

**MONEY 6**  
K'TAKA BANK REPORTS ₹285 CR FRAUD IN FOUR LOAN ACCOUNTS

**WORLD 7**  
MINNEAPOLIS, CALIFORNIA MOVE TO END POLICE NECK RESTRAINTS

**SPORT 8**  
BALOTELLI SET TO BE RELEASED BY BRESCIA

Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

BHOPAL, SUNDAY JUNE 7, 2020; PAGES 8-4 ₹2

# sunday pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



**USUAL SUSPECTS**  
SWAPAN DASGUPTA

## Poll e-campaign renews focus on local networks

On Tuesday morning, Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to address a "massive rally" aimed at the BJP's supporters in West Bengal. The posters for the meeting are already circulating on social media and the State BJP has encouraged individual leaders, MLAs and MPs to post posters of the meeting with their faces. It is unlikely that any of these posters will be in evidence on the walls of houses in either Kolkata or other urban clusters of West Bengal. This absence is significant because the political culture of the State deems that a public meeting addressed by a political stalwart is preceded by posters, bunting and wall writings. There is a thriving industry in West Bengal that is centred on agropop and there is fierce competition between political parties over high attendance. The biggest meetings are traditionally held at the Brigade Parade Ground in the Kolkata Maidan, just adjoining the iconic Victoria Memorial. Slightly smaller meetings – although huge by national standards – are held either at the Shahid Minar or the crossing of Chittaranjan Avenue and Bentinck Street. There is a set drill for public meetings and, by and large, political parties of all shades adhere to the rules. On Tuesday morning, however, there will be no crowds either at the Kolkata Maidan or the Chowringhee crossing. BJP flags will not be in evidence and there will be no saffron-draped march where the local leaders will wait the arrival of Amit Shah. That's because the whole event will be virtual. The Home Minister will be speaking from his residence in Lutyens' Delhi and the party faithful will watch the proceeding from either a computer, a tablet or a smart phone. At best, some enterprising local leader will install a giant screen in the mohalla and a crowd will watch the speech from there. But even here, there will at least be a pretence of social distancing for the cameras, although, as a rule, the citizenry of West Bengal tend to remarkably casual about adhering to the norms of either a lockdown or social distancing. Amit Shah's speech will be closely scrutinised by the entire class. What he has to say about the BJP's aggressive campaign to oust Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress from power will no doubt be interesting. After all, the leader from Gujarat has acquired a formidable reputation as a doughty political campaigner and shrewd strategist. The importance of the Tuesday meeting will, however, be different. The entire political class, cutting across parties, and all political observers will be trying to assess the impact of this new form of virtual campaigning that has been forced on the country by the Covid-19 crisis. Will grand events such as this one have the same impact and, indeed, appeal as a traditional public meeting? What will be the online viewership? Will it have to be supplemented by live telecasts on local channels? Will people view it in real time, keeping in mind that internet connectivity is still erratic, or will they view a recorded version at leisure? These are unanswered questions that need further probing. At this point I can only narrate my own experiences of political engagement using video calls and other social media platforms. Since the lockdown began on March 25 and I found myself stranded in Delhi, unable to get back to the scene of action in West Bengal, I have spoken and participated in at least 20 programmes, big and small. Since Zoom – the platform that despite its China connections offers the best service – can accommodate only a maximum of 100 participants – if you want more, the charges are quite prohibitive – there is the tendency to link it with some other social media platform that has facilities for live broadcast. The only disadvantage is that while Zoom allows interaction with the audience, the other live broadcasts involve a silent audience. This can be disconcerting to speakers who depend, as I do, on audience reactions to mould a speech. At the same time, Zoom has been invaluable in communicating with smaller and more targeted audiences. It has become the best substitute for face-to-face meetings with, say, 50 to 60 people. The additional advantage is that the audience is spared the trouble of commuting – and all the hassles that involves. My feeling is that these conference calls and small webinars have managed quite successfully to overcome the problems caused by the restrictions on travel. However, while these can maintain the activist network and bolster morale, they are of little use in communicating directly with ordinary people, particularly those uninvolved in day-to-day politics. The issue is relevant in the context of the Assembly election in Bihar that is due by September-October this year. The elections in Assam and West Bengal are due by May 2021. If the Election Commission deems that the elections will go ahead as scheduled – despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic – there will have to be many adjustments. At one level there will have to be administrative modifications, keeping in mind social distancing. I believe that if the levels of participation are to be ensured, the EC should consider extending voting hours, even contemplating two-day voting. This would have presented huge logistical problems in the case of a general election but a State Assembly election is more manageable. As for the political issues, I feel that the importance of TV is certain to be enhanced considerably. Secondly, because contacts with individual voters are certain to be more restricted, there will be a renewed emphasis on the existing local networks of parties and candidates. The incumbent may even enjoy a modest advantage, unless there is fierce anti-incumbency. Finally, if the fear of Covid-19 remains as intense as at present, there will be a significant reduction in the costs incurred by political parties – an unintended but desirable consequence.

## LAC parleys raise hopes

No breakthrough, but it creates ground for more talks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to defuse the nearly month-long stand-offs at various locations at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, top military commanders of India and China held extensive talks on Saturday. There was no immediate breakthrough, and both the sides agreed to remain engaged to resolve the ongoing confrontations. The high-level talks between Leh-based 14 Corps chief Lt General Harinder Singh and his Chinese counterpart Major General Liu Lin, commander of Tibet Military District in Chushul-Moldo in China, came a day after the video conference between the senior diplomats of the two countries – Naveen Srivastava, Joint Secretary (East Asia) in the External Affairs Ministry, and Wu Jianghao, director general in China's foreign ministry. They agreed not to let their "differences" turn into "disputes" and address contentious issues through peaceful dialogue while respecting each other's sensitivities and concerns. India and China have also agreed that both the sides should implement the consensus reached between the leaderships of the two countries that the "two neighbours do not constitute a threat to each other and that each other is an opportunity for development and do not let differences turn into disputes." This is in a reference to decisions taken at the two informal summits between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. As expected, the talks between the senior military commanders were not to yield instant solution. However, the three-hour long parleys prepared the ground for some more rounds of talks at the local military level in the coming days, sources said. At present, there are at least four flashpoints at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh and both the sides ramping up their troop strength. More than

12 rounds of talks at various levels of military were held in the last fortnight but failed to achieve any breakthrough. Earlier in the day, the Indian Army officials said Indian and Chinese officials continue to remain engaged through the established military and diplomatic channels to address the current situation in the India-China border areas.



### RESOLUTION

- India and China agreed not to let their "differences" turn into "disputes" and address contentious issues through peaceful dialogue while respecting each other's sensitivities and concerns
- They have also agreed that both the sides should implement the consensus reached between the leaderships that the "two neighbours do not constitute a threat to each other and that each other is an opportunity for development and do not let differences turn into disputes
- There are at least 4 flashpoints at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh

## India risks Covid explosion as it opens up: WHO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The coronavirus disease has not "exploded" in India, but the risk of that happening remains as the country moves towards removing its nationwide lockdown that was imposed in March to contain the Covid-19, a top WHO expert said. India, which went past Italy on Friday to become the sixth worst-hit nation by the Covid-19 pandemic, is already witnessing huge spurt in cases each passing day. WHO Health Emergencies Programme Executive Director Michael Ryan said the doubling time of the coronavirus cases in India is about three weeks at this stage. "Measures taken in India such as the nationwide lockdown has had an impact in slowing transmission but the risk of an increase in cases looms as the country opens up," he said while stressing that as the disease generates and creates a foothold in communities, it can accelerate at any time as has been seen in a number of settings. In South Asia, not just in India but in Bangladesh, Pakistan and other countries in South Asia, with large dense



populations, the disease has not exploded. But there is always the risk of that happening, Ryan said in Geneva. Ryan noted that measures taken in India such as the nationwide lockdown has had an impact in slowing transmission but the risk of an increase in cases looms as the country opens up. "The measures taken in India certainly had an impact in dampening transmission and as India, as in other large countries, open up and as people begin to move again, there's always a risk of the disease bouncing back up," he said. He added there are specific issues in India regarding a large amount of migration, the dense populations in the urban environment and the fact that many workers have no choice but to go to work every day.

## Kejriwal warns pvt hospitals over beds

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Warning of strong action against some private hospitals allegedly refusing admission to Covid-19 patients and involved in "black-marketing" of beds, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said his Government is going to issue an order stating that hospitals cannot deny treatment to such people. The Delhi Government will depute medical professionals at all hospitals who will update availability of beds for coronavirus patients at an official app and ensure admission

of such patients, he said. The CM rubbished claims that Covid-19 tests have been stopped, and asserted the city test ratio is the highest.

### Delhi health infra should be used for its residents only: Panel formed by AAP Govt

New Delhi: A five-member panel constituted by the Delhi Government has suggested that the health infrastructure of the city should be used only for treating Delhi residents.

## FIR against Ganga Ram Hospital for violating Covid-19 regulation norms

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has registered a FIR against Sir Ganga Ram Hospital for allegedly violating Covid-19 regulation norms. "The hospital was allegedly not using RT-PCR app while collecting Covid-19 samples. As per the guidelines, it is "mandatory" for labs to collect samples through RT-PCR app," the FIR stated. There was no immediate reaction from the authorities of the leading private hospital.

## As 3 quit, Cong herds its Guj MLAs to resorts to thwart poaching bid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/AHEMDABAD

Alarmed by the resignation of three of its MLAs ahead of the June 19 Rajya Sabha polls in Gujarat, the Congress on Saturday shifted several of its legislators to resorts and bungalows near their constituencies to thwart any "poaching" bid. With the resignations of Akshay Patel and Jitu Chaudhary on June 3 and that of Brijesh Merja on June 5, the Congress' strength in the 182-member House has been reduced to 65. The effective strength of the House, however, stands at 172 as of now as ten seats are currently vacant – two due to court cases and the rest because of resignations. The party has moved the MLAs to three separate locations keeping in mind the need to maintain social distancing in view of the Covid-19 outbreak. AICC sources said while

several MLAs from north Gujarat were shifted to a resort near Ambaji in Banaskantha district, those from South and Central Gujarat were moved to private bungalows in Anand, legislators from Saurashtra region were shifted to a resort in Rajkot. "The MLAs were asked by party high command to arrive in resorts in Anand, Ambaji, and Rajkot after completing their work on Saturday. They will arrive in these resorts on the basis of the zone-wise location of their constituencies. Many of them have arrived. Others will reach there soon," said party sources. The MLAs might continue to stay in these resorts until the day of the election for four Rajya Sabha seats. Earlier, Congress had moved its MLAs to a resort in Jaipur in March this year after five of them had resigned ahead of the March 26 elections to the Upper House.

## Pregnant woman dies in 13-hour abortive hunt to get hospital bed

PTI ■ NOIDA

An eight-month pregnant woman died in an ambulance here after a frantic 13-hour hospital hunt failed to find her a bed as over half-a-dozen facilities, including a Government one, denied her treatment, her family claimed on Saturday. Neelam, 30, and her husband Vijender Singh, 30, knocked the doors of eight hospitals, including Government ones, before she died in the ambulance outside a facility in Greater Noida on Friday, the family told PTI. Taking note of the death and the claim, the Gautam Buddha Nagar district administration ordered an inquiry into the matter. A resident of Khoda colony on the Noida-Ghaziabad border, Neelam was eight months pregnant and undergoing treatment at Shivalik Hospital here, a private facility, for pregnancy-related complications, her husband said.

## Whopping over 10K cases in a day

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	82,968	2,969	37,390
Tamil Nadu	30,172	254	16,395
Delhi	27,654	761	10,664
Gujarat	19,617	1,219	13,324
Rajasthan	10,337	231	7,501
Uttar Pradesh	10,103	268	5,908
Madhya Pradesh	9,228	399	6,108
West Bengal	7,738	383	3,119
Karnataka	5,213	59	1,973
Bihar	4,831	29	2,298
Andhra Pradesh	4,460	73	2,621
Haryana	3,952	24	1,280
Telangana	3,496	123	1,710
Jammu & Kashmir	3,467	39	1,126
Odisha	2,781	10	1,716

## India, China will have more cases than US if they test more: Trump

Washington: US President Donald Trump has said that countries like India and China would have much more coronavirus cases than America, the worst-hit country in the world, if they conduct more tests. Trump, in his remarks at Puritan Medical Products in Maine, said that the US has carried out 20 million tests. Compared to the US, Germany is at four million and much talked about South Korea is about three million tests, he said. According to Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, the US has reported nearly 1.9 million cases and over 1,09,000 deaths, making America the worst affected country, while the total number of coronavirus cases in India and China stand at 2,36,184 and 84,177 respectively. PTI

## Washing hands with water a luxury here!

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Kusuma's struggle starts at 4 AM. She wakes up early to ensure her family can get water from the tanker which comes regularly in the Sarhat village of Manikpur in Chitrakut. "I get up so early and place the bucket and other utensils in line but there is no guarantee that I will get water," she said. "Ours is a forgotten village where we live with scarcity of water for decades. We do not have enough water to drink. Washing hands regularly with water is a luxury which we cannot afford," she told this reporter on the telephone. As the Unlock 1.0 began early this week with Government advocating people to maintain safe distance and asking them to wash hands regularly to beat Covid-19, the villagers in Bundelkhand have resigned to their fate. Their struggle for water begins in the morning and ends in the evening with fetching water to



wash, cook and drink on a daily basis and cannot think of wasting water to wash hands every two hours, as advocated by experts and doctors. The rugged Bundelkhand is known for water crisis and the summer months are the worst, with groundwater levels acutely low. Sarhat is one of the villages where water scarcity is routine, even during winters. The tankers are only source of water to these parched villages and the day they don't roll in the villagers have to walk long distances hunting for water. Deaths of people as well as animals like cattle due to scarcity of water are rampant too. "Sometimes we have to drink water from filthy ponds. It's revolting. But we have no option," she said. Sarhat is among a dozen such as Amchur Nerwa, Theka,

Bheda, Umari and Thikari in Manikpur block where tanker is the only lifeline, providing water to around 90 families – comprising around 550 people. Scarcity of water has brought a social stigma, too. Like in Gopipur village in Chitrakoot district where number of unmarried youth is rising every passing day because people have stopped giving their daughters in this village. "No one wants their daughter married to someone in Gopipur because it is one of the most water scare village in parched Bundelkhand," Dinesh Kumar, a gram sabha member said. He said many youths have given up any hope of getting married. "There are men who got marriage proposals not once but five to six times because of their status but in the last minute marriage is cancelled because no one wants that their daughter should live in a village where there is no water," he said.

## CAPSULE

- IIT-HYD KIT CAN DETECT COVID IN 20 MINUTES**  
New Delhi: A team of researchers at the IIT, Hyderabad claims to have developed a first-of-its kind Covid-19 test kit that can deliver results within 20 minutes.
- MAN FEEDS EXPLOSIVE LACED BALL TO COW IN HP**  
Shimla: A man was arrested in Bilaspur district near here on Saturday on an allegation by the owner of a pregnant cow that he injured the bovine by feeding her some eatables mixed with explosives, said police. The incident follows the shocking death of a pregnant elephant dying of drowning after collapsing in Palakkad district of Kerala due to starvation.
- PAK VIOLATES CEASEFIRE ALONG LOC, IB IN J&K**  
Jammu: Pakistani troops on Saturday violated ceasefire by resorting to unprovoked firing on forward posts and villages along the LoC and IB in Poonch and Kathua districts of J&K.

HOME THEATRE

# Lacks thrill factor



**MRS SERIAL KILLER**  
Netflix India  
\*ing: Manoj Bajpai, Jacqueline Fernandez, Mohit Raina, Darshan Jariwala  
Rated: 4.5/10

Though it has been just over a month since the film was released, it appears to have caught the imagination of the OTT platform viewers of late. But there are a few things that inherently don't sit well with *Mrs Serial Killer*. First and most important, a defense lawyer telling his client that the only way to prove the innocence of the jailed beloved is to become a copycat killer.

Imagine the consequences and ramifications of such advice. Even if one manages to overlook this bizarre piece of ill-advice, there is the whole backdrop that the film has been shot at.

It is dark, dingy and seedy looking. Why Shirish Kunder? What was it that you were looking for? Is it to tell the viewers that it is a dark movie? The title is a give-away. It is unfortunate that there are few scenes in the entire film that are not shot in the dark. It is more annoying rather than the director trying to be scary and freaking you out that there is a serial killer out there gunning for unwed pregnant girls. Showing a mangled bloody body suspended from chains and six bottles with foetus is nowhere near shocking or worth pucking.

There is a bit on a disconnect as well. While the subject is interesting enough, the subject is far removed from what happens in India. We may have had our share of serial killers — the 2006 Noida serial murders. But these are few and far between. We also

don't want to know that there is a male gynae doctor out to get you.

Then there is Jacqueline Fernandez. This is the second time that we are watching her in a Netflix Original, the first being *Drive*. Here, all she does is either cry or try to pop her eyes like she is shocked but all one will end up doing is roll one's eyes. And what is with the accent?

As for Manoj Bajpai, one hopes that the actor is trying to experiment with different scripts and hence taking up such projects. Otherwise how is it possible for an actor who has been part of films like *Drohkaal*, *Special 26* and *Aligarh* end up doing *Mrs Serial Killer*? It boggles the mind.

Over all, this movie should only be watched if one wants to see the kind of experimenting that is taking place on OTT platforms. — Shalini Sakseena

## TELLYTALE

### SRK DEBUTS AS SINGER

The King of Bollywood, recently made his debut as a singer with his unique version of *Bella Ciao* for the '1 for India' concert. A concert that was organised to raise awareness and reach out to the masses, taking this opportunity Star Bharat is all set to broadcast the worldwide television premier of the concert from the celebrities' home to yours today at 9 pm.

With 85+ artists coming together for the first-ever virtual concert was a treat to all the Bollywood and Hollywood lovers. Actors, sportspersons and famous artists from all over the entertainment industry have contributed their time and energy to make this fundraiser a successful one.

Amongst the many famous stars, Bollywood's extraordinary star Shahrukh Khan held the mic in and sang the famous tune of *Bella Ciao* in his own unique version. The lyrics of the song highlighted today's scenario with a beautiful message at the end. Sharukh Khan's youngest son Abraham's cameo at the end was also said to be the cutest moment in the song.

The superstar said: "Life is all about chances. Good chances. About hope, compassion & love. And that's what we are here to do on this platform. Share love and compassion, in whatever way we can."

### 'ACTORS TODAY HAVE IT EASY'

During this crucial phase of social distancing, Zee TV gives its viewers a daily shot of inspiration with the mythological show, *Vishnu Puran*. Based on an ancient collection of stories and scriptures, BR Chopra's *Vishnu Puran* depicts the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Giving a larger than life feel to these incarnations was veteran actor, Nitish Bharadwaj who skillfully essayed his part.

Recollecting memories from the time while Nitish was still shooting for the show, he recalls Lord Parshuram and Lord Ram as the two most challenging characters he had to essay back then.

Adding further about swiftly adapting from one character to another, Nitish commented, "While it was difficult, I manage to step into the characters

easily because I connected and accustomed myself to the character well before I could shoot for it. Before embarking on a new role, I used to rehearse so much that even before the shoots would start, I was well prepared."

Comparing with some of the many challenges that actors face today, Nitish said, "As difficult and challenging it is to portray mythological characters on screen, back in time the challenges dealing with language barriers or the ability to fit into a character were dealt with greater ease. There is no denying the fact that for most of the actors today, the language barrier is real, and they have to work hard to overcome that. Back then, we had to deliver long scenes at one go without having to cut in between. Actors today have it easy, but we overcame most of these challenges with much ease or rather we never considered these factors to be a major challenge."

### ASHISH ESCAPED ACCIDENT

When actors decide to take up certain roles which has a set of action sequences, a natural risk of safety is put forth. Ashish Sharma, who is seen in multiple movies and television shows doing his own stunts, shares one such life threatening incident from the sets of Chandragupt Maurya.

Recollecting the experience Ashish narrates: "I was on top of a structure that was around 20-30 feet high and I was supposed to swing across on a rope to another building that was around 50 feet away. It was very windy and we couldn't predict its speed. Once I started gliding, I gained greater than the required momentum and slid through much faster than I was supposed to. I almost banged straight into a brick wall but somehow fortunately due to my quick reflexes managed to avoid the collision with the help of my feet. After the incident, I was hanging mid-air for around 20 minutes till the team managed to get me down safely."

The show talks about how Chandragupta Maurya overcomes several obstacles in his path to establishing the Maurya Empire under the able guidance of his chief advisor, Chanakya. It currently airs on Dangal TV.

## Plan Your Stay At Home Week



As sporting events all around the world gear up to get back in action, here is a list of some of the best sports docu-series that you can watch, just to get you into the mood as you brace yourselves for all the excitement that your favourite games will bring.

**Cribs: Footballers Stay Home:** *Cribs: Footballers Stay Home* is a special series adapted for the lockdown era, featuring the homes of famous football players. The series will feature a number of well-known footballers from the biggest leagues in the world, including Arsenal's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and David Luiz, England and Manchester United Midfielder Jesse Lingard, Argentina and Juventus footballer Paulo Dybala, Brazil and Manchester United midfielder Andreas Pereira, Belgian footballing legend Axel Witsel and FIFA 2017 female player of the year, Lieke Martens. Watch the premiere featuring Axel Witsel & Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang at 8:00 pm, every Tuesday on Vn1 India. Streaming on Voot Select.

**The Last Dance:** *The Last Dance* showcases the rise of the 1990's Chicago Bulls, led by Michael Jordan, one of the greatest players in the history of the NBA, and arguably the most iconic sporting figure of all times. The documentary features interviews with virtually every important figure in Jordan's career, from his mother, to former teammates, to musicians and stars like Justin Timberlake. Packed with unaired footage from the 1997-98 season the docu-series is undoubtedly one of the best watch of this year. Streaming on Netflix.

**Icarus:** Like all great documentaries,

*Icarus* isn't about what it was initially supposed to be about. In this Oscar winning series, filmmaker Bryan Fogel set out to investigate the use of steroids in professional cycling, what he found instead was the man behind one of the largest doping scandals in the history of world athletics. *Icarus* won the Oscar award for Best Documentary Feature in 2017. Streaming on Netflix

**Free Solo:** This award-winning special is a dramatic portrait of the free solo climber Alex Honnold, who prepares to achieve his life-long dream of climbing the face of the 3,300 ft El Capitan rock in Yosemite National Park. Streaming on Disney+ Hotstar

**The Test:** *The Test: A New Era For Australia's Team*, is a docuseries showcasing the much-celebrated Australian Men's Cricket. A nerve wracking offering for lovers of the sport, the series showcases behind-the-scenes look at how one of the world's best cricket teams fell from grace and fought back to reclaim their title and integrity. Streaming on Amazon Prime Video

**Formula one — Drive to Survive:** Covering the 2018 and 2019 Formula One championships, this series is one-of-a-kind viewing experience for fans of Formula One. For the ones who don't know, Formula One is a complex, technical sport and one that can clearly not be understood overnight. But once you get into the setup of cars and the different specifications, it feels more like a lesson in physics than a sport. Watch it to witness drivers, managers and owners live life in the fast lane-both on and off the track- during each cutthroat season of Formula One racing. Streaming on Netflix

# 'I will play Lord Krishna every time I am asked'

VISHAL KARWAL, who plays Lord Krishna in *Dwarkadheesh-Bhagwan Shri Krishna* that airs on Dangal TV talks to SHALINI SAKSENA about how he got into acting, challenges that come with playing a mythological character, among other things

**■ What got you interested in acting?**  
I have done engineering in Computer Science from Chandigarh. When I was in third year, I auditioned for *MTV Roadies 4*. Back then I was interested in bike riding. I gave the audition and got selected. I did that show and finished my course. I then went to Texas for a flying course. When I finished my flying, I got another call from *MTV for Splitsville 1*. I flew down straight from Dallas to Mumbai. I was told it would be a month's shooting and a month's promotion and then I could go back. But I won and they offered me another show to host. This was in 2008. Back then there weren't many jobs in aviation. But I kept getting TV offers. I got *Bhagyavidhaata* and the rest of the shows followed. I had not planned to be an actor, they just happened.

**■ So, you had a different trajectory?**  
Yes, I come from a business family. We have jewellery shows. From the very beginning, I was against doing things that were routine and go to one place. When I studied engineering, I knew that it was not my cup of tea. A friend of mine had applied for a flying course and that interested me and asked him how to go about applying for the same. The idea of being up in the clouds and going places really piqued my interest.

**■ Was it a struggle to make space in the industry?**  
If I had not given the first audition, I would have never gone to Mumbai to become an actor. I had no acting background. I never even got a portfolio done for the first four-five years of my career. The industry has very kind to me. When I went to Mumbai, I already had a show in my hand. I have done around 12 shows in a career spanning 12 years and a few films as well.

**■ How did you come on board to play Lord Krishna?**  
This is the fourth time that I am playing Lord Krishna in *Dwarkadheesh—Bhagwan Shri Krishna 2*. I was doing *Rishton Se Badi Pratha* back in 2010-11. Sagar Pictures were conducting auditions through an actor friend. I didn't really prepare for it but got selected. Before doing this show, I had done two fictional shows and reality show but I started enjoying acting when I played Krishna for the first time. The whole idea of standing in front of the camera and to play a God really got me interested.

**I have noticed that not many actors want to do mythological shows. Also, not all of them suit the role. Doing such shows is a different ball game. One needs to do his homework to play these roles**



**■ This is not the first time you have played this character. Why say yes, each time?**  
I have noticed that not many actors want to do mythological shows and I have also seen that not all actors are suited to do them. It is a different ball game. While I had not prepped for the first mythological show, I enjoyed the whole process. As an actor I am truly blessed that I have got this opportunity. I will continue to play this role as long as I keep getting them since people remember you.

**■ How tough is it to live up to people's expectation when you are part of a myth show?**  
Many actors have played Krishna but have not been exacted. Personally, I have to be able to look the part. I was offered to play Shiv but I refused. Because I don't think that I can do justice to the look since Shiv has a rough and rugged personality. I know what my traits are. For me to be able to convince the audience that I am God, I have to be convinced otherwise that conviction will not come across.

**■ What are the challenges that come in such shows?**  
I don't think there are very many since people know the man behind the show due to social media. But when you play such roles, you do your own research. Before I took up the role back in 2011, I never used to practice yoga or meditate. But I do that regularly. I have lots of books as well. It has changed in a way but it has not been intentionally.

**■ Is there a need to change content that we see on TV?**  
Definitely. If we don't do it now then, when? If not, TV is going to suffer since there are so many OTT platforms that offer great content. People even in small towns and cities have access to good Internet connectivity. If makers want people to sit in front of their sets at 8 pm and come back day after day, they need to find content that is brilliant. We must do away with the concept of daily soaps and come up with finite shows. When you do daily soaps, one tends to compromise because there is a deadline and we must do away with this.

**■ Should viewers change their choice?**  
Not really. It is wrong to assume that because the audience watches such shows, makers are producing them. There was a time when the entire family would sit and watch shows, back in the 90s. If you give good content, people will watch it.

**■ What next?**  
I am back home and looking at the change to open a boarding school in Palampur. But I would love to do web series provided the content and script that I am offered is good.

## शहरी असंगठित कामगारों के पंजीयन के लिये एकीकृत पोर्टल एवं शहरी पथ व्यवसायी उत्थान योजना प्रारंभ

भारत सरकार द्वारा प्रारंभ किये जा रहे "प्रधानमंत्री पथ विक्रेता आत्मनिर्भर निधि कार्यक्रम" के अंतर्गत सभी पथ व्यवसायियों (स्ट्रीट वेंडर्स) को कार्यशील पूंजी ऋण के रूप में उपलब्ध कराई जायेगी।

भारत सरकार की इस योजना से राज्य के शहरी पथ व्यवसायियों को अतिरिक्त लाभ देने के लिये "शहरी पथ व्यवसायी उत्थान योजना" प्रारंभ की जा रही है।

योजना में शहरी व्यवसायियों को 10 हजार रुपये की कार्यशील पूंजी ऋण के रूप में उपलब्ध कराई जायेगी। इस राशि के ब्याज पर 7 प्रतिशत सब्सिडी केन्द्र सरकार द्वारा दी जायेगी।

प्रदेश के शहरी व्यवसायियों की मदद के लिये कार्यशील पूंजी के ऋण पर शेष ब्याज (लगभग 5 प्रतिशत) की राशि सब्सिडी के रूप में मध्यप्रदेश शासन देगा।

शहरी असंगठित कामगारों का पंजीयन नगरीय प्रशासन के पोर्टल [www.mpurban.gov.in](http://www.mpurban.gov.in) पर होगा। इसमें दर्ज हितग्राहियों को उनकी मांग के आधार पर कार्यशील पूंजी उपलब्ध कराई जायेगी।

नरेन्द्र मोदी  
प्रधानमंत्री

शिवराज सिंह चौहान  
मुख्यमंत्री

नगरीय विकास एवं आवास विभाग के सभी कार्यालयों में या एम.पी. ऑनलाइन के कियोस्क के माध्यम से पथ-विक्रेताओं के निःशुल्क पंजीयन के लिये 6-25 जून 2020 तक पंजीयन अभियान

आज ही पंजीयन कराये

मध्यप्रदेश जनसम्पर्क द्रष्टा जारी D-11028/20 आवक्यन - म.प्र. माघकर्म/2020

# CM inaugurates Dhankasa, Sharda underground coal mines

Over 1,000 will get employment through these coal mines

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated the Dhankasa and Sharda underground coal mines in Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh online. Two Union Ministers, Road Transport and Highways

Minister Nitin Gadkari and Union Coal Minister Prahlad Joshi were also present in a video conferencing ceremony. More than one thousand people will get employment through these two underground coal mines of Chhindwara district in Madhya Pradesh. In the next four years, Coal India will start 20 mines, out of which 6 will be in Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Chouhan had made efforts during his former tenure for both the mines inaugurated today. The mining work was formally started

soon after the Chief Minister pressed the button. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chief Minister of Maharashtra Uddhav Thackeray, Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari and Coal Minister Prahlad Joshi inaugurated the mine by pressing the button with remote. A total of three mines including Sharda and Dhankasa mines in Madhya Pradesh and Aadasa mine in Maharashtra have been inaugurated. Chouhan expressed gratitude to the Prime

Minister Modi, Union Minister Gadkari, Prahlad Joshi and Coal India. Chief Minister Chouhan thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi in particular. He said that with the opening of these two coal mines in Madhya Pradesh, a new chapter of development will begin. Efforts were being made to start both these underground mines since the last tenure. Capital investment of ₹458 crore from Dhankasa underground mine and ₹57 crore from Sharda underground mine will be made. Both

mines will produce 1.4 lakh tonnes of coal annually. It may be noted that Madhya Pradesh ranks fourth in the country in coal production. The State produces 239 million tonnes of coal in a year through which the state receives revenue of ₹2 thousand crore. Mining work is undertaken by Coal India Limited in six districts including Chhindwara, Betul, Anuppur, Shahdol, Umaria and Singrauli. Of the 56 coal mines in the State, 23 are underground and 23 are open. Of these, a total of 16

mines are operational in Madhya Pradesh, which are mainly in Chhindwara and Betul districts. The Chief Minister said that Madhya Pradesh is a mineral-rich state with deposits of diamond, coal, methane gas, copper and limestone. While Madhya Pradesh is the most prominent State in diamond production, it is second in manganese and copper production and fourth in coal production in the country. Various measures are being taken to increase production of the chief minerals of the

State. The two underground mineral projects Dhankasa and Sharda mines inaugurated by Chief Minister Chouhan by pressing the online button in Chhindwara district today, will not lead to annual production of 1.4 lakh tonnes of coal but also provide employment to about one thousand people. Chouhan said that in this hour of Covid-19 crisis, after saving people and the country through lockdown and other arrangements, Prime Minister Modi gave the mantra that 'Jaan bhi hai aur jahan bhi hai'.

This means that economic activities have to start with life which is mandatory for the country's economy. Chief Minister Chouhan said that he is grateful to the Union Coal Minister Prahlad Joshi for the amount of ₹20 crores given in the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. Chouhan also said that as per the suggestions given by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, work will be done to realize the possibilities of production of coal-bed methane and urea in Madhya Pradesh.



Workers busy cleaning up Laxmi Narayan Birla temple ahead of its re-opening, during ongoing Covid-19 lockdown in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

## CM transfers ₹330 cr to 374 urban bodies, 5 Cant councils

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday transferred an amount of ₹330 crore from Mantralaya to 374 urban bodies and 5 Cantonment councils of the State through a single click. He also inaugurated the "Shahari Path Vyavasayi Utthan Yojana" and "Shahari Path Vikreta Portal". Principal Secretary Nitesh Vyas, Commissioner Urban Administration and Development P Narhari were present on the occasion. The Chief Minister, while address-

ing the street vendors of different districts of Madhya Pradesh through video conferencing said that the Pradhan Mantri Path Vikreta Atmanirbhar Nidhi has been started by India's visionary Prime Minister Narendra Modi, under which loan of ₹10,000 will be provided to urban street vendors. In this, the Central Government will provide 7 per cent interest subsidy. With this, the Madhya Pradesh Government has started the Shahari Path Vyavasayi Utthan Yojana under which the State Government will pay the

remaining interest amount, which will be about 5 per cent. In this way, the beneficiary will get an interest-free loan of ₹10,000 guaranteed by the Government. Chouhan informed that the Shahari Path Vikreta Portal has also been started by the Madhya Pradesh Government with the purpose of providing benefits of various schemes to street vendors / businessmen. Under this, the urban unorganised workers - small traders running their business on roads, in gumtis, as hawkers, will be registered on the portal. This integrated portal

will ensure that they get the benefits of various schemes. Chief Minister Chouhan urged the street vendors to get themselves registered on the portal. Chief Minister Chouhan interacted with street vendors from different districts of the state including Munesh (Chat seller) of Bhopal, Sanjay Kushwaha (vegetable seller), Anita Jain (vegetable seller) of Ujjain, Narendra Singh Vaishya (vegetable seller), Sheela Kushwaha (vegetable seller) of Satna, Pramod Soni (street vendor), Babita (vegetable street vendor) of Indore, Amarji (vegetable vendor) and

Shivraj Singh (lock and key seller), Kaushalya Pal (fruit seller) of Datia etc. The Chief Minister told them to run their business with the amount and stay happy. Government of Madhya Pradesh is always with you. Chouhan informed that with the amount of ₹330 crore, the urban bodies will be able to undertake works related to drinking water arrangement, drain construction, sewerage work, road construction, road repair, infrastructure development, slum development, solid waste management, fire services etc.

## Aim is to build self-sufficient India

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR

This is the time for contemplation. The global pandemic Covid-19 has changed the dynamics of development. The superpowers of the world are battling Covid-19 today, many seem to be failing, and the Covid-19 control strategy of many countries has proved to be a failure. On such an occasion, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with his foresight and determination, has brought the nation to the forefront of the world today in fight against this pandemic. As a result of his timely decision on lockdown, today, despite being a densely populated country, the rate of corona infection in India is lower than that of many other countries. The concern of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not strictly limited to mitigating the

suffering of the people of the motherland rising out of Covid-19. His decisions reflect solution to the situations arising in the country as a result of the lockdown. On one side, there is the battle against spread of corona and on the other hand, there are efforts to resolve unemployment resulting from lockdown. In this difficult time, it is the vision of the Prime Minister to make India self-reliant - Atmanirbhar. His policy interventions are meant to move India towards a New India which is self-reliant and is at the forefront of economic development of the world in general and India in particular. The core of self-reliant India lies in rural development. This will prove to be the biggest step of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to empower India in the global

circumstances arising after corona. Agriculture and village based economy has become the backbone of India. The concept is to build a self-sufficient empowered India through small and medium industries. During the lockdown, the Government has made itself a powerful medium of employment through the MNREGA in the villages. Prime Minister Modi is known for taking bold decisions when situation so demands. This is reflected in the decision of the Government of India to make additional provision of ₹40,000 Crore for MGNREGA during the current financial year raising the outlay to ₹101500 Crore which is more than thrice the allocation that was there in 2013-14 during the UPA regime. More than ₹29,500 Cr has already been released to the States and

UTs. A total of 6.44 crore MNREGA workers have been offered jobs in the country so far and more than 54.71 crore man-days work have been created. The number of job offered to MGNREGA workers in the month of May 2020 has witnessed sharp increase of more than 70 per cent as compared to the number of jobs offered in May 2019. For the current Financial year, in MGNREGA, the average wage has been increased by ₹20 per day reflecting an increase of 11 per cent over the previous year. An ex-gratia payment of ₹1000 in two equal instalment of ₹500 has been transferred in to the accounts of 2.82 crore senior citizens, widows and disabled persons entailing an expenditure of ₹2815 Crore. Efforts are on to ensure that every poor gets a

roof of his own. In its efforts to achieve the objective of providing Housing for All by 2022, a total of 2.21 crore houses has been sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, out of which about 1.04 crore houses have already been completed. During the lockdown period, efforts are on to complete around 48 lakh house for whose construction, third / fourth instalment has been released. Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Phase-III, out of targeted road length of 1.25 lakh km for construction, 13,900 km of roads have been sanctioned. The proposals for approval of about 17 thousand kilometres roads are in the final stage of approval. (The writer is Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare)

## Over 6.27L claims received in State under Forest Rights Act

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

More than 6.27 lakh claims have been received in the State under the Forest Rights Act. Out of these, more than 2.68 lakh claims have been accepted and Forest Title Deeds (Lease) of the occupied land have been distributed to 2.57 lakh claimants. Process to distribute Forest Title Deed in the remaining 10,000 valid claims is underway. Over 3.60 lakh claims of Forest Rights have been rejected due to various reasons in the State. These rejected claims are being re-examined through MP Van Mitra Portal. The claims under the Act are being disposed of online through Van Mitra Portal. So far profiles of secretaries of

The claims under Act being disposed of online through Van Mitra Portal

20,794 Gram Panchayats have been updated on the portal and new as well as rejected claims for re-examination have been submitted online by 35,724 claimants. These claims are being disposed of by Village Forest Rights Committees, Sub-Block Level Committees and District Level Forest Rights Committees. A roadmap has been prepared by the Scheduled Caste Welfare

Department for redressal of the claims. A programme has been prepared to dispose of the claims in the state by June 30, 2020. The State Government is trying to ensure that no eligible claimant of forest rights of the State is deprived of his/her right to forest. Directives have been given to the Forest Department and Revenue Department to make available the documents to the claimants, needed in support with their claims. Ample opportunities for hearing are also being provided to the claimants while disposing of the claims through Van Mitra portal. The Forest rights claims in the State are being disposed of in form of a campaign.

## 45-year-old who was booked for extorting money nabbed

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Awadhpuri police have nabbed a 45-year-old miscreant who was booked for charge of extorting money on May 28; accused used to threaten victims posing as RTI activist and it was found that he had booked for five crimes by MP Nagar and Piplani police. Acting on a tip off, absconding miscreant Manoj Prasad was nabbed who was involved in extorting money from the victim Surendra Kumar who was assaulted by the accused after he refused to provide money. Accused has been booked for theft, assault and extortion by Piplani, MP Nagar and Awadhपुरी police. Police have started investigation. The accused has been sent under judicial

custody. Meanwhile, Kolar police has nabbed a miscreant from Kajlikhedha who was absconding for the past six months and was wanted in a case of rash driving in which permanent warrant was issued seven years ago. Miscreants had been absconding for a long time and there has been a pending warrant against him. Police said that the accused was nabbed after receiving information of the accused. During the action a team rushed to the spot and nabbed the accused who tried to escape after being identified. were sent to help the police team in operation. The nabbed accused holds past crime record. Police said that arrest warrant was pending against the accused but he remained absconding for long and was arrested on Friday.

## 52-year-old man dies after his bike was hit by speeding vehicle near sports hostel

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 52-year-old man died on Friday after his motorbike was hit by a speeding vehicle near Sports Hostel under Habibganj police station area on May 26; police have started investigation. The deceased GS Katiyar was on his bike and when he reached near Sports hostel his bike was hit by speeding vehicle and after accident he return home and later when he reported illness he was taken to hospital and died during treatment. Police said that the deceased was an employee of PWD and met accident when he was returning from work. The police were informed and on the receipt a police team reached the spot and started investigation. The body was sent for the post mortem. After the preliminary investigation police have registered a case under section 304 A of the IPC and started further investigation. Meanwhile,

Shahpura police have booked miscreants who attacked a 33-year-old man with sharp-edged weapons at Ishwar Nagar over petty issue on Friday. According to the police, the victim, Rahul Mishra was attacked by miscreant Shishupal Yadav and Brijendra Yadav with a sharp-edged weapon. The injured victim was rushed to a nearby hospital where he was reportedly stable. In the initial investigation, it was found that the two accused attacked the victim over petty issue at Ishwar Nagar and injured him in his face when the victim tried to save himself, the victim also sustained injuries in his hand. The victim lodged a complaint with Shahpura police and based on the complaint and after the preliminary investigation, the police have registered a case against the two and have started further investigation. The accused are yet to be arrested.

## Factory owner's house burgled, valuables worth lakhs stolen from Bijli Nagar Colony

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

House of factory owner was targeted by miscreants and valuables worth lakhs of rupees were burgled from Bijli Nagar Colony under Ashoka Garden police station area on Friday. Police said that the victim DM Sonawane had gone to temple with family in the morning and when he returned in the afternoon, the valuables were found burgled. A complaint was lodged with the police by the victim in which the victim stated that he left the house at around 11 am with his wife and daughter-in-law while his sons have to factory and when his wife and daughter-in-law returned at around 2.30 pm the valuables were found burgled. The miscreant entered from the window. The police said that in the investigation when CCTV camera were

checked it was found that a man parked a bike near the house but he has committed burglary or not would be investigated in the further investigation. The neighbours have expressed ignorance over the burglary which took place in broad day light. In the incident jewellery and other valuables were burgled. The total loss in the burglary is around ₹14 lakh claimed the victim. The victim has brought cash for factory work. The victim runs a factory at Industrial area which deals in food packaging. Police said that within two hours miscreants broke the lock and escaped with the valuables which suggest that the miscreants were aware of the whereabouts of the victim. Police have registered a case under sections 454 and 380 of the IPC and started further investigation.

## Jobless, 21-year-old guest faculty commits suicide on Bhoj varsity premises

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Dejected after being removed from job, a 21-year-old girl guest faculty of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Hindi Vishwavidyalaya committed suicide by slitting wrist of his left arm in the morning at Bhoj University premises. The deceased Aryan Singh committed suicide at quarter of Bhoj University which is allocated to his aunt Hemlata Dinkar. Few days ago he and few others were removed from the position and two days ago these removed guest faculties had a talk with the Vice Chancellor. On Saturday Aryan morning he committed suicide. The other removed guest faculty members protested and demanded action. The senior members of staff pacified them. Police have not found any suicide note in the investigation. A case was registered after the

body was sent for the post mortem. Meanwhile, a 14-year-old girl was electrocuted while playing at home in her house at Bilkharia in the evening on Friday. According to police, the deceased, Dineshwari Patra was electrocuted after she came into contact with live wires in the evening at around 6 and was rushed to a nearby hospital where she was declared dead. Police were informed and on the receipt of the information, a police team reached the spot and started investigation. After the preliminary investigation, the body was sent for post-mortem. The police have registered a case under section 174 of the IPC. In the post mortem report it was revealed that the girl was electrocuted. The family members found the deceased in an unconscious state and took her to hospital where she was declared dead.

## All churches of Bhopal ready to open from June 8

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

All the Churches in the Archdiocese of Bhopal are getting ready to reopen for the worship. All the churches and other worship places were shut down due to Coronavirus from middle of the March. Now, from June 8 the worship places have been asked to reopen for the devotees by the Government. In this connection all the churches are gearing up for a grand reopening. In this connection Archbishop Leo Cornelio has issued guidelines to all the churches to be practiced based on the norms of Govt. Like social distance, use of

masks and repeated sanitization etc to safe guard oneself and others during Holy Mass and other prayers. "I am very glad to know that we are allowed to worship as usual. It's like coming back home after the exile like Israel in the old Testament" - Pastor CP Singh, Christ Church. "We are indeed in joyful mood to know that we can go to our Church to pray. We were like vegetables with out water during lockdown," Silviya Fernandez, Devotee, Infant Jesus Church. "Though we have developed a new bond of relationship between God and human by praying together in our families during lockdown, we are glad to welcome our church members



back with a bed of rose as the church is an official place to experience God" - Fr Ronald Cardoza, PP, Kolar. "I am excited to go to Temple to pray. First I will pray to God to bless all humanity by forgiving their misdeeds and willing to learn a lesson from this pandemic" Sudhir Sharma, Coordinator, PR Office Appreciating the Govt for letting people to visit the holy places Fr Maria Stephen, the PRO said that Life safety of the believers is very important compared to any other thing in life. We are determined to follow all the guidelines of our Archbishop especially sanitizing the churches before and after worship. As water can not be tasted with a container we need church to feel and experience God and that was missing in our life all through lockdown. The First Holy Mass and prayers will be offered to God as Thanksgiving and for abandoned blessings for humanity he added.



BJP MLA Rameshwar Sharma addresses priests of the temples after oath for making the country self-reliant during ongoing Covid-19 lockdown in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

# Opportunity to build new India: Guv to VCs

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Governor Lalji Tandon said that a new period of Atma Nirbhar (Self-reliant) Autonomous university is beginning in the State. The responsibility to make system strong and successful lies with the Vice Chancellors. Top priority should be given to hold disciplined, obstacle free and fear free examination as per the guidelines.

Tandon was addressing the review meeting of the Vice Chancellors held at Raj Bhavan. The Principal Secretary Higher Education Anupam Rajan, Secretary to Governor Manohar Dubey and Commissioner Higher Education Mukesh Shukla were also present at the

meeting. The Governor said that it is a difficult time of Covid-19 challenge. But at the same time it is an opportunity for building a new India. A new atmosphere of Swadeshi innovations is in the making. Universities must render their cooperation in research, analysis and new experiments.

Universities should come forward to overcome the fear of Covid-19. Encourage the consciousness of Swadeshi and Atmanirbharta. Cooperate in setting up new startups.

Ample fund is available for these activities. He further stated that in this period of crisis, new positivity and energy has infused in the universities. All deserve congratulations for

preparing integrated university management software and integrated digital platforms.

Work done by the universities for generating public awareness related to Covid-19 through messages is commendable. Works carried out by the universities of the state will serve as guidelines in the field of higher education of the country and the state.

Principal Secretary Higher Education Anupam Rajan said that special attention should be paid to sanitisation and physical distancing while making examination arrangements. In order to ensure physical distancing, number of examination centers should be increased for conducting examinations. For

holding examinations, a standard operating procedure should be prepared of all arrangements concerning arrival and return from centers after examinations.

For holding exams in three shifts to reduce examination time, a SOP should be prepared after taking into consideration all possibilities related to completion of necessary arrangements as regard to sanitisation and physical distancing between the intervals of two shifts.

Effort should be made to reduce the travelling time of students. Special attention should be paid to students' safety. Arrangement should be made for holding additional examination for students residing in

remote areas or students unable to write examination due to other reasons.

Work should also be undertaken for students' counseling, he added. The Secretary to Governor, Manohar Dubey informed that permission has been granted by the NAAC for extending grading period for further six months.

He emphasized the need for ensuring adequate arrangement like thermal checking, sanitisers and other necessary arrangements at examination centers. One room should be kept reserved in view of emergency situation at examination centres to enable students with symptoms of fever etc. to write paper in isolation.



BJP State president VD Sharma distributes free ration to the employees of musical band group during ongoing Covid-19 lockdown in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

## 'Ekal Nagrik Database' work to start soon in State: Chouhan

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that work to prepare 'Ekal Nagrik Database' will be started soon in the state. At present, information is sought frequently from citizens to provide benefits of various schemes.

Once the Ekal Nagrik Database is ready, there is no need for the citizens to provide the information repeatedly.

The information available with the Government will be used to provide benefits of various schemes.

Chouhan was holding the meeting in context to preparing 'Ekal Nagrik Database' at Mantralaya on Friday. The Chief Secretary Shri Iqbal Singh Bains, Principal Secretary Planning, Economics and Statistics

Manoj Govil, Principal Secretary Nitesh Vyas were present at the meeting. It is mentioned that currently about 600 to 700 beneficiaries oriented schemes are implemented in the state. Separate registration of beneficiaries is done to provide benefit of these schemes.

On one hand, the Government machinery has to spend a lot of time, while the citizens also have to provide information repeatedly. Chouhan said that the creation of 'Ekal Nagrik Database' will save the time of Government machinery, while the new system will be more convenient for the citizens.

Chouhan informed that at present, a citizen database has been created in the states of Rajasthan, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. In Rajasthan,

this scheme has been implemented under the name of 'Bhamashah' and in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana under the name of "Praja Sadhikar".

The Chief Minister said that beneficiaries will not have to be asked for their documents repeatedly once single citizen database is created.

Once a citizen's caste certificate is issued, his/her record will remain in a Ekal Database, so there will be no need to demand for caste certificate again to avail benefits of any other scheme.

Apart from name, address etc. of citizen, information related to his educational qualification, income certificate, caste certificate, land details, crop grown, bona fide certificate, BPL certificate etc. will be available in Ekal Nagrik Database.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday urged people to use 'Made in India' products and give up the lure for Chinese goods, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' or self-reliant India implies the country has to be less dependent on imported goods and make products for the world.

"To achieve 'atmanirbharta' (self-reliance), we will have to run a campaign and for this, we will have to keep many important aspects before us. One aspect the prime minister talked about is 'local for local', Khattar said speaking on "Post Corona: Self-Reliant India" at a webinar organized by Kurukshetra University.

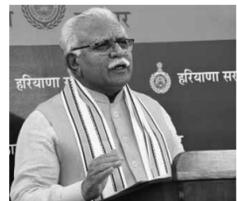
"We will have to use big and small products manufactured in our country, our state, our tehsils and our villages," he

asserted. Urging people to shun Chinese goods, Khattar said we all have to give up the lure, if any, for Chinese products, because this East Asian country has pitted itself against the entire world amid the Covid pandemic.

"It's China versus the world due to coronavirus," said Khattar. "We have no lure for Chinese goods, we don't have to bring them here," the Chief Minister said in Hindi. Khattar asserted, "This virus emanated from China.

Had China controlled it, it would not have become a global pandemic." "The world got this pandemic from China. If anyone is to be held responsible for this situation, it is China. China today is cut off from the world. From an economic point of view too, they are cut off," reiterated the Chief Minister.

Stressing on self-reliance, he said, "When we stand on our



Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar speaking at a webinar.

own feet, our economy will become better and our avenues for employment will grow. Other countries can import from us and our exports will grow."

On the ₹20 lakh crore economic stimulus announced by the Centre for various sections of the society and various sectors of the industry, Khattar said Prime Minister Modi announced this package to help the country continue its growth.

"No other country has announced such a big package," he said. Khattar also made a mention of 4,119 startups reg-

istered by the youth in Haryana, saying the number is twice that in Rajasthan, four times that in Punjab, five times that in Uttarakhand and 14 times that in Himachal. On the Covid situation, he said the people will have to change their lifestyle to prevent the spread of the virus with precautions like social distancing and sanitization. The Chief Minister emphasized that the Government has linked skill development with education so that students can become employable.

Haryana has taken a lead in this by establishing Vishwakarma Skill University in Palwal. As many as 4149 youth have been given loans of ₹868 crore for startups. Loans worth ₹1414 crore have been given to the youth to establish startups under PM mudra yojna. Information technology has played an important role in these times as the Government

has transferred about four thousand rupees per month in the account of 14 lakh families. About five lakh families have been distributed foodgrain and ration. The Haryana Governments have facilitated 3.5 lakh labourers by sending them home through trains and special buses, added CM.

Countries like the USA requested India for hydroxy-chloroquine.

India is manufacturing more than one lakh masks and PPE kits every day. Many companies like Maruti came forward to produce ventilators and other critical care equipment, said the Chief Minister.

Vice-Chancellor Kurukshetra University, Dr. Nita Khanna welcomed the Chief Minister and informed that Kurukshetra University has organized more than 40 programme on Corona awareness and to help the needy during the last two months.

## Punjab Govt prohibits trial of clothing at malls from June 6

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

As Malls and religious places would open from Monday, Punjab government on Saturday issued guidelines prohibiting trial of clothing in shopping malls and barring places of worship from distributing "prasad" when they reopen from June 8.

The fresh guidelines also provide for a token-based entry to malls. Religious places shall remain open between 5 am and 8 pm, the guidelines said.

Besides, there shall be no distribution of prasad, food or serving "langar" at the places of worship, according to the guidelines issued by the Punjab government for shopping malls, restaurants, hotels and places of worship which have been allowed to open from June 8. Mall visitors are required to have COVA app on their mobile phones.

However, a family can be allowed to enter a mall even if one of the members has COVA app installed in his/her phone, the guidelines said.

COVA Punjab (Corona Virus Alert) App has been developed by the state government to provide people with preventive care information and other Government advisories.

The new guidelines forbid loitering in malls. A token system for entry to the malls will be introduced and there will be a provision for maximum time limit for a mall visitor, it said. "The maximum capacity of persons allowed in each

## Shopping malls, worship places not to open in Gurugram, Faridabad

Haryana Government on Saturday decided to open all religious places, restaurants and shopping malls in the State, except Gurugram and Faridabad districts, with the strict implementation of social distance norms from June 8.

The decision was taken by the Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar at a meeting held at his residence. Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala and Home Minister Anil Vij were present in the meeting.

After the meeting, Chautala said that with the rising of the cases of Covid-19 in Gurugram and Faridabad, Government has decided not to allow opening of shopping malls and religious places under Unlock -1 in both the districts. All the religious places, restaurants and shopping malls will be opened

in the remaining districts of the State with strict implementation of social distance norms.

He said issues like opening of religious institutions, shopping malls and restaurants were discussed in the meeting. At present, religious institutions and shopping malls will be opened in all the districts except Faridabad and Gurugram. From June 8, religious places like temples, mosques, churches etc. will be opened with the implementation of social distance norms, but any kind of religious gathering, offering 'Namaz' and gathering at Churches on Sunday has been prohibited at these sites.

Chautala said restaurants will be opened across the State with the permission of only 50 per cent of total seating capacity after seeking permission from the district administration.

shop in the mall shall be fixed on the basis of maintenance of six-foot distance," it added. With the management being responsible for ensuring maximum capacity of the mall, not more than 50 per cent of the maximum capacity shall, at any point of time, enter the mall, the guidelines said. Each shop shall have markers to indicate social distancing while lift shall not be used except in case of differently-abled person or

medical emergency. "Trial of clothing/accessories shall not be permitted," according to the guidelines for shopping malls.

Restaurants or food courts shall not operate in any of the malls except take away or home delivery, it said. In case of hotels and other hospitality units, hotel restaurants shall remain closed and food shall be served only in the rooms of guests.

## Centre's policies responsible for increasing COVID-19 cases: Oraon

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee (JPCC) on Saturday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Central Government are completely responsible for increasing the number of Coronavirus infected patients in India.

Talking to media persons JPCC Chief cum Food and Civic Supplies Minister, Rameshwar Oraon said that due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's wrong policies the positive cases are increasing so drastically despite the total lockdown implemented across the Country. He said that had the Central Government taken steps in a systematic manner, the situation of chaos would not have arisen. A large number of migrant labourers were trapped in various places of the Country, he added.

JPCC Chief visited Lohardaga and reviewed the work being done in dealing with the Corona virus infection by meeting with the officials of the district administration. He took information about food distribution, health services, especially among the common people and migrant laborers.

At the same time Oraon met with senior party leader and Rajya Sabha MP Dhiraj Prasad Sahu. "The number of Corona virus infected patients is increasing continuously across the Country, including in Jharkhand, but the Central Government has shed all its

responsibilities now and entrusted duties to the State Governments. People started talking about tension on the Pakistan and China border. An attempt has been started to divert attention from the original problems.

In the last six years, the economy of the entire Country has become completely ruined by the policies of the Central Government, crores of people are unemployed, the poor do not have food grains to eat and the youths are not getting employment," said Oraon.

JPCC Spokesperson Lal Kishorenath Shahdeo said that those who talked about defeating the Coronavirus in 21 days till yesterday, now they are saying that they will have to live with the virus. He said that the way the number of positive cases are increasing in the Country at present, it is feared that soon India will leave America behind and become the world's largest hotspot center in near future.

Meanwhile, on the occasion of the 'Shradddh' of former party MLA and late senior leader Rajendra Prasad Singh, JPCC served food to the poor at the Hinoo Chowk in Ranchi and gave the final tribute to the leader. On this occasion Agriculture Minister, Badal, described Rajendra Prasad Singh as the messiah of the poor and workers. He said that Jharkhand had suffered irreparable damage due to the departure of a great personality untimely.

## Leaders have to be ready to break barriers: Pillai

PNS ■ RANCHI

TEDxKanke, has been organizing a Webinar Series titled 'The Rise of a New World' which started on May 2. The speaker of the event on June 6 was GK Pillai, Director and Advisor, Walchandnagar Industries Limited while the talk was titled Leadership challenges and behavior in the midst of disruptive scenarios. The session was moderated by TEDx Kanke Curator Rajeev Gupta.

The series is slated to have speakers from the fields of technology, innovation, leadership, creativity and art and culture of national and international acclaim. The sessions are being streamed live on the facebook page fb.me/tedxkanke20.

Pillai said that leaders have to be ready to break barriers and without a goal it is very difficult to push and motivate people towards a larger objective, "Covid is affecting all of the aspects of human life like relations, finances, economy and travel.

I will not talk about the disruption due to Covid because we have reached a saturation point with the information on it. Regardless of the disturbances, there are two ideas that are essential for a leader to succeed - bend the rules and have one goal in sight.

When leaders accept challenges at the top, it passes down to other members who



GK Pillai speaking at a webinar.

are motivated to step up. Leaders have to be ready to break barriers."

"In uncertain times, it is essential for a leader to have one goal. In our case, the goal was to lower number of deaths. The next most important thing is economic revival. We saw a different goal, USA where the President focused on economy over the number of deaths.

In a situation like this, political thinking should be let gone as this is time for national thinking. Stability on economy is important and there is need for a uniform agreement amongst all the stakeholders in the country. We will now have to plan with a proper timeframe for coming out of this crisis, but showing unity is vital even when the average lifestyle has changed," he added.

"Changing the mindset of a company is also essential. When I started at HEC it did not have a lot of money so having a different thought process was vital.

This thought process is required to achieve the goal-making the company profitable in my case. We invited

the wives of our employees and persuaded them to push their spouses to work harder and enhance the work culture at the company which led to things as simple as boosting attendance," said the speaker. "Technology is the only driver that can take us out of this grave scenario. We have seen how technology enabled people to work and operate virtually.

Industry 4.0 will take a push and automation will become more important across organizations. In hindsight, we can see the country becoming stronger with regards to automation and technology. Before Covid, larger states like Maharashtra and Karnataka welcomed migrant labourers which boosted their economy.

This pandemic has changed this dynamic and there is an opportunity for home states to provide crucial job opportunities to labourers.

If jobs and skills are made available in home states like Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha, local regions will become more self-sufficient and also keep the people home. Agriculture and agricultural products will improve in the states as we have experienced during the crisis," said Pillai.

The organizing team for the series includes Kanishka Poddar, Kanika Malhotra, Kailash Manjhi, Pravin Rajgadhia, Bijendra Sharma, Rashmi Saha, Priti Gupta and Santosh Sharma.

## Sonali Phogat, market committee official booked

PTI ■ HISAR

BJP leader Sonali Phogat has been booked for rioting, obstructing public servant in discharge of duty and other charges on the complaint of an agricultural market committee in Hisar who accused her of slapping and hitting him with a slipper.

A case has also been registered against Market Committee Secretary Sultan Singh whom Phogat has accused of making indecent remarks against her.

A video clip, purportedly showing the Hisar BJP leader beating a district's agricultural market committee official with a slipper after accusing him of having made some indecent remarks against her,

had gone viral on social media on Friday. In the video, the 40-year-old ruling party leader from Adampur in Hisar, also a Tik-Tok star, is seen first slapping marketing committee secretary Sultan Singh and then hitting him with her slipper in full public view.

Singh later lodged a complaint with police against Phogat, denying making any indecent remarks against her and accused her of beating him up under a "misconception" that he had opposed her during the Assembly elections.

Hisar Superintendent of Police Ganga Ram Punia on Saturday said a case under IPC Sections 147 (rioting), 149 (unlawful assembly), 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions),

332 (voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty), 353 (assault) and 506 (criminal intimidation) had been registered against Sonali Phogat.

Sultan Singh has been booked under IPC sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty) and 509 (act with the intent to insult the modesty of a woman). Both cases were registered in Sadar Police Station Hisar, Punia said.

On Saturday, the employees of market committees in Hisar, Hansi, Barwala, Uklana, Balsamand, Adampur of the district staged a dharna in their places protesting the beating of Singh. They demanded that Phogat be arrested of

Sonali Phogat and submitted a memorandum to the administration. Youth Congress workers also staged a dharna at Parijat Chowk here and demanded the arrest Phogat and her supporters who were involved in the beating of Hisar Market Committee Secretary Sultan Singh.

In Hansi, market committee employees wore black badges to work and later submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister through the sub-divisional magistrate demanding action against the BJP leader.

Phogat had told media-persons in Hisar on Friday that she had gone to meet the market committee officials on Friday to air some grievance of farmers.

## Admin allows shops to remain open till 9 pm

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

In a fresh development, the district administration has allowed the shops and other commercial establishments to function till 9 pm starting from 5 am. There will be a night curfew from 9 pm to 5 am.

The administration has asked the police to file FIR any person found opening the shop beyond 9 pm. A group of shopkeepers had filed a complaint with the district administration, seeking extension of timings for opening and closing of markets in the city.

The shopkeeper had said that the previous arrangement, according to which shops are allowed to stay open between 7am and 7pm, was not conve-

nient in this weather. They have demanded that shops stay open till at least 9 pm. A district official said that the traders said that by the time the temperature comes down and most people finish with work, the shops are already shut. For the past few days, the mercury has been hovering around the 40 degrees Celsius mark.

Bharat Vasani, a senior functionary of Singhbhum Chamber of Commerce and Industry said: "As per the feedback given by the traders nobody wants to suffer a heat stroke by stepping out. The administration has taken the right decision to allow markets to stay open till at least 9 pm."

Meanwhile, a meeting on social distancing was presided over by Dhalbhum SDO

Chandan Kumar on Saturday. He gave necessary guidelines regarding the operation of taxis, autos and other vehicles in the light of the instructions of the Transport Secretary.

During the meeting it was instructed that it will be mandatory for the taxi driver of a private vehicle to wear a mask. Spray sanitizer will have to be kept in a private vehicle taxi and should be used regularly.

In a five-seater private vehicle taxi, only two passengers in addition to the driver and in a 6-7 seater taxi, only three passengers in addition to the driver will be able to travel. At the time of traveling, passengers will have to sit on both sides of the seat, following social distancing. It will be

mandatory for passengers to wear masks. Smoking, and consumption of tobacco will be prohibited by travellers during the journey. Passengers and drivers have been requested to install the Arogya Setu App on smart phones.

Kumar said that persons over 65 years of age, persons with other diseases, pregnant women and children below ten years of age are advised to stay home except for essential services and health purposes. District Transport Officer Dinesh Ranjan, Executive Officer Jugasalai Municipal Council Jagdish Yadav, CO Sadar Anurag Tiwari, Executive Magistrate Savita Topno, Chandradev Ram, President of Auto Union and others were present in the meeting.

# Centre files affidavit in SC on migrants



Says with help of NHAI, migrants walking on foot provided transport

**New Delhi:** With the Supreme Court having taken suo moto cognizance of the problems faced by migrants, the Centre on Saturday filed a detailed affidavit in the top court regarding the matter, stating that it has, along with the support of NHAI, facilitated shifting of these workers, found walking on roads, by providing them requisite transport to the nearest railway stations.

The Government further said that whenever necessary, the migrants are provided with food, drinking water, medi-

cines, clothes, slippers and other essentials free of cost, depending upon the requirements. In its affidavit, the Centre has said that States and the Railways have been providing food and water free of cost to the labourers travelling back to their native places. "Till 1st June, Railways has served 1.63 crore meals and over 2.10 crore packaged drinking water bottles, apart from services provided by respective State Governments," the affidavit read. **Agencies**

# Rahul accuses Modi Govt of ruining country's economy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing with his tirade against the Modi dispensation, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday accused the Government of actively destroying the country's economy by refusing to provide cash support to people and small and medium enterprises as he termed the Modi regime "Demon 2.0".

Sharing a news report on Twitter on the impact the coronavirus pandemic would have on the economy and the state of affairs of the MSME sector in the country, he called for an immediate provision of ₹10,000 to the poor and an economic stimulus package for the MSME industry to come out of the current situation. "Government is actively



destroying our economy by refusing to give cash support to people and MSMEs. This is Demon 2.0," he tweeted. The Congress has also been demanding an economic stimulus package for the MSME sector, which provides employment to a large number of people, together with cash in the hands of people, to help generate demand.

Rahul had earlier said that it was criminal on the part of the Government not to provide cash to people and the industry to emerge out of this crisis. He had termed the lockdown imposed by the Government to contain the spread of virus as one that "failed" in achieving its aim and purpose.

# ITBP throws open its hospitals' gates for its veterans suffering from corona

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), that secures the frontier with China, has thrown open the gates of its countrywide health centres and hospitals for its veterans suffering from Covid-19, paramilitary chief SS Deswal said on Saturday.

Deswal has issued an official message to all his troops and formations saying the decision has been taken after the force came across media reports of people facing problems in getting admission or treatment at designated hospitals for the management of pandemic.

"We have come across news items that citizens are facing problems in hospital admissions and treatment or they are charged exorbitantly," the DG said in his message.

"Our Himveers (mountain warriors) have sweated throughout their life. We do not want that they suffer and hence all our veterans are being offered health services in case anyone of you are affected by COVID-19," he said.

He further said that all hospitals of the force throughout the country will admit veterans with coronavirus infection and treat them.

The ITBP has about 20,000 retired and dependent personnel.

The ITBP runs a super specialty Referral hospital for the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) or paramilitary forces in Greater Noida, has two base hospitals at Tigris in Delhi and Kimin in Arunachal Pradesh and composite hospitals at



Dehradun and Chandigarh apart from health centres at its every base in the country.

The DG, further in his message, said the COVID-19 situation is "under control" in the force as protocols were strictly followed by field units.

"Everyone of you have contributed in this tense period. We are grateful and proud of our doctors and paramedical staff who have sincerely and with utmost dedication treated our troops and policemen from all forces working in the national Capital region," the DG said.

According to latest data, the ITBP has 211 Covid-19 positive cases out of which 177 personnel have recovered and only 34 are undergoing treatment. One personnel has succumbed to the pandemic.

ITBP also reported three fresh cases of coronavirus infection on Saturday.

The ITBP was the first organisation in the country to have created a 1,000-bed quarantine centre for Covid-hit people.

The centre in Chhawla area of south-west Delhi has treated about 1,200 people including 42 foreigners who were brought to India on special evacuation flights from Wuhan in China and Italy after the Covid-19 outbreak earlier this year.

The facility is still operational and is taking care of those ITBP troops who are joining back work after easing of restrictions imposed during the countrywide lockdown.

It also created the first standard operating procedures (SOP) for management of the pandemic among the various Central paramilitary forces and Central police organisations.

The about 90,000 personnel-strong force is primarily tasked with guarding the 3,488 km-long Line of Actual Control with China and a good number of its troops along with Army personnel are at present engaged in the stand-off with the People's Liberation Army of the neighbouring country in the Ladakh area.

# Air India books over 22K seats in just 15 hrs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Air India opened booking for select destinations in the USA, Canada, the UK and Europe under the phase three of Vande Bharat mission, Air India (AI) on Saturday said that it has sold over 22,000 seats in 15 hours of opening bookings under Vande Bharat Mission-III. AI also informed that more seats to new destinations will be added in due course under the mission.

"Sale of tickets commenced at 5 p.m. Friday for select destinations in the USA, Canada, United Kingdom & Europe under Phase-3 of #VBM. Our website saw exceptionally high traffic without 60 million hits at peak & over 22,000 seats have been sold overall till 8 a.m. now in a transparent manner. Heavy rush however slowed the website at times. More seats to more destinations will be added in due course," the AI tweeted.

The maximum demand is for flights to the US, with connection to San Francisco and Chicago being the most sought after there. As per schedule, AI will be operating 75 flights from India to select destinations in USA and Canada from June 9 to June 30.

People faced a difficult time due to huge demand as tickets are being sold on only AI channels. Passengers wonder why did AI not sell its inventory through online travel agents.

Several Twitter users then pointed out that the Air India website was down and the ticket purchase was not going through.

AI will operate 300 flights to North America, Canada and Europe from June 9 to June 30, 2020 under the third phase of Vande Bharat Mission.

AI has in Phase I operated 64 flights and evacuated 12,708 Indians.

In phase 2, till date 290 flights and 52,113 Indians have been brought home.

# ED employees, including a spl director rank officer, test coronavirus positive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Five Enforcement Directorate (ED) employees, including a special director rank officer, have tested positive for Covid-19, following which the headquarters of the Central anti-money laundering agency has been sealed for 48 hours till Monday.

Out of the five infected personnel, two persons are contract employees. The employees were found infected after the ED carried out section-wise testing at its headquarters in the wake of some Covid-19 cases being reported from other floors of the Lok Nayak Bhawan in the upscale Khan Market area here, where the agency office is located, the officials said on Saturday.

All the ED employees who were found infected with the

pandemic after "proactive testing" are asymptomatic, officials said.

The employees who have tested positive include a special director rank officer and an investigating officer. All of them have been admitted to isolation facilities at a designated hospital for treatment.

After detailed contact tracing, people who came in contact with the infected personnel have been quarantined.

As per procedure, the headquarters of the agency have been sealed for 48 hours and are expected to resume operations on Monday, the officials said.

The affected employees have not been coming to office since they tested positive, they said.

In order to check the spread of the viral infection, a

protocol has been put in place for sanitising the ED headquarters twice a week and all documents. "Daak" (post) is sanitised before it is handed over to officers and other staff of the agency, they added.

An ED employee had tested positive for Covid-19 in May also.

The ED is the federal agency mandated to probe money laundering, black money and hawala crimes under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

Earlier, headquarters of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Border Security Force (BSF) located at the CGO Complex here were sealed after detection of Covid positive cases in the respective Forces' ranks.

# Min dispels notion about barrier-free trade in farm sector

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After the Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Government targeting the Centre over an ordinance which allows barrier-free trade in the farm sector, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday asserted that the ordinance would not violate the spirit of federal structure in any way. The Union Minister also slammed people who create "illusions" over the minimum support price (MSP) for food-grain and said the assured price to farmers would continue.

The Union Minister's statement came a day after Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh dubbed the ordinance as "violation" of the federal structure. The Chief Minister had also warned that it could pave the way for disbanding the MSP regime as well as the foodgrain procurement regime, triggering unrest among the state's farmers.

The Centre on Friday notified two key ordinances to kick in agriculture reforms and help farmers trade freely and fetch better prices.

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion & Facilitation) Ordinance 2020 allows barrier-free trade in agriculture produce outside the notified APMC (Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees) mandis.

It proposes to bar state governments from imposing taxes on sale and purchase of farm produce undertaken outside the mandis and give farmers the freedom to sell their produce at remunerative prices.

Whereas the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance 2020 empowers farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, wholesalers, large retailers and exporters through advanced agreements on pre-agreed prices.

# NIA arrests one in Naval spy case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NIA on Saturday arrested an accused terror funding conspirator in the infamous Visakhapatnam espionage case in which 11 Indian Navy personnel allegedly leaked sensitive information to Pakistan's spy agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

Abdul Rehman Abdul Jabbar Sheikh, 53, a resident of Mumbai, was involved in the terror funding along with his arrested wife Shaista Qaiser and others, an official spokesman said.

During the search of his house, a number of digital devices and incriminating documents were seized by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) which took over the case in December last year, he said.

The Indian intelligence agencies had busted the espionage racket linked to Pakistan last year.

The NIA arrested Mohammed Haroon Haji Abdul Rehman Lakdawala, a resident of Mumbai, last month. A probe found that he was one of the "key conspirators" in the case.

With the arrest of Sheikh, as many as 15 accused have so far been arrested, including the 11 Navy personnel, Pakistan-born Indian national Qaiser and her associates.

ISI recruits agents in India for collecting sensitive and classified information regarding locations and movements of Indian naval ships and submarines, and other defence establishments along with their deployment pattern.

"Investigation revealed that a few Navy personnel came in contact with Pakistani nationals through various social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, and were involved in sharing classified information in lieu of monetary gains.

The money was deposited into the bank accounts of the Navy personnel through Indian associates having business interests in Pakistan," the NIA had said in a statement last month.



# WHO favours wider use of face masks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Days after maintaining that there was not enough evidence to suggest that healthy individuals should wear masks and encouraged the use of medical face masks only by those who were sick or caring for the sick, the World Health Organisation on Friday did a U-turn by recommending wider use of face masks.

The guidelines issued by the WHO on Friday said that people aged 60 years and above, and those with underlying conditions are recommended to wear a face mask in situations where physical distancing is not possible.

The new guidelines also advise use of medical masks for all people who are working in clinical areas of health facilities in areas with the widespread transmission, and not



Based on new research and evidence, the WHO also advises that fabric masks should consist of at least three layers of different materials

round on the cardiology or palliative care units where there are no confirmed Covid-19 patients, they should still wear a medical mask," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at a virtual press conference.

ence, WHO advises that Governments should encourage the general public to wear masks where there is widespread transmission and physical distancing is difficult," Tedros said while introducing the new guidance.

Based on new research and evidence, the WHO also advises that fabric masks should consist of at least three layers of different materials.

At the same time, WHO also warned that masks are not a replacement for social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene - and all measures should be strictly followed to keep the risk of Covid-19 transmission at bay.

The cornerstone of the response in every country must be to find, isolate, test and care for every case, and to trace and quarantine every contact," Tedros stressed.

Stung by the Coronavirus pandemic-triggered restrictions, quarantine requirements and border closures, beekeepers are now, as the lockdown eases gradually, exploring ways on how to move their bee boxes from one place to another across the country.

While the tough regulations have already disrupted their earnings particularly of those engaged in exports, it also suggests that their bees could not be fed as usual on seasonal flowers, neither will they pollinate this summer, warn experts.

Gopinathan Maheswaran, scientist with Birds section of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) said that the Covid-19 lockdown presented a peculiar problem for the beekeepers and the bees. "As countries went into extended lockdowns, movement of non-

# Bee biz may be on track with easing curbs

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

essential vehicles also came to a standstill. In India, the restrictions made it difficult for the farmers to move the huge number of beehive boxes from one State to another or even within the States. As a result, the bees are starving to death."

He explained that during the summer months between February and July, farmers, especially in Northern India, go from one state to the other with their bee boxes to feed the bees (Apis indica) on seasonal flowers of mango and litchi trees.

"Bees feed on the flower honey for nutrition and farmers sell the honey the insects store in their hives. The bees also help pollinate the mango and litchi trees, thereby increasing the production of these two cash fruit crops, and also a variety of other plants," he said in a report published in Nature India recently.

In India, there are more than 9,698 government-registered entities - individuals, societies, firms, companies and a few self-help groups who are engaged in beekeeping. A whopping 15, 59, 771 registered bee colonies are spread across various states in the country. Rakesh Kumar, chief consultant with Lucknow-based Golden Hive Products talked about challenges faced by those selling their products in local market as abroad. "With all their movements' restricted inter-state and intra-state, many aparies were trapped in areas which had nothing to offer to the bees. Many aparies were left with none to care for them for an extended period of time. Though bee keeping was under essential services, it was not easy for the farmers to take up the risk in view of mandatory quarantine period and scare spread all across the country.

As a result, the strength of the bees depleted. Lots of beekeepers were unable to migrate their aparies to different regions as per their planned movement calendar and lost on honey production. The inability to do anything in the face of looming crisis was indeed stressful."

Satinder Singh, a small time beekeeper from Punjab too said that they could not travel across State lines to move the hives around and feed them. "As the temperature increases, we have to shift the bee boxes to the shade" otherwise they will die from the heat, he said.

Rakesh Kumar pointed out that even though lockdown has eased, seven days compulsory quarantine period cross-border will add up to the input cost, even as natives of the respective states are also not keen welcoming the outsiders, unlike earlier, fearing Covid-19 spread.

The BJP will sound the poll bugle in Bihar with the virtual rally by the Union Minister and party's senior leader Shah.

# Employment for migrants should be top priority for ruling NDA: Chirag

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Janshakti Party president L Chirag Paswan on Saturday said that employment for migrants, who have returned to Bihar from across the country, should be the top priority for the ruling NDA as it prepares for the State Assembly polls.

With some of his comments seen to be critical of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led Government, Paswan said he never doubted Kumar's intentions but there have been "shortcomings" which he as an honest ally has highlighted.

"Nitish ji emerged as an

alternative to jungle raaj and was known as 'vikas purush'. But, yes, there have been shortcomings. I am not levelling allegations but offering suggestions for improvement as an honest ally," he told PTI.

Paswan said the Bihar government's handling of the migrant crisis, triggered by the nationwide lockdown to curb COVID-19, "could have been better" and counted law and order as a concern, saying serious crimes like murder and robbery have been rising.

The Lok Sabha MP from Jamui in Bihar called for a common minimum programme to

guide the NDA government in case it retains power.

The assembly elections in Bihar are due in October-November.

Employment, especially for its migrant population, health and education should be the top priorities for the NDA, Paswan said.

Asserting that the opposition alliance, which includes the RJD and Congress, is not in a position to pose any serious challenge to the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, he said the saffron combine may win more than 225 of the state's 243 assembly seats.

# Electioneering amidst coronavirus crisis is nothing but 'political vulturism': Tejashwi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A day ahead of Amit Shah's virtual rally to sound BJP's poll bugle in Bihar, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Saturday said electioneering amidst the coronavirus crisis in the country is nothing but "political vulturism", and alleged that the saffron party was only interested in electoral victory even at the cost of human lives.

The Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Assembly also accused the Nitish Kumar-led NDA government of mulling out "step-motherly" treatment to migrant labourers and asserted that this would be a

The BJP will sound the poll bugle in Bihar with the virtual rally by Amit Shah

major issue in the Assembly polls slated for later this year.

In an interview to PTI, Yadav said he is hopeful that all like-minded parties who are driven by the same ideology of pro-constitutional supremacy and pro-poor would come under one umbrella and fight the "divisive and a failed government of 15 years" in the State.

He also dismissed reports of cracks in the opposition

alliance, saying that having "contrarian views" is healthy for any democracy.

His remarks come a day before the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is set to observe "Garib Adhikar Diwas" that was announced to counter

Shah's rally on June 7 in which the Home Minister will address the people of the State through video conferencing and Facebook live, given the COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions.

The BJP will sound the poll bugle in Bihar with the virtual rally by the Union Minister and party's senior leader Shah.

# ₹285 cr fraud in 4 loan a/cs in Karnataka Bank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Private sector lender Karnataka Bank has reported to the RBI that it has been defrauded of over ₹285 crore consequent to loans gone bad to four entities including DHFL.

A total of ₹285.52 crore has been reported as fraud where in the bank was one of the consortium lenders during 2009 to 2014 to Dewan Housing Corporation Ltd (DHFL), Religare Finvest, Fedders Electric and Engineering Ltd and Leel Electricals Ltd, Karnataka Bank said in a regulatory filing on Friday.

The maximum is owed by DHFL at ₹180.13 crore, followed by Religare Finvest ₹43.44 crore, Fedders Electric ₹41.30 crore and Leel Electricals ₹20.65 crore.

"DHFL (defaulted entity)

dealing with us since 2014 had availed various credit facilities under consortium arrangement wherein, we were one of the member banks. In view of Early Warning Signals (EWS) in the conduct of the account and other developments, the account was red flagged on November 11, 2019.

"The borrowing account was classified as Non-Performing Asset on October 30, 2019 and now, for misappropriation & criminal breach of trust & diversion of funds in the credit facilities extended earlier to the company, a fraud amounting ₹180.13 crore has been reported to RBI," Karnataka Bank said.

Likewise, Religare Finvest Ltd (RFL) was dealing with the bank since 2014, availing various credit facilities.

Following classification of this account as non-performing in October 2019 by a con-

sortium member, Karnataka Bank reported to RBI a fraud amounting to ₹43.44 crore in the credit facilities extended earlier, on account of diversion of funds.

Leel Electricals was classified as NPA account in March 2019 and it reported to RBI a fraud amounting to ₹20.65 crore in the credit facilities to the company on account of diversion of funds.

"In all the referred three non-performing accounts, necessary provisions have been made in full to be spread across four quarters," it said.

Fedders Electric and Engineering Limited was reported as NPA in July 2018 by a member bank in consortium, subsequent to which Karnataka Bank reported fraud of Rs 41.30 crore on account of fund diversion.

The account has already been fully provided for, it added.

# India imposes anti-dumping duty on Malaysian calculators for 5 yrs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has imposed anti-dumping duty on imports of electronic calculators from Malaysia for five years with a view to guard domestic players from cheap imports from that country.

After conducting a probe, the commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) had recommended anti-dumping duty on electronic calculators from Malaysia.

"The anti-dumping duty imposed (USD 0.92 per piece)...shall be effective for a period of five years (unless revoked, amended or superseded earlier)," the department of revenue has said in a notification.

In its findings of the probe, the DGTR had concluded that the product has been exported to India from Malaysia below its associated normal

**DGTR had concluded that the product has been exported to India from Malaysia below its associated normal value**

value, which is amounting to dumping and the domestic industry has suffered material injury due to the dumping. While DGTR recommends the duty, the finance ministry will take the final call to impose the same.

Ajanta LLP had filed the application for imposition of anti-dumping duty on imports from Malaysia.

Malaysia is a key trading partner of India in the Southeast Asian region. The bilateral trade between the countries increased to USD 17.25 billion in 2018-19 from USD 14.71 billion in 2017-18.

In international trade parlance, dumping happens when a

country or a firm exports an item at a price lower than the price of that product in its domestic market.

Dumping impacts the price of that product in the importing country, hitting margins and profits of manufacturing firms.

According to global trade norms, a country is allowed to impose tariffs on such dumped products to provide a level-playing field to domestic manufacturers. The duty is imposed only after a thorough investigation by a quasi-judicial body, such as DGTR, in India.

The imposition of anti-dumping duty is permissible under the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime.

India and Malaysia are members of this Geneva-based multi-lateral body. The duty is aimed at ensuring fair trading practices and creating a level-playing field for domestic producers vis-a-vis foreign producers and exporters.

# COVID-19 Near-term outlook for FMCG sector 'extremely uncertain, says HUL'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The near-term outlook for "extremely uncertain" as the COVID-19 outbreak had a "terrible impact" and the situation remains volatile with the trajectory of the coronavirus undetermined, according to HUL.

While describing the current situation as "much more uncertain than normal", the FMCG major added that it is confident about its ability to manage the immediate crisis.

"The situation remains volatile with the trajectory of the virus undetermined, evolving hot spot geographies, the success of containment measures uncertain, the severity and duration of resulting economic crisis and the extent of structural damage unknown," HUL Chairman and Managing Director Sanjiv Mehta said in his address to shareholders in the company's annual report for 2019-20.

"There are many unknowns today and hence, the near-term outlook is extremely uncertain," he added.

Though the coronavirus and containment efforts have resulted in supply and demand disruptions, leading to a sharper growth deceleration, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) is confident about medium to long-term growth prospects of the sector.

"Despite the near-term ambiguity, we remain confident of the medium to long-term growth prospects of the FMCG sector," HUL said, adding its strong portfolio of trusted brands and capable teams is built to survive times like these.

According to the company, despite being one of the fastest growing markets globally for FMCG products, the per capita FMCG consumption in India is still amongst the lowest in the world, giving the industry a long runway for growth. "The complexity and volatility continue to rise. In the last quarter of financial year 2019-20, we have seen an unprecedented global breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic leading to a humanitarian crisis, lockdown across many countries and a significant economic fallout," it said, adding, "In India, the economic impact of COVID-19 is trickling in on the backdrop of an already challenging macro-economic environment."

Mehta said various containment measures and the nationwide lockdown from March 25 caused disruptions across the company's value chain. "We continue to work closely with the government at different levels, prioritise key SKUs, make planning cycles more agile and create flexible alternatives.

This is helping us reboot our supply lines to a large extent," he added. Mehta said 2019-20 witnessed a challenging business environment with lower GDP growth and slow-down in consumption, which resulted in a weakening consumer sentiment and lower demand for the categories in which HUL operates.

For FY20, HUL's net profit was up 11.48 per cent at ₹6,756 crore, compared to ₹6,060 crore in the previous year. Sales stood at ₹39,136 crore, marginally up 1.44 per cent.

# NITI Aayog CEO Kant Arogya Setu remains among top 10 downloaded apps globally in May

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Arogya Setu, a Govt app developed for tracking COVID-19 patients, retained its position as one of the top 10 downloaded mobile apps in the world in May, NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said on Saturday. The Centre has made the app mandatory for government employees to bolster efforts to fight the COVID-

19 pandemic. "Arogya Setu one of the top 10 downloaded mobile apps globally since launch, second month in running. India has led the way in effectively leveraging technology to combat the COVID-19 pandemic," Kant said in a tweet. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the nation on April 14 appealed to people to download the app.

# Amul Twitter handle briefly blocked

Twitter cites security processes; account restored

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/AHMEDABAD

The Twitter account of Amul was briefly blocked, sparking public outrage, but the social networking and microblogging firm on Saturday said the account was restricted after being caught in the platform's security processes. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) - which makes

Amul brand of food products - found its Twitter account blocked on June 4 evening. The account was restored on June 5.

Some sought to link the blockage to Amul advertising for use of its Make in India products and boycott Chinese products.

Amul had posted 'Exit the Dragon' tweet on June 3 afternoon and its account went down on June 4 evening.

On accessing the account, a message saying "This account is temporarily restricted. You're seeing this warning because there has been some unusual activity from this account. Do

you still want to view it?" was displayed.

Twitter did not link the account restriction to the advertisement.

"Safety and security of the accounts is a key priority for us and to ensure an account has not been compromised sometimes we require the account owner to complete a simple reCAPTCHA process.

These challenges are simple for authentic account owners to solve, but difficult (or costly) for spammy or malicious account owners to complete," a Twitter spokesperson said in an emailed statement. Once the account clears this

security step, the account regains full access, the statement added.

To protect the accounts, we routinely require them to clear this security key for login verification," the spokesperson said. Amul Managing Director RS Sodhi said the company's Twitter account was blocked on the night of June 4, and restored on June 5 morning when the issue was taken up with Twitter.

"Our Twitter account was blocked on the night of June 4 and restored on June 5 morning when we again took up the process of reactivation with Twitter," he said.

# Exports to Bangladesh set to resume through Bengal's Petrapole land port

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Exports to Bangladesh are set to resume through West Bengal's Petrapole land port after traders agreed to create a pool of local drivers, who will deliver consignments to the neighbouring country and stay in isolation after returning, an official said on Saturday. Days after a similar mechanism was introduced at Mahadipur land port in Malda district, this arrangement at Petrapole integrated check post in Bongaon area will start from Sunday, he said.

A pool of 100 local truck drivers will only be allowed to go up to 500 metres within Bangladesh port area, and will return after unloading goods, the official said, adding that they need not move anywhere else in the neighbouring country. "The drivers, who will enter Bangladesh, will stay in the integrated check post (ICP) area after their return and will not go outside the land port," he said. The trade will be allowed for 12 hours daily,

starting from 6 am. All Bangladesh-bound vehicles stranded in and around the Petrapole check post, around 80-km from Kolkata, will be cleared by June 14, he said. The local administration also asked traders to be ready with another pool of 50 drivers outside the ICP area for any exigency. "A large number of trucks are stranded near the border due to the lockdown. Exports through Petrapole check post will resume on Sunday. We have agreed to follow the instructions given by the administration," an official of exporters' body FIEO told PTI.

Federation of Indian Exports Organisations regional chairman (east) Sushil Patwari said exporters are not sure whether this arrangement will continue, following clearance of the stranded trucks by June 14.

Everyday, around 550 to 600 trucks laden with various goods go to Benapole, located on the other side of the border, through Petrapole land port that accounts for the majority

# Paytm reaches out to State Govts on contactless food ordering at restaurants

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Digital payments major Paytm on Saturday said it has approached 10 State Governments to promote contactless food ordering and payments, and to make these a part of the standard operating procedures for re-opening dine-in restaurants and take-away joints. In April, Paytm had said it has developed a 'contactless in-store ordering' solution - 'Scan to Order' - to help restaurants and eateries minimise physical contacts for menu, billing and cash transactions after these businesses open after the lockdown.

"With the Government further easing lockdown norms and opening malls, restaurants in non-contaminated zones, the company is having advanced discussions with multiple state governments urging them to make contactless QR-based food ordering part of the standard operating

procedure for opening food establishments," Paytm said in a statement.

It added that it has reached out to 10 State Govts and plans to approach all states over the next few days. The company had earlier stated that it aimed to onboard over one lakh restaurants for the solution in phase one. Paytm said it has already partnered thousands of restaurants for the solution, but did not provide exact details.

"We strongly believe that our contactless food ordering solution would not only help establishments get back to business but also save lives as the core idea of this innovative product is based on maintaining social distancing and dining out the smarter safer way," Paytm Vice President Nikhil Saigal said. Paytm has developed a QR code that is displayed at partner restaurants that users can scan from the Paytm app to browse the menu and place orders.

# Canara Bank cuts in repo-linked lending rate by 40 bps to 6.9%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Canara Bank on Saturday announced reduction in its repo-linked lending rate (RLLR) by 40 basis points (bps) to 6.90 per cent. Meanwhile, the Bengaluru-based bank also slashed its marginal cost of fund-based lending rate (MCLR) by 20 basis points across various tenors.

The revised lending rates will be effective from June 7, Canara Bank said in a statement. All new retail loans (housing, education, vehicle), credit to MSMEs are linked to RLLR. Many banks have passed on the benefit of reduction in 40 bps in repo rate announced by the Reserve Bank of India in May through cuts in their RLLR. Recently, some lenders, including Punjab National Bank, Bank of India and UCO Bank, slashed their lending rates linked to repo rate by 40 bps.

**कार्यालय नगर निगम हल्द्वानी-काठगोदाम**  
पत्रांक:164 पुनः ई-निविदा सूचना दिनांक: 06.06.2020

नगर निगम हल्द्वानी को ई-निविदा के माध्यम से निम्नलिखित कार्या / प्रमाण की आपूर्ति एवं स्थापना हेतु वाञ्छित विशेषताओं / उल्लिखित शर्तों को पूरा करने हेतु ऑनलाइन के माध्यम से तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय बिड के रूप में ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा के सम्बन्ध में सम्पूर्ण शर्तें एवं सूचनाएं उत्तराखण्ड की ई-निविदा वेबसाइट [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) में दिनांक 09.06.2020 से 22.06.2020 को दिन में 12.00 बजे तक उपलब्ध रहेगी।

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित लागत (लाख में)	निविदा धनराशि	घरोर धनराशि
1.	रानीबाग स्थित चित्रशीला घाट में विद्युत् शवदाह गृह का निर्माण एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य	271.40	5000+18%	₹0 5.50 लाख

(चंद्र सिंह मर्तोल्या) (डॉ. जोगेन्द्र पाल सिंह रौतेला)  
नगर आयुक्त महापौर  
नगर निगम हल्द्वानी-काठगोदाम नगर निगम हल्द्वानी-काठगोदाम

**The Executive Engineer, Jirania Division, PWD(R&B), Jirania, Tripura(W) invites e-tender against press Nit**  
No. 07/EE-JRN/PWD/2020-21 Dated 04/06/2020

**For**"Improvement of road from NH-44(now NH-08) (Champaknagar) to TTAADC H/Q via Balaram Thakur Para and Bikram Molsom (L=14.00 Km) under Belbari RD Block / SH: Widening by GSB, Metalling, Carpeting, Sand seal coating & construction of retaining wall, toe wall & CD etc." Job No.TP/COM/11/2019-20.(2nd Call)

**With**

- Estimated cost: Rs. 9,96,30,825/-
- Earnest Money: Rs. 9,96,308/-
- Time of Completion : 24(Twenty four) months.
- Last Date of bidding for bids - 04/07/2020\*upto 15.00Hrs.

For more details kindly visit: <https://tripuratenders.gov.in>

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
Jirania Division, PWD(R&B),  
ICA/C-501/2020-21 Jirania, Tripura(W).

**Metro Railway, Kolkata**  
Kolkata's Pride

**ZONAL CONTRACT FOR UP-KEEPMENT OF STRUCTURES & ANCILLARY WORKS**

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway for the following work: Name of work: Zone No. 2 i.e "Zonal Contract for Up-keepment of structures including overhead/elevated structures & underground structures, sheds, staff quarters, repair & replacement of pipeline, fire hydrants, water supply arrangements, sanitary & drainage arrangements of RTS Box including all service buildings, sheds, staff quarters at Noapara Car Depot Complex including Belgachia Station (via link line) upto and including Dakshineswar Station and upto Km. 01/3-4 i.e. approach of Belgachia Tunnel face and Patipukur store depot, including all Staff quarters, TA quarters and RPF Barrack at Belgachia & Chitpur area upto Km. 7/14 i.e. Central (In.) including overhead/elevated structures and underground structures, sheds, repair & replacement of pipeline, fire hydrants, water supply arrangements, sanitary & drainage arrangements of Circular Tunnel including all service buildings at Central Park Depot Complex and from Salt Lake Sector V to Phool Bagan Km. (-) 0/7 to Km. 08/06 of East West Metro of Metro Railway Kolkata." Tender Value: ₹ 6,50,31,621.89 (approx.). Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 10,000. Earnest Money: ₹ 4,75,200. Completion period: The contract shall be in force for a period of two years starting from 01.07.2020. Date of closing: 26.06.2020 at 12.00 hrs. The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) The bidding for the tender is to be submitted only through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer, if received shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected.

Abridged e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2331-2020-Recall (Open)

FASTER • SAFER • SMOOTHER • CLEANER

**Kind Attention: Rail Passengers**

**IMPORTANT PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is notified for the information of rail passengers that **Entry and Exit plan for passengers at Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi Jn. and New Delhi Railway Stations are as under:-**

Station Name	Entry	Exit
Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station	Bhogal Side	Bhogal Side
Delhi Jn. Rly. Station	Chandni Chowk Side	Chandni Chowk Side
New Delhi Rly. Station	Both Ajmeri Gate and Paharganj sides	Both Ajmeri Gate and Paharganj sides

Passengers having **Confirmed Reserved or RAC Tickets** for boarding the special trains, will only be permitted to enter the station premises.

**ENTRY FOR THE PASSENGERS NOT HOLDING RESERVED OR RAC TICKETS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.**

**IMPORTANT:**

- Passengers are advised to carry their own food & water and Travel with light luggage.
- Bedroll and linen will NOT be provided by Railways.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Your Convenience - Our Concern  
Visit us at : [www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in)

Please join us on

"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

Public Relations-Northern Railway

# RCF sale of industrial products cross ₹100cr-mark in Apr-May

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Despite COVID-19 crisis, state-owned Rashtriya Chemicals Fertilisers (RCF) has crossed ₹100 crore mark in its industrial products in the first two months of the current fiscal, the Fertiliser Ministry said on Saturday.

"The company's operations have been running successfully. In the ongoing current COVID-19 pandemic, the company is fully geared-up to face the upcoming challenges and ready to capitalise on the opportunities coming its way," the ministry said. The RCF's major industrial products are Ammonia, Ammonium Nitrate, Ammonium Bi-carbonate, Methyl Amines, Nitric Acid, Dilute Nitric Acid, Argon, Formic Acid, Di-Methyl Formamide, Di-Methyl Acetamide and Sodium Nitrate. For instance Ammonia is used as a refrigerant for nitriding of steel, rocket fuel and pharmaceuticals, while that of Ammonium Nitrate in explosives for coal mining and

Ammonium Bi-Carbonate for bakery products and tanneries.

Methyl Amines is used in pesticides, dyestuff, and pharmaceuticals, while Dilute Nitric Acid in jewellery and propellant and Formic Acid is used in the rubber and leather industry. Di-Methyl Formamide - as solvent for fibres, spandex, polyamides. In the statement, the Ministry said that RCF standalone net profit rose by 49 per cent to ₹208.15 crore in 2019-20 fiscal from ₹139.17 crore in the previous year.

The revenue from operations rose 9 per cent to ₹9,698 crore in the 2019-20, the highest since inception.

"Despite various challenges being faced by the company, the financial performance for the current year has been better as compared to previous year," it said.

Fertiliser industry got some relief as the Govt approved vintage allowance of ₹150 per tonne to certain plants (which were 30 years old plus converted to gas) and additional fixed cost of ₹350 per tonne of

urea as per Modified New Pricing Scheme III which was long awaited, it added.

**WESTERN RAILWAY (CONSTRUCTION) E-TENDER NOTICE**

For & on behalf of the President of India, Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction) II, Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vadodra - 390 004, invites e-tender as per the details given below: (i) E-Tender No. **DY.CE/II/BR/CMYGD-DB-SMLA/22 (R1)**; (ii) Name of the work: Laying and linking of BG/NG for Main & loop lines including points & crossing at various yards, Transportation of P-way materials, spreading of ballast, tamping of track, dismantling of existing BG/NG track & Points & Crossing, flesh butt SKV welding and other incidental miscellaneous works between Miyagam-Dabhoi (Including Yard) and Dabhoi (Including Yard) in connection with "Gauge Conversion of existing NG track to BG track between Miyagam-Dabhoi-Sarmaya section" (iii) Approximate cost work: ₹ 883.65 Lakhs; (iv) Availability of online Tender for bidding: From 17.06.2020 at 10.00 Hrs to 01.07.2020 up to 15.00 Hrs; (v) Date of opening & time: 01.07.2020 up to 15.30 Hrs; (vi) Regarding detailed notice containing cost of tender document (non refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, Similar Nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). Manual offers will not be considered.

Like us on: facebook.com/WesternRly

# Protesters support Black Lives Matter on 3 continents

**Berlin:** Thousands of people rallied in Australia and Europe to honour George Floyd and to voice support on Saturday for what is becoming an international Black Lives Matter movement, as a worldwide wave of solidarity with protests over the death of a black man in Minneapolis highlights racial discrimination outside the United States.

Demonstrators in Paris tried to gather in front of the U.S. Embassy in Paris, defying restrictions imposed by authorities because of the coronavirus pandemic. They were met by riot police who turned people on their way to the embassy, which French security forces sealed off behind an imposing ring of metal barriers and road blocks.

"You can fine me 10,000 or 20,000 times, the revolt will happen anyway," Egoantchi Behanzin, a founder of the Black African Defense League, told officers who stopped him to check his ID documents before he got close to the diplomatic building. "It is because of you that we are here."

Pamela Carper, who joined an afternoon protest at London's Parliament Square that headed towards the U.K. Home Office, which oversees the country's police, said she was demonstrating to show "solidarity for the people of America who have suffered



A woman kneels during a Black Lives Matter rally in London on Saturday

for too long."

The British government urged people not to gather in large numbers and police have warned that mass demonstrations could be unlawful. In England, for example, gatherings of more than six people are not permitted.

Carper said the coronavirus had "no relevance" to her attendance and noted that she had a mask on.

"I am showing the government that I am heeding to

their rules and everybody is staying away," Carper said. "But I need to be here because the government is the problem. The government needs to change." In Sydney, protesters won a last-minute appeal against a Friday ruling declaring their rally unauthorised. The New South Wales Court of Appeal gave the green light just 12 minutes before the rally was scheduled to start, meaning those taking part could not be arrested.

Up to 1,000 protesters had already gathered in the Town Hall area of downtown Sydney ahead of the decision. Floyd, a black man, died in handcuffs on May 25 while a Minneapolis police officer pressed a knee on his neck even after he pleaded for air and stopped moving.

His death has struck a chord with minorities protesting discrimination elsewhere, including deaths of indigenous Australians in custody. AP

## Minneapolis, California move to end police neck restraints

AGENCY ■ LOS ANGELES/MINNESOTA

The Minneapolis City Council on Friday voted to end use of chokeholds and neck restraints like that used by a white police officer who pressed his knee into the neck of unarmed black man George Floyd on May 25, sparking coast-to-coast protests.

In California, Governor Gavin Newsom said he would end state police training in carotid restraints similar to the technique used on Floyd by former Minneapolis officer Derek Chauvin while three officers stood by and watched as Floyd died after pleading for his life.

The Minneapolis police fired all four officers, and they have been charged with murder. The incident has communities across the United States reconsidering use of such restraints.

The Minneapolis decision came in response to a Minnesota state human rights complaint against the city. In a proposed court order that must be approved by a judge, the Minneapolis City Council said it would ban all chokeholds and

neck holds, and require any member of the police department to immediately report any unauthorized use of force by an officer.

"Black, Indigenous, and communities of color have suffered generational pain and trauma as a result of systemic and institutional racism and long-standing problems in policing," said the proposed order which the council approved unanimously.

San Diego County in California this week also banned the carotid restraint, in which an officer blocks the flow of blood to a detainee's brain, leading to unconsciousness.

Newsom said he supports legislation to ban use of the technique in local police departments throughout California.

"At the end of the day the carotid hold is literally designed to stop people's blood from flowing into their brain," Newsom said. "That has no place any longer."

Many police departments have ended the use of so-called chokeholds, which put pressure on a detainee's windpipe, but have still allowed carotid restraints.

## 2 Buffalo police officers charged with assault

**Buffalo (US):** Two Buffalo police officers were charged with assault Saturday, prosecutors said, after a video showed them shoving a 75-year-old protester in recent demonstrations over the death of George Floyd in Minnesota.

Both pleaded not guilty to second-degree assault. They were released without bail.

The officers had been suspended without pay Friday after a TV crew captured the confrontation the night before near the end of protests.

The footage shows a man identified as Martin Gugino

approaching a line of helmeted officers holding batons as they clear demonstrators from Niagara Square around the time of an 8 p.m. Curfew.

Two officers push Gugino backward, and he hits his head on the pavement. Blood spills as officers walk past. One officer leans down to check on the injured man before another officer urges the colleague to keep walking.

Dozens of police officers stepped down from the department's crowd control unit Friday, in response to their fellow officers' suspensions. AP



People raise their fists during a rally in Las Vegas

## 4 soldiers killed in helicopter crash in Indonesia

**Semarang:** An Indonesian army helicopter crashed on the main island of Java on Saturday, killing four of the nine people on board, officials said.

The Russian-made MI17 helicopter was carrying nine soldiers on a training mission when it went down and burst into flames in Central Java province's Kendal district about an hour after taking off from the provincial capital, Semarang, said army spokesman Brig. Gen. Nefra Firdaus.

In addition to the four who were killed, five others were hospitalized with serious injuries after managing to escape the wreckage, Firdaus said in a statement.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known.

"The helicopter was flying very low and getting lower



until it crashed with a very loud sound," Eka, a witness, was quoted as saying by Kompas TV. "Two passengers escaped before it crashed, and after that there were three or four explosions." Indonesia, a sprawling archipelago nation of about 270 million people, has been plagued by transportation accidents in recent years, including plane crashes and ferry sinkings.

The military, which suffers from low funding, has also regularly suffered airplane and helicopter crashes. AP

## Taiwanese oust pro-China mayor who sought presidency

**Taipei (Taiwan):** Voters in the Taiwanese port city of Kaohsiung on Saturday ousted their mayor, whose failed bid for the presidency on behalf of the China-friendly Nationalist Party earlier this year brought widespread disapproval among residents.

The number of votes to recall Han Kuo-yu far exceeded the 574,996 needed to remove him. Han accepted the result in a statement to supporters and media after the threshold was passed.

But he blamed the media in part for the result, saying he had been subjected to "constant smears, rumours and attacks." He has one week to leave office, unless he decides to appeal.

The success of the recall vote — Taiwan's first — was hailed by commentators as the latest sign of politicians being held accountable in the island's robust democracy.

It is also a further blow to the Nationalists, who moved

their government to the island after Mao Zedong's Communists swept to power in mainland China in 1949.

The party's continued association with China's demand for eventual unification between the sides has continuously hurt it at the polls, but a failure to generate popular candidates has also resulted in recent major defeats.

The measure to remove Han needed the support of 25 per cent of the city's more than 2 million eligible voters. Just over 22,000 voted to oppose his recall. Han won a surprise victory in 2018 in what had long been a stronghold of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, which rejects China's demand that it recognize Taiwan as a part of China.

His decision to take a leave of absence to seek the presidency just months after taking office drew heavy criticism and a petition campaign was launched to seek his recall. Han was blasted for his

contacts with China's ruling Communist Party and lost in January's presidential election to DPP incumbent Tsai Ing-wen by a whopping 57% to 38%, with a third-party candidate taking the remaining percentage. Strong Taiwanese disapproval of the heavy crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory of Hong Kong and questions about how Han had acquired expensive properties on his modest civil servant's salary also helped Tsai to the landslide win.

China has shunned Tsai since shortly after her 2016 inauguration, shutting the already diplomatically isolated island out of international forums and stepping up its threat to conquer the island by military force. She has, however, received strong support from the Trump administration amid sharply deteriorating relations between Beijing and Washington. AP

## Separate attacks kill 14 Afghan forces in Kabul, northeast

AP ■ KABUL

Two separate militant attacks killed 14 Afghan security personnel on Saturday in the northeastern Badakhshan province and the capital of Kabul, officials said.

A roadside bomb killed 11 security force members in Badakhshan when it tore through a security vehicle responding to attacks on checkpoints in Khash district.

Sanaullah Rohani, spokesman for Badakhshan's provincial police chief, said a local commander was among the dead, and that four militants were killed in the fighting.

An hour-long gunbattle also erupted in Kabul's Gul Dara district when insurgents attacked a police checkpoint, killing three police officers, said Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian.

Both Afghan officials said

the Taliban had carried out the attacks, although no one immediately claimed responsibility. The Taliban on Saturday claimed an attack a day earlier that killed 10 policemen in the southern Zabul province. Afghan government officials said the Taliban ambushed an Afghan police convoy on Friday after setting off a roadside bomb.

US forces had carried out two sets of airstrikes Friday against the Taliban in western and southern Afghanistan. These were the first U.S. Strikes following a brief cease-fire declared by the insurgents for a major Muslim holiday last month.

Since the signing of a US-Taliban peace agreement at the end of February, U.S. Forces have only once before announced a strike against the Taliban, in defense of Afghan forces.

## Clashes, tear gas in Beirut as protests turn to riots

**Beirut:** Lebanese riot police fired tear gas at protesters in central Beirut on Saturday, after a planned anti-government demonstration quickly degenerated into rioting and stone-throwing confrontations between opposing camps.

A few thousand demonstrators had gathered in Martyrs Square hoping to reboot nationwide protests that began late last year amid an unprecedented economic and financial crisis.

But tensions and divisions among protesters over the goals of the demonstration quickly became apparent as groups of protesters faced off, with the army standing between them. Scattered groups of protesters arrived in the capital's downtown area, only some of them wearing masks and face shields to protect against the spread of the coronavirus, in response to calls for a centralised protest to press for demands. AP

## COVID-19 OUTBREAK

### Around the Globe

**Jakarta:** Indonesia reported nearly 1,000 new cases of the coronavirus on Saturday, a new single-day high for the country that brought its total caseload past 30,000, as the government unveiled an enhanced stimulus package worth \$47.6 billion to anchor the virus-battered economy.

**Moscow:** Russia reported its second-highest one-day death toll from COVID-19 even as the number of new coronavirus infections remained steady.

**Washington:** Researchers have found that the drug hydroxychloroquine — with or without the antibiotic azithromycin — did not reduce the risk of ventilation or death, and was associated with longer length of hospital stay in COVID-19 patients. The analysis, published in the journal Med, is the first in the US to report data on hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) outcomes for COVID-19 from a nationwide integrated health system.

**Kathmandu:** Nepal's COVID-19 cases crossed 3,000 on Saturday after a record 323 new infections were detected across the country, while the death toll due to the coronavirus has gone up to 13, according to the health ministry.

**New York:** The New York State, which has been the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic in the US, has recorded the lowest number of 42 deaths and 2,728 hospitalisations since the pandemic began, Governor Andrew Cuomo has said.

## China accords highest level of protection to pangolins

**Beijing:** China has upgraded the protection of the pangolin, believed to be the intermediate host of the coronavirus, to that of the first-class protected animals on par with the endangered species like giant pandas.

Pangolin meat is viewed as a delicacy in China and its scales are commonly used in traditional Chinese medicines to promote lactation and cure impotence resulting in the massive poaching of the mammal.

The pangolin is also believed to be the world's most trafficked mammal. About one million pangolins are estimated

to have been poached in the last decade, and 20 tonnes of pangolins and their parts are trafficked internationally every year, according to the wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC.

After initially suspecting the snake and the bat for the COVID-19, Chinese scientists believe that the pangolin may be an intermediate host of the novel coronavirus to humans.

The contagion, which has turned into a pandemic resulting in the worst global health crisis, was believed to have been spread from Huanan

seafood wholesale market in Wuhan, the virus' first epicentre which was subsequently closed.

This weekend, China announced to upgrade all species of the pangolin from second-class to first-class protected animals considering their rapidly decreasing numbers due to overhunting and habitat destruction, state-run Global Times reported on Saturday.

Other first-class protected animals include giant pandas, Tibetan antelopes and red-crowned cranes. PTI

## Most of 51 new S Korea cases linked to door sales

**Seoul:** South Korea reported 51 new cases of the coronavirus on Saturday, mostly in the densely populated capital region, as authorities scramble to stem transmissions among low-income workers who can't afford to stay home.

As of Saturday afternoon, at least 42 of the new cases were linked to door-to-door sellers hired by Richway, a Seoul-based health product provider.

Vice Health Minister Kim Gang-lip said the spread of the virus among Richway sellers was particularly alarming as most of them are in their 60s and 70s. He called for officials to strengthen their efforts to find and examine workplaces vulnerable to infections.



At least 130 infections have also been linked to a massive warehouse operated by Coupang, a local e-commerce giant, which has been accused of failing to properly implement preventive measures and having employees work even when sick.

South Korea has now confirmed 11,719 cases, including 273 deaths.

The country was reporting around 500 new cases per day in early March due to a massive outbreak surrounding the southern city of Daegu, before officials managed to stabilize

the situation with aggressive tracking and testing.

But the recent resurgence of COVID-19 in the greater capital area, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live, is now threatening to erase some of the country's hard-won gains. It has also led to second-guessing whether officials were too quick to ease social distancing and reopen schools.

Health authorities and hospital officials on Friday participated in a table-top exercise for sharing hospital capacities between Seoul and nearby cities and ensure swift transports of patients so that a spike of cases in one area doesn't overwhelm its hospital system. AP

## Sri Lanka to reopen for foreign tourists from Aug

**Colombo:** Sri Lanka is set to welcome back foreign tourists from August under strict measures to boost the tourism sector that has been crippled by the coronavirus pandemic, authorities said on Saturday.

Sri Lanka announced lockdown in mid-March to contain the spread of the coronavirus. The severest impact was recorded in the tourism sector, with a drop of tourist arrivals by over 70 per cent year-on-year in March.

According to new guidelines, all travellers will be issued a visa valid for 30 days and extendable up to six

months. "Further relaxation of long stay guests is currently under consideration, enabling tourist to be granted five-year multiple-entry visas with a maximum six-month stay," Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority said.

On COVID-19 measures, the authority said there won't be mandatory quarantine upon arrival unless symptoms are detected.

All travellers would be subject to PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) tests at the airport. The PCR tests reports are to be released in 4-6 hours. PTI

## Wear masks in public: WHO's new advice

**Geneva, Switzerland:** The World Health Organization Friday changed its advice on face masks amid the coronavirus pandemic, saying they should be worn in places where the virus is widespread and physical distancing is difficult.

The use of masks has been a hot topic ever since the pandemic first emerged in China in December. "In light of evolving evidence, WHO advises that governments should encourage the general public to wear masks where there is widespread transmission and physical distancing is difficult," said WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. In areas with community-

level virus transmission, "we advise that people aged 60 years or over, or those with underlying conditions, should wear a medical mask in situations where physical distancing is not possible," he added.

But the UN health agency stressed that facemasks alone "will not protect you from COVID-19" — and people suffering with the virus should not be out in public if they can avoid it.

The WHO maintained its recommendation that people who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms should stay at home and if it is absolutely necessary for them or their contacts to leave home, they should wear

a medical mask.

As before, those caring for an infected person at home should wear a medical mask when in the same room; and health workers should wear medical masks plus protective equipment when dealing with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients.

But in an update affecting healthcare workers, the WHO now recommends that in areas with widespread virus transmission, all people working in clinical sections of a health facility should wear medical masks — not just those dealing with patients with COVID-19.

The WHO also issued new guidance on the composition of

non-medical fabric masks for the general public, advising that they should consist of at least three layers of different material. The inner layer should be made of a water-absorbent material such as cotton, the middle layer — which acts as a filter — from a material like non-woven polypropylene, while the outer layer should be a water-resistant material such as polyester.

The WHO's emergencies director Michael Ryan stressed that putting on a fabric mask is primarily about preventing the wearer from possibly infecting others, rather than self-protection. "It's an altruistic act," he said. And Tedros stressed that

masks were only one part of an effective strategy to suppress the virus — and should not lure people into a false sense of security. He said they were not a replacement for physical distancing and hand hygiene.

"Find, isolate, test and care for every case, and to trace and quarantine every contact. That is what we know works. That is every country's best defence against COVID-19."

The novel coronavirus has infected at least 6.7 million people and killed more than 390,000 since the outbreak first emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP. AFP

# Title in sight for Bayern

Flick's side comes from goal down to beat Havertz-less Leverkusen 4-2; Leipzig slip up again



Robert Lewandowski, center, of Bayern Munich scores his team's fourth during the Bundesliga match against Bayer Leverkusen at BayArena on Saturday

**AFP ■ BERLIN**  
Robert Lewandowski scored his 30th league goal of the season on Saturday as Bayern Munich came from behind to claim a 4-2 victory at Bayer Leverkusen and move a step closer to the Bundesliga title. After Lucas Alario secured an early lead for the home side, Bayern struck twice in quick succession just before half-time to turn the game in their favour after Kingsley Coman's equaliser.

Lewandowski netted in the second half as Bayern established a 10-point lead over title rivals Borussia Dortmund, who later host Hertha Berlin. The game also saw Bayern lend their support to protests over the death of black American man George Floyd, with all their players wearing armbands bearing the slogan *Black Lives Matter*. With their talisman and Bayern transfer target Kai Havertz ruled out with a muscle injury, Leverkusen turned to Alario to lead

the line against the champions. The Argentine delivered after just nine minutes, beating the off-side trap after a throw-in to slot the ball past Manuel Neuer. A mistake from Moussa Diaby allowed Coman to curl in the equaliser, before a fizzing shot from Leon Goretzka and an elegant lob from Serge Gnabry saw Bayern take a two-goal lead before half-time. Lewandowski finished the job

with a well-placed header after the break, reaching the 30-goal mark for only the second time in his Bundesliga career, but there was still time for 17-year-old Florian Wirtz to curl in a consolation goal for Leverkusen before the final whistle. Elsewhere, a late equaliser from Christian Strohdiek gave bottom-of-the-table Paderborn a faint glimmer of hope in the race for survival, as they snatched a 1-1 draw away to RB Leipzig.

### FIGURATIVELY

- 30** Robert Lewandowski has scored 30 goals in a single Bundesliga season for a third time (also 2015-16 and 2016-17) — Gerd Müller is the only other player in the competition's history to do so more than once (five times)
- 20** Thomas Müller is the first player in Europe's top five leagues to reach 20 league assists in a single season since Kevin De Bruyne for VfL Wolfsburg in 2014-15
- 90** After 30 matches Bayern Munich have scored 90 goals. New Bundesliga record
- 62** Hansi Flick celebrates the 62nd goal of his team in his 20th Bundesliga match as a manager for Bayern Munich. No other coach in Bundesliga history has seen as many goals in his first 20 matches
- 5** Leon Goretzka of Bayern Munich scores his 5th goal in this Bundesliga season — all of them in the second half of the season
- 17** At 17 years and 43 days, Florian Wirtz of Bayer Leverkusen has become the youngest player in the entire history of the Bundesliga to score a goal



## 'Asian Cup great chance to develop interest in Indian women's football'

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
The Indian women's football team members are delighted at the prospect of playing the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 finals in front of home fans and feel the event can do wonders for the development of the game in the country. India will host the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 finals, continent's biggest tournament for the first time since 1979. "I am very excited that a tournament of this magnitude will take place in India and I thank the AIFF for bringing the Asian Cup to our country. We have one-and-a-half years to prepare for it and I am sure that we will put on a good show," head coach Maymol Rocky told AIFF website. "People are getting more and more aware of the progress made in women's football in India. The girls will get the opportunity to play against the top countries in Asia and fans will get to see the best teams such as Japan, Australia, Korea and China Live in the stadium, which will go a long way to develop interest among young girls and parents," the coach added. The Indian side is currently ranked 55 in the world, having won the Gold medal in its most recent outing at the South Asian Games 2019 and recording draws in away friendly games against Uzbekistan and Vietnam — both of whom are ranked higher. Captain Ashalata Devi, who was among the three nominees for the *AFC Women's Player of the Year 2019*, said that getting to play in the Asian Cup will be a 'dream come true' moment. "I would like to thank the AIFF and Women's Committee as they made a lot of efforts to bring the tournament to India. It's a huge step for us and the entire continent's eyes will be on us," the centre-back said. She also highlighted the importance of the tournament to her and the players. "Ever since I have been playing football, I have never shown any of my matches to my mother. I was waiting for the right moment and now in 2022, I want my mother to come and watch me play against Asia's best teams." Goalkeeper Aditi Chauhan feels it would be a "huge responsibility" to live up to the expectations of fans in the tournament. "It is an amazing opportunity for us to prove and show our supporters why they should believe us when we say women's team has the potential to play at the top level. There is now a huge responsibility for us to put forward the image that we want our supporters to have of women's football," Chauhan said.

## PL stadiums to be split into 'zones'

**AFP ■ LONDON**  
Premier League stadiums will be divided into three zones when the season resumes behind closed doors on June 17, West Ham vice-chairman Karren Brady said on Saturday. Clubs met on Thursday to discuss logistics and safety protocols, with Brady saying stadiums would be divided into red, amber and green zones. "Red zone will be the most severely restricted area, including the pitch, the tunnel, technical areas, changing rooms will be limited to 105 people maximum, to include players, coaching staff, match officials and all the essential staff only," Brady wrote in her *Sun* newspaper column. "And only those who have tested negative for Covid-19 in the past five days can enter this area..."

The amber zone will be restricted to the minimum number of staff required to meet contractual requirements for broadcasting, media and club staff... And anyone entering this area will be subject to a temperature check and a health questionnaire. "And the green zone is the stadium exterior, eg car parking." Players have been told they must not shake hands, spit or share drinks, while social distancing will be observed even in the dressing room and show-



ers, with a 15-minute limit for pre-match talks by managers. "A new strict accreditation process will be developed, including an isolation room should someone unfortunately develop symptoms of Covid-19 whilst within the stadium," Brady added. Television viewers will have access to 360 degree replays and pre-match tunnel shots, while players' shirts will feature the logo of Britain's state-run National Health Service. "So we are in good shape," Brady said. "We are ready. We are raring to go."

## Solskjaer backs extra subs change

**AFP ■ MANCHESTER**  
Ole Gunnar Solskjaer believes the introduction of extra substitutions will be "welcome" when Manchester United resume their Premier League campaign later this month with action away to Tottenham Hotspur on June 19. United face fellow European qualification hopefuls Sheffield United on June 24, with the FA Cup quarter-final at Norwich and league match at Brighton following soon afterwards. With games coming thick and fast, Premier League clubs have agreed managers will be able to make up to five substitutions per match from an expanded nine-strong bench as a way of helping sides cope with a three-month backlog of fixtures. "I think that's helpful because footballers, after being out for so long, going into competitive games will be a challenge for them and we have to look after their injury-wise and fitness-wise," United manager Solskjaer told the club's website. "We can't just flog one player and say to them, 'you play every game and every minute' because it might be a period when we have to rotate quite often." United are currently three points adrift of a place in next season's Champions League, and Solskjaer said: "It does feel like a new season but then again, the first two games against Tottenham and Sheffield United are vital for the league standings, the table. "And it's a short season, it's only nine (league) games so can we get as many points and good performances as possible. "If we do get a good spell now, we could end up with some trophies and something to cheer about. The enforced suspension has allowed the likes of Paul Pogba and Marcus Rashford to regain fitness following ankle and back injuries respectively. But former United striker Solskjaer was cautious about their prospects of playing against Spurs. "Well, we hope everybody's going to be ready for the first game. "We've had time out so I don't think we can expect that those lads who've missed lots of the football can last the full game."



## Hard to believe Ronaldo is 35 in training: De Ligt

**IANS ■ TURIN**  
Juventus centre back Matthijs De Ligt said that it is difficult to believe that Cristiano Ronaldo is 35-years-old when one sees him training. Calling the Portuguese superstar as the best striker of his generation, 20-year-old De Ligt said that Ronaldo is a huge example for younger players. "I always try to improve the way I play by watching him because even in training he has a crazy intensity and you wonder if he really is 35-years-old," the Dutchman told *Tuttosport*. De Ligt was all praise for his Juventus squad, which he joined this year from Ajax. "We really have a good team, a lot of good guys. The most fun are the South Americans. Beside Ronaldo, I was impressed by Paulo Dybala and Rodrigo Bentancur: both players with an amazing technique. Rodrigo in particular is underestimated, he will have a great future ahead of him."

## FIFA open to salary cap & transfer fee limit proposals

**AFP ■ NYON**  
FIFA president Gianni Infantino called on Saturday for discussions over proposals to introduce salary and transfer fee caps to football in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Last month, the German FA and Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge urged industry talks about a salary cap and reforming the transfer system to keep football "credible". "On the financial and governance aspects, I also heard some interesting proposals on a wide range of topics," Infantino wrote in an open letter to FIFA's members. "From salary caps to transfer fee caps or other taxation mechanisms, to the possible obligation for governing bodies, competition organisers and clubs to build reserves or to contribute to a reserve fund which can be of assistance in hours of need such as now. "I personally advocate for clearer and stricter financial regulations, imposing full transparency and good governance principles, and not only limiting this to the transfer system, but to the entire football ecosystem. "FIFA is doing already a lot of work on this area, even if we face some strong vested interests who fight against our plea for a better global governance in our sport." A recent study by accounting firm KPMG said the transfer value of players in 10 of Europe's top leagues could plummet by up to 10 billion euros due to the economic crash caused by coronavirus.



## Djoker worried by US Open health restrictions

**AFP ■ BELGRADE**  
World number one Novak Djokovic described the strict hygiene restrictions under which the US Open is likely to be played as "extreme" and a cap on support teams as "really impossible" on Friday. As doubts grow over whether or not the Grand Slam event can go ahead as scheduled in New York, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak in the United States, Djokovic admitted the demands of organisers could create severe strain. "Just yesterday I had a telephone conversation with the leaders of world tennis, there were talks about the continuation of the season, mostly about the US Open due in late August, but it is not known whether it will be held," the 33-year-old Serb told *Prva TV* television and quoted by *Blic online* daily. "The rules that they told us that we would have to respect to be there, to play at all, they are extreme." Djokovic, champion at the US Open in 2011, 2015 and 2018, described planned limits on player entourages as "really impossible." "We would not have access to Manhattan, we would have to sleep in hotels at the airport, to be tested twice or three times per week. "Also, we could bring one person to the club which is really impossible. "I mean, you need your coach, then a fitness trainer, then a physiotherapist. "All their suggestions are really rigorous but I can understand that due to financial reasons, due to already existing contracts, organisers (want the event to be) held. We will see what will happen."



Lionel Messi returned to Camp Nou on Saturday after missing two group training sessions with a slight leg injury

## Balotelli set to be released by Brescia

**AFP ■ BRESCIA**  
Mario Balotelli's ill-fated stint at hometown club Brescia appears to be coming to an end, with local media reporting on Saturday his contract will be terminated after repeated absences from training. A letter notifying Balotelli of his release was sent to the Italy international by the club's lawyers on Friday, according to *Sky Sport*, *Gazzetta dello Sport* and the *AGI* news agency. Balotelli has reportedly missed a number of sessions since Serie A teams returned to training at the start of May. Players initially worked out individually before clearance was given for them to resume team training. The 29-year-old said this week he had been sick and would send the club medical certificates as proof. Brescia coach Diego Lopez



said on Friday he was "disappointed" with the forward's attitude. "Mario is training separately because his team-mates have done work that he hasn't," Lopez told *Corriere della Sera*. "The (individual) training sessions were optional, okay. But the group took one road and he took another. On Zoom, during the quarantine, we didn't see him. Even if he says he feels good, he's not at the level of his team-mates."

## Serie A confirm 5 substitutions

**ROME** Serie A has announced that each team will have five substitutions per game for the rest of the season which begins on June 20 after the Covid-19 shutdown. According to the statement of Italy football federation, each team can make the substitutions using a maximum of three game interruptions, in addition to the interval

## It's 2021 or never for Tokyo

**AFP ■ TOKYO**  
High-ranking Olympic official Pierre-Olivier Beckers on Saturday made plain that the delayed Tokyo Olympics "will be held in 2021 or not at all." The Belgian was reiterating the stance put forward by Japan and International Olympic Committee chief Thomas Bach that next year was the last chance to hold the Games postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. "Today everyone is sure that they will start on July 23, 2021," he told Belgian newspaper *L'Avenir*. "We are convinced that the Games will take place in 2021 or they won't take place. "It's unthinkable to keep such a project on the go for any longer considering the enormous costs and all the thousands of people involved." Beckers suggested it was "essential" that the traditional sporting calendar emerges from its Covid-19 lockdown before allowing major sporting events like the Olympics to be staged. "All the sporting federations have to adapt to the Games' postponement. "We can't envisage a similar upheaval a second time," stressed the president of Belgium's Olympic Committee. According to Beckers a "final decision on Tokyo will be taken in the spring if questions (over the global health crisis) persist." He said he was optimistic over the staging of the Games, rejecting any notion that it would be held behind closed doors.



# the pioneer agenda

Women know what they're doing all the time, and they're pretending that they don't — Phoebe Waller-Bridge



FROM THE INSIDE

**The spirit of oneness**

As we stand together to face a global pandemic, it is time to reflect within and embrace all humanity as one

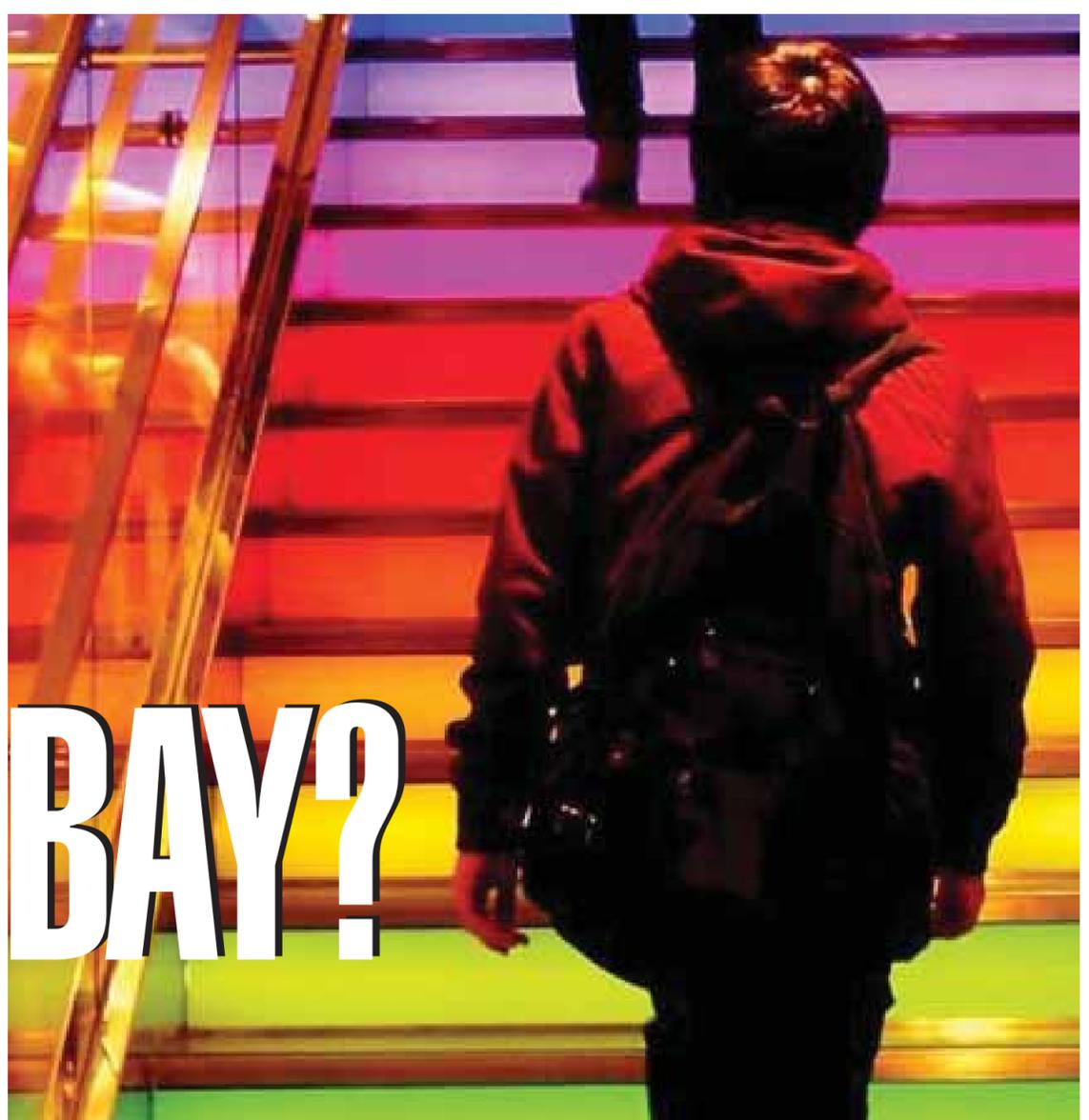


**Awareness for mindpower**

If we remain alert to optimally use the functional coordinates of mind, we shall be able to come out with our best

As queer citizens all over India join others across the world in celebrating a very atypical Pride Month, PARMESH SHAHANI reflects on how the world has changed so much between when the first edition of *Gay Bombay* came out in 2008 and now, when this revised edition is out. An edited excerpt..

# WHAT DOES BEING GAY MEAN IN GAY BOMBAY?

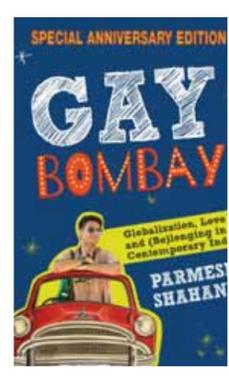


“OVERALL, I THINK THAT TO BE GAY IN GAY BOMBAY SIGNIFIES BEING *GLOCAL*; GAYNESS HERE STANDS FOR *INDIANIZED* GAYNESS. SO, ONE MIGHT DANCE IN A WESTERN STYLE DISCO ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD, BUT ONE CAN ONLY MUNCH ON A POST-DANCE *JALEBI* IN INDIA”

**AUTHOR'S NOTE**

“When the book first came out, it was anthropology but now I think it can be read as a slice of queer history. As you can see in this excerpt below, even 12 years ago, members of the group were contesting ideas around queerness and Indianness, and I read these discussions alongside the other rich activism that was happening in the country then, and also as precursors to the intersectional queer projects that have followed over the years. In the preface to this book's new edition I ask the question — what kind of world are we going to create together now that Section 377 is gone but we have a regressive trans act? How do we find the connectedness between trans rights, Dalit rights, Adivasi rights, and the rights of other minorities and move ahead together? Can we recognise that the #blacklivesmatter struggle that is going on all around the world, is also connected to our queer struggle? I am glad to see how many young queer projects in the country are about intersectionality. This Pride month, I sincerely hope that the queer movement in our country galvanises around the important issue of the regressive Trans Act, the same way as it did around 377. There are so many other laws that need to change in future. A lot of work ahead, and this pride month, I invite all our country's straight citizens to join us queers in creating a more inclusive India together.”

course of my research. Take the case of Harbhajan to whom being gay was 'just sex, over and out' and who was also married to a woman who was aware of his sexual orientation. I observed him at several GB events and he was an intrinsic part of the organizing committees for these. It was clear that he experienced his sexuality as something much more than 'just sex'. He felt a part of the community and there was camaraderie between him and others. Or Bhuvan, who clearly told me that he was not willing to shout out in public about his sexuality. Two years later, he was one of the lead panelists at a CNN talk show, openly discussing his life as a gay man on television!



For the gay identified respondents, being gay signified different things to each of them. For some gay just represented their sexual desires, for others it was a political statement or a social identity. Many respondents felt that it was a state of being or a way of life, while some spoke of it as an emotional commitment to other men. For all of them, the common element about being gay was the imagination of themselves as gay, in whatever way they wished to articulate this imagination. It was fascinating to meet someone like Nachiket, for example. He was married with kids, had never had sex with another man, but still described himself as gay, because he *imagined* himself so. Many respondents felt that they were bound by the *contract of silence* and that being discreet about their sexuality was the pragmatic thing to do. Within this silent space, they found society to be pretty flexible and accommodating with regard to their sexuality. Some, citing responsibilities towards their parents, families and society, had either chosen to get married, or were contemplating doing so in the near future. As Vanita (2001) writes, this is typical in India — The parental family remains a major locus of social and emotional interaction for adults. There are few public places where people can comfortably interact, so friends are entertained at home and absorbed into the family or turned into fictive kin. The family is also the only form of social security and old age insurance available to most people. This means that heterosexual marriage and parenthood hold many attractions even for

homosexually inclined people. Many deal with the dilemma by marrying and then leading a double life. For these married men, or soon to be married men, marriage did not indicate a change in their sexual identity. They were clear that their marriage was an obligation, but that their sexual gratification would continue to rest with men, even after marriage. There was very little sensitivity expressed towards the feelings or desires of women in these worldviews. Other respondents were avoiding marriage and devising means to negotiate what was best for them. For some of these individuals, this meant coming out, for others it meant discreetly fighting for what they felt was important and making creative compromises to attain their goals. But for all respondents, there was a constant reflexivity- an acute consciousness of their thoughts and actions vis-a-vis their sexuality. Overall, I think that to be gay in Gay Bombay signifies being *glocal*; gayness here stands for *Indianized* gayness. So, one might dance in a Western style disco anywhere else in the world, but one can only munch on a post-dance *jalebi* in India. My respondents wanted to selectively draw on a buffet of Indian and western influences in conjuring their own *thali* of gayness! Most of them, even those who had access to the El Dorado of *abroad*, still wanted to configure their gay experiences within an Indian matrix. As Cholan said, hanging out in the Castro was not important, but coming back home and being with his father was. Even for the younger Gul, travelling to America opened his eyes to *Queer as Folk* and gay strip bars, but he used the experience to be more confident in India. Gay Bombay is certainly inspired by Western notions of what it means to be gay-its dance parties, PFLAG style meets, website and so on, have all drawn from Western experiences; but they have been customized, *glocal*-ized and made uniquely Indian, uniquely Gay Bombay. Thus, as I noted in Chapter 3, even though I talk about flows throughout this book, I do not want to diminish the agency of my respondents or their locatedness in Bombay itself. For Gay Bombay, as I have realized, place does matter and this is true both offline and online, where even though it is a *virtual* world, it is still a manifestation of Bombay and Indianness at large.

Excerpted with permission from *Gay Bombay: Globalization, Love and (Be)longing in Contemporary India (Special Anniversary Edition)*, by Parmesh Shahani — Vice President at Godrej Industries Ltd., SAGE Select, ₹595; Ebook (Kindle Edition): ₹435. The book is also available on KOBO and Google Play

Large numbers of Asian men and women continue to live within the 'traditional' spaces for gender or sex difference and to understand themselves and their lives in 'pre-gay' terms that often relate more to the pre-industrial rural pasts of their societies than to the post modernizing urban present. However, there are also large numbers of men and women who are reacting against what they see as the historic constraint on homoeroticism in their respective societies and who are actively engaging in relocating homoeroticism from the shadows and the periphery, to the centre stage of their lives. (Jackson, 2000)

I encountered two opposing conceptions of homosexuality among my interviewees. One version equated homosexuality with being *gay*; this camp wished to assimilate and appropriate the term within the Indian context, recognizing fully well the unique set of circumstances within which this would take place. For them, social interaction was the key to building a sense of gay community in Bombay, but they recognized that cutting across class and gender norms may be a problem within these kinds of interactions. The other version of homosexuality I encountered questioned terms like *gay* and deemed them Western imports and negative influences and preferred to use *gay* as just one term, alongside indigenous terminology such as *kothi* or functional terms like 'MSM'. They were interested in social interaction across class norms, an assimilation of the various LGBT identities that exist in India and were also concerned with issues such as HIV/AIDS. Proponents of both these views used the gay Bombay newsgroup as well as real world events like parties and meetings as a battleground for their respective ideologies. The archive facility of the Gay Bombay newsgroup provides a fascinating and rich look at their debates as they have played out through the volatile posts over the years. However, this is not to suggest that these were the only two positions that my respondents adopted-as we have seen in Chapter 7, there existed a variety of other stances that were sandwiched between and around these two prominent takes on the nature of Indian homosexuality. Many of these included reconciliatory stances advocating a middle ground, which echoed Shivananda Khan's (2000) line of reasoning that 'to say gay is appropriate and right. But at the same time to denigrate or deny other frameworks of identities and choices is not...'. Let us stop seeing a debate that pits those who work for *gay* rights and those who work in preventing HIV/AIDS, among men who have sex with men, against each other. Let us work together, whatever our own frameworks and priorities and recognize that in a region of over one billion people there is space for everyone to work out their destinies. (Khan, 2000)

Indeed I find it difficult to look at things in black or white after my experiences in the field. What people said often contradicted with what they did and people's views changed over the



HOWEVER DIFFICULT LIFE MAY SEEM, THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO AND SUCCEED AT —STEPHEN HAWKING



**HIDDEN SOULS**  
 PRAMOD PATHAK

## Rethinking public health



As the entire humanity reels under the pandemic impact an important question crops up. Do we give public health the same kind of priority that Defence gets? In all probability, no. The global obsession with war preparedness is rather an ancient phenomenon that indicates our insecurity and inclination to be ready to repel any attack from an enemy known or unknown. Even a cursory review of human history since the ancient times would reveal that wars have killed millions causing wide spread devastation. The economic, social and psychological costs of war have been huge in enormity and wide in scale. But, so also have proved the epidemics, in their impact on human history. If we take into account the disruption and death caused by epidemics it could be more than what wars have done. Why, then, have the epidemics been not accorded the same priority that wars get? Why our preparedness against epidemics does not reflect the same degree of concern? These questions may not be easy to answer as many would compare the budgets that are earmarked for defence and health. It is true that on this count many nations do show a tilt in favour of health. Nonetheless, there are some nations who are found wanting on this count as they put more money for defence than public health. But that, notwithstanding, budgetary allocation as a percentage of health is not the issue. That epidemics strike and disrupt irrespective of budgets is just one side of the story. The other and more important one is that preparedness is much more than mere allocation of funds. How much effort and planning goes in defence and how much in health is what makes the difference. So, despite allocating much more budget for health than defence, the US was in no less precarious position than Saudi Arabia and several others that had marked more funds for defence. This is the issue that needs to be resolved. But before that one important assertion. In many cases war and epidemic connection can also be seen if we take a closer look at many past major epidemics. Of course, there may be a few other variables, too, that would need to be examined, but some moderate degree of correlation can be found. The other significant pointer is the fact that epidemics have played more havoc at commercial hubs. All these factors need to be examined by the big data analysts who are busy finding out how many are going to die, when and where. To begin with the first lesson that governments all over the globe have to learn is that like equipping military to defend the borders, they need to equip the doctors and nurses to defend public health. Had there been a well oiled health machinery and a battle ready health army, many decisions that proved costly and painful could have been avoided. There is one more requirement. We must revive the idea of barefoot doctors, the concept that proved useful in the past but went out of practice. The paramedical personnel is a medically trained force, like the para military forces, that must be reared and trained for such exigencies. Nevertheless, this is not the last time that a pandemic has struck nations. Let good sense prevail so that we not only learn but practice the age old lesson that prevention is better than cure. And much less costly. Health is wealth, literally.

Pathak is a professor of management, writer, and an acclaimed public speaker. He can be reached at ppathak.ism@gmail.com

love and tolerance towards people, or do they perpetrate more prejudice and discrimination?

At every opportunity, we should inspire the people with whom we work to make decisions and take actions that promote peace and unity.

### MEDITATION AND HUMAN UNITY

One of the most effective methods to make human unity a living reality in our own hearts is through meditation. Spending time daily in silent meditation helps us commune with our true self and the divine Power that created us.

Those moments are filled with bliss, peace and love. As we enter the inner sanctum of our hearts, we find that there is Light within us.

That Light is the Light of the Creator. The realisation dawns on us that the same Light that is within us is in all other human beings. We start to recognise that Light within others. Then the outer differences that separate us start to dissolve. We see one Light expressed by many different outer coverings, each beautiful in its own way. We start to see all life as one.

When we begin to have love for all, a transformation occurs within us. Our behaviour towards others changes. We become nonviolent in all our dealings. We begin to have understanding and compassion towards the idiosyncrasies and habits of others. We stop criticising people in our minds. First, we realise that they are bound by the shrouds of ignorance and illusion of this world. We know that deep within them is the soul, a part of God, that it is only their mind and their state of spiritual ignorance that causes them to behave the way they do. Secondly, we are so steeped in God's love and the bliss which permeates us that we do not want to be distracted from that rapturous state by petty thoughts of others.

Criticising others in our thoughts only pulls us away from the state of happiness that union with God brings. Since our thoughts will be filled with divine love of God, our words will become sweet and loving. We will not say anything unkind to anyone. People who come within our sphere will find only words love and kindness. We will become sensitive to the hearts of others and will wish them no harm. Finally, we will never do anything to physically harm anyone. We will not become violent with anyone. We will even have regard for the life of animals. When this happens, we will be truly living human unity in our own lives.

The writer is a spiritual leader

# THE SPIRIT OF ONENESS

As we all stand together to face a global pandemic, it is time to reflect within and embrace all humanity as one, writes SANT RAJINDER SINGH



Our world is in need of human unity. We are connected to each other through the silken thread of love, and that is the core of human existence. In our homes, families, societies and cities, there is a need to come together and embrace each other in the spirit of love, tolerance and oneness. Doing so can help bring about peace in our homes, our neighbourhoods, our communities and in the world at large. How do we live human unity? It is not enough to tell others to practice unity and peace; we must live it ourselves if we want our words to be effective. Here are some ways that have proven effective in making unity a reality:

### CLEAR OUR HEARTS

The first step is to make sure that

our hearts are clear of any hatred and prejudice for others who we think are different from us. We must develop true love in our hearts for all people. We must eliminate prejudice and discrimination from our heart and our mind. It is said that out of the abundance of our heart we speak.

If we feel hatred towards any group, we cannot hide it for long; it is bound to come out from our lips or show on our face. Our actions will speak even louder than our words. Thus, living human unity begins with clearing our hearts of any animosity towards others.

When we clean the chamber of our heart from any prejudice and ill will for others, then God can reside there. God is love. God is all-encompassing and embraces all creation as one family. That love will enter our heart when we keep it clear of any

AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY, WE SHOULD INSPIRE THE PEOPLE WITH WHOM WE WORK TO MAKE DECISIONS AND TAKE ACTIONS THAT PROMOTE PEACE AND UNITY

negative thoughts towards others.

### WATCH OUR WORDS

Next, we live human unity by making sure our words express appreciation and tolerance for all people. We need to watch our words lest we injure any heart. Do our words cause division or do they bring people together? Loving, caring words that make people feel comfortable bring people together. We need to become living examples of sweet and loving speech.

### LIVE IT THROUGH OUR ACTIONS

Every day we are faced with choices. Are we going to take action that tears people apart or action that brings people together? In our jobs, we often have to work on committees or make decisions on policy. Do our voices promote policies that show

## Astrology & LGBTQ partners

The universe teaches acceptance of all that it embodies, says ACHARYA PRAVEEN CHAUHAN as he shares the leanings of planets in the ancient science

One form of Lord Shiva is Ardhanarishvara, one form of Lord Vishnu is also Mohini. In the Mahabharata, Lord Krishna transformed into a woman named Mohini and married Iravan for one night. In the Mahabharata, Arjuna took the form of Brihannala, during their exile, Arjuna used to dress like a woman and teach dance to Uttara. Shikhandi gender change is probably an example of reassignment. In Konark Sun Temple, statues depicting homosexual relationships can also be seen. Impotence, homosexuality is an issue that has existed since the early period of human civilisation.

Let's understand this mystery from the eyes of Indian Vedic astrologers

According to Indian astrology, there is also a gender difference in the Navagraha. The planets are also divided on the basis of gender. The gender of the king of the planets, Sun, is male. The Moon is called the queen of planets and is considered a female. Commander Mars is a male planet. Devguru Jupiter is also considered male. Daityaguru Venus has been given the title of a woman. The prince of the planets Mercury is male but impotent. Saturn is referred to as female (impotent) and the shadow planet Rahu is male.

Mercury leans towards homosexuality. The reason behind this logic is that Mercury is considered a child planet and not fit for sexual activity. Saturn has a low libido due to physical deformity. Ketu (south node of the moon) is also marked impotent. Ketu has been ascribed the status of a monk planet, and it offers salvation away from indulgence.

Accordingly, the zodiac signs are also determined on the basis of gender. Aries, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius are considered male and Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, and Libra are female signs. Gemini, Capricorn, Sagittarius, and Pisces are considered impo-



tent. In a chart, the seventh, eighth, and twelfth houses of the horoscope are associated with sexual organs.

Marriage is the most important sacrament of human life. In Hindu culture, the tradition of matching horoscopes of a bride and groom is prevalent even today. In this, the decisions are made on the basis of mutual equality, friendship, and the relationship between the birth planets and planetary constellations of a boy and a girl. But today, when a man comes to ask about his male partner or a woman, comes to ask about his female partner, which is called same-sex marriage, also known as gay marriage, then there is no such arrangement in the horoscope match making of Vedic astrology to answer their questions.

According to Vedic astrology, sexuality and homosexuality is mainly related to the Lagmesh (1st house), Panchamesh (5th house), Saptamesh (7th house), Ashtamesh (8th house) and Dwadash (12th house) house of horoscope. The role of Mercury is seen in the horoscope of gay people. Also, Venus and Ketu also have an influence on

them, thus it is noted that gay people are proficient in various arts and sciences. Moreover, the Saptamesh (7th house) of the horoscope, Mars, and Venus signify the person's sexual desire, as well as the Dwadash Bhav (12th house) denotes that how much physical pleasure a person will get. Moon position reflects your mindset. Whereas Rahu and curved planets show how different two people are. Since Venus is also the planet of sexual desires, it increases sentimentality in a person due to its retrograde, and emotionality has its special significance in same-sex marriage.

I remember a book written by American author and relationship counselor John Gray named "Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus" so where are the rest of us from? In my view, they came from the universe and they should be given equal treatment as we give to straight couples. The universe teaches acceptance and reverence of all that it embodies. It never discriminates. So why should we?

The writer is a Delhi-based Astrologer and Palmist and can be reached at info@astropraveen.com

## Fear of coronavirus

Death is destined; the cause is unimportant, says AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI as he urges people to take care of themselves instead of living in fear

Hardly anyone can claim that the threat of Corona is not affecting them, especially since the most advanced nations with the best medical facilities are the worst hit. Affect it should but not terrorise as it is happening in many cases. Why? I'll explain.

This creation is God's own; He is the controller. It is His responsibility that the world functions properly. It appears to me, rather I am reasonably sure that the Lord has decided that the humanity has abandoned its responsibilities towards one another, climate, etc. Therefore, God had to act and He did in a very decisive way. Only God can bring about the changes in the way we live.

What does God want? What has Him so upset? We, human beings, have been given free will for proper use. And what have we done? A lot many of us, who are reasonably well off have shown blatant disregard for others, climate etc. They are so much engrossed in unlimited sense gratification that no bar is too low for them. In spite of a very active protest by climate activists, mostly young who are rightfully protesting, world leaders have chosen to ignore their concern. These leaders seem to forget or do not realise that there is someone, who is the Master of the universe, and He has acted. We may blame someone for it, but the fact remains that it is God, who is active. And He will remain so till He has brought us to our senses. It will happen but not quite so soon. Habit changes take time. Till then, we, as individuals, must accept whatever is happening.

Yes, acceptance is the key. This is reality right now. No one can deny it. Don't fight it; focus on protecting yourself. You are safe if you do that. It does not matter if the person you come across is infected or not, as long as you



maintain your distance such that any discharge from another person cannot reach you, you should be safe, as safe as one can be. And, it is time to turn to God, who alone can give the feeling of security, because He is the controller. And as stated earlier, this will end when the Lord inspires a scientist or a group of them in finding a vaccine for it as well as drugs to cure this dreaded virus. Till then, take all the precautions, which are relevant.

Some of them are as follows. Social distancing is the bedrock on which this virus is to be avoided. Then, comes wearing masks. Wearing one is crucial but not as crucial as the one worn by the person is your close proximity, and if he or she is talking or sneezing as well. But your wearing a mask is critical for others. Therefore, everyone in public must wear a mask period. Hygiene of the highest standard should be practised. Sanitise whenever in doubt. Don't be lazy. Similarly, trust no one; treat every stranger as a suspect.

Before I end this article, let me put the matter of death due to Corona in the

proper perspective. No one is dying because of Corona; people are dying because it's their turn to die. Death is destined; the cause is unimportant. Life span of everyone is unrelated to any current event. It is fixed at the time of birth itself. Number of deaths due to Corona is a number only, and it should not scare anyone. Do you know that deaths due to road accidents in India was down to almost zero from 400 per day in the initial lockdown period? Even death due to Corona is in low percentage of people infected by it. Intelligent people do not fear death due to Corona but avoid suffering due to getting infected by taking the necessary precautions.

And, finally I will venture my personal opinion about this virus. Since God is involved, as is evident from its scale, it is to reset the style of living of the modern man. Good people need not fear; they will gain something. Yes, bad people have something to fear, i.e. those who are harming this climate, etc; they need to reset their lives.

Bishnoi is a spiritual writer and can be reached at spiritual@ajitbishnoi.com

# American angle in China-Taiwan face-off

The new crisis that has cropped up between China and its rebel nation Taiwan highlights the “love-hate” relationship between the two. The root of the current stand-off lies in the belligerent posture maintained by the Xi Jinping regime. And the face-off has escalated with the re-election of the pro-independence Democratic People's Party (DPP) candidate Tsai Ing-wen as the President and William Lai as her Vice-President of Taiwan.

Clearly the election outcome in Taiwan is a sharp rebuke to both Beijing and the pro-China parties in the island such as the Kuomintang (KMT). Besides China's constant threat to reunify Taiwan with the mainland and the two groups of political actors — one for pro-independence and the other for merger in China — there is an external element, the strong voices from the international community mainly led by the US.

This results into the cross-strait relations between Taipei and Beijing getting more complicated, with the latest saga of events like the island nation's inclusion in the World Health Assembly meeting on the sidelines of the current Covid-19 crisis.

China claims Taiwan as an inseparable part of it. However, the majority of the Taiwanese reject China's claim as bluffs and declare itself as absolutely independent from Beijing. Whenever the matter of complete independence erupts, Beijing either threatens Taipei or airs strong warnings about possible fallout of such steps by the latter. Such extreme pronouncements from the mainland are quite common. In 2017, Yin Zhuo, a Chinese Rear Admiral in the Navy, said, “If the Democratic Progressive Party (Taiwan's ruling party) declares independence, then we must go to war without any hesitation. If they declare independence, we will use military force to bring about unification, we must be very clear about that.”

Needless to say that with the coming of the DPP to power, the centrist forces in the island and the Communist Party in China have become equally concerned about the real intentions of the Tsai regime. Thus any move that leads to complete separation of Taiwan from the sovereign territory of China would tantamount to causing war.

The major cause of irritant for China in Taiwan is the constant American interference and engagement with the island. But then there is an official act known as the “1979 Taiwan Relations Act” that provides the legal basis for the unofficial relations between the US and Taiwan. This particular Act enshrines the American commitment to assist Taiwan in maintaining its



In this image taken from video footage run by Taiwan's FTV, Mayor Han Kuo-yu speaks to the media in Kaohsiung, Taiwan on June 6, 2020. Residents of the Taiwanese port city of Kaohsiung voted on Saturday to oust their mayor, whose failed bid for the presidency on behalf of the China-friendly Nationalist Party earlier this year brought widespread disapproval among residents. The success of the recall vote — Taiwan's first — was hailed by commentators as the latest sign of politicians being held accountable in the island's robust democracy

Taiwan issue will remain intact as a permanent thaw between Washington and Beijing is far-fetched. With Xi's war theatrics and grand propaganda of fulfilling his “China Dream”, the cross-strait relations would continue to be in focus.

Again, if Trump returns to power, it may bolster the China skeptics to continue the trade war with China. It would be a big mistake to think that Trump's anti-China rhetoric is just an election gimmick. It is a permanent policy plank of the core team of Trump presidency to exert pressure on Beijing whether it comes to trade, technology, South China Sea, Taiwan, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Tibet and even to China's border conflicts with India.

Hence, the future of China-Taiwan relations is heading for a chaos. Certainly, there is no chance of an imminent war. But it serves as one of the most dangerous flashpoints in the world, particularly when two nuclear giants are engaged. China's status of being a trade behemoth mainly emboldens it to spur its campaign against major powers of the world, especially against the US. But then derailing a powerful coalition of Western forces would be extremely difficult for China at any time in future.

Instead of competing and contesting the US, China must see to it that its own territories are secured and its citizens enjoy basic human rights. Suppressing the populace back home in the mainland and particularly in Hong Kong would cost Beijing in future. Only mere force applying through the PLA would not help sustaining the Xi model of permanent presidency across all the overseas territories of China.

What seems permanent is that the ill-will between Taipei and Beijing is going to continue. Admittedly, the tension between the two has risen to an all-time high under Xi. Though Tsai is leaving after this term, the DPP and its liberation philosophy can't be obliterated from the Taiwanese soil. With a sixth generation of leadership not coming to take over (because of Xi's permanent presidency), it definitely adds worry to internal party consensus over Xi's presidency after his two terms. These are serious threats to Xi and his core team. Therefore maintaining an iron fist at home and sloganeering unification over Taiwan and Hong Kong would be successful only in rhetoric.

Taiwan would remain what it is today, physically alienated, economically tied with the mainland and politically distant foes forever. So the war of words and weapons between the ROC and the PRC will nowhere head for perpetual peace.

*(The writer is an expert on international affairs)*

defensive capability. Though the US officially does not support Taiwan's independence, but the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) is solely responsible for implementing the US policy towards Taiwan.

Clearly, this is the bone of contention between the US and China. Washington has been developing close contacts with the island and its administration, but that is simply not acceptable to Beijing.

Historically, the 1979 US-PRC Joint Communiqué switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing. In this communiqué, America recognised the Government of the PRC as the sole Government of China. This again reiterates the fact that there is but one China and Taiwan is a part of China. But what has taken an ugly turn today is that only under this communiqué, the US is allowed to maintain cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with Taiwan.

After this, what we need to know is the historic 1992 consensus that is critical in shaping and reshaping the relations between Taiwan and China. When Lee Teng-huei became the chairman of the KMT in 1988 and also became the first elected President of Taiwan in 1996 after the demise of Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of the founder of Taiwan i.e. Chiang Kai-shek. In 1988, he initiated talks with the mainland, and associations representing Beijing and Taipei met in Singapore in 1992. At the end of this historic meet, the

representatives issued a document which read like this: Both sides agree that there is only one Chinese nation comprising all of mainland China, Taiwan, Penghu and the offshore islands; under this Chinese nation, there are two states and both sides agree to disagree on the definition of control of these two states. What follows from this is that basically both sides agreed that the other side existed, but they would disagree about everything else. What many of us miss in this agreement is that both sides agreed that Taiwan belonged to China, while continuing to disagree on which “China, whether it is Republic of China or the Peoples Republic of China. As years passed, this came to be known as the ‘1992 Consensus’, which has been rightly rejected by the current ruling party in Taiwan.

The US, being the predominant power of the world, has a strong military presence in the Asia-Pacific, backed by its allies. Therefore any war-like situation over Taiwan would surely drag not only the US into this maelstrom, but also all its allies. And this could probably be the beginning of the Third World War. America's growing influence in Taiwan starting from defence cooperation to people to people contact has irked China for long. When Tsai won her second term this year, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo congratulated her saying, “Her re-election by a huge margin shows that she has earned the respect, admiration and trust of the people on Taiwan. Her courage and

vision in leading Taiwan's vibrant democracy is an inspiration to the region and the world.”

With this remark coming from Washington last month, China has flashed its anger yet again for the US coming ever closer to Taiwan. In fact, the praise prompted China's Ministry of Defense to issue a statement expressing strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition to Pompeo's remarks. At the same time, its Foreign Ministry said it was “extremely indignant” at the message and accused Washington of breaching its diplomatic commitments. And what happened in the beginning of March was another pointer to America's deeper ties with Taiwan, especially under the Donald Trump administration. On March 4, the US House of Representatives unanimously passed the Taiwan Alliances International Protection and Enhancement Initiative (TAIPEI) Act. What is adding more weight towards the maintenance of Taiwan's unique identity and independence in future is the very special character of the Act. This Act aims at inducing governments that are allies of Taiwan to maintain diplomatic ties with the country and to identify those at risk of sovereign relations with it.

It also calls for the US to supplement its diplomatic presence in countries that support Taiwan and reduce its diplomatic footprint if they side with Beijing. Further, the Act would give the Secretary of State the power to expand, reduce, or terminate US aid to countries

depending on whether they improve, worsen or sever diplomatic relations with Taiwan. It finally calls for increased American support for Taiwan's participation in global affairs. Closely looked at, this directly wants to bolster Taiwan's claim for de facto independence.

What comes from the other side of the spectrum is that Beijing adheres to its one China policy as it is. That is why China registered its utter dissatisfaction with the US by saying the latest words coming from Pompeo is hurting the “sentiments of the 1.4 billion Chinese people.”

Taiwan's re-elected President Tsai hoped for peaceful co-existence with China, but clearly disavows “one China framework” of Beijing. She again highlighted that “Here, I want to reiterate the words ‘peace, parity, democracy, and dialogue’. We will not accept the Beijing authorities' use of ‘one country, two systems’ to downgrade Taiwan and undermine the cross-strait status quo. We stand fast by this principle.”

These words directly indicate what Taiwan under Tsai is looking for. On her inaugural speech, she vowed to fight for Taiwan's participation in international organisations, strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation with its allies and bolster ties with the US, Japan, Europe and other like-minded countries. This definitely is slated for a tough fight with the Xi regime in the days to come.

At the centre of the China-Taiwan bitterness lies the sheer

apprehension of the Taiwanese to be under the Communist dictatorship of the mainland. In the name of people's democracy, what has been practised in China since the days of Mao Zedong till Xi is nothing but a pseudo-socialist system. The political system that prevails today in China is pure market capitalism in the disguised form of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Majority of the Taiwanese do not want to have a governance system like that of the mainlanders. The primary detest and hatred for Chinese political system emerges from the complete absence of basic freedoms, absolute disregard for human rights, and the public display of state-sponsored violence by Beijing. Secondly, since historically and geographically, both Taiwan and China live apart, the people of Taiwan have developed a taste for independence from the beginning. However such claims though buttressed by the Taiwanese side, the mainland outrightly rejects them. For Beijing, Taiwan is a breakaway province and its reunification is a must either by peace or by force.

China's potential danger comes from its own people. The world's most populated nation is simply scared of its own populace. The discontents emerging from its population are not allowed to be surfaced anywhere else. It has been suppressed for decades with an iron fist by its successive communist regimes. When it comes to Taiwan, it is certain that the sensitivity of the

It would be a big mistake to think that Trump's anti-China rhetoric is just an election gimmick. It is a permanent policy plank of the core team of Trump presidency to exert pressure on Beijing whether it comes to trade, technology, South China Sea, Taiwan, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Tibet and even to China's border conflicts with India



MAKHAN SALKIA

## PERSPECTIVE

# Covid-induced vaccination pause puts children at risk

Recording over 6.8 million cases in more than 200 countries, the coronavirus pandemic has undoubtedly become the most widespread infectious disease outbreak, leaving SARS, Ebola and H1N1 influenza far behind. Across the globe, countries have deployed aggressive containment measures, including stringent lockdowns, domestic and international border-sealing and trade restrictions. Tourism, hospitality, public transport, manufacturing and other such “non-essential” services have been affected in most countries, which are likely to have a resounding impact on domestic economies.

In two dozen countries, national routine immunisation programmes have been paused. In India, too, routine immunisation has been suspended to help ease the burden on the already overstretched

health system and to help limit transmission. Of course, this temporary halting is critical to recalibrate efforts to arrest the spread of Covid-19, but it is also deeply concerning. My fear is, this temporary suspension could place children at risk and disrupt the significant momentum we have achieved through our immunisation efforts in the country. Let me elaborate.

Since its inception, the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) — one of the largest public health programmes in the world — has protected millions of children from vaccine-preventable diseases like diphtheria, pertussis, measles, pneumonia, diarrhoea, etc. From offering protection against 6 vaccine-preventable diseases in the mid-eighties, today, the UIP has expanded to provide protection against 12 such diseases! New vaccines like measles rubella,

pneumococcal conjugate, inactivated polio and rotavirus have been introduced to improve the health of our children. In fact, our UIP targets to serve more than 26 million newborns and about 27 million pregnant women every year. Concerted efforts have helped us beat polio, maintain our polio-free status for over half a decade and eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus — which were all responsible for significant child morbidities.

Mission Indradhanush is testament to the Government's commitment to reach and protect the most vulnerable through targeted immunisation. In just 3 years, the mission fully immunised over 8 million children. Today, the Government has strengthened its mission to leave no-one behind, through intensified mission Indradhanush. We have also made strides in

strengthening our systems to better monitor and manage vaccine stocks, logistics, temperature tracking, all of which are essential to ensure that vaccines are accessible to everyone.

Of course, these are just a few of the encouraging results of a more robust UIP and the benefits of new vaccines. But it would be safe to say that, through dedicated efforts of the government and partners, we have managed to considerably improve child health in the country.

So how has the current suspension affected us? Unfortunately, vaccine-preventable diseases have not taken a break. For instance, globally, there has been rising concern about how the current situation could lead to a spike in vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles. In fact, WHO and others predict that more

than 117 million children across the world could miss out on essential vaccines needed to protect against measles. Women are also missing out on a vaccine that protects against rubella — an infectious disease that if contracted by pregnant women could cause spontaneous abortions, fetal deaths and serious congenital defects. These are grave concerns, especially since India, in the recent past, has already witnessed several outbreaks of measles and rubella. Similarly, while we are a polio-free country today and there's much to celebrate, the recent outbreaks of vaccine-derived polio in parts of the world is a sobering reality. We need to ensure that children receive the inactivated polio vaccine on time to avoid the possibility of such an outbreak in India.

The temporary suspension has also significantly affected

vaccine management systems and logistics, including activities that were underway to produce new and existing vaccines. While I am certain that all activities to sustain and expand the immunisation programme will eventually resume, the disruption caused by Covid-19 may lead to delays in restoring full capacity.

This pause has also dealt a severe blow to our plans of scaling up pneumococcal conjugate and rotavirus vaccines across the country. A quarter of our children still die of pneumonia and diarrhoea, yet we may have to wait longer than earlier expected to ensure everyone has access to these life-saving vaccines. The on-going economic downturn affects us all, including vaccine manufacturers, impacting overall production and distribution.

Let's explore the possi-

ty of declaring vaccinators as first line responders. With protective gear and mobile technology, they could effectively sustain immunisation activities while practicing the mandated physical distancing.

Intersectoral collaborations will be critical to immunisation infrastructure — scientists, researchers, policymakers, economists, and civil society organisations and private organizations have to come together to design a roadmap to cover lost ground.

Even as all hands are on deck to develop a Covid-19 vaccine, we need to collectively carve out a meticulous risk management, financing and executive plan to ensure that once an emergency vaccine is available, everyone has access to it.

*(The writer is former Director General, ICMR)*



NIRMAL K GANGULY



BELIEVE IN YOUR INFINITE POTENTIAL. YOUR ONLY LIMITATIONS ARE THOSE YOU SET UPON YOURSELF — ROY T. BENNETT

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

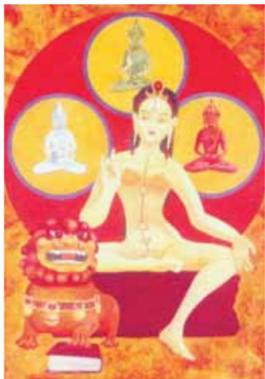
MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

Overall health remains good. You will feel energetic and enthusiastic. There is a need to bring about change in your nutrition. Adopt new approach and ideas. You are filled with positive energy through the week. Those who have recovered from serious ailment must do the follow-through. On the career front, if you are involved in any sort of competition, then you are advised to keep a close eye out for any cheating. The bottom line is basically to cover your tail. Make sure you are doing things the right way, and then you'll have nothing to worry about. You are not very vocal in a relationship. Express yourself to those you love by saying loving words. Your introvert and individual persona does not help you to get closer to the one you love.

**Lucky number** 28  
**Lucky colour** Orange  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

This week health will be good. This is the time when you feel at your best, physically, mentally and emotionally. Health, vitality and inner vibrancy will fill you with energy and inspiration. Some creative ideas will occupy your mind and shine you bright. Females who are on the family way, would feel healthier and nourished. Make sure you take out adequate time for relaxation. On the work front, this could be that phase in your life which begs you to bring some desirable changes in your career. You might not be satisfied with your current job. Switching to a new job is likely. Some of you may opt for business, instead of a job. Don't ignore your personal life. Your loved ones mean a lot to you. Take some time out and show your concern, let the heart speak louder than the mind.

**Lucky number** 10  
**Lucky colour** Camel brown  
**Lucky day** Sunday



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

This week you will reap the results of your past efforts. You will be focused on the reality that life comes a full circle and that what goes around always, without fail, will come around. Remember that when you make a point to be generous, whether, with time, energy, or money, that too is an investment in your future. Professionally, you may be inspired to start a new creative project. You are at that point in your life where you feel comfortable with who you are and what you feel. You see new potential in allowing your creativity to flow. On the relationship front if you are in love and decide to make him or her your life partner, take the approval of your parents. You will be able to maintain good relations with the seniors at home and take their blessings.

**Lucky number** 13  
**Lucky colour** Turquoise  
**Lucky day** Friday



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week you will enjoy happiness, good health and worldly pleasures. You tend to be enthusiastic and will carefully weigh what others ask you now. You will get inspired by everything around you. Connecting to yoga, meditation cosmic healing, learning new interests is indicated. Professionally, you will be torn between work and entertainment. This is the time to weigh your priorities and responsibilities. Make a decision in favour of better work conditions and output. If you wish for improved working conditions, stay away from tension and stress. Don't let negative forces bother you. On the personal front, look hard at yourself and analyse whether you are being realistic about love. Don't spend too much time in self-pity or wishing your life away.

**Lucky number** 30  
**Lucky colour** Green  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you are extraordinarily active on a mental level. You find that your drive to make things happen is ignited. Your analytical and reasoning powers are very strong and you will not listen to others. You think what you say or what you do is right. Don't find faults in others. On the career front, some good news is on the cards. An out-of-the-blue opportunity may surprise you. Your focussed attitude will help you sail through difficult times. Avoid work politics. Deceit, clashes could be experienced this week in love matters. You could ruin the very things that you want the most such as close, intimate relationships with your friends and lover. Lack of communication and understanding could be harmful at this point.

**Lucky number** 12  
**Lucky colour** White  
**Lucky day** Monday



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you are a quiet and keen observer. A positive outlook will change your perception of life. You feel healthier than ever. Spiritually, things will move along well, and you will feel hopeful about the future. You may have to decide whether to put your energy into things, people, and situations that you are involved with. On the career front, you will want your time and space and may be in isolation for a while. You will feel exhausted. The trauma of losing your job, financial and health worries may overpower you. You find most of the answers in your isolation. This is not the time to make decisions. The beginning of love, happiness and compassion is on the cards. The start of a new relationship, be it a friendship or a romance will bring a smile on your face.

**Lucky number** 20  
**Lucky colour** Sky Blue  
**Lucky day** Friday



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

Self-improvement is on top of your mind. Plan some creative activity to stay busy and avoid stress. The tension you have been experiencing lately would ease. Don't hesitate to share your feelings with your trusted ones or ask for help from them. Professionally, this is a very good time to start planning long term. Where do you want to be in the coming five years? How will you make it happen? Focus on your skills and potentials. You have great expectation from life and are happy about the surprises it often brings. The investments you made in the past are likely to return with interest. An existing relationship may suffer due to lack of understanding. Think calmly and carefully about what your limitations are in a relationship.

**Lucky number** 14  
**Lucky colour** Brown  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you may be restricted in your life. Health issues seem to be out of control. One after another problem may crop up on the health front. You need to analyse why you are feeling this way and work to release yourself from these restrictions. You need an emotional release from whatever it is that is making you feel stuck. Professionally, you are in mood for enjoyment and wish to have blast. Spend some time to pamper yourself, feel good and look good. Money is not a problem, earning will be good. This is a good time to look into home décor and consider renovation. On the relationship front, messages of love and affection are likely to come your way. If you are single, a new suitor with whom you have a lot in common may come into your life.

**Lucky number** 11  
**Lucky colour** Pink  
**Lucky day** Monday



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

Running away from reality does not suit your personality. Those dealing with a health problem should consult a doctor. A change in environment will rejuvenate your health. Do not stress over unnecessary issues. On the career front, you are ready to confront any unfinished business in your life. You are decisive and determined. You have reviewed your past experiences and have learned from them. All the pieces of the puzzle of your life are finally coming together to form one. On the personal front, it is a good time to listen to your mind than your heart. You find that your drive to make things happen is ignited. At home, your domineering attitude could make others irritated, and you may be left alone. Listen more and say less.

**Lucky number** 10  
**Lucky colour** Silver  
**Lucky day** Saturday



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

This is a good week. You will encounter new experiences and warm people who will invite you into their world. Everything is starting to fall into place and you can be one with the situation. On the career front, an enhanced status, promotion or designation is on the cards. This week you are very sound and grounded therefore, you are likely to take important decision related to career or relationship. You are hardworking and focused. Expect some stressful moments this week. Abundance of energy and self-confidence will give you a boost to move ahead. On the personal front, you are charged up with extra energy. You have great clarity on a situation and can now argue your case out with the view to emerge victorious.

**Lucky number** 21  
**Lucky colour** Peach  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

This week you can solve many problems with your wisdom. With your experience and maturity, you would be able to take hold of your life. Instead of being innovative, you need to adapt to the existing set of beliefs and systems. Any new theory will not suit you this week. You have to follow an orthodox approach. On the career front, you may be your own worst enemy. How you speak your mind is as important as what you say. There may be some unfairness at play at work. Be sure that your behaviour is impeccable. Try to cut unnecessary expenses. If you are already in a committed relationship the clear message is that trust is crucial. If you are feeling suspicious for some reason about your partner, make a point to talk about this even if it is difficult.

**Lucky number** 31  
**Lucky colour** Red  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

This week you will have to make some efforts to improve your health condition. You need more exercise under expert or nutritional guidance to make sure that you stay fit and are eating better. Take charge of your life. This can be a very creative time for you. Enjoy being with yourself and your childlike energy will help you enrich your life. This week, working environment will be friendly, consistent and this will increase your efficiency. You will enjoy working in a group and come out with productive results. You will be able to win the support of your senior. True love, balanced partnership, commitment, and all of the good are easily available for you. You could expect a genuine and long term relationship as the foundation of your love is very strong.

**Lucky number** 22  
**Lucky colour** Grey  
**Lucky day** Friday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

# Awareness for mindpower

Continuing from where we left last week, it comes out that 'Freewill' serves as a double-edged sword. If, on one hand, it binds you to fate, at the same time, it also enjoins you with the potential to come out of its limitations. What choice to make, remains the prerogative of 'ahamkara' (Ego consciousness). The paradox, however, is that we are all born with inherent desire and mind-trends, coming as they may as Karmic carryover from the past birth, which serves as the defining principle of mind. We are, thus, born with a pre-conditioned mind.

As a consequence, more often than not, ahamkara is inclined to identify itself with indwelling desires, which it wishes to passionately pursue as the end game. Going through the run of life, ahamkara also gets drawn towards tempting influences of the seeming world, and instinctively makes it as a dream destination. Taking them on their face value, ahamkara doesn't allow time and space to look beyond for a better option if any. Nor, is it keen to invoke buddhi (faculty of discriminate intelligence) for due diligence either. With such a narrow frame of vision, one fails

to have a holistic understanding of the living realities of life. One, thus, can't see things in the right perspective due, and therefore, fails to pick up the right lead. So, we end up helplessly fated.

The question now is: Is there any scope to come out of the binds of fate? If so, what is the way forward? Remember, the inherent limitations, with which we are born, don't grant us access to the full landscape of our mind. Consequently, the processing power of the mind gets compromised. The obvious calling, therefore, is to first service our empowerment tool, the mind — by clearing all clutter and inherent limitations. Following which, you may then be able to discriminate between 'what you want' and 'what is right'. Also, you could explore all options available with an open mind, free from all limitations whatsoever, to pick up the most appropriate lead. The next question would be: how to go about?

Awareness is the key. The first step called for in this direction is to look for an enlightened Guru, who may lead you through. Otherwise, you may end up being stuck to your mental mesh. The Guru will first give you exposure to the



construct, chemistry, and operating principles of mind. Remember, mind is the prime mover of a being. All actions out in the open, be it chasing a desired destination or respond and react to an external stimuli, originates in mind, which following processing translates into action. Even the imprints of all your inherent tendencies are there in the mind itself, in the form of thought-seeds. It is again following a mental process that could help purify the mind, so as to have access to its full landscape with its wholesome powers. Unless you become conversant with the working modalities of the instrument in use, it will not be possible to use it efficiently.

Be it known, Mind has three functional tools — *Buddhi*, *Ahamkara* and *Manasa*. *Buddhi* is the faculty of discriminate intelligence, intrinsic to which is the sense of dispassion. It analyses issues in hand in an unbiased manner, arrives at the right judgment, and accordingly guides how to act upon. But, *buddhi* can't act upon by itself unless directed by *ahamkara*. *Ahamkara* brings in the sense of 'I' consciousness, which makes you take the call of life, and own up for the consequences of all your doings. *Manasa* is the sense-driven mind, which with the

help of its perceptive instruments is supposed to collect outer field data. And then deliver them for due diligence to *buddhi*, which following due consideration directs *manasa* to accordingly act upon. *Manasa*, again as directed by *ahamkara*, puts into action usual functional mandates of mind. Guided by indwelling mind-trends, often *ahamkara* takes things on their face value, when it ignores *buddhi*, following which *manasa* acts on instinctive judgement, and with obvious consequences.

All these three coordinates are supposed to work in a coordinated way as a unified organism. If we remain alert enough to optimally use the functional coordinates of mind exactly as mandated, we shall be able to come out with our best. For, then, wholesome powers of mind shall be available. The paradox, however, is that stuck to the usual grinds of life, we often lose our sense of alert, and with obvious consequences.

To be continued...

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025  
Tel: 91-11-49848475/9818037273  
Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com