo against Smart City Project.	1,72,24,600/-	222300/-	5000	12 Months	B
8.	Metalling and Tarring on extended Portion Hill/Valley Side on NH-22 (New NH-05) from Dhalli Tunnel to Mashobra Junction in km 153/180 to 155/045 and km 24/180 to 24/250 on Shimla Bye Pass .	49,20,807/-	81500/-	1500	12 Months	C

- Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website <https://hptenders.gov.in>. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: <https://hptenders.gov.in>. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.
- Key Dates: (I)

1. Date of Online Publication	29.05.2020 at 17.00 PM
2. Document Download Start and End Date	29.05.2020 at 17.00 PM PM. & 15.06.2020 at 18.00 P.M.
3. Bid Submission Start and End Date	29.05.2020 at 17.00 PM PM. & 15.06.2020 at 18.00 P.M.
4. Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	16.06.2020 at 10.30 A.M.
5. Date of opening of Technical Bid.	16-06.2020 at 11.00 A.M.

- TENDER DETAILS: The Tender Documents shall be uploaded online in 2 Cover: i) Cover 1: shall contain scanned copies of all "Technical Documents/ Eligibility Information". ii) Cover2: shall contain "BOQ/Financial Bid", where contractor will quote his offer for each item.
- SUBMISSION OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS: The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security/Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and other Technical Documents in the C/O National Highway Division H.P.PWD., Theog Distt. Shimla H.P., as specified in Key dates Sr. No. 4 on Tender Opening Date, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive.
- BID OPENING DETAILS: The bids shall be opened on 16-06-2020 at 11.00 A.M. HRS in the office of National Highway Division H.P.PWD., Theog Distt. Shimla H.P., by the authorised officer. In their interest the tenderer is advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of tenders. If the offer happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than 120 days after the deadline date for bid submission.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.

Eligibility Criteria:-

- The bidders must have successfully completed similar nature of one work not less than 40% of the estimated cost during the last five year under Govt. Department State or Central PSU's (without Liquefied damages or compensation) except Job No 8 and 9
- The Executive Engineer reserves the right to accept/reject any tender/application or all tenders without assigning any reasons.

Executive Engineer, National Highway Division, HP.PWD., Theog.

on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

HP / 0507/20-21

HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

CHANDIGARH ADMINISTRATION U.T. CHANDIGARH

E-TENDER NOTICE

The Executive Engineer C.P. Divn No 1, Chandigarh on behalf of President of India Re-Invited sealed Percentage Rate tender from approved & eligible contractors enlisted with Chandigarh Admn, dealing with Road works which shall be uploaded and received on <http://etenders.chd.nic.in/cicgsp>

Sr. No		Name of Work and location		Estimated cost put to tender		Earnest money		Time of completion		Last date & Time		For Submission of documents in Physical form by the lowest bidder, Within a week after opening the tender	Time & date of opening of tender 26.05.2020 at 3.00 P.M.
1		Re-carpeting of Cycle Tracks Transfer from M. C. Chandigarh.		Rs.18,58,839/-		Rs.37177/-		One Month		For submission for original EMD	25.05.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.	26.05.2020 at 2.00 P.M.	

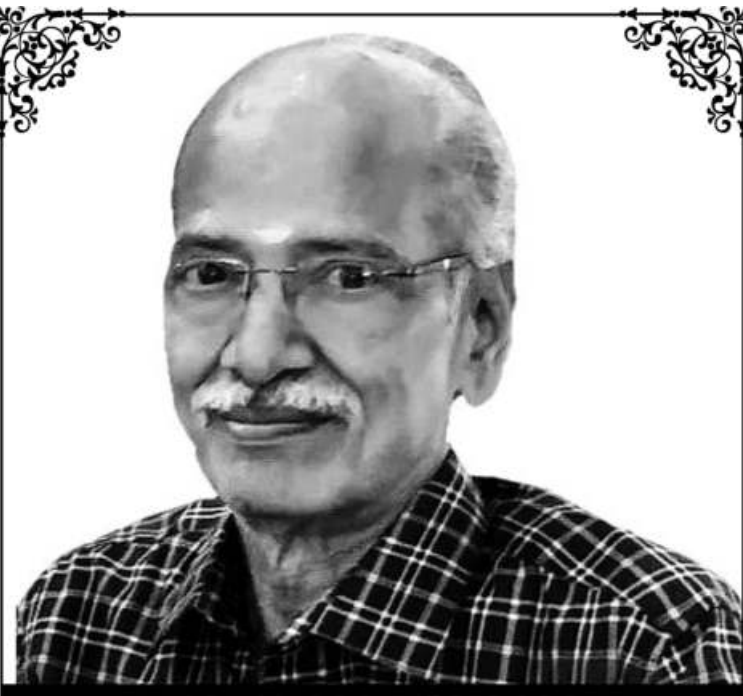
CONDITIONS

The tender document can only be downloaded/up-loaded by the contractor/bidders from the website <http://etenders.chd.nic.in>.

Executive Engineer, C.P. Division no.1, Sector 9, Chandigarh. Tel.No. 0172-2740620

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH



M.K. RAMASWAMY

Deputy Commissioner Customs (Rtd.)

January 15, 1943 - May 20, 2020

For condolence visits: May 22, 10 am - 12 pm.

EVERYTHING

You are the greatest father a girl could ask for.

You were the perfect husband to Amma.

You were a wonderful friend.

You were a kind, generous, sweet and loving soul who was loved by many.

You were an outstanding human being.

You went out of your way to help people.

You didn't just live, you made a difference.

To say you will be missed is an understatement.

We will miss everything about you.
From your morning newspaper reading and our chats to your handsome face and big beautiful heart.

Our lives will never be the same without you.

We will never be the same without you.

You are our everything.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for being you.

We are so lucky to have been able to call you Appa, Anu Pa and the most beloved MKR.

We will miss you so much. Love you to the moon and back.

With all our love, Chandra, Anitha

and your darling Thombachi Preetha



Dr. T.S. Kamala

Wife of Late Shri V Krishnaswamy reached the heavenly abode on 20 May 2020. Funeral took place on the same day.

Deeply Mourned by Family and Friends.

Phone : 98840 77704



R. Raman

10.04.1938 to 20.05.2020

Former Chief General Manager, SBI

Attained the Lotus Feet at 3.00 pm on Wednesday

Deeply mourned by family and friends

Mobile: V R Rajagopal - 9940227618

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES



5th ANNIVERSARY

Retired Professor V.V.V. College for Women, Virudhunagar

Expired on 22.05.2015

Fondly Remembered by:


Dr. R. Arunmozhimarman

M.S. Ortho

& Family

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Friday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning, hail and gusty winds very likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh; with lightning and gusty winds at isolated places over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Kerala and Lakshadweep and with lightning at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala.....	2.7	30.6	24.8	Kozhikode.....	—	33.0	27.0
Ahmedabad.....	—	44.1	26.0	Kurnool.....	—	43.1	28.8
Aizawl.....	21.0	23.7	19.2	Lucknow.....	—	40.5	24.8
Allahabad.....	—	42.2	25.4	Madurai.....	—	—	27.0
Bengaluru.....	—	33.2	22.0	Mangaluru.....	—	34.7	25.4
Bhopal.....	—	42.7	22.0	Mumbai.....	—	35.1	26.5
Bhubaneswar.....	—	35.0	20.9	Mysuru.....	—	31.4	24.0
Chandigarh.....	—	38.3	21.8	New Delhi.....	—	43.2	23.6
Chennai.....	—	42.0	29.9	Patna.....	—	32.4	24.2
Coimbatore.....	—	35.0	25.3	Port Blair.....	—	6.7	31.7
Dehradun.....	—	36.7	19.3	Puducherry.....	—	0.2	41.2
Gangtok.....	—	22.4	19.6	Pune.....	—	39.0	23.9
Goa.....	—	34.6	26.9	Raipur.....	—	39.5	21.6
Guwahati.....	—	00.0	00.0	Ranchi.....	—	0.8	30.1
Hubballi.....	—	34.0	23.0	Shillong.....	—	86.4	19.6
Hyderabad.....	—	19.9	24.8	Shimla.....	—	27.1	18.2
Imphal.....	—	4.5	28.0	Srinagar.....	—	26.7	8.4
Jaipur.....	—	42.0	26.8	Thiruvananthapuram.....	—	17.7	27.8
Kochi.....	—	0.4	32.0	Tiruchi.....	—	41.1	28.0
Kohima.....	—	15.0	24.2	Vijayawada.....	—	—	—
Kolkata.....	—	236.3	26.8	Vizakhapatnam.....	—	35.6	30.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad.....	—	27	16	53	82	■
Bengaluru.....	—	03	11	38	36	■
Chennai.....	—	04	33	76	71	■
Delhi.....	—	—	39	107	204	■
Hyderabad.....	—	52	35	10	95	■
Kolkata.....	—	05	08	22	110	■
Lucknow.....	—	05	18	29	111	■
Mumbai.....	—	31	10	10	14	■
Pune.....	—	26	10	59	33	■
Vizakhapatnam.....	—	09	65	06	82	■

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Soren seeks permission to fly back workers

Jharkhand government to provide free food and water for returning migrants along national highways

AMARNATH TEWARY
SATYASUNDAR BARIK
PATNA / BHUBANESWAR

Days after a spat with Rail-way Minister Piyush Goyal over ferrying migrants on special trains, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah expressing willingness to bring back the “distressed workers” of his State from Leh and the north-eastern States on chartered flights with “dignity”. “So far we have been able to get back 1.5 lakh stranded workers, students and other persons by trains and buses and while executing this evacuation exercise, we came to know that nearly 200 labourers of Jharkhand are stuck in the difficult terrain of Ladakh. Similarly, around 450 such workers are stranded in the north-eastern States. Distress calls from there are being received every day in my of-



Food being served in one of the over 6,000 Mukhya Mantri Didi Kitchens in Jharkhand. •SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

... due to the difficult terrain of these places, a viable solution would be to lift them by air,” said Mr. Soren in his one-page letter dated May 20 to the Home Minister. Noting that MHA lockdown rules prohibit chartered flights, he urged Mr. Shah to grant permission while reminding him about an earlier request dated May 12 for a similar chartered

flight from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands to bring back over 300 workers of the State. Nearly 4 lakh migrant workers from Jharkhand are stuck in different parts of the country after the nationwide lockdown was imposed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Many of them have returned home but lakhs of migrants are still stranded.

Mr. Soren, who has been vocal about the official insensitivity towards the plight of migrant workers, also announced the opening of community kitchens along highways to provide free food.

Spots identified
The community kitchens will be set up at a gap of 20 km along bordering national highways and migrant workers found walking towards their homes will be provided food and water free of cost. The Jharkhand CMO has identified 94 spots so far for the purpose along national highways. Besides, Jharkhand has been providing two meals to about 45,000 people every day through 6,432 ‘Didi Kitchens’

Migrant workers from other States who are either stranded in Jharkhand or using the State as transit route will also avail free food in the

community kitchens. They will be taken to a nearby centre from where vehicles will be arranged to ferry them to their respective State borders.

“People should not lose humanity at the time of pandemic. We should set an example. About 7 lakh workers from Jharkhand are stranded outside. Food and accommodation arrangements for more than 6 lakh of those migrant workers have been made in coordination with different State governments,” said Mr. Soren. The government was also making efforts to bring back migrant workers stuck outside by special trains and buses, he said.

On May 15, Mr. Soren had directed all district administrations as well as Jharkhand police to ensure that no person belonging to Jharkhand or any other State walks towards their destinations.

Migrants trigger spike in U.P. cases

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The huge number of migrant workers returning to Uttar Pradesh during the lockdown has caused the positive cases of COVID-19 in the State to surge, an official said on Thursday.

Amit Mohan Prasad, Principal Secretary in the Health Department, said so far 1,230 migrant workers who had returned to U.P. had tested positive. Over 46,000 samples of migrant workers have also been collected, he said.

Mr. Prasad said the number of pool tests showing positive results in the State had also considerably gone up because of the entry of migrant workers.

Over 5.42 lakh migrant workers are under the surveillance of ASHA workers, he added. So far, over 20 lakh migrant workers have returned to U.P.

Two girls found murdered in Shamli

Reports of heinous crimes have once again started emerging from western U.P.

ANUJ KUMAR
GHAZIABAD

After a lull, reports of heinous crimes have once again started emerging from western Uttar Pradesh. After the gruesome murder of two workers of a political party in Sambhal on May 19, two unidentified bodies of girls were found in a sugarcane field in a village in Shamli district on Wednesday, police said.



The sugarcane field where the bodies were found. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

port says the girls were murdered between the night of May 18 and May 19. There are head injuries that suggest they were killed with a heavy, blunt object. There is no evidence of rape,” he said. Mr. Jaiswal said four teams had been formed to trace the antecedents of the deceased.

“We have questioned the locals but no one has come forward to identify them. We are in touch with neighbouring districts such as Baghpat, Muzaffarnagar, and Panipat in Haryana to check if a missing person report has been lodged there.

In another incident an alleged cow smuggler was killed and a constable was seriously injured during an encounter in Saharanpur on Wednesday night. According to an official release, the police responded to an informer's tip off that four persons were indulging in cow slaughter in village Ghanamandi.

According to the release, a team of five policemen surrounded the area. The smug-

glers fired at the police but constable Vatan Pawar caught hold of one of the smugglers. The constable was attacked with a knife three times. The police fired in self-defence, injuring one of the smugglers.

The four managed to escape. Later, during the combing operation, one of the smugglers named Virasat was found lying in a sugarcane field around 2.30 a.m. on Thursday. He was taken to the district hospital where he was declared brought dead.

The injured constable was referred to Dehradun where his situation is critical, according to Dinesh Kumar P, Senior Superintendent of Police, Saharanpur. A case has been registered.

Assam to go for ‘ruthless quarantine’ policy

Those in isolation will have no access to social media, says State's Health Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam government has decided to go for “ruthless quarantine” of passengers coming from outside the state by all modes of transport, including air for keeping the novel coronavirus in check.

The decision came hours after Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri advocated a pragmatic approach to quarantining air passengers and insisted such measures were not required for short-haul domestic flights.

“Assam has had a sudden spike in COVID-19 positive cases since May 4 when the Ministry of Home Affairs allowed inter-State travel. In view of the grim situation

because of cases, mostly imported from western and southern India, we have decided to go for ruthless quarantine with a humane heart,” Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday evening.

The elites and influential will not be spared the ruthlessness that entails a denial of phone and social media access, the Minister said.

“Assam now has 191 (increased to 199 later) positive cases, mostly after 37,000 people returned by road and train. This is just the tip of the iceberg with another 12 lakh are waiting to come and we are not firm about quarantining,” Mr Sarma said.

“All passengers will be

quarantined, and we will get air passengers from three airports when domestic air travel starts on May 25,” he added.

Cash incentives

The Minister, however, said the ruthless quarantine policy will come with cash incentives.

“We have decided to stop payment-based quarantine with immediate effect. The government will bear the expenditure of up to Rs. 20,000 per quarantined person and all district heads have been asked to facilitate the payment,” he said.

A person at institutional quarantine will be entitled to a one-time payment of Rs. 500 for toiletries and up to

Rs. 500 per day on food. The local authorities have been authorised to pay up to Rs. 2,000 per day for each person put up in hotels. “Any person who does not test positive will be allowed to go after seven nights in institutional quarantine but will have to be in home quarantine for the next seven days. For that, he or she would be given Rs. 2,000 once,” Mr Sarma said.

Zoning formula

The Health Minister also said the State government has decided to modify the standard operating procedures to not mark any district red or orange unless the number of positive cases touches 200.

Police remand for Cong. leader Pankaj Punia

Controversy over social media post

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Congress leader from Haryana Pankaj Punia, arrested by police in Haryana's Karnal for allegedly hurting religious feelings through a social media post was on Thursday sent on police remand for a day by a local court.

“We produced Pankaj Punia in a local court at Karnal on May 21, and the court has granted one day police remand. He was arrested from Madhuban area late Wednesday night,” Bharti Arora, Inspector General of Police, Karnal Range said.

A police case was registered against Mr. Punia, a

former secretary of Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee, on basis of a complaint by a Karnal resident, who alleged that Mr. Punia had posted provocative falsehood to promote enmity between sections of society on ground of religion.

The case against Mr. Punia was registered under sections related to promoting enmity between different groups, outraging religious feelings of the Indian Penal Code and under the Information Technology (Amendment) Act 2008. Another FIR was registered against Mr. Punia in Lucknow as well for his alleged objectionable tweet.

M.P. records 248 new cases

STAFF REPORTER
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh on Thursday registered 248 new COVID-19 cases, taking the overall count to 5,981, said the Directorate of Health Services.

Most cases, at 61, were registered in Ujjain, where 481 cases and 51 deaths have been recorded so far. The case fatality rate in the city stands at 10.6%, according to a bulletin issued by the Directorate.

Whereas, four deaths owing to the illness were reported in the State during the day, taking the death toll to 270. Two patients died in Indore, and one death was reported in Ujjain and Neemuch each.

As for recoveries, 110 patients were discharged from hospitals across the State after recovering from the illness.

So far, 2,843 patients have recovered, with most, at 1,213, being in Indore.

TENDER NOTICE						
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HPGCL, HISAR	NIT NO.10/2020-22/RGTPP/TGM-I/1 VOL-VI DT. 12.05.2020. ANNUAL RATE CONTRACT FOR ONLINE LEAK SEALING JOBS FOR TWO YEARS TO PLUG WATER/ STEAM/OIL LEAKAGES IN TURBINE & BOILER AREAS AT 2X600MW RGTPP, KHEDAR HISAR, 1X210MW & 2X250MW FTPS PANIPAT AND 2X300MW, DCRTPP YAMUNANAGAR .	12.05.2020 01.06.2020	77581/-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9355084495 ramesh.kumar@hpgcl.org.in
2	HPGCL, HISAR	NIT NO.21/XEN/CMB-J/RGTPP/2019-20 DT. 06.05.2020 AMC FOR PLANT BUILDING AND CIVIL STRUCTURES AT RGTPP, KHEDAR, HISAR 2020-21.	06.05.2020 26.05.2020	72300/-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9355084412 Singh.yashpal@hpgcl.org.in
3	HPGCL, HISAR	NIT NO.217/RGTPP/BMD-J/318 VOL-IX DT. 11.05.2020. CARRYING OUT TWO YEARS RUNNING CONTRACT FOR OPERATION OF MECHANICAL WORKSHOP AND ITS PETTY MAINTENANCE AT 2X600MW RGTPP, KHEDAR, HISAR.	11.05.2020 01.06.2020	1.42 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9354516229 rk.gulati@hpgcl.org.in
4	HPGCL, HISAR	NIT NO.216/RGTPP/BMD-J/319 VOL-IX DT. 08.05.2020. CARRYING OUT TWO YEAR MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR ROUTINE/PREVENTIVE/BREAKDOWN MAINTENANCE OF BOILER PRESSURE PARTS, COAL & OIL BURNER ASSEMBLIES, WIND BOX , HP VALVES, SAFETY VALVES , FANS, APH'S ESP, DUCTING & FUEL OIL PUMPS ETC. AT 2X600MW UNIT-I & II AT RGTPP, KHEDAR, HISAR.	09.05.2020 29.05.2020	3.50 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9354516229 rk.gulati@hpgcl.org.in
5	MC JHAJJAR	LAYING OF MASTIC LAYER AND LAYING OF 1PB 80 MM THICK ON CHAWNI ROAD IN WARD NO. 16 JHAJJAR.	CLOSING DATE 01.06.2020	9440/-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	8222002777 yogeshrathi89@gmail.com
6	MUNICIPAL COUNCIL FATEHABAD	SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR REMEDIATION AND RECLAMATION OF EXISTING DUMPSITE BIGHAR ROAD VILLAGE MATANA FATEHABAD	16.05.2020 29.05.2020	435.52 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9466731655 municipalcouncilfatehabad@gmail.c
7	MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, NANGAL CHOUDHARY	SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR REMEDIATION AND RECLAMATION OF EXISTING DUMPSITE AT NEAR KRISHNAWATI RIVER	CLOSING DATE 27.05.2020	EMD 28940/-	https://www.etenders.hry.nic.in	9813397504 secymcnch@gmail.com
8	HSSCA PANCHKULA	SUPPLY OF BLUE AND WHITE COLOURED CERTIFIED TAGS	28.05.2020 15.06.2020	35 LACS	https://www.etenders.hry.nic.in	072-2587573
9	M.C. ROHTAK	REGARDING CATCHING THE STRAY CATTLE (COW, CALF, BULL) WANDERING INSIDE THE LIMITS OF MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ROHTAK AND LEAVING/SENDING THEM IN THE VILLAGE PAHAWAR GAUSHALA	20.05.2020 26.05.2020	NIL	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	csimcrohtak@gmail.com
10	THE SONIPAT COOPERATIVE SUGAR MILLS LTD. SONIPAT	PURCHASE AND CONVERSION OF G.M LINER AND G.M. CASTING BUSHES ETC + 8 OTHER WORKS	20.05.2020 27.05.2020	10.40 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9728310002 sonipatsugar@gmail.com
11	HARYANA STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION	REPLACEMENT OF OLD AC SHEETS WITH 0.60 MM THICK GALVALUME / ZINCALUME STEEL SHEET ROOFING FOR 1000MTS CAPACITY GODOWNS	23.05.2020 03.06.2020	AS PER INDIVIDUAL TENDER	etenders.hry.nic.in	SECRETARY
12	HFDC SIRSA	TRANSPORTATION STACKING IN DEPOT IN KALANWALI RANGE + 5 OTHER WORKS	20.05.2020 09.06.2020	1 LAKH	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01666-243020 gm.sirsa@hfdc.gov.in
13	HARYANA POLICE HOUSING CORPORATION, PANCHKULA	EMPANELMENT OF STRUCTURE CONSULTANT FOR THE VARIOUS BUILDING WORKS OF HARYANA POLICE HOUSING CORPORATION.	22.05.2020 15.06.2020	5 LACS	www.hphc.org.in	dlbpanchkula@yahoo.com
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in						
Samvad - 80975						

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:
www.thehinduads.com
011-43579738 • 43579797

XPRESSIONS
BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES
SITUATION VACANT GENERAL

I WISH Dear Mummy & Papa to beat this world with love and everlasting happiness of life together!! - From Priya & Monu
WANTED ADMIN Manager, Incharge, M / F Food & Shelter 161/6 Mangalam Chny Ch-40. 9952972511, 9808230317



Keeping the peace

India and China must end tensions on the border by clarifying the LAC

With four incidents along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in recent weeks, the India-China border is witnessing the highest tensions since the Doklam stand-off in 2017. In the three years since, both sides have done remarkably well to keep the peace. Prime Minister Modi and President Xi both agreed differences should not be allowed to escalate into disputes. Also, a clear message was sent to the two militaries to abide by the detailed protocols already in place, such as those agreed to in 2005 and 2013. These regulate the activities of troops in the contested zones that lie in between both sides’ overlapping claim lines of the undefined LAC. If Army Chief General Manoj Naravane wisely sought to cool the temperatures with his May 14 statement, China has unhelpfully raised them. On May 19, its Foreign Ministry accused the Indian Army of “attempting to unilaterally change the status” of the LAC. The stand-off in Ladakh appears to have been triggered by China moving in troops to obstruct road construction activity by India. Last year, India completed the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulet Beg Oldi (DBO) road which connects Leh to the Karakoram Pass. India also maintains a key landing strip at DBO at 16,000 feet. The broader context for the tensions is the changing dynamic along the LAC. India has been upgrading its roads as it plays catch-up, with China already enjoying an advantage in both terrain and infrastructure. China now seems to be telling India it has no right to carry out the kind of activity that Beijing has already done. India is well within its right to carry out construction work. Delhi needs to remind Beijing that a fundamental principle that underpins all previous agreements is recognising the right to mutual and equal security of the two sides.

The immediate priority is for both sides to use existing channels and step back. Flag meetings between brigade commanders have so far been unable to break the stalemate. The incidents have underlined how the new LAC situation is placing existing mechanisms under renewed stress. India and China should grasp the current situation as an opportunity to revive the stalled process of clarifying the LAC. China has resisted this as a distraction to the boundary negotiations. But rather than agree on a line, both can instead simply seek to better understand the claims of the other and reach a common understanding to regulate activity in these areas. Clarifying the LAC may even provide a fresh impetus to the stalled boundary talks between the Special Representatives. Beyond the posturing, both sides know a final settlement will ultimately have to use the LAC as a basis, with only minor adjustments. Only a settlement will end the shadow boxing on the LAC. With both countries in the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic, the time to push for a settlement to a distracting, protracted dispute is now.

A double disaster

India forecast Amphan’s arrival; it must now handle the impact of the storm and COVID-19

The trail of death and devastation that Cyclone Amphan has left in West Bengal and Odisha demonstrates, once again, the fragile state of eastern coastal States during the storm season. At least 72 people are dead in Bengal and normal life is paralysed for millions in Kolkata and in the rural areas of both the States. That Amphan would be a terrible disaster was anticipated, but even with reliable forecasts of its movement since May 16, and the preparatory moves by National and State Disaster Response Force units, the impact has been catastrophic. The States along the east coast have evolved a code of practice for a storm coming under category 3 and above: evacuations, arranging for backup power, warning people to stay far from the coasts, designating strong buildings as cyclone shelters, and providing for at least a week’s supply of cooked food besides bolstering medical supplies. Yet, the loss of life and damage to livelihoods is always significant. This time has been no different, and the Centre and the governments of the affected States, including those in the Northeast lashed by heavy rain, must help people already weighed down by a severe lockdown pick up their lives again. There is an additional challenge, as thousands of people have been moved to crowded shelters where the COVID-19 pandemic poses a continuing threat. Adhering to hygienic practices, monitoring those requiring medical assistance and testing for the virus is a high priority.

India’s cyclone warning system has made major advances for being able to provide clear warnings and saving lives but the precarious lives led by millions of citizens have once again been subjected to a severe shock. Many who were working in distant States have just returned to Odisha and Bengal in the wake of the economic paralysis caused by COVID-19, and need sustained support after the storm. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has appealed for strong support from the Centre, which the State must be provided to help it overcome the double jeopardy of the pandemic and the cyclone. Encouragingly, some vital activities such as functioning of the Kolkata airport were restored a day after the cyclone struck, facilitating movement of essentials, and additional NDRF personnel despatched to restore normalcy. The challenge is to provide pre-fabricated facilities for safe shelter in outlying areas, such as the Sunderbans, and use off-the-shelf solutions such as solar power to mobilise communities. While the battle against the virus may yet be won sooner or later, India must strengthen its response capabilities for a never-ending cycle of storms along its coastline.

The lockdown has highlighted stark inequalities

Instead of embracing the welfare state path, the BJP government is encouraging greater privatisation



ZOYHA HASAN

The novel coronavirus is a global threat, but the pandemic has had an uneven impact across countries and within countries. Historically, social inequality has always been extreme in India. However, the lockdown has sharpened the edges of inequality even further, especially because of the way it has been implemented. Many countries have imposed lockdowns but not as stringent and severe as the Indian one. What is more, the largest lockdown in the world with hardly any safety net was imposed at a four-hour notice. The sudden decision deprived countless people of jobs and livelihoods. This has strained the fragile social and economic fabric far more than it needed to.

A disastrous decision

Nobody is safe from the virus, but some classes are more protected than others. Class and wealth inequality means COVID-19 may pose greater risks to some as it poses a double threat to them. In India, the lockdown favours the “balcony classes”, with no regard of its consequences for others. The pandemic has exposed the precarious existence of millions of migrants who operate the levers of the informal economy. It required no rocket science to anticipate that India’s huge army of informal labour would be the most badly hit by the lockdown. Repeated extension of the lockdown has caused economic devastation to workers in the informal economy as it has left them with no income, no food and no shelter. The Centre for

Monitoring Indian Economy estimates that about 140 million people have lost jobs since the lockdown. In brief, pervasive unemployment or underemployment, a feature of the Indian economy before the lockdown, worsened after it, and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Worldwide, the defining images of India’s lockdown are the caravans of migrant workers walking hundreds of kilometres to reach their homes. Bereft of substantive support from the government or their employers, they want to escape the city and get back to their villages and families. Several hundreds of them lost their lives in their desperate attempt to reach home during the lockdown. The SaveLife Foundation, a non-profit organisation working to prevent road accidents, has recorded nearly 2,000 road crashes and 368 deaths from March 25, when the lockdown began, to May 16.

The Union Home Ministry had asked shops, industry and commercial establishments to pay wages to workers during the lockdown but it offered no financial support should this not happen. Social activist Harsh Mander asked the Supreme Court to order the government to pay wages. As expected, the apex court refused to intervene. However, the Court intervened and asked the government not to resort to any coercive action against private companies that have not paid their workers full wages during the lockdown in accordance with a government order in March. Since then, the government has dropped the crucial order. Clearly, the Court has readily accepted the government’s assurance that it was looking after migrant labourers. But all that the government had done was take small steps such as providing dry rations and a paltry sum of ₹500, the first of the three instalments of



SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Putting the onus on citizens

The Sangh Parivar believes that society has to take care of itself through self-regulation. Given this world view, it is no surprise that the BJP government is offering little by way of a safety net. Rather, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in one of his national addresses, asked each citizen to help nine poor families during the lockdown. This puts the responsibility for containing the consequences of the pandemic/lockdown squarely on the citizens, instead of instituting a government-backed social support system. While the call to compassion is unremarkable, it has two implications – it minimises the urgency of state intervention required to deal with the economic crisis and it passes on the responsibility to citizens with an emphasis on citizens’ duties as against citizens’ rights.

Quite the reverse is happening in many other countries which have introduced huge relief packages involving large amounts of government expenditure to provide money for workers’ wages for up to three months, giving money or rebates to companies, unemployment allowance or direct benefit transfers. The Spanish government unveiled sweeping reforms that led to nationalisation of all private hospitals. The U.K. extended a worker furlough programme that pays people idled by the pandemic till the end of October. This

is similar to the Paycheck Protection Programme in the U.S. Both seek to preserve jobs rather than resorting to mass lay-offs.

In India, transfer of cash in the past two months of lockdown could have mitigated the most heart-breaking migrant crisis since the Partition in 1947. This was the basic requirement of justice. But the government failed to transfer money to the distressed people or to small businesses and commercial establishments. Failure to do so has exposed the heartlessness of the BJP government. It refuses to embrace the welfare state path adopted by most governments which believe radical change is essential for restoring a social balance underlying the welfare state of earlier years. Even governments ideologically committed to conservatism are loosening their purse strings. But the BJP government has done nothing of the sort. In the event, acute distress and disempowerment of the most vulnerable has further deepened existing social inequalities of Indian society. The government’s lack of sympathy and concern for the stranded migrant workers clearly shows that the system doesn’t work for everyone. No wonder, migrant labourers across India have told reporters they won’t return to see such humiliation again.

Greater privatisation

Seen against the scale of distress, the government’s economic stimulus package is niggardly based on minimal fiscal cost and minimum social spending. Just about everything is included in the fiscal stimulus ranging from repaying tax refunds to loans. At this rate, even a good monsoon can be considered fiscal stimuli. The immediate relief to the people is not more than 1% of the GDP. The stimulus package has been rightly dismissed by almost everyone out-

side the government as too little, too late.

Most shocking is the slew of controversial reforms announced by the Finance Minister in the last episode of her five-part serial on the government’s stimulus package. Instead of addressing the migrant worker crisis, the government has embarked on greater privatisation and further opening the economy to foreign capital. It has thrown open coal, defence production, space travel, among other areas, to the private sector. These contentious pieces of economic reforms wouldn’t be counted as rescue package anywhere; moreover, it is wrong and unethical to push them under lockdown without parliamentary oversight.

The much-derided Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and National Food Security Act (NFSA) have come to the rescue of the people. Ironically, both schemes are legacies of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government and both were hugely criticised by the BJP. MGNREGA was described as a “living monument” of Congress failure in addressing poverty. Now the government has decided to allocate an additional ₹40,000 crore to MGNREGA. This is welcome as it will provide a semblance of relief during distress in rural India. But in cities migrant workers do not have even this modicum of social security. The one important lesson that this pandemic has underlined is the urgent need for an urban employment guarantee scheme. In the meantime, generous cash transfers can provide economic security. However, for this to happen, we need a more humane government responsive to the basic needs of its people.

Zoaya Hasan is Professor Emerita, Centre for Political Studies, JNU

A violation of right found, but no remedy given

Despite finding a violation of rights in prohibiting 4G Internet in J&K, the Supreme Court did not issue a writ to the state



SUHRITH PARTHASARTHY

The maxim *Ubi Jus Ibi Remedium* (where there is a right, there is a remedy) has anchored the common law for centuries. In India, the Constituent Assembly regarded the principle as so foundational that, through Article 32, it granted the Supreme Court the authority to issue a set of prerogative writs to enforce the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Over the last four decades, though, the idea of remedies moving in parallel with rights has come to wither. In this period, the Supreme Court has enunciated a number of rights which it found ought to be manifest on a proper reading of the Constitution. These have included the rights to clean air, health, shelter, human dignity, and privacy. But this articulation, stentorian as it might have been, hasn’t always led to just results. The court’s history is littered with cases where a violation of a right is found, but a remedy hasn’t been forthcoming. The ruling delivered on May 11, in *Foundation for Media Professionals v. Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir [FMP]*, is, in many ways, symptomatic of this trend. It ought to enjoin us to think more deeply about what the

Court’s institutional role really should be.

The judgment begins thus: “Again, this Court is called upon to address a very important but a sensitive issue... we have to ensure that national security and human rights can be reasonably and defensibly balanced, a responsibility, that this Court takes with utmost seriousness.” But while the Court found that a prohibition of 4G Internet in J&K was potentially disproportionate, it could not extend itself to remedying the wrong by issuing a writ to the state. What it did instead was to relegate the decision-making to a newly formed committee comprising officials from the executive. In doing so, it effectively reversed the age-old principle that no person shall act as a judge in his own cause.

Vagueness of purpose

What was the reason for the Court’s dithering? The answers are hard to find in the judgment. The Constitution, and the debates that went into its making, are clear on what the judiciary’s role ought to be. It is meant to act as an independent check on parliamentary and executive actions. But the Court remains mired in a vagueness of purpose. When must it strike down legislation? When must it show deference to Parliament? Do social welfare measures demand greater deference than ordinary criminal laws? Should the level of scrutiny of executive actions be higher than that em-



ployed in testing statutes? Under what circumstances do executive acts call for special respect? These questions should have been settled by now. But the Court still wavers in its answers every time a new case comes before it. In January, when, in *Anuradha Bhasin*, the Court recognised something akin to a fundamental right to access the Internet, the judgment was widely acclaimed. But of what use is the fashioning of a new right to the people of J&K if a decision on whether that right has been violated is consigned to the very authority that made the original call?

Indeed, the petitioner in *FMP* relied on the Court’s judgment in *Anuradha Bhasin* to argue that a blanket restriction on 4G Internet across the region had had a deleterious impact on a slew of rights, including the rights to free speech and expression, education, freedom of trade, and health. The Court’s own past decisions, including that of the very bench which heard *FMP*, prescribes a standard of proportionality to judge cases where a fundamental right is limited by state action. The test would have required the Court

to engage in a rigorous analysis of the facts, to examine whether the state’s rationale for limiting access to the Internet was, one, predicated on legitimate grounds; two, was the least intrusive measure available to the government; and three, whether on a balance of the competing interests the restriction was justified. Given this doctrine and given that the Supreme Court often functions as a court of first resort, it cannot absolve itself from the job of fact-finding. In a system of justice that is adversarial, it is incumbent on the Court to appreciate the rival versions of the facts submitted before it and arrive at what it deems to be the truth. And once it does so, should it find the state’s actions illegitimate, it must issue a writ to remedy the wrong, unless it finds compelling reasons not to do so. And if such reasons do exist, they require voicing.

There is no doubt that there might be instances in which appreciating evidence can prove to be a confounding exercise. But judicial review is not meant to be easy. What we need today is a reversion to first principles – where the Court seeks to treat the art of delivering a judgment as an exercise in persuasion, where there is a clear link drawn between rights and remedies. In far too many cases the Court has inverted the basic logic of judicial review: it has either enunciated a violation of rights only to deny a remedy or it has granted remedies without articulating what right has been violated.

In her 2002 Reith Lectures, the philosopher Onora O’Neill began by quoting Confucius, who held weapons, food and trust as necessary for the government. O’Neill retold this theorem not to stress on any need for arms, but to emphasise on what she believed was a crisis of trust. It was telling, she thought, that ancient philosophies held trust to be the dearest of qualities. If a ruler, said Confucius to his disciple Tsze-kung, could not hold on to all three necessities for government, he should give up the weapons first and the food next. Trust, he said, had to be guarded to the end. Unlike governments, trust is all the judiciary has. When that belief begins to dissipate, courts lose their moral sway. They are rendered meaningless.

Building trust

Courts build trust not through ambiguous snippets of wisdom, but through an adherence to basic norms. Principle over policy and consistency over randomness are the lodestar tenets of moral courage. The separation of powers cannot, as American writer Gore Vidal wrote, be allowed to work simply as a useful device under which “any sin of omission and commission can be shifted from one branch of government to another.” We need it to do more. We need it to uphold the rule of law.

Suhrith Parthasarathy is an advocate practising at the Madras High Court

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.

Post-COVID world

Taking a lead over China in the post-COVID global order is easier said than done given the series of failures of our political leadership in handling the pandemic and the economy (“China, better prepared for the post-COVID world”, May 20). Efficient governance, a good law and order situation, professionalism in bureaucracy, an investor-friendly environment, and harmony among various sections of the people are prerequisites for attracting global investors. Enough damage was done to national unity when the controversial law on

citizenship was passed. We can’t afford such societal disruptions again.

N. RAVEENDRA BABU,
Hyderabad

China’s loss cannot be considered as India’s gain unless India strives hard to attract companies exiting China. Infrastructure here needs a lot of improvement. Ease of business remains a challenge in terms of implementation at the State and local levels.

V. RAJAGOPALAN,
Chennai

China has emerged stronger from this crisis because of its disciplined

execution of its strategy to contain the virus. On the other hand, in India, where the emergence of the virus was slow to begin with, the situation is now spiralling out of control. The Centre could have aggressively followed the Kerala model implemented at the village level by the Health Minister, K. K. Shailaja. Instead, it adopted a different approach that has clearly not worked. This is a clear sign that at a fundamental level in India, there is no proper planning.

G. PARAMESWARAN
Coimbatore

No refund yet

While we can appreciate

the Civil Aviation Ministry’s announcement, no steps appear to have been taken yet to refund fares for tickets booked during the no-flight period (“Domestic flights to resume on May 25”, May 21). I hope the Civil Aviation Ministry, while looking forward, also finds a solution to this problem. International flights are extremely expensive and many of us are still waiting for our hard-earned money to be returned.

K. RAMALINGAM,
Chennai

Playing politics

The ruling dispensation in U.P. will lose nothing if it

accepts the few hundred buses to take the stranded migrants to their native places (“Not the time to play politics, says Priyanka,” May 21). The labourers have already undergone untold hardships. Making them wait further in the heat is inhuman. Instead of

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS: The fourth paragraph of the report headlined “60% of farmers faced losses: survey” (May 21, 2020) read: “The survey found that 26% of respondents had harvested a crop in the past month, while ...” Actually, according to the survey, 63% of respondents had harvested a crop in the past month.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers’ Editor’s office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers’ Editor, The Hindu, Kasturba Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers’ Editor are on www.thehindu.com

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



transporting the labourers, it says a lot that the government is busy finding fault with the vehicles arranged by the Opposition.

V. JOHAN DHANAKUMAR,
Chennai

MORE LETTERS ONLINE:
www.hindu.com/opinion/letters/

Will sport be the same in empty stadia?

PARLEY
This will mark a new normal, at least till the end of the year. Players will have to tune their minds

Last weekend's return of Bundesliga - German football's premier division - marked the revival of top flight international sporting action after a two-month long hiatus. But physical distancing measures necessitated by COVID-19 ensured that matches were played without fans. India is a long way from starting tournaments, with the government having just given the nod for individual training to resume under spectator-less conditions. In a discussion moderated by N. Sudarshan, Sunil Chhetri and Sunil Yajaman discuss if sport behind closed doors will be the new normal and what lies ahead for the sports industry. Edited excerpts:

Did it feel strange watching top-notch football being played in an empty stadium?

Sunil Chhetri (SC): It did feel strange. As a player I'd always prefer to play in front of fans. But as a spectator, I was happy. It looks like once the lockdown ends and slowly competitions start, we will have to play in empty stadia. But I might still happily play because what I understood as a fan last weekend was that you get a lot of joy watching live action. It is still the second best thing; the ultimate joy is still to go to the venue. But under the present circumstances, it made us all happy.

Sunil Yajaman (SY): It will be the new normal, definitely till the end of the year. But it is safer. Australian Open, the season's first Grand Slam tournament in January, is already talking about having no spectators. The fear [of the virus] will stay for quite some time and we need to figure out new ways to get around it.

What is the change in mindset that players will require?

SC: In team sports, home advantage is a very important aspect. There are multiple reasons why a game is termed a home game - climate, ground and fans. Among these, fans are the most important and act as a

motivating factor. But a home game played now will not feel like a home game. It is not ideal; but [these are] the kind of times we are in now.

SY: Spectators are a very important part of players' performance on court, both in positive and negative ways. It has a psychological effect on players. So it is not going to be easy to play in an empty stadium, especially the bigger events. Smaller competitions like ATP Challengers and many ATP 250s (the lowest rung of ATP tennis tournaments) do not attract much of a crowd except for the last two days. But players will still have to tune their minds. All the motivation and energy have to come from within. It will take a few months of playing to get used to it.

So if fans cannot attend, is it worth going ahead, if you are told that there is a TV audience?

SC: To me, it is the best possible solution. To cancel events because fans cannot attend may be worse. Of course, the best thing would be for everyone to get a vaccine and for life to be normal. But that doesn't look like it will happen anytime soon. But the German and South Korean leagues have shown the way.

Let's be clear here, it is not easy; even for a closed door game, there are a lot of things to be taken care of. There are ball boys, the kit managers, the coaches, the physios and we have to monitor all of them. In the unfortunate scenario of even one person getting infected, the whole league has to stop. At least that particular team cannot play and has to be quarantined. So you need to be really really careful. But I hope we are able to manage it until a vaccine arrives.

SY: If a sport is able to go on without fans, it is a great thing under the present circumstances. Professional players' livelihood is tied to them playing. There is a whole bunch of people that depend on tournaments for survival, like the supporting staff, officials, groundsman etc.



In the eyes of many, sport is better off waiting until things return to normal. Should it?

SC: We need to calculate and balance the risks. We need to look at various aspects - what's the kind of money involved, how many livelihoods are at stake, etc. Ask a sportsperson, he or she will say sport is the best thing in the world. But it is an individual opinion. If studies show sport should be the last thing to reopen, so be it. In India, we first started with essential services, which was key. Next we tried to see to it that no one went to sleep hungry. These two were prime concerns, no doubt. People who need to be treated and those who need intensive care will always take priority. So in my view, decision making should be informed and shouldn't be a matter of bickering and acrimonious debate.

Does it make economic sense to organise competitions behind closed doors?

SY: Except for the really top championships, money from ticket sales is negligible. And considering that only top-level tournaments like ATP Masters and Grand Slams are telecast, broadcast revenue also isn't much. So that's when sponsorships become important, especially for

In team sports, home advantage is an important aspect. There are multiple reasons why a game is termed a home game, the most important being fans

SUNIL CHHETRI
Indian football captain

events in India, and it is going to be incredibly tough to find sponsors. Even at big meets a sponsor wouldn't like to see his or her name in an empty stadium. Every sponsor will look at the return on investment (ROI) and one of the major conditions for good ROI is the footfalls at the sporting site. In the absence of footfalls, it won't be inviting for companies. The ATP Bengaluru Open (South Asia's biggest ATP Challenger) has a budget of ₹6.5 crores. The Karnataka government has been funding close to 50% of it. Now I don't know if the government will even be looking to support a sports event in the next one or two years. And many of our sponsors are under financial strain and are a long way [from] recouping things. Already a company which had to settle the final instalment for the last edition has expressed an inability to pay. So you can already see the effect. For the next edition we will have to broaden the base by looking for more sponsors and also look to cover the government's



Sunil Chhetri
is the captain of the Indian football team



Sunil Yajaman
is Joint-Secretary, Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association

Cinema after COVID-19

Online platforms provide an alternative to big-screen halls. But their reach is limited

KUNAL RAY

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has led to large-scale anxieties about the future of the arts. Many livelihoods rely upon the performing and visual arts. It is just not the fraternity of artistes but their support staff, co-workers and an entire ecosystem that is sustained through their practice. We are the largest film-making nation in the world. The film industry offers jobs to several thousands.

The lockdown will be eventually relaxed at some point as can be seen in different parts of the world but many are of the opinion that this pandemic will significantly impact our film-viewing behavior and other economic decisions around it. We might stay away from film theatres to avoid large gatherings. This could also indicate a shift towards viewing films on online platforms which have already made a dent during the lockdown.

Netflix, Amazon Prime, etc., have witnessed a record surge in subscriptions during the lockdown. This doesn't mean that everybody has suddenly turned a film lover, but that these platforms offer a plethora of entertainment options for people locked inside their homes. The content and range of programmes on these portals is also far superior to what is available on regular television. There are films and TV series which are especially commissioned by and released exclusively on these platforms.

Direct to home releases
Their numbers might further increase. As I write this, news has just trickled in that two big Hindi films, one Tamil and Telugu film, amongst others, are being released on a digital platform next month owing to the uncertainty about theatrical release in near future. Also, the choice and diversity of content on these platforms is much greater. A film theatre has to cater to mainstream audience expectations for business reasons. In the process, many deserving films often miss out on decent screening slots or have to make do with whatever is available. The online platforms do not have to deal with these concerns and offer a good mix of both mainstream and art-house cinema.

No denying the fact that watching a film on the big screen has its own merits and an inherent sense of community but safety concerns might outweigh everything else.

During the lockdown, some films available on these online platforms have gained a new lease of life. Otherwise, public memory is essentially short lived. Our celebrity-based film culture largely pivots around the star. The film is forgotten while we find ways to memorialise the star.

Malayalam film Virus is the talk of the town again owing to its availability on these platforms. Dealing with the Nipah crisis in Kerala, this film is a great reminder of the actions taken by the State government to tackle the crisis. Kerala has also been widely praised for its successful handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps there's another film in waiting. Steven Soderbergh's Contagion is also doing the rounds. Released in 2011, the film seems prophetic in its depiction of a similar crisis that the world is facing today.

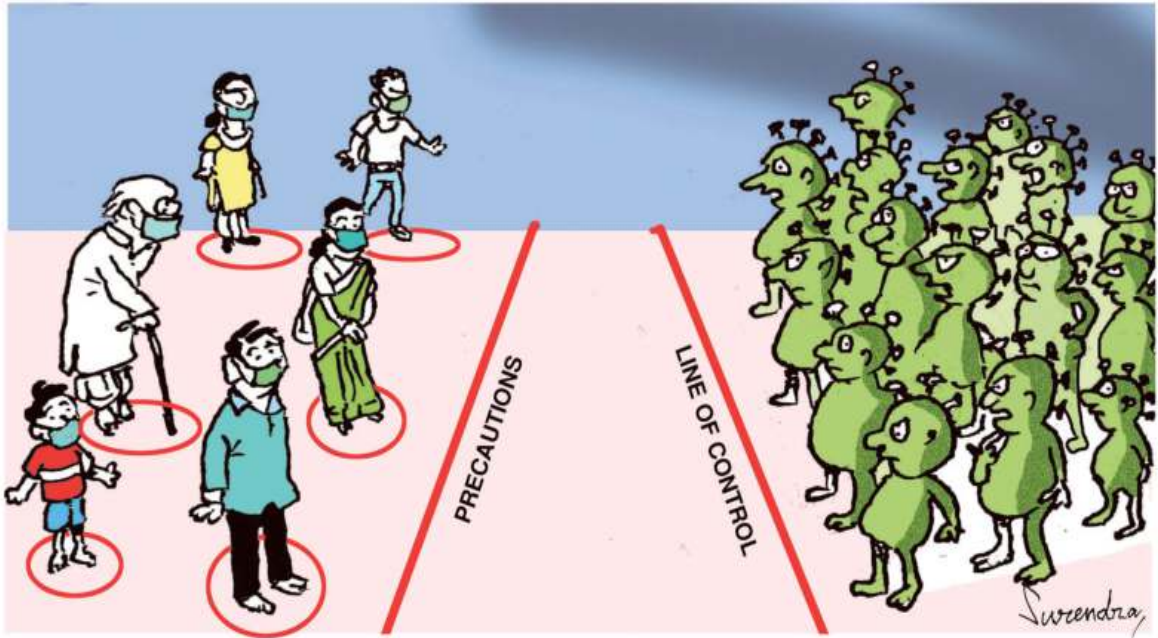


Bypassing the censors
Also, you could bypass many of the problems of censor certification if you release films on these

platforms. Amidst the ongoing pandemic, many film festivals are moving online. Britain's most famous socialist filmmaker, Ken Loach, has made some of his best films available for free on YouTube. Other film streaming platforms are making foreign and documentary cinema available at a nominal fee for a limited time span. With increased awareness about films, will we go back to theatres and settle for the same content that mainstream cinema peddles after the lockdown?

However, there is also a grave danger. Access to these platforms is largely limited to an urban demography that can afford an Internet connection, along with the subscription fees which also determines the class character of its potential viewers. If this were to become the norm, it would exclude a large majority of the film-viewing population. That will be a denial of cinema to those who have been its utmost supporters.

The writer teaches at FLAME University, Pune



NOTEBOOK

The eternal longing for the distant home

Abandoned by the very society they helped to build, migrants yearn to return

N. VENKATESWARAN

Some travel for fun, some for the experience of it. Some to find themselves. Then there are those who rally for rivers or similar noble causes. My road trip earlier this month had no such lofty aim - I just wanted to bring my family, stuck in Mumbai since mid-March, back to Chennai. Around 2,800 km in four days - that is the distance I had to drive to get them home. The maths was simple, but as life keeps reminding us, it is anything but. Armed with two cloth masks, a bottle of hand sanitiser, a 20 litre can of water, and some bananas, I set off in an SUV with a driver just before midnight on May 8, the pass issued by the Tamil Nadu government valid between May 9 and May 12. Editing reports for the newspaper on a daily basis and keeping track of news developments closely, I thought I knew a lot about the problems and suffer-

ings of migrant workers trying to get back home. Once we crossed Krishnagiri on the way to the Karnataka border, I realised how wrong I was. Vehicle after vehicle, full to the brim with migrants and their families from Erode, Tiruppur, Salem and other parts of Tamil Nadu, zipped past, making their way to Rajasthan via Karnataka and Maharashtra. These were labourers and agents and small-time businessmen, who had collected money, hired buses and then organised passes to get back home. Jobs lost and sources of income drying up, with some being asked to vacate their rented accommodation, they wanted to go back to their villages where they were assured of food and shelter. A horrifying picture Talking with them while waiting at police checkpoints en route, little did I realise that these migrants were among the luckier lot. Only when my vehicle left

the Pune expressway and entered the roads leading into Mumbai did the horrors unfold. Scores and scores of people sat by the roadside - some alone, others huddled together in groups - hungry and tired after hours (or maybe days) of walking in the hot sun, waiting for food and water and maybe a miracle to enable them to go home. Policemen hung around, checking vehicle passes and ensuring that they sat around in one place. The more people I saw by the roadside, the more I thought about the blank look in their eyes. Was it due to hunger or thirst? Was it that they were tired of walking long distances, or were they thinking about the effort needed to reach home? Was it fear about what the future held for them, or were they worried about their livelihoods once they go back to their towns and villages? Or was it sadness, brought about by the disappointment that the very society for which

they had cooked and cleaned, or built roads or houses had abandoned them? Was it due to the inaction of those who had rendered them refugees in their own country? Or was it their way of expressing disgust for a society that entertained itself by watching reruns of Ramayan and Mahabharat while a humanitarian tragedy unfolded outside on the roads? My driver Ganesh ensured I was back home in Chennai with my family by the evening of May 11, a whole day and a half earlier than the deadline. I still wonder about those I saw on the Mumbai roads - were they able to get food and water? Were they able to catch a train back home? Or were they beaten up by policemen and sent back to their unlivable tenements? Or if they just ended up as statistics on some highway accident report? The exodus of vehicles from Tamil Nadu to Rajasthan and Bihar, meanwhile, continues unabated.

share because it may come down.

Thus far, the focus has been on fan safety. What about player safety even in a closed door environment?

SC: It is an individual thing. Troy Deenay (captain of the English club side Watford) has said he wouldn't return to training because he has a five-month old son with breathing difficulties and he wouldn't want to put the child in more danger. Why would he go out knowing that there are chances of him getting infected and passing it on? It is a legitimate concern that we should be sensitive to. There are, at least, 45 people at any given time on the pitch, even during a training session. So there is a risk. Personally speaking, when football starts, I will probably train. That's a decision I am taking based on the information available currently and in the belief that my club will take utmost care and ensure full safety. But I don't know what's in store in the future. So, I can fully understand Deeney's conundrum. There is a lot at stake, and in many cases it's a matter of life and death.

SY: In tennis, players move across continents and countries on a week-to-week basis. If you see, the major spread of infection is through travelling. So they are always at the risk of getting infected. So we may see localised events, but at the ATP Challenger level, players may risk travelling because that's where players earn substantial points and make a little bit of money.

There is talk of using augmented reality to create virtual fans so that match-watching experience on television gets better. Is this the way forward?

SC: There is huge money involved, so if broadcasters take that decision, I am not the one to comment. But technological intervention in football has thus far been minimal and that's the beauty of it. There is the Video Assistant Referee system now, but it is still a mostly free-flowing game that's raw and natural with real fans in the stadium showing

their aggression and passion. It's preferable if it stays like that.

SY: I am sure there will be innovative things done. But a tennis fan is mostly looking at the players. A television camera may miss zooming in on a celebrity sitting in the crowd. But for a fan watching tennis on the television, the presence of a crowd is immaterial. At the end of the day, they will continue to watch because of a Roger Federer, a Rafael Nadal or a Novak Djokovic.

What is the way forward for sports in India?

SC: If everything goes well, it will be around October or November before competitions behind closed doors can start. I am 35 and I don't want to lose a single day of my career. But lives are more important. For us sportspersons, sport is life, but until we feel completely safe we should not start. Overall, sport is not going to be the same as before. A lot will change, particularly on-field hygiene. For example, spitting on the pitch will reduce. Just because footballers are fit, their hygiene is taken for granted. But that's not always true.

SY: The sports industry as a whole is going to take a big beating. Fewer people are going to get into sport in the next one or two years. Fans will mostly depend on live broadcast but even for television companies revenues are going to reduce because all of them are under financial stress. We have no idea whether advertising will continue as before. But sports is about positivity and it will come back, albeit in a changed scenario.

In fact, you can see that the whole education system is undergoing a change. There is more online learning and I don't see children getting back into the classrooms in the near future, with distancing rules set to be strictly enforced. More children are going to be locked up inside and parents are sure to ask their children to go out and play, at least individual sports, for their physical and mental well-being. So I am hoping that participation at the grass roots will not tank.

The Hindu.
FROM THE ARCHIVES
FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 22, 1970

Atom Isolated and Photographed

A British-born physicist announced yesterday [May 20] he had succeeded in achieving one of science's ultimate dreams-isolating and photographing a single atom. The scientific breakthrough was made by Professor Albert V. Crewe, assisted by two graduate students, Joseph Wail and John Langmore, at the University of Chicago two months ago with the aid of a scanning electron microscope which Dr. Crewe designed and built with funds supplied by the Atomic Energy Commission. Dr. Crewe displayed photographs of single uranium and thorium atoms, magnified a million times, at a press conference. They were the result of six years' research and expenditure of between \$750,000 (Rs. 56,25,000) and one million dollars (Rs. 75,00,000). The technique devised by Dr. Crewe enables a single atom of these metals to be seen within a molecular structure for the first time. With further research the technique "will provide a tool for investigating the materials of biological processes and enable biologists to proceed more rapidly in the techniques of studying biological cells, such as cancer and other cells," he said.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 22, 1920.
The Reform Act unmasked.

(From an editorial)

The official head of the Moderate party has borne testimony to the sincerity of the Government of India's zeal for real reform in India. With a temerity which his captains might admire but dare not emulate, he once made the astounding suggestion that there was nothing reactionary about the Government of India's famous Despatch on the Bill. Another and equally notable monument to their zeal for democracy and the early realisation of self-Government in India is to be found in the draft rules framed by them. The rules of business of the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils show up the Reform Act in its true character. They make the position of these Councils actually worse in some important respects than it now is. Hitherto, it was possible to raise a discussion on important subjects in the Councils either by a motion for adjournment or by means of Bills. Hereafter, these courses have been either effectively shut out or so modified as to make them useless for the purpose for which they are intended. The bureaucracy learnt by bitter experience the uses to which these provisions may be put and they have now so hedged them in with restrictions as to render them futile. Its powers will, under the new rules, be as effective as ever.

Amphan kills 72 in West Bengal, brings life to a halt

Govt. sets price range based on flight duration

'PLA blocking Indian patrols in Ladakh, Sikkim'

ICICI offers FD scheme for senior citizens

CMYK

Five die in Telangana, seven in T.N.; with fresh fatality, Kerala's toll rises to 4; Karnataka gets positive cases from Maharashtra

COVID-19

As her condition turned critical, the hospital authorities were preparing to shift her to the Government Medical College Hospital (MCH), Thrissur. However, she died before being shifted to the

The toll rose to 54 and the tally of positive cases touched 2,605, including 153 migrant workers. Two cases each in Nellore and Chittoor were linked to the Koyambedu

Patient data moved to C-DIT: Kerala to HC

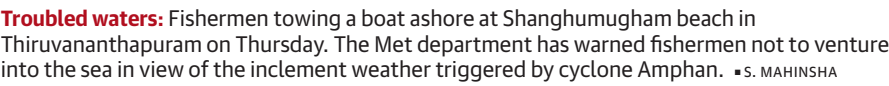
‘Sprinklr told to destroy residual data’



The data had been transferred by April 20 itself. In fact, no data had been shared with Sprinklr after it

However, it has not received any positive reply so far from the MeitY.

Push to safety



The temples set to have online pujas and direct tele-

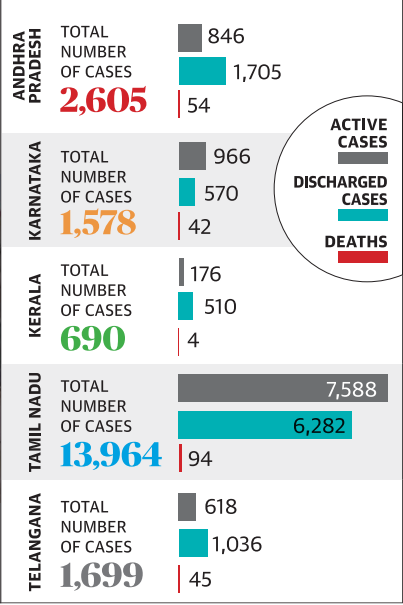
Cleanliness drive: Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike staff spraying disinfectant at the K.R. Market in the city on Thursday. ■ V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

The Telangana surge in deaths was one of the highest in the State. While four

There were 38 more positive cases, including 26 from Greater Hyderabad, two from Rangareddy and 10 were migrants. So far, 99 mi-

date, 618 were active, 1036 were discharged and 45 people died.

143 cases in Karnataka
Till the first week of April,
Tablighi Jamaat attendees



776 new cases in T.N.

With the death of three patients in government hospitals and four in private hospitals, the death toll went up to 94.

(With inputs from Vijaya-wada, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai Bureaus)

IN BRIEF



As many as 97 Russian tourists, the last batch of stranded foreign tourists in Kerala, left for Moscow on Thursday on a chartered flight from the Thiruvananthapuram international airport. Seven tourists who were brought here by road from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh also boarded the Royal Flight aircraft. The majority of the passengers were women.

An ordinance brought by the government paved the way for five private universities to offer courses from the ensuing academic year in Telangana. A Cabinet sub-committee, after going through 13 applications, short-listed and recommended giving the private varsity status to some institutions of which four universities are on the outskirts of Hyderabad city and one is in Warangal.

The Karnataka government issued special orders to evacuate migrants stranded at the Maharashtra-Karnataka border near Nippani. As many as 393 people from six districts who had returned from Maharashtra and other States were allowed to go home on Wednesday and Thursday. They were stuck at Kuganoli inter-State check-post set up as per the standard operating procedure of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

There was tension and panic among people residing near HPCL Visakh Refinery in Andhra Pradesh when thick, black smoke billowed out of the Fluidised Catalytic Cracking Unit-1 of the refinery on Thursday. "The smoke that originated from one of the pipelines due to temperature fluctuations has been brought under control immediately," an HPCL spokesman said. "It has neither caused any damage nor casualty," he said.

The third officer of a ship, a Ukrainian national, sailing from Egypt to Thoothukudi with urea, went missing from the vessel when it was in the mid-sea on May 15. Sources at VOC Port in Thoothukudi said the third officer Andriy Starostin went missing from the ship 'MV Gravity' on May 15 after it left a port in Egypt with urea. The ship was coming to VOC Port and there were 22 seafarers on it.

Case registered against Sonia for tweets on PM CARES fund

Karnataka Congress alleges political motive behind FIR

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing glasses and a patterned top. She is looking slightly to the right.

Sonia Gandhi



KARNATAKA

It said that at a time when the nation was fighting the pandemic, the Congress was spreading “false information” through the social media and trying to mislead

public or induce a person to commit an offence against State or public tranquillity) of the Indian Penal Code against Ms. Gandhi. Meanwhile, the Karnata-

'Not paying train fare reflects badly on State'

Insensitive approach: Karnataka HC

“Today, because of the State government’s reluctance to pay the train fares, many are unable to travel

“Sorry to say that the State has forgotten that it is a human issue and there is Article 21 [Protection of life and personal liberty]. It reflects badly on the State. We are finding fault with the insensitive approach of the State ... Why don't the State take a bold stand that migrants are rich and they can pay for tickets...” the Bench observed orally.



Going live: The Chamundeshwari temple in Mysuru those planning to embrace webcasting. ■ M.A. SRIRAM

Policeman killed in attack in Pulwama

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR

One policeman was killed and another injured in a hit-and-run attack of militants in south Kashmir's Pulwama on Thursday. A police officer said armed militants alighted at Pulwama's Prichoo area and opened indiscriminate fire on a checkpoint, manned by the Jammu and Kashmir police and the CRPF, in the afternoon. "It was a stand-off fire. Two security personnel, including a policeman and a CRPF jawan, were injured in the attack," said the police. Head constable Anoop Singh succumbed to his injuries. The militants managed to escape from the spot.

Congress launches Kisan Nyay Scheme

Party rolls out assistance plan for farmers in Chhattisgarh on Rajiv Gandhi's death anniversary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Launching the Rajiv Kisan Nyay Yojana in Chhattisgarh through video conferencing to mark the 29th death anniversary, Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday said this was a true tribute to the late Prime Minister. The party also announced that instead of spending on advertisements to mark the occasion, it would spend the amount on helping migrants who have borne the brunt of the prolonged lockdown in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Such schemes should be implemented at the ground level to help bring a change in the lives of people. This is a revolutionary scheme and is a true tribute to Rajiv



Homage: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paying tribute to Rajiv Gandhi in Raipur on Thursday.

Gandhi. This is a big step taken in line with the values of Rajiv Gandhi," Ms. Gandhi said. The online event, however, was marked with several

scheme will benefit 19 lakh farmers and help bring more area under cultivation. Landless labour and agriculturists would be covered in the next phase, he said. Former party president Rahul Gandhi lauded Chhattisgarh for being the first State to transfer financial aid directly into the accounts of farmers. "A true patriot" "The Chhattisgarh government has set the example for the country on how to help people in the time of crisis," he said at the launch event. Mr. Gandhi also remembered his father as a "true patriot, liberal and who put the country on the path of progress and self-reliance with his farsightedness". "In memory of my beloved father, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who was martyred this day in 1991. He was a wonderful father; gentle, kind, compassionate and patient. I miss him. But he will always stay alive in my heart and in the wonderful memories I have of him," he wrote on Twitter. His sister and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra posted her last photo with her father and shared an emotional tweet. "To be kind to those who are unkind to you; to know that life is fair, no matter how unfair you imagine it to be; to keep walking, no matter how dark the skies or fear-some the storm; to nurture a strong heart, and fill it with love no matter how great its sorrows; these are the gifts of my father's life," she tweeted.

Finance panel flags recovery uncertainty

Members of the Committee have wide variations of opinion in nominal GDP growth projections

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

India's nominal GDP growth rate in 2020-21 could range between -6% and 1%, according to members of the 15th Finance Commission's committee on the fiscal consolidation road map, which had a videoconference on Thursday. "There are high levels of uncertainty, both with regard to the course of the pandemic and the fiscal pressures on the economy and the trend of economic recovery," the Commission's Chairman, N.K. Singh, told presspersons after the meeting. He said participants in the meeting had wide varia-

tions of opinion in terms of nominal GDP growth projections, ranging between -6% and 1%, as well as on whether the economy would experience a V-shaped or U-shaped recovery. Nominal GDP growth does not take inflation into account, and is thus higher than real GDP growth. "In the medium term, we would like to be in the range of 8% growth, or the debt trajectory becomes very problematic," said Dr. Singh, who felt that the Centre's reforms as part of the Aatmanirbhar stimulus package were meant to spur such growth in the medium term, even if they did not help im-



mediately. "The question is what is the lag with which these reforms are going to reflect in the growth rate in the medium term," he said. He also endorsed the Centre's reform conditions to allow the States to exceed their current borrowing li-

mits, though several States have objected to this. The Commission's high-level group on health, headed by AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria, also met on Thursday, to review its earlier recommendations in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has now recommended an immediate beefing up of health infrastructure in areas with a cluster of positive patients, and discussed the growing needs of rural health infrastructure, especially with migrants returning from the cities, often carrying the virus. "There is a wide disparity between the per capita health personnel available in

various States. The situation in rural Bihar and Jharkhand is dramatically different from the cities," Dr. Singh said. The anaesthetists needed to operate ventilators are crucially missing in many rural areas, he noted, even while manufacture of the machines has increased. There were also discussions about allowing final year MBBS students to begin practising in some areas and the need for a national health service. In the medium term, the government's financial outlay on the health sector must increase significantly from the current 0.9% of GDP, said Dr. Singh.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE AYODHYA

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, which has been established to oversee the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya, has said several broken statues of Hindu gods and goddesses have been found at the site where levelling operations are under way. "During the excavation, a 5-ft Shivaling, pillars and broken idols have also been discovered," it wrote on Twitter. Trust general secretary Champat Rai said the recovery further established the fact that a temple had existed at the site.

Health Ministry plans to study viral behaviour in corpses

Death toll rises to 3,561; total cases stand at 1,12,359

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN NEW DELHI

The lockdown period has been gainfully utilised to ramp up the health infrastructure in the country, the Union Health Ministry said on Thursday, with senior health officials confirming that India is now planning to initiate a study on "behaviour of the COVID-19 virus in persons who died after contracting the disease". Autopsy in confirmed COVID-19 cases is not recommended by the Health Ministry and this research, to be conducted at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, will be the first to be undertaken on a COVID-19 dead body. This is expected to give researchers an insight into how the virus behaves in a dead body, the manner in which it affects organs and so on. A senior health official said: "We are at planning stage for this very vital exercise and it will be a multi-department enterprise. India in its guidelines has said that forensic autopsy should not be done in COVID-19 death cases as mortuary staff are exposed to potentially



Five CAPF companies have been deployed in severely affected areas of Mumbai.

dangerous health risks due to organ fluids and secretions even after taking the highest precautions. It adds that autopsy procedure if undertaken are to be strictly limited to what is necessary for the research work concerned." The death toll due to COVID-19 rose to 3,435 on Thursday, with 132 fatalities. The total number of cases stands at 1,12,359 with 5,609 new cases in the last 24 hours, according to the Union Health Ministry. The number of active cases stood at 63,624, while 45,299 people have recovered, taking the recovery rate to 40.32% as per the Ministry.

"So far, 26,15,920 samples have been tested and 1,03,532 samples have been tested in the last 24 hours through 555 testing labs [391 in the government sector and 164 private labs]," noted the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). According to data from State Health Departments, the tally stands at 1,17,580 case and death toll 3,561. Community survey The ICMR, in collaboration with the Health Ministry and the National Centre for Disease Control, with support from State Health departments and key stakeholders, including WHO, is conducting a community based serosurvey to estimate the prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 infection in Indian population. ICMR has also recommended the TrueNat COVID-19 test stating that as the COVID-19 pandemic is expanding, there is a global shortfall of diagnostic supplies. "It is critical for countries to strengthen indigenous production of diagnostic material to ensure uninterrupted availability," the ICMR said.

CAPF awaits clarity on canteen order

VIJAJITA SINGH NEW DELHI

The Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) are awaiting clear orders from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on what comprises swadeshi or indigenous products, a week after Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that CAPF canteens will only sell swadeshi goods from June 1. A senior government official said that Ministry of Commerce was working on the guidelines as confusion prevailed on future procurements in the canteens, which sell many daily-use products at a subsidised rate to around 10 lakh personnel, their families and retired personnel. "We are collecting data on the production facilities of all the companies that sell items in the CAPF canteens. We do not know if the products manufactured here under multinational labels will also be counted as a foreign product," said the official. "Since the June 1 deadline is approaching, the clarification is necessary, else the supply chain will be affected," said the official.

'MVA' govt. showed political intransigence'

Former Maharashtra CM calls for protocol to boost economic activities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Thursday that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government had demonstrated political intransigence in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. He also demanded that the State come up with a "protocol" for jump-starting economic activities while dealing with the novel coronavirus. Speaking at a video press conference, Mr. Fadnavis said the State had erred in taking care of inter-State



workers who would not be "easily replaceable" by local labour following their reverse migration. "The MVA government, and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in particular, is overly dependent on a group

of bureaucrats, whereas a crisis like this requires political will and decisiveness. The government's efforts are being lost in groupism in the bureaucracy and the Chief Minister's failure to handle the administration," he said. Mr. Fadnavis said the high number of cases in Mumbai and Maharashtra was earlier attributed to a large number of tests, but it was no longer the case. The government's recent decision not to test asymptomatic contacts of high-risk patients amounted to buying trouble. "The government also did

not do enough off-take of free food grains offered by the Centre for the poor; up to 3 lakh ration card-holders got free grain only in May, and not in March or April," he said. "A State like Maharashtra, which got over 40% of all foreign direct investment that came to India, needs a protocol for starting economic activity in green zones. I spoke to many industry people, who said rules had not been framed for this yet. If we don't set a protocol soon, we may miss the bus on the economic front," he said.

Wildlife Institute of India (An Autonomous Institution of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India) Chandrabani, Dehra Dun - 248 001, INDIA. EPBAX: +91-135-2640114 to 2640115, 2646100 E-MAIL: registrar@wii.gov.in, Web Site: www.wii.gov.in

Advertisement No. WII/ADM/2019-20/15 Deputation appointment of IFS officers for the post of Scientist-D/E/F and Scientist-G

Applications are invited from IFS officers for filling up the posts at the level of Scientist - D/E/F & G in the Pay Matrix Level 12/13/13-A & 14 respectively for appointment on deputation basis in Wildlife Institute of India, Dehra Dun.

The detailed advertisement, terms and conditions can be seen on Institute's website: www.wii.gov.in The last date of receipt of application is 15.06.2020.

The Director, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, reserves the right to reject any or all applications without assigning any reasons.

Registrar Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

Office of the Mission Director NATIONAL URBAN LIVELIHOODS MISSION No.11, Unit No. 305, 3rd Floor, Blue cross Chambers Building, Infantry Road Cross, Bengaluru - 560 001.

No: MD 31 DAY-NULM/2020-21 Date: 20.05.2020

NOTIFICATION Applications are invited for the following posts on contract basis under DAY-NULM for State Mission Management Unit (SMMU).

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Posts
1	State Mission Manager (Shelters and Social Infrastructure)	01
2	State Mission Manager (Financial Inclusion & Micro Enterprises)	01
3	State Mission Manager (MIS & ME)	01
4	Multi-tasking Officials	01

Applications should be submitted to Office of the Mission Director, DAY-NULM, National Urban Livelihoods Missions, through e-mail: hrdaynulmkarnataka@gmail.com on or before 30.05.2020. Detailed Notification and Application format can be downloaded from www.kaushalkar.com/nulm website.

Sd/- Mission Director National Urban Livelihoods Mission DIPR/DDU/118/2020-21

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT TENDER 4th EXTENSION NOTICE NIT No. 41, 42 & 43/2019-20/20/ BMC/MW/CHENNAI Date : 20.05.2020 Last date for receipt of Tenders received in this office NIT No. 41, 42 & 43/2019-20/20/ BMC/MW/ CHENNAI Dated: 10.03.2020 for three works are extended upto 03.06.2020, 3.00 P.M. Further details are available in the Website <http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in>. Other conditions remain unaltered.

Superintending Engineer, PWD., Buildings (C&M) Circle, M.W., Chepauk, Chennai-5.

DIPR / 1873 / TENDER / 2020

Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer Water Resources Zone, Jaipur Sinchai Bhawan, J.L.N. Marg, Jaipur-302017 No. : 7171 Date : 18.5.2020

INVITATION OF E-TENDER NO. 5 YEAR 2020-21

On behalf of Governor of Rajasthan, invites e-tender from eligible contractor for civil works under DRIP-II Scheme, estimated cost of work is Rs. 3452.00 Lacs. The details are available in the following websites:-

UBN No.: WRD2021WLOB00232

1. www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in
2. www.dipr.rajasthan.gov.in
3. <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>

Addl. Chief Engineer Water Resources Zone, Jaipur DIPR/C/3475/20

Release J&K political detainees, says CCG

It slams Net curbs in Union Territory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Concerned Citizens' Group (CCG), headed by former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha, sought the release of all political detainees in Jammu and Kashmir on the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr. "Many senior political leaders, including a former Chief Minister [Mehbooba Mufti], continue to be in detention in several cases under the draconian Public Safety Act. Meanwhile, there are attempts to incubate artificial political processes - through the village and local body elections and facilitating the launch of a new political party. However, these processes have failed to fill the political vacuum," the CCG said in a statement. It wanted the Central government to release all those detained since August last.

The Union government had also used the lockdown to implement domicile laws for the Union Territory, that should have been debated by people's representatives and affected citizens, said the group. "Do not use the lack of a legislative Assembly to push through policies with long term consequences," it said. 'Restore 4G Net' The CCG demanded the restoration 4G Internet in J&K to alleviate the problems of businessmen, traders, healthcare professionals and, most importantly, students so that they do not lose an academic year. "The communication lockdown - permitting only



Yashwant Sinha

Don't use the lack of a Legislative Assembly to pass policies with long term consequences CONCERNED CITIZENS' GROUP

2G Internet, premised on the assumption that faster Internet speeds help terrorists - is causing havoc not only in banking, trade, business and healthcare but in the field of education as well," it said. "The 2G technology cannot sustain online learning, which is a ready option being used in the rest of the country. The problem is particularly acute for students who have returned home because of the pandemic from universities and colleges in the rest of India. They cannot attend online classes and webinars or submit assignments. They may not be able to appear for online end-semester examinations which universities and colleges plan to hold soon," it added. The other members of the group are former National Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah, Air Vice-Marshall (Retd.) Kapil Kak, senior journalist Bharat Bhushan and Sushobha Barve.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATI RAJ (An Organisation of the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India) Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500030.

RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATION Applications are invited from qualified and experienced persons for the following positions:

Name of the Post	No. of Positions
1 Assistant Director, Pedagogy	1
2 Assistant Director, Evidence-based Policy Analyst (Skills & Livelihoods)	2
3 Assistant Director (e-learning)	1
4 Mission Managers (Training & Development)	2
5 Project Officer (e-learning Operations)	1
6 Project Officer (Training Operations)	2
7 Assistant Director (M&E)	1
8 State Team Manager (M&E)	7
9 Project Officers (M&E)	3
10 Software Engineers	3
11 Legal Officer	1
12 Manager (HR)	1
13 Project Associate (HR & Admin)	2
14 Thematic Expert (Research & Policy)	1
15 Thematic Expert (MIS)	2
16 Thematic Expert (Finance)	1
17 Thematic Expert (IEC & ICT)	1
18 Project Assistant	1
19 Content Manager	1

Positions from S. No. 1 to 13, are based at NIRDP, Hyderabad Positions from S. No. 14 to 19, are based at New Delhi For other details such as Job Description, Qualification, Experience, Work Location, Application Submission etc., please visit our website: www.career.nirdpr.in ; www.nirdpr.org.in Advt. No. : 09/2020 F.No.: NIRDP/AajeevikaSkills/REC/2014-Part(1) Last Date : 10/06/2020 Addl. Project Director

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, KAKKANAD, COCHIN - 37 TEL NO. 91-484-2413111

BUILT UP AREA AVAILABLE FOR LEASE IN COCHIN SEZ CSEZA invites bids in sealed envelope for allotment of built up space for setting up units in Cochin Special Economic Zone (CSEZ). For Details please visit www.csezaauthority.in or www.csez.gov.in

SOUTHERN RAILWAY THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (WORKS BRANCH) E-Tender Notice No.V/W/TVC/6/2020 Dated: 19-05-2020

Divisional Railway Manager / Works Branch / Trivandrum Division, Trivandrum - 14 for and on behalf of the President of India invites ONLINE Tenders for the following works as per Tender Notice given in our E-Tender Portal www.ireps.gov.in. The Tenderer (s) / Contractor(s) to apply for E-Tender for WORKS in Trivandrum Division, need to get enrolled in the E-Tender Portal www.ireps.gov.in and only Online Tenders will be accepted.

Sl.No.	Description
1.	Divisional Engineer / South Jurisdiction - Engaging of semi skilled labour by outsourcing for night patrolling.
2.	Divisional Engineer / North Jurisdiction - Engaging of semi skilled labour by outsourcing for night patrolling.
3.	Proposed Renovation of Senior Section Engineer / Bridge Office at Ernakulam.
4.	TVP - Proposed supply, Installation and Commissioning of Centralised Oxygen Plant at Railway Hospital.

Sl. No.	Approximate Value ₹ (in Lakh)	Earnest Money Deposit (in ₹)	Cost of Tender Form (in ₹)	Period of Completion in Months
1.	25.82	51,700/-	3,360/-	Six
2.	24.41	48,800/-	3,360/-	Six
3.	18.79	37,600/-	2,240/-	Six
4.	19.70	39,400/-	2,240/-	Two

Tender Closing Date and Time for Sl.No.1, 2 & 4 03-06-2020 at 11.00 Hrs. Tender Closing Date and Time for Sl.No.3 10-06-2020 at 11.00 Hrs.

Details of approximate value of Tender, Cost of Tender Form, EMD & Location are given on the E-Portal, www.ireps.gov.in. For Details of Bid Submission, please refer Website Portal www.ireps.gov.in.

Senior Divisional Engineer/Co-ordination, Trivandrum - 14. for and on behalf of the President of India

Jairam questions Centre on briefings

Congress leader asks AIIMS director to give regular updates since ‘citizens deserve to know the truth’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh on Thursday questioned the Central government’s move to discontinue daily briefings on the COVID-19 pandemic, and suggested that Randeep Guleria, Director, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), give regular briefings as “citizens deserve to know the truth”.

In a series of tweets, the Congress leader asked the government to allow the parliamentary panel on health

to meet the Ministry officials as well as experts of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

“Why has the Government of India discontinued daily briefings on the health situation? All countries inform their citizens through the press in a time of crisis. At such times, credible and professionally competent faces should be telling us what is happening,” he said.

“The Health Minister, a medical doctor himself, has so far stayed away from daily briefings. My suggestion to



Jairam Ramesh

govt: Let Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director of AIIMS, brief the country every evening. Let experts speak relying on facts and science. Our citi-

zens deserve the truth,” he stated.

Transparent or not? Mr. Ramesh questioned the transparency and effectiveness of the earlier briefings by the Health Ministry officials.

“The Health Ministry official when he was briefing last kept saying that MAYBE the peak will never come. What are we to make of this assertion? Is there a larger design to this statement made not once but thrice? Recovery rates are rising, says the go-

vernment. Fine. But does this have any scientific meaning? Recovery rate is a function of the time of entry into hospital. What about cases where the COVID patient does not have access or is denied entry into hospitals.”

He said, “The Standing Committee on Health, of which I was a member for 5 years, is chaired by the very sober and responsible Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav. The Committee should be allowed to meet and interact with the Health Ministry and ICMR.”

Enforce night curfew, says Centre

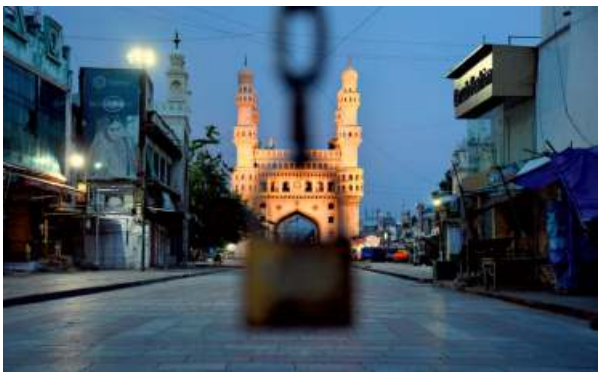
Home Ministry flags violations by the States in implementation of guidelines

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has asked the States to strictly implement night curfew for non-essential activities in all jurisdictions till the lockdown is in force.

In a letter to the States, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said it had been noticed through “media reports and others sources” that there were violations at various places in the implementation of the Ministry’s guidelines for the lockdown extended till May 31.

“The need to ensure night curfew or prohibition of all non-essential activities, between 7 p.m and 7 a.m. is an important element of the



Strict instructions: All non-essential activities are suspended after 7 p.m., according to the guidelines. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

MHA guidelines. The night curfew has been mandated with a view to ensuring that people observe social distancing and to contain the risk of spread of infection.

Accordingly, local authorities should be asked to issue orders in the entirety of their jurisdiction, under proper provisions of law for imposition of curfew. Strict com-

pliance of these orders should be ensured by the authorities,” the letter said.

‘Proper delineation’ The Ministry asked the States for “proper delineation of containment zones and effective implementation of the containment measures within these zones” to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The guidelines issued on May 17 had given considerable flexibility to the States in deciding the zones and allowed buses, autorickshaws and taxis to ply in all the zones except in containment areas.

Shops were allowed to open, except in malls.

Private airlines to join Vande Bharat mission

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

IndiGo on Thursday announced that it will join hands with the government in bringing back Indians stranded overseas and operate 97 flights between Kerala and destinations in West Asia like Saudi Arabia, Doha, Kuwait and Muscat.

Earlier in the day, Minister for Civil Aviation Hardeep Puri said the Vande Bharat mission, will also have participation from private airlines. “Private carriers had expressed their desire to participate in the repatriation of Indians. They will also be joining in this exercise.”

Odisha adopts contract farming system

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has promulgated an ordinance allowing investors and farmers to enter into agreement for contract farming in view of the continuing uncertainties due to the pandemic.

The ordinance is aimed at facilitating both farmers and sponsors to develop mutually beneficial and efficient contract farming system. Since the Assembly is not in session, the ordinance has been promulgated, the State said.

It argued the new system will improve production and marketing of agricultural produce and livestock while promoting farmers’ interest.

The State has, however, made it clear that no title, rights, ownership or possession of land or other such property will be transferred or alienated or vest in the sponsor or its successor or agent.

Over 2.37 lakh train tickets booked within a few hours

Railways to restart reservation counters from today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With the Railways opening on-line booking for some special trains on Thursday, over 2.37 lakh tickets were booked within a few hours.

“At 16:00 hours, 101 trains were available in the system for booking. 2,37,751 tickets were booked for 5,51,724 passengers,” a spokesperson said.

The Railways will begin running 200 time-tabled trains from June 1, and the booking started at 10 a.m. Thursday. These trains will have both AC and non-AC coaches.

The Railways said it would also restart reservation counters and allow bookings through Common Service Centres and ticketing agents in a graded manner from Friday.

The Railways asked its zones



The Railways asked its zones to adhere to standard physical distancing guidelines and observe hygiene protocols. ■ PTI

to adhere to standard physical distancing guidelines and observe hygiene protocols in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. “Zonal Railways have been instructed to decide and notify the opening of reservation counters in a phased manner from tomorrow [Friday], along with

dissemination of information about their locations and timings as per the local needs and conditions.” it said.

The Railways will cancel all tickets booked by passengers whose originating and terminating stations fall in Maharashtra because inter-district travel is not allowed in the State. The passengers will be given a full refund.

“The Maharashtra government has informed the Railways that inter-district travel is prohibited within the State... It is, therefore, desired that tickets of all the passengers whose originating and terminating stations fall within Maharashtra be cancelled and full refund given without deduction of any cancellation/clerkage charges,” said an order issued by the Railway Board.

Indian convicted in terror finance case deported

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Ibrahim Zubair Mohammad, an Indian citizen jailed in the United States for concealing financing of terrorism, has been deported to India on board a repatriation flight, along with 166 others who were illegally staying there.

“They were brought on board an Oman Air flight on May 19,” said an agency official.

In April 2018, Mohammad and two others, Asif Ahmed Salim and Sultane Room Salim, had pleaded guilty on one count of concealment of financing of terrorism, for their roles in concealing the supply of funds to Anwar Al-Awlaki in 2009, according to a U.S. Department of Justice (DoJ) statement on April 12 that year. Al-Awlaki, a leader of the Al-Qaeda, advocated violence against the U.S., supported and was involved in attempted terrorist attacks, court documents said.

INTERVIEW | BHUPENDER YADAV

‘Centre’s approach is sensitive and holistic’

The ₹20 lakh crore package offers stimulus to all sectors, says the BJP general secretary

NISTULA HEBBAR

Bhupender Yadav, BJP general secretary and party in-charge for Bihar, says the government has taken a sensitive approach to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the lockdown by strengthening infrastructure and reaching out to those in need. In an interview, the Rajya Sabha MP described the ₹20 lakh crore package announced by the Centre as a holistic one benefiting all sectors. Excerpts:

The issue of inter-State workers trying to get home has become a humanitarian crisis amid the medical one of the pandemic. Do you think the government underestimated this factor before calling for a lockdown?

■ The crisis unleashed by the coronavirus is a humanitarian one. It is also an unprecedented one. The Modi government thus was very sensitive in its handling of the crisis at hand. Within two days of the first phase of the lockdown, the government announced a ₹1.74 lakh crore relief package aimed at providing a safety net for those hit the hardest – the poor and migrant workers. The package allowed about 800 million people to get free cereals and cooking gas apart from cash through direct transfers for three months. As

many as 6.93 crore farmers were benefited through the PM-KISAN scheme that was meant to help them tide over the COVID-19 crisis.

The movement of people was restricted because the government needed time to get the healthcare infrastructure ready to tackle COVID-19. It had to ensure the supply of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), testing kits and the availability of quarantine centres. If movement was allowed without the basic preparations being made, it would have led to an unmitigated disaster.

Now that the system is well in place and functional, Shramik trains have been moving since May 1.

Over 1,500 trains have ensured the safe return of more than 20 lakh migrants back

home. More such trains will continue to run.

The NDA government in Bihar has been criticised by many for refusing entry to inter-State workers belonging to Bihar earlier. Do you think the criticism was justified?

■ This is a pure political criticism. Ironically, the criticism is coming from a party whose top leader was not even in the State at a time it was facing one of its biggest crises in history. Over 900 trains of the 1,500 Shramik trains that have been running since May 1 brought Bihar migrants back home.

Not only this, the Bihar administration was working for the welfare of people from the State stuck in other States even before the trains started getting them home. The NDA government in Bihar sent ₹1,000 straight to the accounts of more than 18 lakh people of Bihar origin who were stranded in other parts of the country. All those returning are being screened and put up in quarantine centres. Over 7,840 quarantine centres have been



The economy is now being given some breathing space with sectors being allowed to open slowly

opened at block levels. About 2.33 crore people have benefited under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana with money being transferred directly to their accounts. The Opposition may not be aware of it because its leader was missing from the State until May.

The financial package announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has been seen as being too structural and with very little immediate relief offered to the poor. Even the amount is being disputed as being not ₹20 lakh

crore but around ₹1.80 lakh crore in actual cash. How do you justify the package?

■ The ₹20 lakh crore package aims at making India self-reliant on the five pillars elucidated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his recent address to the nation. The pillars being economy, infrastructure, technology-driven systems, vibrant demography and demand.

The package is holistic in its approach and offers stimulus to all sectors from agriculture to MSMEs, to big businesses. The package needs to be seen from a more holistic viewpoint. This view should include the relief offered by the RBI to banks. The banks will in turn pass on the relief to customers.

Loan moratoriums and reduced interest on loans are among the schemes that have already been rolled out. These schemes ensure more cash in the hands of people.

Remember the economy is now also being given some breathing space with sectors being allowed to open slowly.

(For the full interview, log on to bit.ly/BhupendarBJP)

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Bhavani Basin Circle, Erode -11

LUMPSUM Contract - Item wise rate (Two Cover System)
Short Term Tender Invitation No. NIT. 3/2020-21/ BBC/ Erode/Dt. 20.05.2020

On behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu, the undersigned has invited sealed tender for the following works Upto 3.00 PM on 09.06.2020 from the Registered Contractors of Public Works Department.

Sl.No.	Name of Work	EMD Rs.
1.	Rehabilitation of Irrigation sluices from mile 1/2 to 20/1 in Arakkankottai channel & its branches in Gobi Taluk of Erode District. Approximate value of work is Rs. 362.74 lakhs (Including GST)	Rs. 1,92,000/-

Period of contract: 12 Months, Class of contractor: I- Class (State Level) Rs.75 Lakhs and above, Cost of Tender schedule (including GST) Rs.15000 + 1800, 1. Tender Schedule will be available in this office during working days & hours of the schedule sale period. Contractors eligibility, Tender Schedule and other conditions are available in the website. 2. EMD and Cost of Tender Schedule to be remitted to the credit of: Executive Engineer,WRD, Bhavanisagar Dam Division, Bhavanisagar payable at Sathyamangalam. 3.Tender Schedule sale period : 23.05.2020 to 08.06.2020 Upto 5.45 PM 4. Last Date and time for the receipt of Tender: 09.06.2020 Upto to 3.00 PM 5. Tender Opening Date: 3.30 p.m 09.06.2020 6. Contractors eligibility, Tender Schedule and other conditions can be downloaded from the following web site at free of cost Web site address : <http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in> Any changes in this tender notice will be intimated in the Web site www.tenders.tn.gov.in only

DIPIR/1871/Tender/2020

Superintending Engineer,WRD, Bhavani Basin Circle, Erode -11

प्रतिभुति मुद्रणालय / SECURITY PRINTING PRESS
(भारत प्रतिभुति मुद्रण तथा मुद्रण निगम लिमिटेड का इकाई)
(A Unit of Security Printing & Minting Corporation of India Ltd.)
महाराष्ट्र सरकार के पूर्ण स्वामित्ववाली/Wholly owned by Govt. of India
केन्द्रीय मुद्रण, प्रतिलिपि, प्रतिलिपि/Print Compound, Salibad, Hyderabad-500063
GSTIN: 36AAJCS611J1J29 CIN: U22213DL2006GG1144763

संपर्क/Contact: (+91)-040-23253621 फ़ैक्स/Fax: (+91)-040-23456687 ई-मेल/Email: spphyd@spmcil.com वेबसाइट/Website: www.spphyderabad.spmcil.com
No. SP/PH/A-III/Adv/2020/158 Date : 22-05-2020

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना / Notice Inviting Tender (NIT)

मुख्य/Principal निविदा/Principal निविदा (ओ/ओ) सेवाओं की प्राप्ति के लिए प्राप्ति और योग्य निविदाकर्ताओं से आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं :
Sealed tenders are invited from eligible and qualified tenderers for the following items:

क्र.सं./Sl.No.	मात्रा / Quantity	निविदा संख्या / Tender No.	मात्रा / Quantity	निविदा की प्राप्ति के लिए / Closing date and time (IST) for receipt of tenders
1	Blue wave Paper in Reels for making of Inland Letter Cards	6000014728	1,00,000 Kgs	05-06-2020 At 10:45 AM (IST)
2	Sensitized Dandy Roll All Over Ashoka Pillar Watermarked Gummed and Supercalendered Security Paper	(Pre-Qualification Bid) SP/PH/A-III-E-6/ CFS/2020	1,00,000 Kgs	07-07-2020 At 10:45 AM (IST)

अन्य/Other बिदा/Other बिदा (ओ/ओ) सेवाओं की प्राप्ति के लिए प्राप्ति और योग्य निविदाकर्ताओं से आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं :
amendment/ corrigendum if any, will be published on website only.

हस्ता/Signature: - Sd/-
Dy. General Manager (TO) & CPSO (कृते/By मुख्य महाप्रबंधक / For Chief General Manager)

idco
Your power to grow
ISO 9001 & 14001 Corporation

ODISHA
NEW OPPORTUNITIES

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C)
IDCO, IDCO TOWERS, JANPATH, BHUBANESWAR - 751022
Tender Call Notice No. IDCO/O.H.O./P&C/EST/E-1425/02/2019 / 7425 Date : 18/05/2020

NOTICE INVITING TENDER UNDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

1. Name of the Work : Procurement of Total station Survey Instrument and Global Positioning System (DGPS) for IDCO.

2. Estimated Cost : Rs.26.30 Lakh

3. Period of Completion : 03 (Three) Calendar Months.

4. Other details

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for Bidding
		From To
1	2	3
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Bhubaneswar.	Bid Id. No. PC/EST/E-10/ 2020-21	28.05.2020 up to 16.00 Hrs.

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in and Corrigendum if any will not be published in news papers and can only be seen in the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in and www.idco.in.

sd/- Chief General Manager (P&C), I/C
OIPR-14003/11/0014/2021

CAD-73:

idco
Your power to grow
ISO 9001 & 14001 Corporation

ODISHA
NEW OPPORTUNITIES

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C)
IDCO, IDCO TOWER, BHUBANESWAR
Tender Call Notice No. File No. 735/04/2014(P-V) 7383 Dated : 15.05.2020

NOTICE INVITING TENDER THROUGH e-Procurement

Name of the Work : Construction of 33KV DC line with “H” pole and 2X8 MVA, 33/11KV, GIS type e-substation for Power supply to Aluminium Park at Angul.

Period of Completion : 06 (Six) Calendar Months.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for Bidding
		From To
1	2	3
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, IDCO Tower, Bhubaneswar.	Bid Identification No. P&C/EST/E-08/2020-21	Dtd. 27.05.2020 at 12.00 Hrs.

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in and Corrigendum if any will not be published in news papers and can only be seen in the e-procurement portal as well as in IDCO website.

Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, Bhubaneswar
OIPR-14003/11/0019/2021

CAD-69:

Amphan makes quick work of grand trees and joie de vivre of City of Joy

The morning after the super cyclone, city wakes up to untold devastation all around; people speak of a ‘doomsday’ feel with a strange encompassing silence

BISHWANATH GHOSH
KOLKATA

Last October, Arabinda Ganguli passed away at the age of 91. Seven months later, on Wednesday, the *radhachura* tree he planted outside his south Kolkata home in 1977 was also dead. The trunk that had withstood many storms was felled by Cyclone Amphan.

The *radhachura* isn’t alone. Countless other trees, including many that inspired poetry in those who lived under their gaze, are gone. Not just trees alone. Poles were uprooted,

cars were damaged and metal roofs flew off. On Thursday morning, Kolkata woke up in a state of daze, the silence gripping the city far more pronounced than the one caused by the lockdown imposed to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Roads blocked

And just when residents thought they would pick up the pieces and move on, they realised the road ahead was blocked by the lockdown. To make matters worse, mobile networks col-



Broken spirits: A fallen tree in the Tollygunj area of Kolkata on Thursday morning. • RAJEEV BHATT

lapsed, and as a result people couldn’t reach their loved ones to enquire whether they were safe. But thanks to broadband, pictures of battered neighbour-

hoods began to circulate on social media once power supply was restored and the extent of damage began unravelling itself.

Shops vanish

“There is devastation all around our house. So many [makeshift] shops are gone. Ours is one of the few houses that have power and neighbours are sending their fish and milk to be refrigerated. I even saw vans carrying bodies – no idea whether they were victims of COVID-19 or electrocution,” Ranjini Guha, daughter-in-law of the late Ganguli, told *The Hindu*.

This is peak summer, when Kolkata should be melting in the heat, but the weather feels like February, and the citizens of the City of Joy would have loved to do what they do best: celebrate. But they are not only fettered by the lockdown but are also staring at uncertainty because of the increasing number of COVID-19 infections in the city and now the pounding from the super cyclone. While it is up to the government agencies to calculate the ex-

tent of damage, one thing is certain: Amphan has scarred Kolkata.

“We are feeling miserable and alone, like a doomsday feel. We can’t even step out because trees have fallen on both sides of the road, but we can sense the trail of destruction,” said Anshu Monga Kapur, an entrepreneur who lives with her husband in Ballygunge. “The shaken security guard at the gate asked me innocently whether the cyclone had blown away coronavirus as well.”

The Karachi-born Shamlu Dudeja, a long-time resident

of Alipore, said: “Amphan has taught us that the biggest necessity for any human is a shelter whose roof wouldn’t blow away and whose floor won’t come under water.”

She herself lives in a handsome house but spent a better part of Thursday getting water out of her ground-floor rooms. “Last night was very frightening. It was like a horror film. I have never been through such times,” said Ms. Dudeja, who, as a child, witnessed the horrors of Partition.

Worst over as Amphan leaves India

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Cyclone Amphan has crossed India and is now in Bangladesh. It will no longer have any “adverse impact” on West Bengal and Odisha, according to an update from the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

“Super cyclonic storm ‘Amphan’ moved north-northeastwards with a speed of 27 kmph during past 06 hours, further weakened into a cyclonic storm and lay centered at 05.30 a.m. over Bangladesh,” the statement said. The storm is likely to “weaken further” into a depression by afternoon and will have no adverse impact on West Bengal and Odisha.

15 dead in badly ravaged metropolis

Minister asks for time to make Kolkata functional again as super cyclone damaged vital infrastructure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Fifteen persons died in the havoc caused by the super cyclone in the city on Wednesday. Deaths were reported from almost all parts of the city, with some of the victims electrocuted and others crushed under trees or collapsed houses.

For the next few days, the civic authorities have their task cut out with the main works being clearing thousands of fallen trees from the roads and restoring power supply.

The destruction, unprecedented in recent public memory, was evident in every neighbourhood of the city. Residents of the metropolis woke up with almost all the



Remains of the day: A man walking through a waterlogged road in Kolkata on Thursday. • PTI

roads blocked by fallen trees and electric poles. Some areas were submerged.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee shared photographs with presspersons, showing

traffic to a standstill. Waterlogging was reported in low-lying parts, including at the city airport. The Kolkata Municipal Corporation was trying to pump out water from the low-lying areas.

Time required

Firhad Hakim, Chairman of the Board of Administrators of the Corporation and State Urban Development Minister, sought time from people to make the city functional again.

From Dum Dum in the north to Tollygunj and Jadavpur in the south, every area had suffered damage from fallen trees and broken lamp posts. The central business district was badly damaged with trees falling on bound-

dary walls.

Central Red Road witnessed massive uprooting of trees. Hospitals such as M.R. Bangur and SSKM, which were battling the COVID-19 pandemic, had to deal with the destruction caused by the cyclone.

The cyclone raged for hours on Wednesday evening and night. The storm started making landfall at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday and by 4 p.m., the impact was felt in Kolkata. For over six hours the storm raged with all its fury.

Around 6 p.m., the Alipore Weather Office recorded a wind speed of about 112 kmph and at 7.20 p.m. the wind speed in Dum Dum peaked to 133 kmph.

Life comes to a halt in South 24 Parganas

Cyclone leaves residents high and dry

SUVOJIT BAGCHI
CANNING

Till late on Wednesday, Selima Akhter Sekh, a 55-year-old farmer, refused to leave her tin and bamboo thatched house.

But after the extended backside collapsed, she had to shift to a nearby school at around 10 p.m., when Cyclone Amphan was at its worst. Slowly, the entire house and dozens of houses nearby collapsed. From the school, Ms. Sekh could hear the sound.

“It took us 10 years to buy this land and build the house, and a three-hour storm flattened it,” she said. Locals did not let Ms. Sekh wait, said Ajizul Sekh, a con-



Selima returned to her home to find that it was flattened.

struction worker and one of her three sons. “We shifted and survived, but the house disappeared,” Mr. Sekh said.

On Wednesday night, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said South and North 24 Parganas were two of south Bengal’s “ruined” districts.

Pidawa, an unheralded success

FROM PAGE 1

“We had to take the help of the local police and move them by ambulance on April 6 to Jhalawar for testing, which could only be done by the evening, further delaying matters,” recalled Dr. Raees. On April 7, three of the five samples taken proved positive, all symptomatic. Dr. Raees and his staff were also tested and put in quarantine, thus closing the CHC until doctors from neighbouring hospitals arrived.

This set in motion a chain of events that were to prove decisive in the containment and eventual elimination of the virus from Pidawa. “In hindsight, we may have been a bit harsh in imposing curfew over the entire town,” reminisced Sidharth Sihag, Jhalawar District Collector. “We were all in a learning curve about the virus at that time, and didn’t have any other protocols to go by,” he ad-

ded. He and his Rapid Response Team descended on Pidawa moments after the first positive reports came, and closed the town completely from the midnight of April 7-8. And then began an extensive testing programme beginning with the family, neighbours, street by street, and mohalla by mohalla.

Collection centre

Once another five positive cases appeared it was decided to set up a sample collection centre at Pidawa. Constantly moving people was proving to be a logistical nightmare. A local college was converted into a sample collection centre. Another seven tested positive, and in a matter of days from zero the case count had reached 15, raising stress levels and questions about the source. In the process of testing and enquiring about the roots of the contagion, a travel history cropped up. On March 18, some members of the family

had gone to Indore for trou-seau shopping, as well as to get supplies for a grocery store. And then, others had gone to nearby Kota too, for the upcoming “wedding of my niece Arshi,” said Riazullah, brother of the deceased Khalida Bi. The wedding was scheduled for March 23 but postponed when Rajasthan announced its lockdown on March 21. In the meantime, and unknown to all, the virus had entered the family and slowly begun to make its way around.

Shravan Rajawat, Pidawa Sub-Divisional Magistrate, was the administrative local point man and recalled suggesting to the Collector that women should also be extensively tested. “Unlike other places, the women in Dalelpura, the area of Pidawa most affected, are not house bound and are actively moving around, socially or otherwise,” he said. While it is debatable if data can back that assertion, the spread was ne-

vertheless quick, albeit within a close circle. Almost all the cases were either family, neighbours, or nearby associates. Sohan Lal, the family sharecropper also tested positive, as did his wife and child. A neighbour of Mr. Lal, suffering from paralysis, also tested positive. In all, Pidawa saw 20 positive cases, which for a town of about 14,000 is enough to cause a major scare scenario. And then the demographics of those who tested positive gave rise to yet more unwanted scares.

“Don’t forget that the first positive cases in Pidawa appeared the day after the stoning incidents in Indore,” remarked an official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. “Coupled with the Tablighi allegations doing the digital rounds, we were sitting on another social disaster,” the official added. Pidawa has a delicate demographic balance, and hasn’t been immune from the longer term contagion.



So far so good: Milk distribution underway at Dalelpura, a red zone, in Rajasthan. • T.R. SIRVI

Those tensions were revived in early April and the administration was hard-pressed to watch the spread of both viruses, the digital as well as the novel coronavirus. The curfew certainly helped, in keeping people indoors and putting testing procedures in place, but it did create problems for families in terms of availability of milk and vegetables.

And even in that an avenue was found to fan the flames of the older virus. As the whole town was under curfew, the supply to each locality came to be staggered, giving rise to allegations that the ‘other’ were getting ac-

cess on a more regular basis than the ‘own’. Curfew rationalisation sorted out that insinuation from spreading further, but not before causing administrative stress. “It had us on the edge for sure, but luckily better sense prevailed,” said the same official.

In fact, the local administration and medical authorities now recall with a great deal of satisfaction the cooperation they received from the public. The family that initially tested positive was singled out for praise in terms of its calmness and cooperative attitude once the contagion was explained to

them. They were taken to Kota, the divisional headquarters, in the first days of quarantine and treatment, for that was the protocol established across Rajasthan. After a few days, and the Kota Medical College feeling the strain of increasing numbers, they were shifted to Jhalawar Medical College for the remainder of their treatment, quarantine and repeated testing. Even as all patients continued to provide negative samples subsequently, the drama didn’t cease around them.

Spill vial


On May 7 a bunch of samples arrived at the laboratory of the Department of Microbiology at Jhalawar Medical College. When opened a vial was found to have spilled, causing a major scare among the laboratory technicians. They refused to touch the samples for fear of infecting themselves. “The HoD handled the situation brilliantly,” recounted Mr. Sihag, the Collector. Yogendra Tiwari, HoD Microbiology, laughed off the praise, but did admit to the

fear hovering among the laboratory technicians. “The vials didn’t have screw-on caps, so one of them spilled its sample over the others, and one didn’t know whether it was an infected case. So I had to handle the whole bunch myself,” he said. He cleaned all the samples himself, and then decontaminated the entire laboratory. “We resumed work after fumigation, invalidated that sample, had it taken and tested again,” he added. About 292 samples were repeat tested, and only then was Pidawa declared free of the novel coronavirus.

While most of the district administration and medical authorities were reticent about claiming a major success in containing and eliminating the novel coronavirus from a remote small town near the heart of India, Dr. Tiwari was unabashed.


“The Pidawa model is something to be proud of,” he declared. Mofussil India scored a point, and left a marker, without any fanfare.

(The writer is a former Member of Parliament)

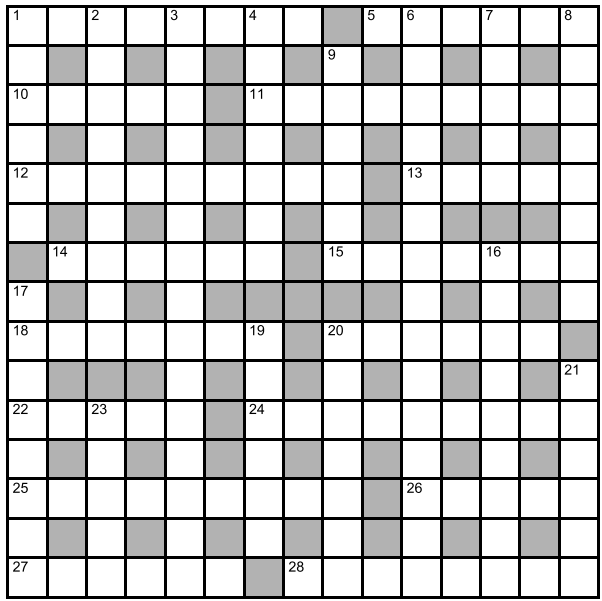
**THE CROSSWORD**

12942

Are you good with numbers or better with words? Pick from Sudokus and crosswords.
@ <https://crossword.thehindu.com>



(set by Dr. X)



ACROSS

1 Deny arresting American dissenter (8)

5 Start to admire David say, one with special defence (6)

10 Found strength to give up cocaine for good (5)

11 Unstated reversal in plan to go to live in the country (9)

12 Keep cuddling wife after wine for a sensational reaction (5, 4)

13 Clothes stand (3-2)

DOWN

14 Ridicules many getting sick aboard steamer (6)

15 Times of terrible unrest over citizenship essentially (7)

18 Suckers for old-time therapy? (7)

20 Outlaw at townhouse arrested around capital city (6)

22 Small compact chip (5)

24 Sponge cake prepared by chefs heartily in department (9)

25 Charge of care given incorrectly (9)

26 Select good bank (5)

27 Graceful maiden starting to bathe in river (6)

28 Consequences of America infiltrating territories (8)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12941

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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



SHIVESH BHATIA

No-oven cake

Feeling the urge to bake a delicious cake but don't have an oven or even the 'right' ingredients? How about batter made with glucose biscuits in a pressure cooker? New Delhi-based food blogger and cookbook author Shivesh Bhatia explains his popular five-ingredient cake (no flour, no egg), "You start by preheating the cooker (close the lid without the whistle) on medium heat for 10 minutes. This makes sure that once your batter (in a greased pan) goes in, it's hot enough for the cooking process to start. Use a wire rack or plate to make sure that the bottom of the cooker doesn't touch your baking pan. I don't like adding water because then it gives more of a steamed texture," Stating that anyone can make the cake, he adds, "I wanted to simplify it so that even people using

a cooker for the first time can make it. It takes about 50 minutes for the cake to cook on an induction stove, but the baking time varies; I always suggest keeping an eye on it." As for the all-important question of taste, Shivesh says, "Honestly, the texture is as good as any regular cake. If you did a blind taste test, I don't think anyone will be able to guess that this cake is made with only glucose biscuits. That is the best part, because you get a great dessert without compromising on the taste."

Extra hack

Waffles are one dessert that everyone loves but a waffle iron is a gadget that is not commonly available in Indian households. Instead of the iron, use a sandwich-maker or griller to make the waffles. It actually does such a great job and I think this is a great hack that everyone can try.

From cake made in a pressure cooker to eggs in an *idli* steamer, here are some easy hacks to make cooking more fun during lockdown

KITCHEN HACKS for slim pickings

APARNA NARRAIN

Steamed egg curry

For Sarvesh Devanandan of the Instagram page 'A Bite Of Chennai', a story on cooking eggs in an *idli* steamer gave him the idea to take it one step further and make an egg curry. "I had watched an Instagram video of eggs being steamed and then toasted on a pan with some pepper, chilli powder and curry leaves. That's what I wanted to make initially. Then, I had this idea of changing my mother's recipe. She used to make tomato curry, where she would add the

raw egg to it when it was boiling. But the eggs would become messy and also overcooked. So, I thought of adding steamed eggs to the curry. It turned out really well. The eggs were fluffy, soft and stayed intact."

Extra hack

When we make egg *dosa*, we usually make the *dosa* first and then spread the egg on it. Instead, mix the egg in the batter and cook it. You don't get the *dosa* texture, but it does become very fluffy. And it goes really well with any gravy or chutney.



SARVESH DEVANANDAN

Mug pizza

Mug cakes may be well known, but are you familiar with mug pizza and mug mac 'n' cheese? Bengaluru-based food blogger Richa Gupta of *My Food Story* channel says, "Mug recipes are popular because when you're watching something late in the night, you just want something to eat and these recipes are really fast and easy. You don't even need egg. All my mug recipes are eggless; they are made in a microwave and are quick and easy." So how does one make these dishes? Says Richa, "For the pizza, we use baking soda as a leavening agent and so you get that breadly sort of texture in the base when it cooks in the microwave. Then you add sauce, cheese and toppings and the top part cooks and gives you that pizza-like taste. The mac 'n' cheese takes about eight minutes to make in a microwave. The reason for that is the pasta has to cook; it's not like the pasta can cook in two minutes just because it's in a microwave. After that, it is another 30 or 40 seconds when you add the milk, cheese and cornflower powder. And the texture is very similar to a regular pasta: creamy and cheesy."

Extra hack

My favourite hack, if you have forgotten to soak channa or rajma overnight, is to take a casserole or anything with a tight lid, fill it with hot water, add the beans, a little bit of salt, cover it, and leave it aside for one hour. The hot water and salt will do the trick and the beans will be the same as if you had soaked it overnight.



RICHA GUPTA



PRABALIKA M BORAH

Of Asia's 50 Best Bars in 2020, only one is Indian. Sidecar in Delhi, is at number 40 in the William Reed Group's respected, much-anticipated list released recently. It is no wonder that the man behind the bar counter, Yangdup Lama, is thrilled. The mixologist, bartender and entrepreneur – who is deep into spirituality, by the way – chooses to respond with a Spider-Man-like sentiment: with great power comes great responsibility. Yangdup says he hopes "to keep winning trust and deliver the best always, so people look forward to visiting us". Sidecar is Yangdup's second project, his first being Gurugram's first



The best of spirits

The man behind Sidecar, the only Indian bar in Asia's Best 50 list, discusses some tricks of his craft and trade

speakeasy bar Cocktails And Dreams. With 25 years of experience in bartending, Yangdup says that his motive at work is not to be listed, but admits that such recognitions are encouraging for the team nevertheless. Contrary to the popular saying that the life of a bar is two years, he says that a bar should have an en-

during, friendly neighbourhood charm. Over a phone call from Delhi, he discusses his cocktail philosophy: "The basic guideline that I follow is, 'anything edible can go in a cocktail'. Cocktails should be diverse in flavour and culture. Take coffee, for instance. India produces good coffee, like tea, and depending on

Ready to serve A happy Yangdup Lama behind the bar at Sidecar, his second project

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

where it comes from, it influences the flavour of the cocktail differently."

He also experiments with nuts, in his creations. "I once infused three types of nuts – almonds, walnuts and peanuts – in a 50-year-old single malt whisky. Everyone thought I had lost it. But when the makers of the whisky tried the infusion, they said they wouldn't have the single malt any other way."

The mixologist, who is making the best use of his unplanned stay at home, is thrilled to be able to restart theoretical learning.

"It dawned on me that I still had a lot of learning to do about cocktails. I love taking some quizzes and knowing where I stand," he says, adding that he has also been doing a lot of online training with his staff.

"Without the the pressure of work everyday, we seem to be learning a lot better," says Yangdup, adding that he is also using this time to teach the team about mindfulness, since he has an interest in spirituality.

"In that process, I must say that I too have benefited. Mindfulness elevates your experience, especially at work. If we can put our heart into our work, we will not only work better but also make more enjoyable cocktails and create a better experience for our guests," states Yangdup, adding, "I believe that whatever we do should make us happy."

The root of the matter

With food security emerging as a priority during the lockdown, Kerala is promoting tuber cultivation



Nature's bounty Tapioca cuttings being taken away for distribution in Mayyil panchayat in Kannur district

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ATHIRA M

"I can't wait to see whether I will be able to grow *koorka* (Chinese potato) at home. I haven't done that before. I have planted the rhizomes to raise the vines and, hopefully, will succeed," says Chandrika Devi S, adding with a chuckle that she even browsed the Internet to clear her doubts.

The 50-year-old Government employee from Vizhinjam in Thiruvananthapuram district remembers growing up in a homestead with tubers of different varieties. "They were part of our daily diet. But as food habits changed, I never got around to cultivating them. The lockdown has got me thinking about self-sufficiency in food and I have planted *madhura kizhangu* (sweet potato), *koova* (arrowroot), *chembu* (colocasia), *chenna* (elephant foot yam), *kaachil* (purple yam)..." The planting material was provided by Santhigram, a voluntary organisation in the district, which has initiated a scheme to promote tuber cultivation in and around the area.

The COVID-19-induced break in supply chains of food has brought the focus back on tubers in Kerala. Besides the State Government, voluntary organisations, local self Government bodies and farmers' groups have also stepped in to promote cultivation of roots and tubers, along with vegetable farming in the state.

The Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (ICAR-CTCRI) in the State capital has chalked out a tuber campaign with the support of the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU), Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPC), and State Agriculture Department. The project encourages farming of cassava (tapioca), different varieties of yams, sweet potato, taro and Chinese potato. Mayyil panchayat in Kannur district has

launched a scheme to grow tapioca and sweet potato in every household. It is led by Mayyil Rice Producer Company (MRPC), a farmer producer organisation that has been instrumental in reviving paddy cultivation in the panchayat. "Planting materials of both tapioca and sweet potato were distributed early this month. There are over 8,000 households in the Panchayat and tapioca cuttings were given away to over 6,100 of them and sweet potato vine cuttings to nearly 1,000 families," says TK Balakrishnan, managing director, MRPC. While tapioca can be harvested in six months, it will take three or four months to harvest sweet potatoes.

He says that this is part of making every household in the Panchayat self-sufficient in food production. "Ginger roots and turmeric rhizomes have already been distributed by Mayyil Krishi Bhavan. Later this month, we are distributing vegetable and paddy seeds in the panchayat. We have divided the Panchayat into several clusters, and guidance regarding cultivating vegetables and tubers will be given by the conveners of these clusters," he adds. The company is supported by the Agriculture Department, Panchayat officials, libraries and like-minded individuals.

S Suja, coordinator with Santhigram, says the organisation has been focussing on food security for the last three years. "During the lockdown, we were able to give vegetable seeds to 100 families. Tuber cultivation came as the next phase and the planting materials have already been distributed to 50 families," she says.

Meanwhile, the University of Kerala has announced that it will revive farming on its campus at Kariavattom in the State capital, which includes tuber cultivation. Another initiative is by the corporation of Kozhikode, which has already started tapioca cultivation in 12 spots that were lying fallow.



A throwback to the Vijayanagara Empire

Author Srinivas Reddy discusses his biography of Krishnadevaraya, whom he likes to describe as a poet-king

SANGEETHA DEVI DUNDOO

A book on Krishnadevaraya, the most popular ruler of the erstwhile Vijayanagara Empire, seems like a natural progression of things for sitar player and author Srinivas Reddy. Growing up with a keen interest in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil literature, he completed his PhD at UC Berkeley in 2011, with his thesis on Krishnadevaraya's Telugu work *Amuktamalyada*. Srinivas translated *Amuktamalyada* in English as *Giver of the Worn Garland*, in 2010. Around that time, he also began working on a biography on Krishnadevaraya, which is now published as *Raya: Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara* (by Jugernaut, available as e-book at ₹503, and print form at ₹535).

Edited excerpts from an email interview with the Rhode Island-based author:

What got you interested in history and literature in your growing years?

● I was raised in a traditional but liberal-minded family. Both my parents were medical doctors, but knowledge of every kind was greatly valued at home, be it scientific, humanistic or artistic. As a child, however, I was much more into science than literature. In college, I had a spiritual awakening that brought me back to Indian literature, philosophy and music. Around that time, my grandfather came to stay with us and my education in Sanskrit and the *Bhaga-*

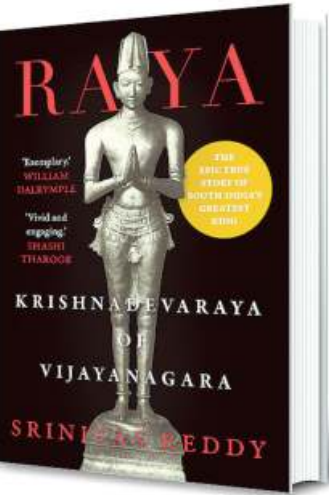


From then on, I was in love!

What prompted you to write a book on Krishnadevaraya and how did you want to make it different from the existing ones?

● Krishnadevaraya is a well-known name, and many people have heard the stories of his amazing empire, but there has been surprisingly little academic research done on his life. This book is the first sustained work in English to explore the emperor's remarkable life and his place in Indian/world history. I think the most unique contribution of my work is the integration of well-known historical sources like Portuguese chronicles with classical Telugu literature, much of which has never been ful-

Notes from the past (above) Srinivas Reddy, (below) Book cover ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



ly explored or translated into English.

What aspects of Krishnadevaraya's life did you want to highlight?

● There are many facets of Raya's life that I wanted to shine light on, but one important theme is the idea of a *kavi-raja* or poet-king. This old India concept (akin to the 'philosopher king' or 'enlightened monarch' of western civilisations) emphasises that a good king should be both mighty in battle and wise in governance. Raya was the pre-modern epitome of this ideal; he was a brilliant warrior, statesman and poet all wrapped into one extraordinary individual. Another critical aspect that I examine is the persistent notion that Vijayanagara was a staunchly Hindu state in valiant opposition to the onslaught of Islam. This oversimplified narrative is something I wanted to re-evaluate and contextualise, especially in regard to Raya's promotion of religious tolerance and multiculturalism.

There is a tendency to eulogise while writing about a personality one has followed for years. What was your writing approach?

● This is true and I even concede to it, in the book. I am an admirer of Krishnadevaraya because after years of studying his life, he remains a great source of inspiration to me, and hopefully now a whole new generation of leaders and thinkers. As the book progresses, I am also critical of Raya's actions at the end of his reign, particularly his growing megalomania and the unfortunate incident with his beloved minister, Timmarasu. As the story goes, Raya, in a fit of rage, blinded the man who he always called a father. A sad story indeed, but one that also serves to humanise this larger-than-life king.

HOMING IN



For your weekly **Watch List**, we have Malayalam actor '**Appani**' **Sarath** sharing his list of favourite movies/series that he recommends. "Because of the lockdown, I'm now getting more time to catch up on movies I have missed," says Sarath, who rose to fame with the gangster-drama *Angamaly Diaries*

HARIKUMAR JS

Iruvar

This classic from Mani Ratnam scores high in every department, be it direction, casting or the performances. The story of political rivalry, inspired by real-life events, is gripping and an inspiration.



Sacred Games

Web series have become quite popular for their flexibility quotient today, and *Sacred Games* provides wholesome entertainment. It showcases some top-notch performances, especially by Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Saif Ali Khan.



Joker

Joaquin Phoenix truly deserved the Oscar for Best Actor for his brilliant performance in this film. Watching it, one can see the immense effort that went into the characterisation.



Kilukkam

Directed by Priyadarshan, it is an evergreen comedy in Malayalam. It is one of those movies that always proves a stress-buster and is a perfect watch for some comic relief during this lockdown.



Bigil

Atlee is one director I like a lot and the success of this Vijay-starrer goes beyond its popular appeal. It is both a celebration and an inspiration.

We would love to know how you are keeping busy at home. Tell us what you are watching at metro@thehindu.co.in

Love is just six feet away

A trans US-India team aims to create Instagram's largest network of people who are physically distancing, with illustrations and personal stories

SWETA AKUNDI

For 6ftlove, the Instagram Grid takes on a much more literal sense. Intersecting lines run like tracks all over this page, joined by little pink hearts. And the building block units of this hive are illustrations of people like you and I, all physical distancing.

The page (@6ftlove), created by New York-based urban planner, Sabah Usmani, is a reminder that though we are staying six feet apart physically, we are all still connected emotionally.

"6ftlove is both a design project and a global solidarity movement to fight the spread of COVID-19," says Sabah. The team invites people to send in their experiences of isolation, submitted in any lan-

guage. Almost every day, they profile an individual's story, with an illustration and a quote of how they are navigating the outbreak and dealing with physical distancing.

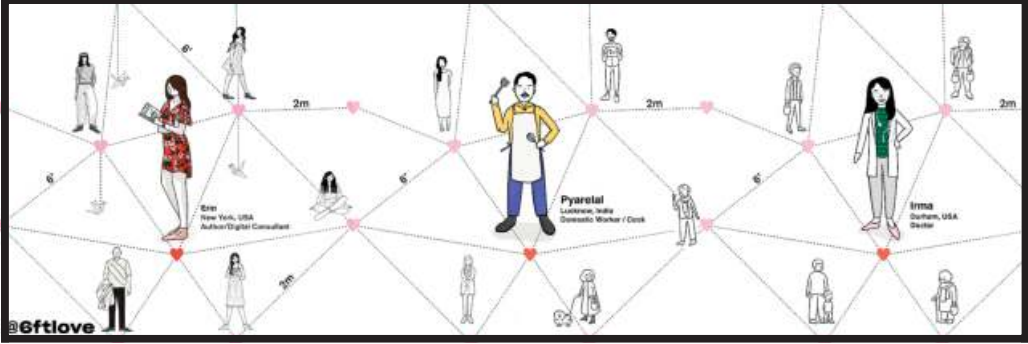
"We are gathering stories spanning a diversity of experiences, backgrounds, and geographies. We include quotes in their original language alongside an English translation," adds Sabah.

And it is working: the stories put up have come in from 17 countries and 34 cities, in seven different languages so far. Some of them are doctors and domestic workers, while others are comedians and writers.

A 12-year-old talks about celebrating her birthday

under lockdown, while a former graffiti artist from Adelaide, Australia, who has now taken to canvases, is itching to paint the town again. "I am reminded of where my love for art came from," he says.

The illustrations in the grid are by Diana Ang and Aashiti Miller, and the team includes urban planners (Sera Tolgay, Akemi Sato), designers (Mira Khandpur, Nikita Notowidigdo), and an environmental expert (Daphne Yin) – some based in the US and some in



Grids of grit The stories featured in 6ftlove have come in from 17 countries and 34 cities; (below) Sabah Usmani along with some of the illustrations ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

India. "I started 6ftlove in early March, just as the COVID-19 pandemic swept through the world. It was at this time that the term 'physical distancing' (aka social distancing) came to dominate the discourse," says Sabah.

"I felt that there was a need to spread the message that practising physical distancing doesn't mean we can't be social or connect with people - whether it be loved ones or strangers."

Living in New York City, which emerged as one of the epicenters of this crisis, Sabah was worried

about her father. "He is in his late sixties, has diabetes, and is in the high-risk category. I tried to convince him to stay at home." Despite her parents living in the same city as her, she hasn't seen them in person in over two months. "I mostly keep in touch with my family and friends via video calls and texting, which means my phone has basically become an extension of my arm," she says.

But as cities around the world are easing restrictions in the coming weeks, Sabah plans to bring the movement from social-media to real life.

"We are working on a campaign to

mainstream the need for collective action to combat the spread of COVID-19 and remove the psychological barriers to physical distancing. This will include a design for a wearable pin that communicates to others that even though you are keeping a safe distance, you are doing it out of love and concern for them." Meanwhile, the team is focussing on hard-to-reach stories, from vulnerable groups, rural populations, and frontline workers. "We would also like to partner with organisations with aligned goals to reach out to communities who may not have access to social media," she says.

POOCH CAFE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



China plans security law for Hong Kong

Parliament to discuss a Bill on ‘improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms’ for the city

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

China's Parliament will consider a Bill that could limit opposition activity in Hong Kong, a spokesperson said on Thursday, appearing to confirm speculation that China will sidestep the territory's own lawmaking body in enacting legislation to crack down on activity Beijing considers subversive.

Zhang Yesui said the National People's Congress will deliberate a Bill on “establishing and improving the

COVID-19

legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to safeguard national security.”

Anti-govt. protests

Such a move has long been under consideration but was hastened by months of anti-government protests last year in the former British colony that was handed over to Chinese rule in 1997. Such legislation was last proposed in 2003 under Article 23 of



Controversial move: President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang, right, observing a minute of silence for COVID-19 victims at the opening session of the Parliament in Beijing. • REUTERS

the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-Constitution, bringing hundreds of thousands of the territory's citizens out in protest.

The proposal was withdrawn by the government but Beijing has increasingly pushed for measures such as punishment for disrespecting the Chinese national flag and anthem and increased pro-China patriotic-themed education in schools. Opposition in Hong Kong's Legisla-

tive Council, however, made it unlikely such a Bill could pass at the local level.

The new measures are required by the “new situation and demands” and action at the national level is “entirely necessary,” Mr. Zhang said.

A vote at the NPC will add to concerns in Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp that Beijing is chipping away at the semi-autonomous territory's rights to assembly and free speech that greatly ex-

ceeded those permitted by the ruling Communist Party in mainland China.

Mr. Zhang's comments at a news conference came on the eve of the opening of the congress's annual session after a two-month delay because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Thursday saw the opening session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, an advisory body. That will be followed Fri-

day by the start of the 3,000-member NPC at which Premier Li Keqiang will deliver a keynote speech outlining economic and social goals for the year.

The holding of the “two sessions,” as the annual meetings are known, is a further sign of what the party says is its success in bringing the outbreak under control, although clusters of cases are still popping up in some parts of the country.

Members of the Consultative Conference will “tell the world about how China, as a responsible major country, has taken firm action and contributed to international cooperation in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic,” Wang Yang, the chairman of the body, said in a report to the opening session. Mr. Wang's comments were in the prepared text distributed to journalists, although he skipped over them in his delivery, apparently to save time.

Rank-and-file members wore masks in the vast auditorium inside the Great Hall of the People in the heart of Beijing.

White House report blasts Chinese ‘malign activities’

It expands on Trump's tough rhetoric in hopes that it will resonate with voters angry at that country

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

Beyond its hard-hitting rhetoric against China over its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, the White House has issued a broad-scale attack on Beijing's predatory economic policies, military buildup, disinformation campaigns and human rights violations.

The 20-page report does not signal a shift in U.S. policy, according to a senior administration official, who was not authorised to publicly discuss the report and spoke only on the condition of anonymity, but it expands



President Donald Trump pointing towards China on a chart showing daily mortality cases, in this file photo. • REUTERS

on President Donald Trump's get-tough rhetoric that he hopes will resonate with voters angry about Chi-

na's handling of the pandemic, which has left millions of Americans out of work.

“The media's focus on the

current pandemic risks missing the bigger picture of the challenge that's presented by the Chinese Communist Party,” Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said.

“China's been ruled by a brutal, authoritarian regime, a communist regime since 1949. For several decades, we thought the regime would become more like us – through trade, scientific exchanges, diplomatic outreach, letting them in the World Trade Organization as a developing nation. That didn't happen,” he said. “We greatly underestimated the degree to which Beijing is

ideologically and politically hostile to free nations. The whole world is waking up to that fact.”

Later, the State Department announced that it had approved the sale of advanced torpedoes to the Taiwanese military. China regards the island as a renegade province. The department said it had informed Congress of the \$180 million sale of heavy-weight torpedoes, which “will help improve the security of (Taiwan) and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance, and economic progress in the region.”

Man held for ‘honour killings’ of cousins in Pak.

Murder after victims video went viral

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PESHAWAR

The Pakistan police have arrested a man over alleged “honour killings” of his two cousins, who appeared in a viral video being kissed by someone, police said on Thursday.

The two women were shot dead last week in a northwestern district near the Afghan border, where women are subjected to strict tribal codes that limit their movement outside of the home.

Muhammad Aslam, the 26-year-old first cousin of the victims, is accused of carrying out the murders.

“We have arrested the main suspect and are trying to recover the pistol he

used,” said Mohammad Nawaz Khan, who is investigating the case.

Police said the victims, both in their 20s, were later gunned down in North Waziristan's remote Garyum village and buried by family members.

A third woman seen in the video, recorded last year, is the wife of the suspected killer but has been safely located, police added.

Two other relatives of the women have also been arrested over the killings, while the man in the video and the man who filmed it have both been arrested for indecency.

Around a thousand Pakistani women are murdered in honour killings each year.

Biden warns of ‘abuse of power’

In a veiled attack on Trump, he says the powers that be are protecting friends

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

Joe Biden is warning that those “tasked with enforcing the law are abusing their powers,” offering a measured critique of the Mr. Trump's administration a day after he declined to respond to President Donald Trump's attacks directly.

Speaking on Wednesday to Columbia University Law School graduates via video, Mr. Biden urged them to “protect the very foundations of democracy.”

“Trust in self-governance. Because right now, it's under attack,” the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee said. “The very people tasked with enforcing the rule of law are abusing their powers, protecting their



Joe Biden

friends, weakening the very principles that make our country work.”

Asked on Tuesday night how he'd respond to the allegations, Mr. Biden said, “I don't want to get down in the mud with these guys.”

Speaking at a Yahoo News virtual town hall on Tuesday, Mr. Biden said Mr. Trump was trying to distract voters

from his inadequate response to the coronavirus pandemic. Mr. Trump has said the virus will disappear “like a miracle.”

Broadly dubbing his allegations “Obamagate,” Mr. Trump has pointed to the legal case of his former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, suggesting that the “unmasking” of Mr. Flynn's name as part of legal U.S. surveillance of foreign targets was criminal and motivated by partisan politics.

There is no evidence of that, and Mr. Trump's accusations misrepresent the facts of the case. The “unmasking” of people in surveillance reports is a routine, legal activity in government – the Trump administration made 10,012 such requests in

WHO records highest daily number of COVID-19 cases

1,06,000 cases: the most since the outbreak began in Dec.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

The World Health Organization said on Wednesday it had registered a new daily record number of COVID-19 cases as it quickly neared the “tragic milestone” of five million total infections.

The UN agency's chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that on Tuesday, there were “1,06,000 cases reported to WHO – the most in a single day since the outbreak began” in December.

The WHO was also getting to grips with US President Donald Trump's reform ultimatum, giving the organisation 30 days to overhaul its operations otherwise its biggest contributor would freeze its funding and consider pulling out altogether.

The Geneva-based WHO's



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

coronavirus disease dashboard said that on Tuesday, 106,662 confirmed cases had been reported to the agency from around the world. More than 325,000 people have lost their lives, according to the AFP tally.

“We still have a long way to go in this pandemic,” Mr. Tedros told a virtual press conference as his agency

warned of rising infection figures in poorer countries.

More than 4.9 million cases of the novel coronavirus have been registered in total since the outbreak first emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP.

WHO emergencies director Michael Ryan said the five million cases mark would be a “tragic milestone”.

Mr. Tedros added: “We're very concerned about the rising numbers of cases in low- and middle-income countries.”

Meanwhile, Mr. Ryan said neither “Hydroxychloroquine nor chloroquine have been, as yet, found to be effective in the treatment of COVID-19.

Trump suggests holding in-person G7 summit

‘It would be a great sign of normalisation’

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he is considering hosting world leaders for the annual G7 summit at his Camp David retreat despite the ongoing coronavirus crisis, as the global death toll soared past 3,25,000.

There was encouraging news, meanwhile, on the scientific front as two studies on monkeys published on Wednesday offered hope that humans can develop protective immunity to the novel coronavirus.

Beginning to comeback

Mr. Trump said in a tweet that the U.S. was “Transitioning back to Greatness” and he may hold the G7 in June in person, instead of

remotely by videoconference as proposed previously.

“I am considering rescheduling the G-7, on the same or similar date, in Washington, D.C., at the legendary Camp David,” he said.

“The other members are also beginning their COMEBACK. It would be a great sign to all – normalisation!”

G7 countries – Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States – take turns organizing the annual gathering.

French President Emmanuel Macron said he would attend the Camp David summit if “health conditions allow,” his office said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she would “wait and see what happens.”

Iranian tankers will get military escort: Venezuela

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
CARACAS

Venezuela on Wednesday said its Navy and Air Force would escort Iranian tankers arriving with much needed fuel, after Tehran warned of “consequences” if the U.S. stopped the ships from reaching their destination.

“We're ready for whatever, whenever,” President Nicolas Maduro told state-run media, thanking “all the support” from its West Asian ally in its confrontation with the U.S.

Venezuela has the world's largest proven oil reserves, but its capacity to refine crude into gasoline is limited.

US President Donald Trump's administration has imposed unilateral sanc-



Nicolas Maduro

tions aimed at ending oil exports from Iran and Venezuela.

Defence Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez said that when the Iranian ships enter the oceanic economic zone “they will be welcomed” by Venezuelan naval ships and warplanes.

According to reports, five ships have sailed from Iran but it is not known when they will arrive.

With an eye on U.S. election, Iran tries a new tack

A shift in policy from provocation to limited cooperation reflects an effort to avoid direct confrontation with the Trump administration

ALISSA J. RUBIN
FARNAZ FASSIHI
BAGHDAD

After years of increasing tensions that nearly led to war, Iran has moderated its approach to the West, shifting from a policy of provocation to one of limited cooperation. The change reflects an effort to avoid direct confrontation with the U.S. that the Iranians say could benefit President Donald Trump in the November election.

Nowhere is the shift more evident than in Iraq, where Iran has backed a pro-American Prime Minister and ordered its proxy militias to cease their rocket attacks on U.S. forces.

The Americans, while publicly dismissive of any change in Iranian posture, have quietly reciprocated in



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. • AFP/FILE

modest and indirect ways.

Taken together, the openings represent an incipient détente that, even if it does not last or lead to the end of hostilities between Iran and the U.S., has already lowered the temperature of the relationship, reducing the risk of open conflict.

“A war is less likely to happen, but there is still the risk of a confrontation,” said Randa Slim, a senior fellow at the Middle East Institute. “But it's less likely because the intent of the primary actors has shifted. Both Iran and the U.S. definitely do not want a war six months before the U.S. elections.”

Iran's shift, which it has not announced or explained publicly, appears to be tactical, analysts said, noting that the country still vehemently opposes the Trump administration's demand that it negotiate its nuclear agreement with the West and that it has not backed off its goal of ousting the U.S. military from West Asia. Publicly, both countries remain engaged in verbal warfare.

But the recent signs of de-escalation have been significant:

Attacks ceased

After months of hit-and-run attacks on U.S. forces in Iraq that pushed the U.S. and Iran to the brink of war in January, Iran has called off its proxy militias, and the at-

tacks have largely ceased.

When Iraq's Parliament chose a U.S.-backed Prime Minister this month, Iran, which has been instrumental in choosing previous Iraqi governments, ultimately acceded to the choice and helped put him in office.

In April, Iran reached out to the U.S. to open negotiations for a prisoner swap, offering to release a U.S. Navy veteran held by Iran in exchange for an Iranian American doctor detained by the Americans.

Attacks on merchant ships and tankers in the Persian Gulf that threatened one of the world's busiest shipping lanes for much of last year have been ratcheted down, although not entirely ended.

Diplomats, Iraqi and Iranian officials and analysts

cite a combination of reasons for the change, including a fear of war with the U.S. They also note that Iran is overextended – fighting a coronavirus epidemic, a tanking economy and public unrest at home – and needs to retrench.

Caught by surprise

Tehran was caught by surprise when the Americans retaliated for the killing of a U.S. contractor in Iraq in December by killing the leader of Iran's elite Quds Force, Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

The U.S. threatened a disproportionate response if another American was killed, something Iran could ill afford.

“Iran is redefining its regional policies after Gen. Soleimani's assassination,” Mo-

hamad Hossein Malaek, a seasoned Iranian diplomat and former Ambassador to China, wrote in *Iranian Diplomacy* magazine in April. “It's reshuffling its cards, it's reassessing its capabilities, and it has entered the arena with a new perspective and plan.”

Iran has also concluded that escalating tensions with the U.S. could provoke armed conflict that, aside from being painful for Iran, could benefit Mr. Trump politically, improving his reelection chances, according to people familiar with the policy. Since taking office, Mr. Trump has withdrawn from the nuclear agreement with Iran and imposed crippling economic sanctions that have devastated Iran's economy. NY TIMES

ELSEWHERE



Two dams breach in U.S. state of Michigan

SANFORD
More than 10,000 residents evacuated their homes in Michigan on Wednesday after two dams failed following heavy rain and triggered what officials warned will be historic flooding. Governor Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency in Midland County, site of the breached dams, in the towns of Edenville and Sanford. The National Weather Service warned of life-threatening flash flooding and urged people in the area to seek higher ground immediately. The downtown area of Midland could soon be under approximately water, said Mr. Whitmer, warning of “historic” flood levels. AFP

