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'WE NEED AN ALTERNATIVE
TO SALIVA'



VARUN IS
MISSING HIS
PEOPLE
10 VIVACITY

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Booster dose for MSMEs, farmers

Cabinet OK's ₹20k cr for MSMEs, hikes MSP for kharif crops

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday announced a major scheme for the revival of micro, small & medium enterprise and enhanced the minimum support price for kharif crops to ease off the problems of farmers due to Covid-19 and protracted lockdown.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) announced ₹20,000 crore financial package for two lakh "stressed" MSMEs and ₹50,000 crore "Fund of Fund" equity infusion plan to the medium and small units to enable list in stock markets.

Later Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a dedicated one-stop portal "Champions" for the MSMEs to avail the benefits announced in the Atmanirbhar package.

Detailing the Cabinet announcements, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and Prakash Javadekar said these two packages will help the millions of MSME units to tide over their bank NPA problems and get more loans as well as new fund infusion. "With today's approval, implementation modalities and road map



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs a Cabinet meeting in New Delhi on Monday

for entire components of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package are in place. This will help in attracting investments and creating more jobs in the MSME sector," said Gadkari, adding that the new single window portal "Champions" will take care of the grievances of MSME units and also monitor their applications to banks under the

Atmanirbhar packages. Gadkari said the change in definition of MSME will help the small and medium enterprises to get more help from financial institutions. He said that the Government has also formed ₹4,000 crore distressed asset fund for the revival of small and medium units in the country. "The definition of

micro manufacturing and services unit was increased to ₹1 crore of investment and ₹5 crore of turnover. The limit of small unit was increased to ₹10 crore of investment and ₹50 crore of turnover. Similarly, the limit of a medium unit was increased to ₹20 crore of investment and ₹100 crore turnover. The revision was done after

14 years since the MSME Development Act came into being in 2006. After the package announcement on May 13, the Government received several representations that the announced revision was still not in tune with market and pricing conditions and it should be revised upwards.

Community transmission well established: Experts

They paint gloomy picture in report to PM, assert Covid can't be eliminated at present stage

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Contrary to the Government's stand, a group of health experts, including eminent doctors from the AIIMS and ICMR on Covid-19, has said that community transmission stage of the coronavirus infection has been well-established across large sections or sub-populations in the country. "It is unrealistic to expect that Covid-19 pandemic can be eliminated at this stage given that community transmission is already well-established across large sections or sub-populations in the country," they said while painting a gloomy picture of the state of the deadly disease in a report which has now been submitted to the Prime Minister. The report comes amidst spurt of cases in major States



Medics wearing protective kits work inside a mobile coronavirus testing facility bus in New Delhi on Monday

like Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Bihar. The report compiled by experts from the Indian Public Health Association (IPHA), Indian Association of Preventive and Social Medicine (IAPSM), and Indian Association of Epidemiologists (IAE) is damning in nature and also slams the Government for failing to take timely adequate steps to contain the disease for which "India is paying a heavy price, both in terms of

humanitarian crisis and disease spread." "The expected benefit of this stringent nationwide lockdown was to spread out the disease over an extended period of time to flatten the curve and effectively plan and manage so that the healthcare delivery system is not overwhelmed. This seems to have been achieved albeit after lockdown 4.0 with extraordinary inconvenience and disruption of the economy and life of the general public," said the report.

Haryana, Odisha too join the race

Maharashtra, TN, Delhi, Gujarat, UP remain biggest contributors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Haryana and Odisha on Monday recorded the biggest single day spike in the number of Covid-19 cases after Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh remained the major contributors in sustaining the high figure on a daily basis for weeks.

Haryana reported 265 new cases, which is its highest daily count, taking the total number of positive cases in the State to 2,556. Haryana has seen steady rise in the number of cases during the last one week. State's ruling politicians have blamed Delhi for the spike and sealed the State's border with the national Capital.

Odisha reported 156 new cases on Monday which took its overall tally of cases to 2,104. The State has seen a gradual increase in the number of cases since the migrants workers began to return in tens of thousands. Jammu & Kashmir reported 155 new cases — 56 from Kashmir division and 99 from Jammu division. Total positive cases in the Union Territory

Covid-19 in India

TOTAL CASES: 1,98,214

DEATHS: 5,608

RECOVERED: 95,615

ACTIVE: 96,980

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	70,013	2,362	30,108
Tamil Nadu	23,495	187	13,170
Delhi	20,834	523	8,746
Gujarat	17,217	1,063	10,780
Uttar Pradesh	9,100	199	6,213
Rajasthan	8,361	222	5,030
Madhya Pradesh	8,283	358	5,003
West Bengal	5,772	325	2,306
Bihar	3,945	23	1,741
Andhra Pradesh	3,676	64	2,374
Karnataka	3,408	52	1,328
Telangana	2,792	88	1,491
Jammu & Kashmir	2,601	31	946
Haryana	2,356	21	1,055
Punjab	2,301	44	2,000

stand at 2,601 including 1,624 active cases. West Bengal added 271 new cases, which took its tally of positive cases to 5,772 while the death toll is at 253. Karnataka reported 2,187 cases which took its tally to 3,408. Maharashtra's count rose to 70,013 cases with 2,362 deaths. The State reported 2,361 new cases on Monday. The recovery rate from the coronavirus pandemic in Maharashtra

improved to 43.35 per cent in the month of May. As many as 40 deaths and 1,413 new Covid-19 positive cases were reported in Mumbai on Monday, taking the total number of cases in the city to 40,877. Municipal Corporation Greater Mumbai said. Meanwhile, the State's doubling rate has also improved. It is 17.5 days now, as compared to 11 days earlier. After reporting 1,295 cases

on Sunday, Delhi on Monday added 990 new Covid-19 cases. Delhi's total case count has now risen to 20,834 with a total death toll of 523. The day Tamil Nadu chose to relax the lockdown and allow factories, IT companies and business establishments to resume operations, it saw 1,162 persons testing positive for corona virus, the highest number of cases to be registered on a single day.

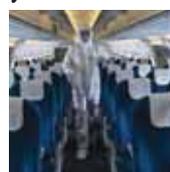
Airlines should keep middle seat vacant if feasible, says DGCA

Otherwise passenger on middle seat will be provided with PPE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday issued a circular instructing the airlines to keep the middle seat vacant if the passenger load and seat capacity permits. The order, which will be effective from June 3, however, states that members of the same family can be allowed to sit together.

If the middle seat, or the seat between two passengers, is occupied due to passenger load then additional protective equipment like the Ministry of Textiles-approved wrap-around gown will be given to the individual occupying the intervening seat, in addition to three-layered face mask and face shield. The Government had earlier said it would not be viable to keep middle seats vacant as fares would shoot up. From now on, no meals or



drinking water shall be provided on board except in extreme circumstances. The DGCA order read. The DGCA order said airlines must provide a safety kit to each passenger. It shall include a three-layered surgical mask, a face shield and adequate amount of sanitiser in either a sachet or a bottle.

The embarkation or disembarkation shall be sequential and passengers shall be advised by airlines to follow the three-layered face mask and face shield. The passenger should not rush towards the exit as soon as the flight lands. Airlines must ensure the orderly entry and exit of the travellers, it said.

Delhi borders sealed for week to stem corona spike: Kejriwal

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rising coronavirus cases in the national Capital, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday ordered to seal Delhi's borders connecting Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Also, Kejriwal has sought suggestions from Delhiites via WhatsApp and emails on the issue. Sources said after reviewing the feedback, the Delhi Government will decide whether borders to neighbouring States should be opened or not.

"Delhi's borders will be sealed for a week due to rising coronavirus cases. Essential services will remain functional and Government officers can travel on their identity cards. Delhi residents can send their suggestions via WhatsApp 8800007722, email delhionline.suggestions@gmail.com and call on 1031 by Friday 5 pm."

"Delhi to open schools and barber shops, movement on road restricted from 9 pm to 5 am except for essential services," a Delhi Government's order read.

Should hospitals be reserved for Delhiites, CM asks residents

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday sought suggestions from public on whether hospitals across the national Capital should be reserved only for residents amid the Covid-19 epidemic. "Positive cases are rising in Delhi, which is a matter of worry but there is no need to panic. I say this because the AAP Government has invested a lot in developing the healthcare infrastructure of Delhi in the last five years."

Delhiites can send their suggestions on WhatsApp 8800007722, email delhionline.suggestions@gmail.com and call on 1031. The Chief Minister's office (CMO) in a tweet stated that the suggestions can be sent by June 5, 5 pm. "We have opened new hospitals and new ICUs, opened many Mohalla clinics and offered free treatment for the people. Your CM can assure you the Delhi Government is ready to provide adequate health facilities and a bed if you are ever infected by corona," Kejriwal said.

Record single-day jump of 156 coronavirus cases

• Total tally in State 2,104
• Day's highest 50 infected in Kendrapada
• 119 recover, total recoveries 1,245

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A whopping 156 Covid-19 cases were detected on Monday, the highest single-day jump till date, taking the State's total tally to 2,104.

Out of the new cases, Kendrapada district registered the highest 50 cases while Cuttack district reported 20 cases followed by Ganjam 17, Jagatsinghpur 14, Jajpur 11,

Kandhamal nine and Bhadrak seven. Three cases each were detected in Khordha, Nayagarh, Sundargarh, Nuapada, Mayurbhanj, Bargarh and Subarnapur districts, two cases each from Balangir, Sambalpur and one case each from Boudh, Konjar and Malkangiri districts. With this, the total number of active cases in the State rose to 969 while recoveries stood at 1,126 and seven deaths so far, the Health and Family Welfare Department said. However, as many as 119 patients recovered from the disease on Monday, taking the total recoveries to 1,245. The highest 60 recovered in Jajpur district, 13 in Cuttack, 12 in Kendrapada, nine in Jagapati, six in Nayagarh, five in Sundargarh, three each in Baleswar, Puri and Khordha, two each in Ganjam and Balangir and one in Sambalpur.

State issues own guidelines post lockdown

Allows, restricts these services

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As the Covid-19 lockdown ended in the country on Sunday, the Odisha Government issued guidelines of 'Unlock-1' that began on Monday.

Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said the number of positive cases in the State would increase in coming days with huge numbers of migrants returning to the State through various means of communication. As many as 4,26,504 people have returned to the State so far through flights, trains and buses. "The fight against Covid-19 fight is not going to end soon. We have to stay ready for every situation. The Chief Minister has already said that the month of June is very crucial," Tripathy said.

In view of the possible rise in positive cases, the State

Government has issued guidelines of 'Unlock-1, 1' said he.

Services to be restricted: Schools, colleges and other educational institutions to remain shut till July 31.

Cinema halls, gymnasiums, swimming pools and shopping malls will remain closed till June 30. Political and social gatherings and entry of people into religious institutions will be restricted till June 30.

Services to be allowed: Hotels with 30% guests. Restaurants with only take-away facilities.

Hospitals, medicines shops and other essential services allowed.



The Chief Secretary said persons aged above 65 years, children aged below 10 years, persons with co-morbidities and pregnant women have been strictly asked to remain indoors because of their vulnerability.

Besides, DGP Abhay said the 7 pm-7 am curfew would continue in the State though the Centre has relaxed the curfew as 9 pm to 5 am. "People have become negligent following easing of lockdown. We will begin enforcement against the people found violating mask-wearing and social distancing norms," he added.

Educational institutions to be shut till July 31

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Monday announced that all schools, colleges and other educational institutions would continue to remain closed till July 31. Briefing the 'Unlock-1' guidelines, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy made this announcement.

Earlier on Sunday, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash had informed that schools, which have remained closed, would not reopen on the scheduled date of June 17. However, online classes would continue while evaluation of answer-sheets of Matriculation and Plus Two examinations have already begun.

The Centre in its guidelines has not mentioned any specific date for reopening of educational institutions in July underlining that feedbacks of all stakeholders, including States and parents, would be taken before deciding on the date for reopening.

State clamps weekend shutdown in 11 districts

Orders Saturday, Sunday restrictions for 1 month

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In view of rising number of Covid-19 cases reported from 11 districts, the State Government on Monday decided to enforce a two-day shutdown in these districts every week for a period of one month.

The 48-hour shutdown would be in force in the coastal districts as well as in Nayagarh and Balangir districts till June 30, said Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy. The districts to be under complete shutdown are Ganjam, Puri, Khordha, Kendrapada, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Baleswar, Nayagarh and Balangir.

As around 95 per cent of the cases are reported from quarantine centres in these districts, the Government decided to restrict movement

of people during weekends to contain spread of infections in community level, Tripathy said. As per the shutdown restrictions, all offices, commercial establishments, bus services, local transports and non-essential services that resumed on Monday would remain closed for two days every week. However, the healthcare services, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes and medicine shops would be excluded from the shutdown norms.

The electronic media persons identified by district administration and police authorities would be allowed for movement on roads. The railway and flight services and goods movement would remain unimpeded during shutdown period. The social distancing guidelines would be strictly followed in the sectors offering essential services, Tripathy said. The move came on the first day of 'Unlock-1' after the Centre lifted lockdown in phases.

K'jhar, Jajpur, K'pada truckers spar over transport

Hundreds of trucks detained at mineral loading points

MALAY MOHAPATRA ■ KEONJHAR

The mineral transport business has led to a tussle among the truck owners associations of Kendrapada, Jajpur and Keonjhar district. A few days back, Keonjhar truck owners alleged that their trucks were detained and the drivers were harassed at the unloading point at the Paradip Port. The iron ore from Keonjhar mines is transported to Paradip en route Anandpur, Jajpur and Chandikhol. Hence, all truck owners on the route always wish to engage their trucks in this mineral transport. But since the loading points of the trucks are located in the Keonjhar district, the local truck owners get a priority in loading which sparks discontentment among outside district truck owners. The truck owners of



Paradip, Jagatsingpur, Kendrapada and Jajpur areas allegedly have started harassing the Keonjhar RTA registered trucks at the unloading point. In a backlash, the Keonjhar truck owners started detaining trucks of other districts on the Paradip route inside Keonjhar district for the last one week near Ranki bypass. Now, hundreds of trucks are parked on the National Highway after detention and no solution to the crisis has been evolved between the truck associations. Many Keonjhar registered trucks are also detained by

other associations on the Chandikhol-Paradip Express Highway. The driver and truck staff detained at Keonjhar are being provided food and water by the Kendujhar District Truck Owners' Association (KDTOA). "If they keep harassing our trucks at Paradip, we will not allow the trucks from their area to enter our district or get a loading at our mines," the KDTOA joint secretary said. A joint meeting of these associations is needed to discuss and find a solution to the dispute, opined many here.

Youth found dead under bridge in N'garh

PNS ■ NAYAGARH

Mystery shrouded the death of a youth whose body was found under a bridge at Tulapur village in Nayagarh district on Monday morning. The deceased was identified as Purnachandra Lenka,

Kin allege murder

son of one Gobinda Lenka of Tulapur. Sources said that the youth was missing for the last two days. Some locals spotted his mutilated body with disfigured face under a bridge and called up police, who reached the spot and recovered the body. Though the reasons behind Purnachandra's death are yet to be ascertained his family members alleged that has been murdered. However, police have begun an inquiry into the incident.

State-of-the-art equipment at PPT Hospital

PNS ■ PARADIP

A state-of-the-art portable X-Ray machine and a biochemistry auto analyser were dedicated to service of the patients at the PPT Hospital by Paradip Port Trust (PPT) Chairman Rinkesh Roy on Monday. PPT Deputy Chairman AK Bose, Deputy Chief Engineer Himanshu Sekhar Rout and PPT Hospital CMO Dr P Panda were present. During natural disasters, it was becoming difficult to manage investigations like blood tests and X-Ray if there was any breakdown of the main equipment, a lot of people in the locality are dependent on PPT Hospital. Now, portable X-Ray would be useful to make X-Ray examination of patients at the bed side of the seriously ill



patients. Previously, it was required to move the patient for such examination. Further, X-ray examinations of Covid-19 suspects are now possible in the Flu OPD (Acute Respiratory Infection OPD) situated totally outside the main hospital building, minimising the chances of spread of cross-infection. Previously such X-ray examination was being performed in the Radiology Department situated inside the main hospital building, which was being mandatorily sanitised thereafter.

NEWS BRIEFS

HOTEL CROWN SALUTES COVID WARRIORS



Bhubaneswar: Leading city-based Hotel Crown has displayed a banner appreciating the services of Covid-19 warriors.

PIONEER SCRIBE HONOURED AS CORONA WARRIOR

Paradip: The Pioneer Paradip correspondent Prasanta Rout was felicitated as a corona warrior by the Odisha Road Safety Forum and the Bapuji Academy at Kujang recently. Forum president social activist Arun Kumar Pani, vice-president Sarada Prasad Sarangi, Secretary Sheshanayake Acharya, chief guest Kujang Tehsiladar SP Priyadarshini, social worker Sunakar Behera, Journalists Dumsanta Majhi, Bibhuti Bhushan Das, Prasant Kumar Rout, Ranjit Panda, Hariguru Das, Manoj Pradhan, Pralaya Mohapatra, Pramod Mallick, Rashmi Ranjan Routray, Srikanth Das, Gourga Swain, Nirbiptra Das, Babru Bahan Rout and Anganwadi and ASHA Workers were present.

ONE DIES IN ASPHYXIATION, TWO CRITICAL

Kendrapada: A person died and two others' conditions became critical due to asphyxiation when they were engaged in removing a latrine tank centring at Post Office lane here. The deceased was identified as SK Munna of Idgahmohalla. The injured duo was admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital.

IFFCO PARADEEP HOLDS UTKAL JANANI SINGING

Paradip: The IFFCO Paradeep unit organised mass singing of 'Bande Utkala Janani' in its premises to honour corona warriors. Senior officials, employees, contract workers, township residents and children participated in the programme wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Unit head KJ Patel, GM (Finance) Suresh Goyal, JGM (Elect) SD Sharma, DGM (P&A) AK Malli, DGM (HR) G Acharya, SM (HR) BK Mahapatra, HR Anil Kumar Singh, Administrative Officer PK Beura and Employees' Union president Suvendu Majhi and general secretary TR Puhari were present.

SOCIAL WORKER LAKSHMI PANDA DEATH ANNIV HELD

Brahmapur: The 23rd death anniversary of Ganjam district's known social worker Lakshmi Panda was observed at her Gandhinagar residence here on Saturday. Panda was a kind-hearted and soft spoken person. Because of her ungrudging help to distressed and poor people, she was popularly called as 'Sahuan' (woman who gives financial help to poor) in need by the villagers of Alladigan under Purushottampur block. Panda's husband late Govindra Chandra Panda too was a freedom fighter and an Ex-Serviceman who fought in the Second World War.

VEDANTA STAFFERS SING 'UTKALA JANANI'

Bhubaneswar: In response to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's appeal, Vedanta employees, business partners and families across its plant sites and townships in Lanigarh and Jharsuguda recited the 'Bande Utkala Janani' song and expressed gratitude to the State Government, district administrations, private organisations, civic bodies and individuals for their relentless efforts in fighting Covid pandemic. "The State Government's endeavours to confront and contain the pandemic and provide care to residents have been strategic, effective and praiseworthy. I extend heartfelt gratitude to all Covid warriors of Odisha," said CEO CN Singh.

DHAMRA PORT STAFFERS SING UTKALA JANANI

Dhamra: Rising to the call of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, employees of the Adani Dhamra Port sang 'Bande Utkala Janani' to boost morale power of corona warriors. Led by port CEO Subrata Tripathy, all senior officers, heads of various departments and projects, ship captains, sailors, staff and workers sang the song.

NTPC TALCHER KANIHA SALUTES COVID WARRIORS

Talcher: Responding to the call of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, NTPC Talcher Kaniha employees, including contractual ones, sang 'Bande Utkala Janani' at 5:30 pm at its various departments and locations across its plant. They expressed gratitude to the frontline workers, including doctors, nurses, security personnel, police, people's representatives and others, engaged in Covid fight. Staffs wore masks and maintained social distance while singing the song.

RED CROSS SUPPORTS AMPHAN-HIT PEOPLE

Bhubaneswar: The Indian Red Cross Society, Odisha State Branch distributed relief materials like polythene and mosquito nets to Cyclone Amphan-affected people in Kendrapada, Jagatsingpur, Bhadrak and Baleswar districts. It also supported the whirlwind-affected people of Haladipada slum of Laxmisingar in Bhubaneswar.

Migrant dead near quarantine centre

PNS ■ CUTTACK

A migrant worker was found dead near a quarantine centre in Krushnapur panchayat under the Badamba police limits in Cuttack district on Monday. The deceased was identified as Brajabandhu Rana, who had returned from Mumbai and was kept at the quarantine centre since May 26. His body was found near the boundary wall of the quarantine centre in morning. Being informed, police reached the spot, recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem. The reason behind the death was yet to be ascertained. Police started investigation into the matter.

Same-sex marriage held as girls get into wedlock

RAJESH BEHERA ■ KENDRAPADA

Love knows no limits or bounds. Such a case has come to the fore in the district amid lockdown where two girls, who were in love with each other, have committed to spend their lives together by becoming life partners. They exchanged garlands in front of Goddess Durga at a temple here. This is the second instance in the district where a same-sex marriage between girls has been held. Charulata Mallick (30), a resident of Karilopatana GP under Marshaghal block, and Sandhyarani Mallick (24) of Ghodadanda (Hurasahi) under Gadapalur block on Wednesday solemnised their same-sex marriage at Karilopatana -based Durga



devi temple. According to the girls, both of them came in contact

with each other and developed intimacy. Later, they started loving with each other and decided to marry. Though they faced opposition from the family members, yet they remained firm on their decision. "We both decided to live with each other for which we fled our houses in Bhubaneswar and returned to our locality on Wednesday," they informed the duo girls. When the matter came to the notice of Sandhyarani's father, the family members came to the house of Charulata and discussed with her parents. Later, both the family members gave nod to the same-sex marriage between Charulata and Sandhyarani. Even though India does not have a law on same-sex marriages, but the two are within their legal rights to live with each other since the Supreme Court has partly struck down Section 377 of IPC, said Bidhubhusan Mohapatra, a lawyer. Notably, in January 2019, one Sabitri Parida of Mahakalapada block solemnised same-sex marriage with Monalisa Nayak of Pattamundi block and have been staying as life partner in the Kendrapada township-based short stay home.

4 cousins drown in pond in D'nal

DHENKANAL: Four cousins, all minors, drowned in a pond while taking bath at Barabanka Sali under the Sadar police station of Dhenkanal on Monday. While two of them were boys, two others were girls. According to reports, family members of the deceased spotted the bodies floating in the pond. Earlier, their relatives had frantically searched for them in the locality as they didn't return home. All of them were declared dead at the District Headquarters Hospital. The bodies were sent for postmortem by police, who started investigation into the matter after registering an UD case.

'Stop privatisation of electricity service'

SUCI holds demo, demands waiving of 2 months' bill

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Covid-19 lockdown has broken the financial backbone of the people. Many have lost their jobs and become unemployed. The Government is appealing to the house owner to waive the rent of tenants. In this scenario, the Cesus 'anti-people' policy has become an extra burden on the common people, said the Socialist Unity

Centre of India (Communist) on Monday. While earlier the electricity bills for the months of April and May used to be between Rs 500 to Rs 700 now it is between Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000. In this situation, two months electricity bill should be waived off. The privatisation of power distribution companies, said the SUCI, which held a demonstration before Cesu office at Ranihat in Cuttack and submitted a memorandum addressed to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. SUCI Cuttack district secretary Biswabasu Das and office secretary Khageswar Sethi were, among others, present.

'Declare B'pur City Hosp Covid unit'

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

Former president of Ganjam district BJP Kanhu Charan Patil has alleged that the corona warriors fighting the Covid-19 pandemic such as doctors and nurses of Brahmapur are in distress and grossly neglected by the Government. Citing an example, Patil said that though the doctors of Brahmapur City Hospital are on duty to attend hundreds of patients in the hospital every day in an unhealthy environment and are now forced to take to streets, the Government was apathetic to them. Patil urged upon the B'pur pati urged upon the Government to immediately declare the City Hospital of Brahmapur as a 'Covid Hospital' with an exclusive ward with all equipment and safety measures.

15 G'pati, R'gada women stranded in AP

Govt for help to return home

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

Fifteen women migrant labourers of Gajapati and Rayagada districts have been confined in a sea food processing firm in Andhra Pradesh as their contractor is allegedly not allowing them to return home. These women have fervently appealed the district administration and Odisha Government to help them in returning back to the State. Reports said five months



back the sea food company contractor had taken the labourers to a lockdown factory at Budarajoga Cherubu village in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh for a remuneration of Rs 7,000. But due to the nationwide lockdown for the coronavirus

A typical day at home

This lockdown is not completely gloomy



SWAYAM PRAWA MISHRA

The corona lockdown has opened up a Pandora's Box of events in a household. Earlier in March 2020 when the lockdown process started with stringent norms, the focus was primarily on food gathering followed by staying safe. After March 25 as the days passed, by the online technology made its existence felt on an hourly,

daily, weekly and monthly basis. Earlier no doubt, we were slaves to it with, of course, our own autonomy; but now, it has become the ultimate master. So, let me pen down the events of a typical day in a middle-class family during the lockdown. One of the prominent forces was felt by our children and their teachers, who started daily in the online platforms to make teaching-learning an ongoing process. It may not be a challenge in the West but it surely is a challenge in the East for making your 5 year old kid(s) sit constantly to study online and when the teacher instructs (apparently it is for the parents) don't move here and there; sit properly as you sit in your class; do get a copy and a pencil; and so on, it seems like even Babubhai would have failed to follow the instructions. Then come the never ending assignments and to make it accomplished is a task in itself

for the parents. Most of the parents would be struggling to wake their kids for the general daily classes let alone the Yoga, aerobics, dance, vocal, art and crafts and other hobby activity classes. In the art class when the teacher says to draw step by step a large round pot filled with cylindrical shaped petals, Gungun draws a rectangular pot with round shaped petals, and draws the teacher moves to the next step of drawing the stem and the leaves, the kid has finished the task and says "Phew! It's over Mamma" and asks "Why the teacher is not coloring it?" In the meantime, the "admin" by mistake turns the "un-mute" icon for a few kids and the fight among the parents and the kid is clearly audible. "The mother is heard authoritatively saying, "Arey round shape bana pot ko" and the kid keeps screaming back "Mein nahin karunga". It reminds me of the Sholay's

Gabbar and Thakur scene of "Yeh hath mujhe de thakur" and "Nahin". Next, if you come across a Bhisma "Pitamah" or Dronacharya or an effervescent Arjuna type of a kid who finishes all assignments and tasks efficiently on time, a glaring conscious arises in you questioning about your parenting skills. However, the kids especially the little ones love being at home with their parents around and watching unrestricted cartoons and kids channels. Nevertheless remember learning is an ongoing process and so also is parenting. Since olden times, we have seen in the mythological serials and have heard stories from our grandmothers about how women have to do household work and child bearing and rearing irrespective of the position they hold in society. If or not it has trained the women to accept their fate, it has surely

made a point for the male counterparts to expect the same from their mothers, wives and sisters. So, how can you engage in a lockdown, along with the daily chores of Jhadu, Pochha, Bartan, Khana bhanda, kapda dhona, etc., calls for a prodigious multitasking. The situation becomes easy if both partners strategize in a way to share the burden and live with love and respect for each other and devoid of any anxiousness. The days keep moving with

the online meetings, calls and emails. As the night approaches, you are glued to the news on the Television and see the cases reported and deaths apart from other information. You start searching for an alternative channel for some respite. If you find any of your all time favorite mythological serials or any hit meaningful movie, you are at bliss. This lockdown is not completely gloomy. Life has given us a task to stay at home and fight with the outer coronavirus as well as with the inner virus. It's time to understand the gaps and make efforts to fill up them. The lesson learnt is you are surely make you a BETTER YOU. Have a great time!

(Dr Mishra is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Analytical and Applied Economics, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar)

BJP Bihar campaign to start with 'virtual rally'

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, the BJP is set to unlock its poll campaign in Bihar next week with a "virtual rally" by Union Home Minister and former BJP president Amit Shah who will address the people of the State through video conference and Facebook Live.

Shah's virtual rally will be followed by BJP leader P Nadda's "digital rally" in the State that is slated to go to polls in October-November this year to elect 243 members of the Bihar Legislative Assembly. The term of the current Assembly elected in 2015 will expire on November 29, 2020.

The BJP has been sharing power with the JD(U), headed by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar since 2005, barring a four-year gap from 2013-17. The BJP would be the largest of the 2,000 virtual video conferences, rallies or meetings announced across the States by the BJP in the next month. The Central and State leaders, to begin with, will address and mobilise booth-level workers in the State through video-conferencing.

According to Bihar BJP President Sanjay Jaiswal, the

party has set a target of roping in "at least one lakh people across the 243 Assembly segments in Bihar" for the video conference, besides those who may prefer to listen to the speaker on the social networking site.

"The virtual rally can be very well called the commencement of our digital campaign for Assembly elections in Bihar. The June 9 rally by the Home Minister will be followed by similar public addresses from party president P Nadda on a later date. Itinerary for the same will be made known in due course. Nadda is expected to address the people in two long sessions covering north and south Bihar," he said at Patna.

The Rashtriya Janata Dal is also planning to counter Shah's "virtual rally" by its own "Garib Adhikar Divas" rally on June 9.

BJP's national president this week said that Coronavirus has restricted the scope of real poll campaigning but the party would launch electioneering sticking to new norms of social distancing and avoiding face masks.

Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Shashi Kumar Modi, had, interestingly, spoken of the possibility of virtual cam-

paign and even 'online voting' replacing old-style rallies and the long queues outside polling booths in the times of pandemic.

The election commission will have the last say on the date of polling and the mode of campaign if the pandemic curve is not beaten effectively before the year-end, sources said.

While large gatherings are prohibited under what is being termed as "Unlock 1.0", it remains to be seen whether conventional poll campaign involving rallies and roadshows will be allowed by the time the election schedule is announced.

Rival parties in Bihar apprehend that a campaign restricted to the "digital" mode would be of disproportionate advantage to the BJP, which has a well-oiled IT cell, and that the number of Lok Sabha seats in Bihar for more than six years can marshal resources with far greater ease than its rivals.

Last month, Nadda had addressed a meeting of Bihar core committee leaders and chief ministers through a video-conferencing and exchanged views related to electioneering, including the subject of stranded migrants from the State.

India's corona fatality rate still lower at 2.83%

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

COVID-19 case-wise, India may have moved up decisively from the 10th position to 7th position within a week since May 25 but the fatality rate at 2.83 per cent of the total death of nearly 5,400 is much lower than the global 6 per cent.

The recovery rate in India also improved to 48.13 per cent on Monday. On May 25, India with 1,38,645 infected cases was at tenth position piping Iran which currently has 1,54,445 cases. On May 31, India with 1,30,335 cases in the country moved to 7th position.

A senior official from the Union Health Ministry said that infection and fatality might seemingly be moving at the faster pace in India, but when compared to the other high countries, it is comparatively low (See Box).

The case fatality rate is 2.83 per cent. On May 18, it was 3.15 per cent while on May 3, it was 3.25 per cent and on April 15 it was 3.5 per cent.

"A steady decline can be seen in the case fatality rate in the country. The relatively low death rate is attributed to the continued focus on surveillance, timely case identification and clinical management of the cases," he said.

In comparison, said the official, the USA has 5.92 per cent, UK (14.07 per cent), Italy

THE CASE FATALITY RATE FOR COUNTRIES HAVING THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF DEATHS

COUNTRIES	TOTAL DEATHS	CASE FATALITY RATE
World	367,166	6.19%
USA	1,01,567	5.92%
UK	38,376	14.07%
Italy	33,340	14.33%
Spain	29,043	12.12%
France	28,717	19.35%
Brazil	27,878	5.99%
Belgium	9,453	16.25%
Mexico	9,415	11.13%
Germany	8,500	4.68%
Iran	7,734	5.19%
Canada	6,996	7.80%
Netherlands	5,951	12.87%

(14.33 per cent), Spain (12.12 per cent) and other around eight other developed nations where case fatality is comparatively higher than India.

"Through a graded, pre-emptive and pro-active approach, we are taking several steps along with the States/UTs for prevention, containment and management of Covid-19."

These are being regularly reviewed and monitored at the highest level," he added. The official also said that two specific

trends are being noticed: while the recovery rate is increasing on one hand, case fatality is going down on the other.

Of the 1,318 patients have been cured of the disease, with recovery rate at 48.19 per cent amongst Covid-19 patients.

The testing capacity has increased in the country through 472 Government and 204 private laboratories (total 676). Laboratories said. Cumulatively, 38,32,207 samples have been tested so far for the infection.

IMA urges Govt to extend MSME benefits to clinics, nursing homes

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has urged the Government to extend the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) benefits, recently announced by the Finance Ministry, to clinics, nursing homes and small hospitals run by single doctors, couple doctors and group of doctors who are grappling with financial crisis owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.



All of them are important in the current stage of exit to provide non-Covid services and perhaps even Covid-19 related services," IMA national president Dr Rajan Sharma said.

"There are thousands of single doctors, couple doctors and group of doctors who have established clinics, nursing homes and small hospitals in almost all the districts and towns of the country. They provide affordable healthcare and are accessible 24x7."

"Most of them fail to come under the definition of MSME. It has been a time they have been badly affected in the current lockdown situation. Many of them have been closed. Some of them may not revive at all.

This stimulus package, which requires clarity will allow these institutions to survive and continue serving the people. Dr Sharma added. The IMA represents private medical professionals in the country.

The Government has announced a major economic package for the MSMEs which has been given a special consideration to help them bail out from financial crisis in the wake of Coronavirus pandemic.

Naidu, Birla mull virtual Parliament in long run

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday discussed about the conduct of Monsoon Session of Parliament under social distancing norms in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Naidu and Birla will convene a "virtual Parliament" as an option in the long run and to adopt technology to enable Parliament Sessions to take over situations when regular meetings are not possible.

Both the Presiding officers also referred the issue of virtual meetings of parliamentary committees to the Rules Committees of both the Houses in view of the confidentiality aspect of the deliberations.

Parliament officials said several options are being considered including holding the meeting of Lok Sabha in the

Central Hall, with the Rajya Sabha, which has less members than the lower house, shifting to the chamber of Lok Sabha. Also the sittings of both the Houses can be held on alternate days.

Taking note of reports suggesting that the fight against the coronavirus is likely to be a long one, Naidu said in a meeting at his official residence which was also attended by the Secretary Generals of both the houses.

The presiding officers directed the Secretary Generals to examine the feasibility of using the central hall of Parliament appropriately to ensure social distancing norms during the upcoming monsoon session.

"They noted that since there is a high element of maintaining confidentiality of the proceedings of both the Houses, which are open to general public besides being

telecast live, virtual Parliament is an option to be explored in the long run."

The officials were also directed to examine in detail various technical and other arrangements to be ensured to enable smooth functioning of both the Houses.

Parliament usually meets in July-August for the monsoon session. It was adjourned sine die on March 24, ahead of schedule, amid growing concerns over the Covid-19 outbreak.

"Both the Secretary Generals briefed the Chairman and Speaker on issues connected with the proposed virtual meetings of various committees of Parliament," said the official.

Measures include providing a safe technical platform, complying with the rules of confidentiality of deliberations in such meetings and the difficulties in ensuring the

same in case of virtual meeting, they said.

Infrastructure upgrade to be undertaken to enable virtual meetings and the time likely to be taken in this regard were also discussed.

Taking cognisance of the long existing rules regarding confidentiality in respect of both the Houses, the officials and the implications of holding virtual meetings, Naidu and Birla opined that it would be necessary to refer the issue of virtual meetings to the Rules Committees of both the Houses, the sources said.

Regarding the view expressed in some quarters that presiding officers can suspend the Rules, officials have pointed out that such suspension requires a motion to be moved in the House and presiding officers cannot suspend the rules by issuing directions.

Both Naidu and Birla noted that the chairman of var-

ious committees of Parliament including the department-related Standing Committees are empowered to convene regular meetings of respective committees on their own.

However, in view of the feedback being received from some members of Parliament about their inability to travel on account of quarantine norms in various states, they felt that it may be better for the chairman of various committees to convene meetings after ascertaining the likely attendance of Members.

He questioned the "silence" of the Government on the "brazen Chinese transgression" into Indian territory.

The Congress leader also expressed concern over issues raised by Nepal and hoped the Government would find a lasting solution to it.

"Why has the Modi Government not taken the nation into confidence vis-a-vis

Take political parties, country into confidence over China border issue, Cong tells Centre

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday asked the Government to take all political parties and the country into confidence over restoration of the status quo ante on the border with China.

Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said there can be no compromise on India's security and territorial integrity and posed a set of questions to the Government on the situation at the border in Ladakh.

He questioned the "silence" of the Government on the "brazen Chinese transgression" into Indian territory.

The Congress leader also expressed concern over issues raised by Nepal and hoped the Government would find a lasting solution to it.

"Why has the Modi Government not taken the nation into confidence vis-a-vis

the actual position on the ground," the Congress asked.

"While the Government has briefly commented upon resolving the crisis diplomatically, the Modi Government must take all political parties and the country into confidence on restoring the status quo ante and protecting India's territorial integrity," Surjewala demanded at AICC Press conference.

The Congress said that unmet news reports reflect that Chinese forces have made serious transgressions into Indian Territory at three points in Ladakh and Sikkim.

"Reports of Chinese Army moving thousands of troops in Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso Lake Area (Ladakh) are disturbing and is an attempt to occupy our 'territorial integrity'," said the party leader. The grand old party said if these reports are true, the

Modi Government must answer "Have the Chinese troops occupied Indian Territory in the Galwan River Valley and Pangong Tso Lake in Ladakh?"

It asked from the government to clarify that the Chinese transgressions into Galwan River Valley and Pangong Tso Lake in Ladakh?

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NOTICE OF POSTAL BALLOT /E-VOTING TO THE MEMBERS

Members are hereby informed that pursuant to Section 110 of the Companies Act, 2013, as amended (the "Act") read with Rule 22 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, Himalaya Food International Limited (the "Company") is seeking approval from its Members by passing the resolution as set out in the Postal Ballot Notice dated May 28, 2020 ("Notice") by way of remote e-voting.

Members are also hereby informed that pursuant to Sections 108 and 110 of the Companies Act, 2013 ("Companies Act"), read with the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 ("Management Rules"), each as amended from time to time, and the General Circular Nos. 14/2020 and 17/2020 dated April 8, 2020 and April 13, 2020, respectively, issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India (the "MCA Circulars") and the consequent dispatch of the postal ballot notice along with explanatory statement (in electronic form) on June 1, 2020 to all shareholders whose names appear in the register of members list of beneficial owners, as on the close of working hours on May 22, 2020 ("cut-off date"), as received from the National Securities Depository Limited ("NSDL") and Central Depository Services (India) Limited ("CDSL") (together referred to as "Depositories") and who have registered their e-mail addresses in respect of electronic holdings with the Depositories through the concerned Depository participants and in respect of physical holdings with BEETAL Financial & Computer Services Pvt. Ltd., Share Transfer Agent of the Company ("STA"). A member who is not holding the shares as on the cut-off date shall treat this notice for information purposes.

Members may also note that in compliance to the above MCA Circulars the communication of assent/dissent of the members on the resolution proposed in this notice will only take place through the remote e-voting system.

To enable participation in the remote e-voting process by those shareholders, to whom physical Postal Ballot Notice could not be dispatched, the Company has made appropriate arrangements with its STA for registration of email addresses, in form of the MCA Circulars.

For the purpose of registration of email address and voting in the resolution proposed in the Postal Ballot through remote e-voting, members who have not registered their email address may get their email address registered by sending an email to the Company's Share Transfer Agent at beetalra1@gmail.com. Members may also intimate the same to the Company by writing at www.himalayainternational.com. The members shall provide the following information in the email:

1. Full Name
2. No of shares held
3. Folio Number (if shares held in physical) and PAN
4. Share certificate number (if shares held in physical) and PAN
5. DP ID & Client ID (if shares held in demat)
6. Email id to be registered and Mobile No.

Post successful registration of the email, the member would get soft copy of the notice and the procedure for e-voting along with the User ID and Password to enable e-voting for this Postal Ballot.

The Company has appointed CDSL as a service provider for facilitating e-voting to enable the Members to cast their votes electronically. Further, the S.S. Gopal Praxidex Company Secretary shall act as Scrutinizer to scrutinize the Postal Ballot process in a fair and transparent manner.

Notice is hereby given that the Members can vote on the business specified in the Notice during the period commencing Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. and ending on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. The e-voting module shall be disabled for voting thereafter and voting through electronic means shall not be allowed thereafter. Once the vote on a resolution is cast by a Member, the Member shall not be allowed to change it subsequently. The remote e-voting module shall be disabled for voting thereafter.

Please also note that the results of Postal Ballot process (by way of remote e-voting) will be declared on or before Friday, July 3, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. (IST) at the Registered Office of the Company by the Managing Director/Executive Director.

In case you have any queries or issues regarding e-voting, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") and e-voting manual available at www.evotingindia.com, under help section or write an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdsindia.com or to Ms. Surabhi Maheshwari Company Secretary at cs@himalayainternational.com.

This Notice is available on our website at www.himalayainternational.com and the website of CDSL at www.evotingindia.com and also on the website of Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com.

For Himalaya Food International Ltd.
 Sd/-
 Surabhi Maheshwari
 (Company Secretary)

Odisha, Sikkim, Mizoram join 'One Nation-One Ration Card'

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

Three more States — Odisha, Sikkim and Mizoram — have joined the One Nation-One Ration Card scheme, taking the number of states and union territories (UTs) which have joined the scheme to 20. Uttarakhand, Nagaland and Manipur will also be added to the national cluster by August.

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan and on Monday said necessary infrastructure work - upgradation of electronic Point of Sale (ePOS) software, integration with central Integrated Management of PDS (IM-PDS) and Aamritvan portal - availability of ration cards/beneficiaries data in central repository and requisite testing of national portability transactions — required for ration card portability has been completed in these three states-Odisha, Sikkim and Mizoram.

So far, ration card portability has been implemented in 17 states and UTs—Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, Telangana, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh.

Under the "One Nation-One Ration Card" initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any Fair Price Shop in the country using the same ration card.

Further, constant efforts are being made by this Department to expand the reach of national portability to the beneficiaries of other states/UTs also in association with respective state/UT governments," Paswan said.

PM Svanidhi for street vendors

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) on Monday launched PM Svanidhi, or Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atma Nirbhar Nidhi scheme, which is a special micro-credit facility plan to provide affordable loan of up to ₹10,000 to more than 50 lakh street vendors, who had their businesses operational on or before 24 March. The scheme is valid until March 2022.

Under the scheme, vendors can avail working capital loan of up to ₹10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments within one year. On timely/early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy of 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) on six-

months basis. There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan.

The scheme is applicable to vendors, hawkers, thewaleas, rehwalas, theladhwalas in different areas/contextes who supply goods and services. Street vendors belonging to the surrounding peri-urban/rural areas are also included.

The duration of the scheme is till March 2022. The street vendors belonging to the surrounding peri-urban/rural areas are being included as beneficiaries under the urban livelihood programme for the first time.

OZ PM to hand over stolen artefacts to Modi during virtual meet

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

A virtual meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison scheduled on June 4 is also likely to witness the latter handing over online the exquisitely carved stolen artefacts, including two Nayak period dwarapalas or temple gate guardians and a 6th or 7th Century serpent king (Nagaraja).

The Australian Government had earlier planned to return the three antiquities of cultural significance during the official visit of Morrison to India in January early this year. But the plan went for a toss, first owing to forest fires in Australia followed

by the Covid-19 pandemic which has brought the world on its knees.

Sources in the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) said that the three culturally significant artefacts, a pair of Dwarapal (doorway guardians), dating back to 15th century, are from Tamil Nadu. The 'Nagaraja' (serpent king), belonging to 6th or 8th century from either Rajasthan or Madhya Pradesh, was at display at Naravela gallery of Australia. It had reportedly purchased them from idol smuggler Subhash Kapoor.

However, extensive research undertaken by the Gallery prompted it to voluntarily return these artefacts to India. "We are expecting the Australian leader to virtually handover the idols to our Prime Minister Modi when



they have a virtual meeting on June 4. After that, we will send the two Dwarapal to Idol wing of Tamil Nadu which has registered a theft case in the matter while the Serpent King will be handed over to a museum in Red Fort," the sources

India by Australia. The two and a half feet 16th-century idol which was kept in the gallery in Adelaide, Australia for 17 years was traced a year ago.

Three years ago, Australia had returned three artefacts including an idol of goddess Pratyangira, stolen from a Shiva temple in Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu. In 2014, then Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott had returned two statues of Nataraja and Ardhanarishwara stolen from temples in the state.

Both India and Australia are a party to the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transport of Ownership of Cultural Property.

Another push

Cabinet decisions on MSMEs and the agricultural economy are well-intended but depend a lot on implementation and sub-text



The Coronavirus and its shape-shifting effect on the economy have been debilitating but the Government has been reacting to them in fits and starts. And while the stimulus packages announced in a series so far haven't been as stimulating, the Cabinet decisions with regard to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and the agricultural economy are well-intended but depend a lot on implementation and details. The definition of MSMEs has been changed, their turnover limit revised upward to ₹250 crore from ₹100 crore. The Government has infused ₹20,000 crore into

the sector as subordinate debt for stressed units. And although the Finance Minister in her first tranche of the stimulus had included ₹3 lakh crore collateral-free automatic loans for them, many MSME owners claimed that about 97 per cent of them were not in the corporate sector and were either partnerships or proprietorships. So only a minuscule number of firms, that were either private limited or LLP, benefited. Besides, this badly-hit sector, which contributes up to 30 per cent of the GDP, has not quite recovered from demonetisation and many units are almost on the verge of closure. And for all the detailing, the fact of the matter is that credit channels like banks and NBFCs will have to ease loans to this sector no matter what the Government says. Even now, MSME credit is a very small percentage of total outstanding bank credit and that pie was declining even before the pandemic, decelerating industrial growth. The proposed fund of funds would help list MSMEs on stock exchange, hoping it would encourage private sector investments in them. But without good ratings and financials, that would not deliver immediately. Farmers, too, got some incentive in the form of a hike in Minimum Support Price (MSP) for 14 crops, which will be 50-83 per cent more than the cost of production. But the Government's loan facility to them (₹3 lakh with a two per cent interest subvention) and the credit scheme for street vendors still do not address the dire need for fund infusion. Of course, more decisions guaranteeing farmers' incomes, encouraging crop rationalisation and making agri-business investment worthy are expected like getting rid of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act and facilitating easy inter-state trade for farmers. They are currently bound to sell agriculture produce only through APMC mandis, which restrict the free flow of farm products and lead to cartelisation. Though APMCs were meant to protect farmers from commission agents and middlemen, over time they embodied the very ills that they were meant to cure. But to their credit, they did ensure a steady procurement of foodgrains to avoid our food crises. So though farmers may have free market benefits, dismantling a regimented procurement structure would have to be followed up by creating an efficient marketing and distribution system that does not compromise our food security. Free market policies may not look at such altruistic priorities as creating a buffer. Yet we must remember that at least our surplus food reserves helped us somewhat during an emergency brought about by the pandemic. The dairy industry would be a good comparison. With private dairies refusing to buy extra milk produced, only cooperative dairies picked it up and converted it into other milk products, thereby easing the pressure on dairy owners. The Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation is even providing free milk to migrants to take care of the glut in supplies. Also, over 90 per cent of our farmers do not have access to regulated markets, so dismantling them wouldn't really have a cascading impact. A better bet would be to widen a network of well-distributed mandis and invest in longer shelf life of produce by way of attendant infrastructure like cold chains, storage, grading, transportation and so on.

Also, many of these measures were intended and discussed before to revive a slowing economy and are not particularly a palliative to the pandemic. We still have a slowing GDP to take care of and that will need big bang reforms and a fund infusion in the short run. Second, this year's GDP projection has fallen to 4.2 per cent and a consistent downward revision of growth means that figures aren't sacred. And for all the push to the agricultural sector, nothing is being done to generate demand in urban hubs or tackle joblessness without which no reform would make sense. Our manufacturing and construction growth is almost flatlining and certain sectors are just not being considered for incentivisation. Till this piecemeal approach continues, no matter how reinvigorating each is, there is no rescuing the economy.

Back to space

The privately-funded SpaceX mission not only marks America's return to manned space flight but is much more



A comment on Twitter read, "2020 in the US resembled 1968." A statement by aviation journalist Jon Ostrower has a historical context to it. For those of us in India, it is worth recalling that in the late 1960s, as the US reached for the moon, race riots and civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King reached a crescendo. Similarly, protests following the "effective" murder of an unarmed Black man George Floyd, just as America launched its first manned mission to space after almost a decade, is a telling commentary on the US: The world's only superpower can climb the greatest heights and plumb the lowest lows all at once. However, one must not lose sight of the tremendous achievement of the SpaceX Crew Dragon mission to the International Space Station (ISS) undertaken by astronauts Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley. For one, while funded in part by the US' space agency, NASA, the rocket that carried the astronauts to space, the Falcon 9, the Dragon capsule and even the spacesuits the astronauts wore, were all developed by the Elon Musk-promoted SpaceX. Musk, who also founded electric carmaker Tesla, is a divisive figure for many but only the most petulant will deny that he is a technology visionary. Developing a commercially-viable space launch system from scratch and now using it to launch astronauts from American soil, he has done something that was previously unthinkable. A private, commercial organisation without Government support, funded by Musk's billions among other investors in a sector previously dominated by Government money across the world, he has proven, like he himself with electric cars, that change is possible.

This acquires even more significance as India, too, is opening up its space sector for commercial opportunities. Of course, we might not be able to find a man like Musk but even small private sector development, starting with a satellite that can use existing technology from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), can drive India's space industry. Musk's development with SpaceX alongside the work by fellow American billionaire Jeff Bezos with his "Blue Origin" has created large volumes of research as well as high-tech jobs across the US. India can emulate this and create jobs for legions of its best and brightest engineers, many of who emigrated to the US to work with the likes of Musk and Bezos as well as the larger aerospace and space industries. Arguing that opportunities exist and allowing industry access is not, however, the be-all and end-all of policy. The Indian Government, ISRO and private Indian industry will have to walk the talk if we want to emulate Musk.

Age of reason

Amid border tensions, India must beat China at its own game by playing to its strengths, lowering rhetoric, strengthening its military-economic muscle and posturing peace



BHOPIINDER SINGH

The crest and trough of the Sino-Indian relationship has been witnessing its lowest ebb ever since the Doklam standoff of 2017. Now, an expected reportage of counter-narratives is ensuing on both sides. Hard facts have become a casualty. The primary driver for the present jingoistic fervour is the cold reality of extreme "political vulnerability" following mismanagement of the COVID pandemic and its accompanying impact both in Beijing and New Delhi. Thus, the common urge for some societal distraction. The ability to spin the situation (however severe) towards their own advantage has been the hallmark of both regimes.

While this is certainly not the sort of diet for the weary appetites of New Delhi's sensibilities, it is clearly up the Chinese path of circumstantial preference. The Xi regime is legitimised and galvanised by the hegemonic "Chinese Dream" and the sudden undoing of the same due to the socio-economic cost of COVID-19. Alongside came the trade war with the US, impulsive tendencies flaring up in Hong Kong, Tibet and with the Uighurs. The re-election of Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-Wen, who has brazenly slammed the door on the Chinese offer of "one country, two systems," dealt a further blow. Chinese President Xi Jinping is desperately looking for distraction and is showcasing some "wins." He is punting on the tried and tested formula of patriotism to "manufacture" distraction.

In such times, the media becomes the foremost weapon for subterfuge and inflaming passions that tend to divert passions from real issues. It is in this backdrop that a rather bizarre, loaded and factually questionable god was made by Xi when he said, "It is necessary to explore ways of training and preparing for war because epidemic control efforts have been normalised." The supposed "enemy" was not named. It could be anyone — Taiwan, the US or India — given the prevailing dissonance. The Indian media does no service in biting the bait with its own proclivity for war-mongering and provoking the citizenry to adopt their own diversionary views. Uber-nationalism is also fodder. Besides, it is also ostensibly projecting a "positive" outlook of Indian capabilities.

Amid the media din, the official dispensation has maintained an unusual silence, unlike the fuming free-for-all against Pakistan. Somewhere, the chinks in the US's foreign policy (especially with our neighbours) are getting embarrassingly exposed with traditional allies like Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, too, rolling their eyes gently at China. Indian diplomacy seems to have got carried away with its own supposed stridency and circumstantial "pivot" with an ultimately flimsy



US ignoring the virtues of quiet diplomacy and humility.

The fact is that China has an expansionist agenda while India does not. This is reflected in Chinese realpolitik and its chess-board moves. Denial and deception are a standard feature of Chinese diplomacy and no amount of serving tea on a swing can undo that basic instinct. When Xi was being personally charmed in Ahmedabad, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was engaged in a border fracas at that very moment. The same China, which selectively posits a "Dragon-Elephant tango," will have no qualms to veto India in favour of an international terrorist like Masood Azhar.

To get carried away by "hometown diplomacy" is reminiscent of *Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai* (India and China are brothers) naivety. Border issues between India and China date back to decades but a consensus on delimiting the same was established by way of improving bilateral relations. Today, a breakdown of that diplomatic understanding is apparent. Rhetoric on both sides needs to be lowered and not escalated. Beyond a point, the Chinese themselves cannot afford to open yet another "front" in these trying times.

So when the dust settles, both sides will claim to have "bloodied each other's nose," their cadres will be electrified and then, the leadership on both

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THE CITIZENRY HAS TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT TO REVERT TO OLD-FASHIONED AND PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMACY THAT IS NOT NECESSARILY CONDUCTED UNDER THE GLARE OF THE MEDIA LENS OR WITH ONE EYE PERMANENTLY FIXED ON ELECTORAL PROSPECTS
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sides will move on to the next set of distraction after having "won" this round. But the essential point of "tripping diplomacy" is well-nigh forgotten.

Reality is that 2020 is not 1962 even though the Indian armed forces are numerically and materially lesser than the PLA. However, the Chinese would know better than most that numeric superiority is not enough. Limited combat operations against India in 1967 at Nathu La and Cho La or the more expansive war against the Vietnamese forces in 1979 would validate this but the Chinese did get a bloody nose, both times.

Worse for the Chinese, today's PLA is also the largest military to have never partaken in any tangible combat except where Indian soldiers are combat-experienced and tested. The Chinese are masters of knowing when to bargain as also just how much. They will limit their activism to the levels already established and keep the kettle boiling with existing and new-found proxies in the sub-continent. They just found a convenient opening for limiting distraction as the Indian diplomacy and the Government inadvertently afforded the chance.

The foremost lesson for India is to not be taken in by its own charm offensives and instead strengthen its "core" in defence and economy. As it is, the diplomatic dice is loaded and

we make it worse with thundering blasters that unsettle smaller neighbours and send them scurrying into the willing arms of China. Uber-nationalism that is seen and heard in political rallies need not be inked where it matters, that is in defence budgets. All talk of mass exodus of US firms from China to India is more social media fantasy, like the cadre call for boycotting Chinese products. A bulk of this lopsided trade with China is done by the Indian Government itself.

Instead, the citizenry has to put pressure on the Government to revert to old-fashioned and professional diplomacy that is not necessarily conducted under the glare of the media lens or with one eye permanently fixated on electoral prospects. China fears India as a "moral idea" which intrinsically resonates across global capitals. We cannot look and sound like China. Xi's "thought on diplomacy" is apologetic about its hegemonic intent. India needs to "manage" the same by lowering rhetoric, strengthening military-economic muscle and yet posturing peace and reason. Basically, beat China at its own game by playing to its strengths. The elephant needs to remain calm, wise and powerful. It must never forget the ignoble fire-spewing instincts of the dragon.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands)

SOUNDBITE

If you take the modern-day game, India has two best players in Virat and Rohit, who play orthodox cricket but they are absolutely destructive in any format of the game.
Former Sri Lanka captain
 —Kumar Sangakkara

I've never been hell-bent on having a birthday celebration. I find great joy in the simplicity of things. I like and find comfort in a lack of pomp and flair.
Actor
 —Shobhita Dhulipala

The WHO needs to reform. What the President said, if it reforms, ends corruption and reliance on China. The US will very seriously consider coming back.
US NSA
 —Robert O'Brien

It (the BJP) does not have any experience of administration at the national level... in States, it's a different matter... Now they don't know how to face this pandemic.
Congress leader
 —Kapil Sibal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Condemnable act

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Racist attack" (June 1). George Floyd's death is a dastardly and brutal act. The image of him begging for air to breathe is tragic. The circumstances around his death are a shame not only for the US, nowadays, they are in this computer age, but also for the rest of humanity. It is nothing but a vulgar display of authority and arrogance by the police and is a case that must be condemned in harsh terms. It is a sheer violation of human rights. The hope is that the law and judiciary will do justice to Floyd.
NR Ramachandran
 Chennai

Things Government must set right

On March 24, when a three-week national-wide lockdown was announced, the Government's concern was to save human lives. Prime Minister Narendra Modi borrowed an idiom from Urdu poet Meer Taqi Meer, "Jan hai toh jahaan hai" (If you have life, you have the world) to drive home his point. The Corona pandemic had just begun spreading its tentacles then. On the day when lockdown 4 ended to be replaced by unlock 1, India reported 8,380 cases and 193 deaths, taking the total tally to 1,82,143 cases and 5,164 deaths — a big leap from just 10 earlier. The idiom, too, was tweaked to, "Jan bhi and jahaan bhi" (Life also, the world also). All of this seemed to echo the insensitivity shown by US President Donald Trump and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, though to a lesser extent. There has been a marked attitudinal change by the Government towards the virus and life. However, the notion of the two Western nations is too obsessive to be emulated in India, which has to take care of millions of people on the roads, under tin roofs and in thatched huts across the country, in short those who have been facing myriad existential issues for ages. The Central Government is insistent on adopting a uniform strategy. There is perceptible reluctance on its



part to let State Governments rule and regulate without Central interventions. Further, it is either ignorant about the diverse environment in States or is ignoring the pattern deliberately. It remains a fact that COVID cases and deaths in many saffron-ruled States show exponential rise every passing day. Possibly, it is this political expediency that is forcing the Government to drag its feet from devising State-specific strategies to unlock the Corona-driven crisis. Yes, let us not underestimate the enemy. There is an urgent need for a new template now.
Haridasan Rajan
 Kozhikode

Be a responsible citizen

Sir — The Corona pandemic has affected almost every sphere of our lives. All sectors of the economy remain paralysed, thus affecting their financial position. It's only now that the economy is resuming activities. But with life returning to normal, this is the time for us to inculcate positive changes. The vacuum created due to COVID-19 also reminded us of an old saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention." Even as life remained stagnant, we learnt to remain "self-dependent" and practise "self-reliance." Barring a few cases, in general people were cooperative, confining themselves to their homes and maintaining minimum interaction. Now that our fight against the COVID pandemic will continue until a vaccine/cure is found, it is for the people to stay safe. The lifting of curbs will see a spontaneous rise in cases. But people must voluntarily observe safety protocols while going about their lives.
Gobardhan Singh
 Ranchi

Ill-effects of e-learning

Sir — Though just some time ago, youngsters, especially school-going kids, were prohibited from using mobile phones and computers for a longer period of time, nowadays, they are the ones who use digital devices for long hours as online classes have become a norm, thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The education sector was one among the first to cope with the Coronavirus crisis. It started adapting various methods to be in touch with the learners. In India, lakhs of students are now glued to their laptops and mobile screens, listening and interacting with

their teachers, who have become "regular visitors" right on their beam and in their hands. Now that online classes have become a go-to solution, helping educational institutions beat the pandemic so as to push their academic calendars, concerns have been raised by experts. They fear that overuse of digital devices and too much exposure to the internet can harm young minds in a hazardous way and that is unpredictable.
M Pradyu
 Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Beware the dragon's moves

China's recent actions at the LAC have only gone to prove the long-term and diverse strategies that the nation follows



AMRIT PAL SINGH

China is doing what it does best — confuse and confound. Its recent actions have only gone to prove the long-term and diverse strategies that the nation follows. It began with the sequential escalation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) at Naku La in Sikkim and then at Pangong Tso in Ladakh. This has been followed by a face-off at the Galwan Valley in the Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) sector of the LAC in Ladakh. The activities, with soldiers engaged on three border points, have the potential to escalate due to the intrinsic linkages between and the changed circumstances of the present clashes from the earlier incidents. There were some indirect actions on both sides that have been in focus like the objection by Nepal to the development and inauguration of the road from Dharchula to Lipulekh pass in Uttarakhand. This is despite an agreement between India and China to have trade across the pass in the tri-junction of Nepal-India-China. Beijing accepted the pass as one of the commercial and cultural transit points with India under its 1954 Peace and Tranquillity Agreement. This was reiterated when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited China in 2015. The route has deep-rooted spiritual and civilisational significance for India. In contrast, the recent broadcasting of weather reports of Gilgit-Baltistan on Indian news channels and the pre-conditions set for Foreign Direct Investment in segments of the Indian economy have definitely upped the ante for the Chinese.

The three sectors where India and China have recurrence of disputes are in Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Ladakh. The Arunachal sector is largely dormant despite China's claim to the entire State. The Sikkim sector is strategic as any Chinese road and infrastructure development in its proximity can threaten the narrow Siliguri Corridor which is the gateway from India to the seven States of North-East India. The Doklam stand-off for 73 days from June to August 2017 amply demonstrated the strategic relevance of this sector.

It is in the Ladakh sector that the geo-strategic implications of the face-off and incursions assume significance. The Chinese have made an immense investment of \$62 billion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. Recent assertions by India on its right to Gilgit-Baltistan through which the CPEC passes on its way to the Karakoram Pass in the Shaksang valley (illegally conceded by Pakistan to China) have obviously rocked the boat. China does not make short-term tactical moves without a long-term plan which may unfold in the winter when terrain and weather put India at a disadvantage. Unlike Doklam, where the Chinese movement was restricted to the single track which they were trying to develop along a narrow valley, in Ladakh the LAC is open and rugged. There are various "disputed areas" and "areas of differing perceptions" from the DBO in the north to Fokche in the south (the point of entry of the Indus river from Tibet to India). The scene of the recent scuffle has been on the banks of the Pangong Tso Lake. Its centrality to the entire LAC in Ladakh and proximity to the Spangur Gap and Chushul make the south bank of the lake a secure flank for large-scale moves by the Chinese. Hence, it holds operational importance to both armies.

The western Ladakh region of DBO provides a buffer against Chinese direct access to Shaksang valley and the Siachen heights. India therefore, strongly holds on to DBO. Here the Galwan valley has witnessed similar stand-offs in the past with Chinese encampments detected far inside the alignment of the LAC into the valley. Strong deployments along the Line of Control (LoC) at Kargil and Drass opposite Pakistan have also to be maintained by India at all times. Reinforcements and additional forces will perform have to be moved into Ladakh mostly from the plains and will require acclimatisation to operate in high-altitude areas of 11,000 to 16,000 feet. Logistics and sustenance of forces are a key factor, especially in Ladakh.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) forces involved in the skirmishes are not their regular army but the Border Defence Regiments (BDR) backed by PLA garrisons and camps with acclimatised troops along the Chinese East-West Highway. In contrast, Indian regular troops get sucked in as reinforcements and readjustments of command and control are necessitated as the Indo-Tibetan Border Police force (ITBP) readjusts from its border posts held in peacetime.

Hence, two imperatives for the Department of Military Affairs and Ministry of Defence to resolve in the present will be in the fields of command and control of border management forces and logistic preparedness. The office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) is best suited to resolve intra-service coordination of both areas as also inter-ministerial resolution of the command and control lacunae of forces on the LAC. India's approach must include a myriad of agencies and all elements of national power. The annual defence allocations have been shrinking regularly (experts say the percentage available for modernisation has shrunk from 40 per cent to almost 32 per cent) and cannot sustain the human and equipment inventory needed to effectively deter China. In such a situation and in the post-Corona reduced resource basket, the prioritisation of requirements rather than a dilution of weapon qualitative requirements, is recommended. There must be a push towards operationalising the Rottlman tunnel to full capacity especially in view of logistic sustenance and troop reinforcements for the road closed period starting in November.

(The writer is a veteran and co-author of 'Maoist Insurgency and India's Internal Security Architecture'.)

THESE THUGS ARE DISHONORING THE MEMORY OF GEORGE FLOYD, AND I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN. WHEN THE LOOTING STARTS, THE SHOOTING STARTS.

—US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

POINT COUNTERPOINT



AFTER STOKING FIRES OF WHITE SUPREMACY YOUR ENTIRE PRESIDENCY, YOU HAVE THE NERVE TO FEIGN MORAL SUPERIORITY BEFORE THREATENING VIOLENCE?

—SINGER TAYLOR SWIFT

Hope sprouts in the farm

The Government deserves some credit for at least putting on the table long-pending reforms in agri-marketing, which if carried through, will be truly revolutionary



UTTAM GUPTA

Heralding a new chapter in agricultural market reforms in India, on May 15 Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made three major announcements under the 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan'. The first announcement was about the Centre's decision to enact a legislation to enable direct purchase of specified commodities — under entry 42 of the Union List and entry 33 of the Concurrent List — from farmers outside the designated Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs). Next was the move to enact a Central law on contract farming to provide a legal framework for farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, large retailers and exporters in a fair and transparent manner. Third was the decision to amend the Essential Commodities Act (ECA), 1954 and take off pulses, cereals, edible oil, oil seeds, onions and potatoes from the purview of this archaic law.

To understand the full ramifications of the proposed enactments, at the outset, let us take a look at the existing regulations. At present, trade in agri-commodities is governed by a highly restrictive legislation viz. the APMC Act. This empowers State Governments to specify market areas — where farmers bring their produce for sale. These are operated and regulated by market committees or mandis across the country. The stated objective of the APMC acts is to promote organised marketing of farm commodities to ensure fair play, achieve an efficient system of buying and selling of commodities, protect farmers from intermediaries and traders and to ensure better prices and timely payments for the produce. Far from achieving these objectives, farmers are being exploited by a network of licensed traders and middlemen, who have a complete stranglehold over these platforms.

While on one hand, farmers don't get to sell their entire produce at the Minimum Support Price (MSP), on the other, no alternative platforms are available where they could sell. Even Government agencies don't come forward to buy when the market price dips below the MSP. Actually, the problem is much deeper.

This has to do with a cozy nexus between politicians and grain traders that has existed and flourished for decades. A grain trader has a fundamental interest in ensuring that he minimises his payout to the farmer for the grains he buys. He can succeed in this gameplan if the farmer is left high and dry by State agencies. So, he collaborates with the politicians in the ruling establishment to ensure that State agencies remain weak and ineffectual.

The nexus has also come in the way of amending the APMC Act to make way for alternative channels of selling, such as direct purchase by bulk buyers, processors, exporters and so on (the revenue State Governments get from levy of market fee on transactions at the mandis has proved to be another major deterrent). In 2017, the Modi Government had passed a Model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and Facilitation) Law containing provisions to give more options to farmers for selling their crop and greater flexibility to traders such as 'single pan-State licence' for buying from anywhere in the State).

True to its non-altruistic, the model law is a mere showpiece as until hitherto (prior to the COVID-19 crisis, to be specific), a majority of the States showed no interest in amending their

“ THESE FARM REFORMS ARE INTENDED TO CREATE A PARALLEL ARRANGEMENT FOR SELLING FARM PRODUCE AND CAN CO-EXIST WITH THE APMCS. THESE AIM AT BREAKING THE MONOPOLY OF A FEW LICENCED TRADERS AT MANDIS. CREATE COMPETITION AND THIS WILL HELP BOTH FARMERS AND CONSUMERS. WHETHER OR NOT THESE ACTUALLY SEE THE LIGHT OF THE DAY REMAINS TO BE SEEN ”



laws. In a daring move, the then BJP Government, led by Devendra Fadnis, had approved in August 2018, an amendment to the Maharashtra Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act, 1963, in sync with the Centre's model law. That was done through the ordinance route. But Fadnis was forced to withdraw the Bill on November 28, 2018 from the legislative council, a day after it was passed.

The continued writ of the APMC acts has meant that there is no free movement of farm products even within the State, forget free inter-State trade. With several States of State legislation creating impenetrable zones, even the much-trumpeted electronic national agricultural market (e-NAM) has failed to take off. The processors, exporters and other large buyers have no incentive to invest in agri-infrastructure. The archaic ECA (1954) with its draconian provisions, especially with regard to stock limits, acts as a further disincentive.

All this boils down to farmers not getting a remunerative price for their produce on the one hand and consumers having to pay a high price on the other — even a number of intermediaries in the supply chain appropriate a major slice of what the latter pays. Needless to say, that the resulting low income not only keeps farmers poor but also boomerangs on overall economic growth through reduction in rural purchasing power. The stated state of affairs is not good for boosting exports on a sustainable basis either.

The COVID-19 crisis may have come as a blessing in disguise. It gripped India at a time when the Rabi crop, mostly the winter staple wheat, was ready for harvest. April-May is the period of the scheme was to encourage exports. Being the only platform where farmers could sell their produce, this would have led to overcrowding at the markets

which comes in conflict with "social distancing" — a pre-requisite for preventing the spread of the deadly virus. Due to the dire need for adhering to "social distancing", Modi asked the States to suspend certain provisions of their respective APMC laws for three months to make way for purchase of farmers' produce directly from their doorsteps by large farmers' producer organisations (FPOs), large buyers such as processors, millers, exporters, cooperatives, individual traders and so on.

Some States like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka responded by making amendments in their APMC laws (using the ordinance route as none of the State Assemblies are in session, courtesy the prevailing emergency). As per the amendment, the entire State is declared as a "single market" wherein a trader can get a single licence for purchase of agricultural produce from any farmers' within it. Further, it allows trade in all farm commodities, including livestock, outside the regulated APMC markets.

This has not only kept COVID-19 at bay (as the traders went to the farmers' doorstep instead of the latter having to go all the way through the mandis) but also fetched a remunerative price for their produce by offering more choice, resulting in higher income. No wonder, amid the gloom and doom in most other sectors of the economy, agriculture is expected to show a positive growth rate over three per cent during the current year (of course, this will be helped by normal monsoon predicted by the meteorological department).

In retrospect, there is some reason to rejoice over the changes in APMC laws by the aforementioned States, which has enabled private trade to complement the efforts of State agencies in ensuring record procurement from the farmers. While Modi had asked for suspension of the relevant provisions for

three months, these States have gone a step further by bringing an element of permanence. That serves as the icing on the cake. But some doubts remain.

For one, most States continue to turn a deaf ear to the Centre's wish. Even in the four States, where the changes have been brought about, these will have to be passed by the State Assemblies in the end. Given the deep-rooted vested interest, a Maharashtra-type fiasco can't be ruled out. In this backdrop, the Centre's decision to enact a Central law, wielding the rarely-used power under the Constitution to regulate inter-State trade and intra-State trade, makes more sense. The law will enable an entire country to buy farm produce from farmers directly anywhere in the country, even outside the regulated market yards.

At the same time, the amendment in the ECA to remove fetters such as stock limits (these limits will be imposed only in exceptional circumstances) will enable large buyers viz. processors, millers, exporters and so on, to scale up purchases, thus providing sustained support to farmers. The proposed Contract Law — enforceable in all States — will clearly lay down rules of the game for a processor/large retailer that it must follow to ensure that farmers are not taken for a ride.

These farm reforms are intended to create a parallel arrangement for selling farm produce and can co-exist with the APMCs. These aim at breaking the monopoly of a few licensed traders at mandis to create competition and thus help both farmers and consumers. Whether or not these actually see the light of the day remains to be seen. For now, the Government deserves some accolades for at least putting on the table long-pending reforms in agri-marketing, which if carried through, will be truly revolutionary.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

Don't take their right to life away

Having given legal protection to intersex kids against unnecessary surgeries, India must proactively put an end to intersex and female infanticide



PRASHANT SINGH GOPI MADURAI

The recent killing of a one-day-old girl child in Tamil Nadu's Tiruvannamalai district has brought to the fore the unending practice of female infanticide. The murder was discovered on the complaint of an alert medical officer who suspected foul play.

Being the second reported instance of female infanticide from the region, this case has demonstrated that this evil practice is alive even during the current pandemic. Nearly 30

years ago, economist Amartya Sen argued that 100 million women were "missing". However, much before this usage was coined, the phenomenon behind the phrase was a reality in India, reflected in the practice of sex determination, selective abortion, and female infanticide. There were no official numbers on female foeticide until the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) started collecting data on this crime in 2014. However, the consequences of killing the girl child before or after birth are clearly reflected in the skewed sex-ratios in the country.

In 2016, the Government released data based on the civil registration system. It showed that the sex ratio at birth (SRB) had fallen from 946 girls for every 1,000 boys in 1949 to 877 in 2014. A deeper crisis is revealed when the data on girls in the age group of zero-six years is examined. In 2011, the number of girls below six per

1,000 boys stood at 914 — which is the lowest since Independence. Now that the registration of births is compulsory, the SRB data is considered to be quite accurate. The problem is graver in five States (Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu) which have an SRB equal to or below 840.

Prevention of female foeticide and infanticide has been the focus of a wide range of the Government's efforts since the 1990s, with some successes and many challenges. The child sex ratio has continued to be on the decline even after the enactment of a Central law in 1994 providing the use of prenatal diagnostic tests for sex determination. Aside from this legal measure, the Union and State Governments have undertaken several policy initiatives such as the National Action Plan of 1991 to Balika Samridhi Yojana in 1997 to the latest Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao

campaign of 2015, to incentivise retention of the girl child. Several State Governments have also implemented innovative initiatives like the "Cradle Baby" scheme of the Tamil Nadu Government. Launched in 1992, the aim of the scheme was to encourage parents to give female children up for adoption by providing for cradles at Government hospitals and Primary Health Centres (PHCs). The two-fold objective was to prevent female infanticide and also stop illegal sale of babies.

This measure of the Tamil Nadu Government also encouraged reporting of this crime unlike other States where the cases are massively under-reported. In addition to improving law enforcement and preventing access to ultrasonography, measures like "Cradle Baby" scheme are critical.

The preference for the male child leading to a skewed sex ratio has been well-documented. However, another major consequence of such preference poses a serious risk to bodily integrity of intersex infants and children. Intersex children in India are at constant risk of forced surgical and medical intervention in the form of sex normalising surgeries to align their body as per the normative definition of traditional gender identity i.e. male and female. In most cases, intersex children are assigned as male at birth.

This heinous practice is widespread in several Indian States, including Kerala, which claims to be a model in terms of human development indicators. Even worse, the medical community also justifies such procedures, displaying a shocking ignorance of intersex human rights. For instance, doctors working in a hospital in Kerala have admitted performing such surgeries on intersex children and have also highlighted the preference of parents for the male child. In 2019, the Madras High Court outlawed this

practice and directed the Tamil Nadu Government to pass an order implementing the ban. However, infanticide of intersex babies and children continues to be an ignored issue in India. It is estimated that every year, more than 10,000 intersex children are born in India.

Still, our official statistics, including the census, do not provide any authentic population data of intersex children in the country. Over the years, various United Nation (UN) committees have highlighted this issue. In 2019, expressing concern over the "mercy killing" of intersex children with disabilities, the UN Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities recommended the Government to "protect intersex children from attacks against their lives and any related harmful practices". The "missing intersex children" phenomenon is not limited to India. There is an urgent need for more

research and documentation on this subject globally. Further, it is also critically important to initiate a dialogue on the need for an international instrument to prevent intersex infanticide and a complete ban on sex normalising surgeries.

Having already established a legal protection regime for intersex children against unnecessary surgeries, India has a unique opportunity to lead the intersex human rights movement if it can proactively put an end to intersex infanticide. To achieve these goals, the Centre and States must undertake urgent steps to ensure prevention and prosecution in cases of female and intersex infanticide.

(Singh is Executive Director, Sriшти Madurai-LGBTQA+ student volunteer movement and Madurai is the elected Intersex Representative and Executive Board Member of International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, Geneva)

FLOYD ANGER PERVALES US

Thousands arrested, nearly 40 cities under curfew

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US remained a tinderbox of anger and emotion as violent protests erupted for a sixth day across the country over the custodial killing of African-American George Floyd, resulting in the death of at least five people, the arrest of thousands and placing of curfew in nearly 40 cities, while forcing President Donald Trump to take shelter in a White House bunker.

Considered to be the worst ever civil unrest in the US in decades, the violent protests have engulfed at least 140 cities across America in the days following the death of Floyd, a 46-year-old man who was pinned to the ground in Minneapolis on Monday by a white police officer who knelt on his neck as he gasped for breath. Some of the protests have turned violent, prompting the activation of the National Guard in at least 20 states. "At least five people were killed in violence that flared as demonstrations in parts of the country devolved into mayhem," the Washington Post reported. Police have arrested at least 2,564 people in two dozen US cities over the weekend. Nearly a fifth of those arrests were in Los Angeles, it said.

The unrest initially began in Minneapolis in Minnesota but has now spread across the country, with reports of violence coming in from across major cities including Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Houston, Philadelphia and Washington DC. "The United States remained a tinderbox of emotion, anger and continued violence on Sunday, the sixth day of nationwide unrest since the death of yet another man at the hands of the police," the New York Times reported. Birmingham, protesters started to tear down a Confederate monument that the city had previously covered with a tarp and the rift between the state attorney general and the city.

In Boston, a police SUV was set ablaze near the State House,



sending up a column of black smoke after a large group of protesters had mostly dispersed.

In Philadelphia, police officers used tear gas and pepper spray to try to repel rioters and looters.

In New York, demonstrators marched across the Brooklyn and Williamsburg Bridges, snarling traffic. The Manhattan Bridge was shut down to car traffic. Chaos erupted in Union Square, with flames leaping up two stories from trash cans and piles of street debris, the Times said.

"It is the first time so many local leaders have simultaneously issued such orders in the face of civil unrest since 1968, after the assassination of the Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr," the report said.

Police fired tear gas near the White House on Sunday night as protesters gathered outside the White House raising slogans against President Trump. According to CNN, President Trump was briefly taken to the underground bunker for some time during the protests.

For the past few days, thousands of protesters have gathered outside the White House raising slogans against President Trump. According to CNN, President Trump was briefly taken to the underground bunker for some time during the protests. The report said that President Trump was also taken to the bunker. President Trump made no

public appearances on Sunday, but in a series of tweets he blamed the media for fomenting hatred and anarchy in the country. "The Lamestream Media is doing everything within their power to foment hatred and anarchy. As long as everybody understands what they are doing, that they are FAKE NEWS and truly bad people with a sick agenda, we can easily work through them to GREATNESS!" he said.

Earlier in the day, he announced that his administration will be designating ANTIFA as a Terrorist Organization. ANTIFA is regarded as a militant, left-wing, anti-fascist political activist movement in the US. It comprises autonomous activist groups that aim to achieve their political objectives through the use of rioting rather than through policy reform.

US Attorney General William Barr said that the violence instigated and carried out by the organisation and other similar groups in connection with the rioting is domestic terrorism and will be treated accordingly. The Trump administration alleges that it appears the violence is planned, organised, and driven by anarchists and far left extremists, using ANTIFA-like tactics, many of whom travel from out of state to promote the violence. Former Vice President Joe Biden, who is the presumptive

presidential nominee of the Democratic party, visited a protest site in Delaware on Sunday. "We are a nation in pain, but we must not allow this pain to destroy us. We are a nation engaged, but we cannot allow our rage to consume us. We are not a nation exhausted, but we will not allow our exhaustion to defeat us," Biden wrote on social media postings on Sunday.

"The only way to bear this pain is to turn all that anguish to purpose. And as President, I will help lead this conversation — and more importantly, I will listen, just as I did today visiting the site of last night's protests in Wilmington," he said. The Committee to Protect Journalists, in a late night statement said several dozen covering the protests have been harassed, as well as arrested by law enforcement agencies.

TRUMP BLAMES BUIS AS 'WEAK' ■ URGES CRACKDOWN ON PROTESTS

President Donald Trump derided the nation's governors as "weak" and demanded tougher crackdowns on protesters in the aftermath of "another night of violent protests in dozens of American cities."

Trump spoke to governors on a video teleconference with law enforcement and national security officials, telling the local leaders they "need to be much tougher" amid nationwide protests and criticising their responses. AP

SIDELIGHTS

BIDEN MEETS WITH BLACK LEADERS AT LOCAL CHURCH AMID UNREST
Joe Biden vowed to address "institutional racism" in his 100 days in office as he met with community leaders at a predominantly African American church in Delaware on Monday morning, leaving home for a second consecutive day to address exploding racial tensions that have begun to reshape the upcoming presidential election.

GEORGE FLOYD'S FUNERAL TO BE HELD IN HOUSTON
George Floyd, the 46-year-old black man whose cold-blooded murder at the hands of a white police officer has sparked protests across the US, will be laid to rest in his hometown of Houston, following a public visitation in Minneapolis. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner announced the funeral plans on Saturday, though there are currently no public details about when it will take place. The mayor broke the news as part of a larger plea for peace amid a weekend where Houston police arrested hundreds of protesters.

JOURNALISTS COVERING US PROTESTS FACE ASSAULT, ARREST
From the East Coast to the West, journalists covering the widespread protests in the US after the killing of African-American George Floyd are facing assaults, being shot at, tear-gassed and arrested, as a leading media rights group urged authorities to ensure that reporters do their job safely without fear of injury or retaliation. From Minneapolis to Washington DC, from Louisville to Las Vegas, reporters are facing assault and arrest while reporting on widespread protests and unrest, the CNN reported.

WORLD'S REACTION TO US WEAVES SOLIDARITY, CALLS TO CHANGE

Several thousand people marched in New Zealand's largest city on Monday to protest the killing of George Floyd in the US as well as to stand up against police violence and racism in their own country. Many people around the world have watched with growing unease at the civil unrest in the US after the latest in a series of police killings of black men and women. Floyd died on May 25 in Minneapolis after a white police officer pressed his knee on Floyd's neck until he stopped breathing. The officer was fired and charged with murder. In Iran, which has in the recent past violently put down nationwide demonstrations by killing hundreds, arresting thousands and disrupting internet access to the outside world, state television has repeatedly aired images of the US unrest.

In Brazil, hundreds of people protested crimes committed by the police against black people in Rio de Janeiro's working-class neighborhoods, known as favelas. Police used tear gas to disperse them, with some demonstrators saying "I can't breathe," repeating Floyd's own words. In Canada, an anti-racism protest degenerated into clashes between Montreal police and some demonstrators. Police declared the gathering illegal after they say projectiles were thrown at officers who responded with pepper spray and tear gas. Some windows were smashed and some fires were set.

In authoritarian nations, the unrest became a chance to undermine US criticism of their own situations. Iranian state television repeatedly aired images of the US unrest. Russia said the United States had systemic human rights problems.

North Korea's official Rodong Simun newspaper on Monday reported about the demonstrations, saying that protesters "harshly condemned" a white policeman's "lawless and brutal murder" of a black citizen. It printed three large photos of protest scenes from recent days in the city where Floyd was killed.

China threatens to 'counter-attack' US over HK curbs

AP ■ BEIJING

Beijing warned Washington of retaliation after President Donald Trump announced restrictions on Chinese students in the US in protest over a new national security law in Hong Kong.

Trump said Friday that the United States would ban some Chinese graduate students and start reverting Hong Kong's special status in customs and other areas, as Beijing moves ahead with a plan to impose a controversial security law.

The US President said the Chinese Government had been "diminishing the city's long-standing and very proud status." But China reacted angrily to the moves on Monday, saying it was "detrimental to both sides."

GLOBE TROTTING

SCALE DOWN DRILLS: RUSSIA TO NATO

Moscow: The Russian military on Monday accused the US and its NATO allies of conducting "provocative" military drills near the nation's borders, a statement that reflected simmering Russia-NATO tensions. Col-Gen Sergei Rudskoi of the Russian General Staff said Russia has sent a formal letter to NATO proposing to scale down each other's military activities for the period of the coronavirus outbreak, but the alliance has stonewalled the offer.

PUTIN SETS JULY 1 FOR VOTE TO EXTEND HIS RULE

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin said a nationwide vote on constitutional amendments that could allow him to further extend his rule will be held on July 1. Putin said the pace of Russia's coronavirus outbreak has slowed down, allowing election officials to safely hold the vote.

DANIEL PEARL CASE

Pak's SC rejects Sindh Govt's plea to suspend HC verdict

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday rejected a petition filed by the Sindh government to suspend a high court verdict that overturned the conviction of al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh in the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl in 2002, in a setback to the US efforts to get justice for the American journalist.

Pearl, the 38-year-old South Asia bureau chief for *The Wall Street Journal*, was abducted and beheaded while he was in Pakistan investigating a story in 2002 on the alleged links between the country's powerful spy agency ISI and al-Qaeda.

On April 2, a two-judge Sindh High Court bench overturned the death sentence of British-born 46-year-old al-Qaeda leader, who was convicted in the abduction and murder of Pearl in 2002.

He has been in jail for the past 18 years.

The court also acquitted his three aides, Fahad Naseem, Salman Saqib and Sheikh Adil, serving life sentences in the case.

The Bench announced the verdict on the appeals filed by

the four convicts 18 years ago.

The Sindh Government challenged the High Court judgment and on May 2 the slain journalist's parents also approached the Supreme Court against the acquittal of the convicts.

On Monday, a three-member bench headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed heard the appeals in Islamabad.

The apex court after initial hearing refused to suspend the Sindh High Court judgment and asked the provincial government to provide complete record of the case. It also said the petition contained irrelevant sections.

"We should be provided a complete record of the case," said bench member Justice Manzoor Malik.

"I want to look at all the records so that I can understand all the points."

The court adjourned the hearing for an indefinite period, after the Sindh government sought time to submit the record of the trial court.

The apex court ordered the counsel representing the Sindh government, Farooq H Naek, to submit the detailed record before the court.

COVID-19

OUTBREAK

Around the Globe

● Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said it was a "mistake" to enforce a strict coronavirus lockdown as it aggravated the economic situation, even as the number of Covid-19 infections crossed the 72,000-mark in the country on Monday. According to the Ministry of National Health Services, 2,964 new infections surfaced over the last 24 hours, taking the nationwide tally of coronavirus to 72,460. "Lockdown is not a solution as it can only slow down. So it was a mistake to shut down business in the country," Khan said.

● The Singapore Government said it will build new accommodations to improve the living condition of foreign workers and reduce the population density in their quarters, which have seen a very high transmission rate of the novel coronavirus. There will be additional space to house about 60,000 workers by the end of the year, the Ministry of National Development and Ministry of Manpower said.

● The US has delivered two million doses of the antimalarial medicine hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) to Brazil to fight Covid-19, the White House said, though drug has not been proven effective against the coronavirus. "HCQ will be used as a prophylactic to help defend Brazil's nurses, doctors, and healthcare professionals against the virus. It will also be used as a therapeutic to treat Brazilians who become infected," a statement said.

● Britain's Queen Elizabeth was photographed riding a 14-year-old Fall pony in Windsor Home Park on Sunday as the country eases stringent measures to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus. The Queen has been living at Windsor Castle, west of London, during the lockdown with her 98-year-old husband Prince Philip.

GLOBAL CASES CROSS 6.3 MN

Covid-19 TRACKER

TOTAL CASES: 6,319,550
DEATHS: 3,75,593
RECOVERED: 2,876,722

COUNTRY	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL DEATHS
USA	1,843,920	1,06,379
Brazil	5,14,992	29,341
Russia	4,14,878	4,855
Spain	2,86,509	27,127
UK	2,76,332	39,045
Italy	2,33,197	33,475
France	1,88,882	28,802
Germany	1,83,627	28,610

Report: Russia to start using 1st approved drug from next week

Moscow: Russia will start giving its first drug approved to treat Covid-19 to patients next week, its state financial backer told Reuters, a move it hopes will ease strains on the health system and speed a return to normal economic life.

Russian hospitals can begin giving the antiviral drug, which is registered under the name Avifavir, to patients from June 11, the head of Russia's RDIF sovereign wealth fund told Reuters in an interview.

He said the company behind the drug would manufacture enough to treat around 60,000 people a month.

There is currently no vaccine for Covid-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, and human trials of several existing antiviral drugs have yet to show efficacy.

A new antiviral drug from Gilead called remdesivir has shown some promise in small efficacy trials against Covid-19 and is being given to patients by some countries under compassionate or emergency use rules. Avifavir, known generically as favipiravir, was first developed in the late 1990s by a Japanese company later bought by Fujifilm as it moved into healthcare. Agency

Report: People living on higher altitudes less vulnerable

Washington: Researchers have found that populations living in higher altitudes, especially 3,000 metres above the sea level, significantly report lower levels of coronavirus infections than their lowland counterparts.

The *Washington Post* cited one peer-reviewed study published in the journal *Respiratory Physiology & Neurobiology*, in which researchers from Australia, Bolivia, Canada and Switzerland looking at epidemiological data from Bolivia, Ecuador and Tibet found that Tibet's infection rate was "dramatically" lower than that of low-



UN forced to cut aid to Yemen, even as virus increases need

Cairo: Aid organisations are making an urgent plea for funding to shore up their operations in war-torn Yemen, saying they have already been forced to stop some of their work even as the coronavirus rips through the country. Some 75% of UN programs in Yemen have had to shut their doors or reduce operations. The global body has claimed more than 4,000 lives nationally. Agency

land China, three times lower in the Bolivian Andes than in the rest of the country and four times lower in the Ecuadorian Andes. Cusco in Peru, a picturesque Andean valley, the high-altitude city of 42,000 residents, had only recorded the death of three tourists from Mexico, China and Britain, between March 23 and April 3, at the start of Peru's strict national lockdown. Since then, there has not been another covid-19 fatality in the entire Cusco region, even as the disease has claimed more than 4,000 lives nationally. Agency

SA eases; liquor is sold, school openings delayed

AP ■ CAPE TOWN

Many South Africans spent their Monday morning lining up outside liquor stores, as alcohol sales were allowed again after a two-month ban because of the coronavirus outbreak.

But while South Africa — with the continent's most developed economy and the highest number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 — relaxed its strict lockdown, the reopening of most school classes was delayed and there was debate about how churches could safely resume services.

The Government opening the planned opening of two grades for another week so that some under-prepared schools could get ready to resume classes for grades 7 and 12, the final years of elementary school and high school.

Placing worship were allowed to open from Monday with limits on the number of people in congregations, yet many religious groups said they would refuse the opportunity. They said they were concerned about the danger of allowing people to gather in an enclosed building — something health experts warn against — and

some also said that limiting the number of people who could come into their church is against their values.

South Africa has reported over 32,000 Covid-19 cases and more than 600 people have died. The government warns that the number of infections will continue to increase and the peak is not expected until August or September.

Still, the relaxation of the alcohol ban came as a relief to many, who chose restocking their liquor cabinets instead of going straight to work on the day much of the country's economy also reopened. AP

Lockdowns ease across Europe, Asia with new tourism rules

AP ■ ROME

The first day of June saw coronavirus restrictions eased from Asia to Europe on Monday, even as US protests against police brutality sparked fears of new outbreaks. The Colosseum opened its ancient doors in Rome, ferries restarted in Bangladesh, golfers played in Bangladesh, golfers played in Bangladesh, golfers played in Bangladesh.

Countries around the Mediterranean Sea tentatively kicked off a summer season where tourists could bask in their family sunny beaches while still being protected by social distancing measures from a virus that is marching relentlessly around the world.

"We are reopening a symbol. A symbol of Rome, a symbol of Europe, a symbol of the Russo, director of the Colosseum's archaeological park. "We are) restarting in a positive way, with a different pace, with a more sustainable tourism."

Greece lifted lockdown measures Monday for hotels, campsites, open-air cinemas, golf courses and public swimming pools, while beaches and museums reopened in Turkey and bars, restaurants, cinemas and museums came back to life in the Netherlands.

"Today, we opened two rooms and tomorrow three. It's like building an antihill," Athens hotel owner Panos Bettis said as employees wearing face masks tidied a rooftop restaurant and cleaned a window facing the ancient Acropolis. "We can't compare the season to last year. We were at 95% capacity. Our aim now is to hang in there till 2021."

A long line of masked visitors snaked outside the Vatican Museums, which include the Sistine Chapel, as they reopened for the first time in



three months. Italy is eager to reboot its tourism industry, which accounts for 13% of its economy.

The Vatican Museums' famous keyholder — the "davigero" who holds the keys to all the galleries on a big ring on his wrist — opened the gate in a sign both symbolic and literal that the Museums were back in business.

Strict crowd control measures were in place at both landmarks: visitors needed reservations to visit, their temperatures were taken before entering and masks were mandatory.

"Having the opportunity to see the museums by making a booking and not having to wait in line for three hours is an opportunity," said visitor Stefano Dicozio.

The Dutch relaxation of coronavirus rules took place on a major holiday with the sun blazing, raising immediate fears of overcrowding in popular beach resorts. The new rules let bars and restaurants serve up to 30 people inside if they keep social distancing, but there's no standing at bars and reservations are necessary.

Britain, which with over 38,500 dead has the world's sec-

ond-worst death toll behind the United States, eased restrictions despite warnings from health officials that the risk of spreading Covid-19 was still too great. Some elementary classes reopened in England and people could now have limited contact with family and friends, but only outdoors and with social distancing.

In Asia, Bangladesh restarted bus, train, ferry and flight services Monday, hoping that a gradual reopening revives an economy in which millions have become jobless. Traffic jams and crowds of commuters logged deaths in the pandemic, which has disproportionately affected racial minorities in a nation that does not have universal health care.

Moody's downgrades India's rating to 'Baa3'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Moody's Investors Service on Monday downgraded India's sovereign credit rating for the first time in more than two decades, saying policy-makers will be challenged to mitigate risks of low growth, deteriorating fiscal position and financial sector stress.

Downgrading India's rating by a notch to 'Baa3' from 'Baa2' assigned in November 2018, Moody's estimated India GDP shrinking by 1 per cent — first full fiscal contraction in more than four decades, as the country faces a prolonged period of slower growth.

Moody's said India faces foreign-currency and local-currency long-term issuer ratings have been downgraded to Baa3

from Baa2. India's local-currency senior unsecured rating too has been lowered to Baa3 from Baa2, and its short-term local currency rating to P-3 from P-2. The outlook remains negative.

"The decision to downgrade India's ratings reflects Moody's view that the country's policymaking institutions will be challenged in enacting and implementing policies, which effectively will mitigate the risks of a sustained period of relatively low growth, significant further deterioration in the general Government fiscal position and stress in the financial sector," Moody's said.

"Baa3" rating is the lowest investment grade — just a notch above 'junk' status.

Moody's had last downgraded India's rating in 1998.

The negative outlook reflects dominant, mutually reinforcing, downside risks from deeper stresses in the economy and financial system that could lead to a more severe and prolonged erosion in fiscal strength than Moody's currently projects, it added.

Moody's said slow reform momentum and constrained policy effectiveness have contributed to a prolonged period of slow growth, compared to India's potential, that started before the Covid-19, and it expects this to continue well beyond the pandemic.

Moody's said India faces a prolonged period of slower growth relative to the country's potential, rising debt, further

Says GDP to shrink by 4% in FY21

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmark index SENSEX on Monday rallied 879 points on heavy buying in financial, FMCG and energy stocks as the Government starting the process to unlock the economy boosted investor sentiment.

Positive cues from the global equity markets also helped the key equity indices extend gains for the fourth session in a row. After skyrocketing 1,250 points during the day, the 30-share SENSEX settled 879.42 points or 2.57 per cent higher at 33,303.52.

The NSE Nifty surged 245.85 points or 2.57 per cent to finish at 9,826.15. Bajaj Finance was the top gainer in the SENSEX pack, rising around 11 per cent, followed by Titan, Tata Steel, SBI, M&M, HDFC, IndusInd Bank and Reliance Industries. On the other hand, Sun Pharma, Nestle India and UltraTech Cement were among the laggards.

All sectoral indices ended on a positive note with BSE consumer durables rallying 6.56 per cent, followed by metal, finance, banking, energy, auto and realty indices.

"Domestic shares opened at opening and stayed strong throughout the day as investors ignored fourth-quarter GDP data and reacted positively to the government's decision to come up with a phased reopening of all activities outside containment zones beginning June 1," Paras Bothra, President of Equity Research, Ashika Stock Broking, said. Positive sentiments also supported after US President Donald Trump stopped short of specifying

Sensex, Nifty spurt over 2 pc as India begins to unlock economy

PTI ■ MUMBAI

well while Pharma stocks came under selling pressure. Doepak Jaisani, Head Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said.

Asian shares advanced to three-month highs on Mon as progress on re-opening economies helped offset jitters over risks in the US cities and ease over Washington's power struggle with Beijing. Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul settled up to 3 per cent higher, and those in Europe opened with significant gains. International oil benchmark Brent crude futures were trading 0.21 per cent higher at \$37.91 per barrel.

On the currency front, the rupee appreciated 8 paise to provisionally close at 75.54 against the US dollar. India is likely to receive 102% rainfall of a long-term average this year, the IMD said on Monday in its 2nd long range forecast, raising expectations for higher farm output in India, which is reeling from the new coronavirus pandemic.



Non-subsidised LPG rate hiked, aviation fuel ups by ₹11,000/kl

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Oil marketing companies have hiked the prices of non-subsidised cooking gas and aviation turbine fuel with effect from Monday.

The price of the 14.2 kilogram cylinder of non-subsidised LPG gas in Delhi has been raised by ₹11.50 from May to ₹593 per cylinder. In Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai, the price of LPG has been raised at ₹616, ₹590.50 and ₹606.50, against ₹584.50, ₹579 and ₹569.50 per cylinder respectively. The highest increase was witnessed in Chennai with a hike of ₹37 from the price in May.

The Government currently subsidises 12 cylinders of 14.2 kilograms each per household in a year. Additional purchases have to be made at the market price.

In a statement on Sunday, Indian Oil Corp said that the retail selling price of LPG in Delhi market for the month of May 2020 was reduced from ₹744 to ₹581.50 per cylinder for all consumers in line with drop in international prices.

"For the month of June, there has been an increase in international prices of LPG.

Enhancement of turnover limit of MSME sector to help exporters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government's decision to increase the turnover limit for medium units from ₹100 crore to ₹250 crore will help to infuse technology and promote automation in certain sectors and boost outbound shipments, according to exporters.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations President Sharad Kumar Saraf said that exclusion of exports turnover from total turnover will help in internationalisation of MSMEs and will bring their focus on exports. "This will also benefit a lot of gems and jewellery companies, who would have breached the MSME criteria due to sheer cost of their inputs," he said in a statement. The cabinet on Monday approved further increasing the limit for medium manufacturing and service units to ₹50 crore of investment and ₹250 crore of turnover. The turnover with respect to exports will not be counted in the limits of turnover for any category of MSME units whether micro, small or medium.

The move is most pragmatic and will also infuse technology as in certain sectors margins are so low.

Raj DIPR sets new dimensions fighting corona pandemic

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The main corona warriors were Doctors, Paramedical Staff, Police, District Administration, Revenue Officers, Teachers, Sanitation Staff, Media Personnel and newspaper hawkers, NGOs and philanthropists.

Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) was silently playing its role and was keeping people of the State and media informed about all development of the State Government including the announcements and decisions through various forums.

Jairaj: In the ongoing fight against Covid, all departments of Government of Rajasthan played their important role. The main corona warriors were Doctors, Paramedical Staff, Police, District Administration, Revenue Officers, Teachers, Sanitation Staff, Media Personnel and newspaper hawkers, NGOs and philanthropists.

PNB cuts repo-linked lending rate by 40 bps to 6.65%

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Punjab National Bank (PNB), the country's second-largest state-owned lender, on Monday said it has reduced its repo-linked lending rate (RLR) by 40 basis points (bps) to 6.65 per cent from 7.05 per cent. The bank's marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR) has also been revised downwards by 15 bps across all tenors.



HDFC Bank launched a mobile ATM on Monday to facilitate the residents of Greater Noida in the Corona era. It was inaugurated by Additional CEO Deep Chandra of Greater Noida Authority. He flagged off the ATM mobile van.

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Kolkata's Pride

ZONAL CONTRACT FOR UP-KEEP OF ELEVATED STRUCTURES & OTHER WORKS

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Civil Engineer, Metro Railway for the following work: Name of work: Zone No. 7 i.e. Zonal Contract for Up-keep of elevated structures, overhead and underground structures, station and allied service buildings, fire hydrants, pipe lines work etc. from Km. 16/18 to Km. 25/11 between stations Mahanagar Ulliam Kumar (Ex.) to Kavi Subhash (In.) including Kavi Subhash Yard & car shed of Metro Railway, Kolkata. Tender Value: ₹ 1,02,79,290.20 Cost: Nil. Tender Document: ₹ 5,000. Earnest Money: ₹ 2,01,400. Completion period: The contract shall be in force for a period of two years starting from 01.07.2020. Date of closing: 22.06.2020 at 12.00 hrs. The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website www.treps.gov.in. The bidding for the tender is to be submitted only through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not accepted against this tender and any manual offer, if received shall not be allowed and will be summarily rejected.

Abridged e-Tender Notice No. Civil-2328-2020 (Open)

FASTER • SAFER • SMOOTHER • CLEANER

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Age: 25-30 years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'7", Built: Thin, Face: Long, Hair: Black, was wearing Black T-Shirt and Blue Jeans and Blue Hawal Chappal, was found hanging with a tree near DDA Land, right side of Rani Khera to Mundka under Pass. Who was declared brought dead by the doctors of Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital. In this regard a DD No. 2A, dated 28.05.2020, has been lodged at P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi Ph.: 011-25951486, 25952485

DELHI JAL BOARD GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI EXECUTIVE ENGINEER(NORTH WEST)-H BLOCK UDYOJ NAGAR INDL AREA PEERA GARHI CHOWK NEW DELHI-41

NTT NO:07/ENW/1(2020-21) PRESS NOTICE

S.No.	Name of Work	Amount / Put to tender (Rs.)	EM (Rs.) & processing Fee's	Di. of release of tender procurement solution D. No.	Last date/ time of receipt of tender E procurement solution
1.	Engagement of 20 No. Bidders on hire basis for day to day maintenance of water lines in Kirti (AC-09) under ZE-IEENW/VI.	70,000/-	500/-	28/05/2020	11-06-2020 at 3.00 P.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

Sd/- (Himanshu Agarwal) EX. ENGINEER (NW)

Ravinder Singh Dhillon takes over as CMD of PFC



New Delhi: Government-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC), India's leading NBFC, on Monday announced the appointment of Ravinder Singh Dhillon as its Chairman and Managing Director. RS Dhillon assumed the charge of the post of Chairman & Managing Director, PFC w.e.f 01st June 2020 upon the superannuation of Rajiv Sharma. Dhillon brings with him close to 36 years of rich and varied experience.

TENDER NOTICE

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / END (APPROX) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION NO. 1, SOHANA	PROVIDING SEWERAGE SYSTEM IN VILLAGE KHANPUR KALAN DISTT. SONPAT	29.05.2020 08.06.2020	319.75 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01263-258417 ee1gohana@gmail.com
2	DTIS KURUKSHETRA	TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF MANPOWER SERVICES OF VARIOUS POSTS/ JOBS IN DTIS, KURUKSHETRA	30.05.2020 15.06.2020	END	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	SECRETARY
3	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	DESCRIPTION OF STORE- 01. NI. LIST COMPRISING OF ITEMS FROM SR. NO. 1 TO 29 (SINGLE LOT OF 29 ITEMS)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
4	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	DESCRIPTION OF STORE- 01. NI. LIST COMPRISING OF ITEMS FROM SR. NO. 1 TO 29 (SINGLE LOT OF 29 ITEMS)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
5	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	DESCRIPTION OF STORE- 01. NI. LIST COMPRISING OF ITEMS FROM SR. NO. 1 TO 04 (SINGLE LOT OF 04 ITEMS)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
6	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	DESCRIPTION OF STORE- 01. NI. LIST COMPRISING OF 01 NO. ITEM I.E. LG MAKE SPLIT AC, CAPACITY 2 TON (SINGLE LOT OF 01 ITEM)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
7	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	DESCRIPTION OF STORE- ONE NO. LIST COMPRISING OF ITEMS FROM SR. NO. 1 TO 03 (SINGLE LOT OF 03 ITEMS)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
8	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	MULTI-AXLE (6 X 2) TRUCK CHASSIS WITH DAY/SLEEPER CAB FOR FABRICATION OF 18.0 KL CAPACITY DIESEL TANKERS	01.06.2020 03.07.2020	1.80 CRORE	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
9	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF LED BASED SOLAR HOME SYSTEM FOR ANGANWADI CENTERS OF THE HARYANA STATE	01.06.2020 03.07.2020	4500.67 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
10	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	DESCRIPTION OF STORE- ONE NO. LIST COMPRISING OF ITEMS FROM SR. NO. 1 TO 02 (SINGLE LOT OF 02 ITEMS)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
11	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	SOLAR INVERTER CHARGERS TO CHARGE THE BATTERIES OF EXISTING CONVENTIONAL INVERTER.	01.06.2020 03.07.2020	7035.00 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
12	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF LED BASED SPV HOME LIGHTING SYSTEM (MANOHAR 2070)	01.06.2020 03.07.2020	4500.00 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
13	DISTRICT ADMIN KURUKSHETRA	TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF MANPOWER SERVICES/EMPANELMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDER OF VARIOUS POSTS/ JOBS IN DISTRICT KURUKSHETRA	30.05.2020 15.06.2020	END	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
14	WATER SERVICES SUDIPUR	REPAIRING OF DAMAGED CIVIL WORKS WALL OF FALL AT RD 2859 OF WVC MUL + 12 OTHER WORKS	01.06.2020 08.06.2020	2.02 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	01735-242638 xendadupur@yahoo.com
15	PWD BDR GURUGRAM	PROVIDING 500 KW SUB STATION AT HARTIKR MULTI SKILL DEVELOPMENT CENTER (HSDC) GURUGRAM	29.05.2020 15.06.2020	41.10 LACS	www.etenders.nic.in	0124-2320874 Pwd.ee@punjab.govt@hry.nic.in
16	HEALTH AMBALA	E-TENDER FOR OUTSOURCING OF MANPOWER FOR SUPPORT SERVICES, ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING SERVICES AND CLEANING & SANITATION SERVICES FOR CIVIL HOSPITAL AMBALA CITY. + 1 OTHER WORKS	04.06.2020 14.06.2020	4 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	Civil Surgeon
17	FOREST YAMUNA NAGAR	SMC WORK C.C. STUO NO. 1 TO 4 AT BIR TAPU R.G.F ON BANK OF YAMUNA RIVER IN BHOGWANSHAR BLOCK OF JAGRIH RANGE + 5 OTHER WORKS	29.05.2020 04.06.2020	53.92 LACS	www.haryanaforest.gov.in	dfp@hry.nic.in
18	PWD BDR BR. GURUGRAM	PROVIDING RMR & CABLING IN GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE AT VILLAGE CHAINDA IN DISTRICT FARIDABAD + 2 OTHER WORKS	31.05.2020 11.06.2020	END 47200/-	www.etenders.nic.in	0124-2320874 Pwd.ee@punjab.govt@hry.nic.in
19	HEALTH PALWAL	PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES SUCH AS -HOUSEKEEPING, GENERAL DUTY ASSISTANT, HALL AND DHOBI + ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES SUCH AS MAINTENANCE OF CIVIL WORKS, ELECTRICAL WORK, LIFE OPERATOR, COMPUTER OPERATORS, FIRE SAFETY OFFICER, ETC. AT CIVIL HOSPITAL, PALWAL - 1 OTHER WORK	02.06.2020 22.06.2020	18 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	9315944933 cpspalwal@gmail.com
20	WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT DEPTT. HARYANA (PALNDA PLANT GHARASANDA)	TRANSPORTATION/LOADING/UNLOADING OF RAW MATERIAL (FOOD ITEMS) FOR THE YEAR 2020-21 TENDER ID:- FISHING NET 130042-1	30.05.2020 10.06.2020	8.5 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01746-253855 pangit@ntwv@punjab.govt@hry.nic.in
21	FISHERIES DEPARTMENT HARYANA	FISHING NETS LIKE HARA, CHAT JAL, DRAG NET CAST NET, HAND NET ETC. (AS PER SPECIFICATION) - DETERMINATION OF VARIOUS FISHING NET RATES	OPENING DATE 22.06.2020	10,000/-	www.harfish.gov.in	97114-33362 fisheries@hry.nic.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in RO NO. 81099



pioneer HEALTH

Avoid Vaping

A team of US researchers led by an Indian-origin scientist revealed that just a few months of vaping may put healthy people on the brink of oral disease. The study found that the collection of bacteria in daily e-cigarette users' mouths is teeming with potent infection-causing organisms that put vapers at substantial risk for ailments ranging from gum disease to cancer

DOCYARD

DR PARTAP CHAUHAN

Director

JIVA AYURVEDA



Keep hormones in check

A woman undergoes many physical and hormonal changes in her life. Some are easy, but some can bring complications with them. Menstrual cycles, for instance, tend to be accompanied by problems like irregular periods, excessive bleeding, pain, and cramps.

Causes of menstrual disorders
Factors that are responsible for this condition include the increased intake of sour, salty, hot, pungent, heavy, and fermented food; meat of fatty and domestic animals; alcoholic beverages; indigestion; and eating before the previous meal is digested. Conditions that also have a strong effect include repeated abortions, excessive sexual activity, increased physical exertion (walking, riding, weight lifting), emaciation, trauma, and day sleeping. Psychological conditions such as grief, anger, lust, and anxiety are also known to play a key role in aggravating menstrual problems.

According to Ayurveda, poor diet and inefficient digestion are the main causative factors for these disorders. Improperly digested food leads to the production of toxins in the body. These toxins are circulated by the blood to the deep tissues and channels, where they cause blockages and stagnation. These conditions cause aggravation of vata dosha (air) and the rakta dhātu (blood). The aggravated vata brings impaired blood into the channels carrying the raj (menstrual blood), leading to increased menstrual blood flow.

Ayurveda recommends different types of treatment to treat menstrual problems. These include nourishing and toning herbs as well as rejuvenative treatment in accordance with the nature of the disorder. Massage and the incorporation of medication and yoga may also be beneficial for permanent elimination of the problems. It is important to address these menstruation problems because a woman expels a large proportion of her wastes and toxins through this process. If these toxins remain in the body, they cause further stagnation and blockage within the body.

- Ayurvedic tips that will help fight menstrual problems
- Take one crushed garlic clove (lahsun) with two cloves (laung) twice a day during your periods.
- When suffering from period cramps, take a teaspoon of aloe vera gel mixed with a pinch of black pepper or cinnamon (dalchini) powder.
- Drinking ginger infused herbal tea helps. You can also mix 1 tsp of ginger powder in warm water and have that.
- Take the following decoction from the first day of your periods to alleviate the symptoms: Boil one tsp of cumin seeds with two glasses of water over moderate heat until the mixture reduces to half. Sieve the seeds. Add a teaspoon of honey and drink it warm.
- Cooling showers and bathing with sandalwood and mint essence are helpful.
- Include spices like cumin (jeera), fenugreek seeds (methi), black pepper (kali mirch), cloves (laung), coriander (dhanya), and mint (pudina) in your diet.
- Include pumpkin, papaya, cucumber, potato, cauliflower, and peas in your diet.

SUMMERCoolers

SWEET POTATO: A sweet potato is a sweet and starchy root vegetable. It is a great source of fibre, vitamins and minerals. They are also rich in antioxidants which help promote gut health. Sweet potatoes also contain significant amount of magnesium which help to reduce stress and anxiety. They are also known for their anti-inflammatory properties which help reduce inflammation on the body. Sweet potatoes can help in controlling blood pressure because



KICK THE HABIT

No Tobacco Day was on May 31. Doctors tell you how to be tobacco free to boost immunity during Coronavirus pandemic

Tobacco consumption happens in two forms- either chewing tobacco in the form of smokeless tobacco (pan masala, gutka & khaini) or smoking (cigarettes & beedi). Tobacco consumed in any form is extremely addictive because of nicotine and three hundred cancer-causing carcinogens. Chewing tobacco accounts for major consumption of tobacco in India, making head and neck cancers the most commonly reported forms. Smokeless tobacco is usually a mixture of aromatic betel leaves and nuts that the user keeps in the mouth and chews on it for hours. When these leaves are chewed upon constantly for long durations, nicotine is released in the mouth along with other flavours, that causes the mouth to produce excessive saliva. Users generally end up spitting this out. While smoking tobacco, nicotine is released in the lungs and affects the other organs, tobacco when chewed stays in the mouth. Development of tartar can lead to gum disease and can negatively impact saliva flow in the mouth. It makes it easier for bacteria to stick to teeth and gums. Repeated consumption causes various damage to the oral health:

- **Impacts on oral health**
- **Bad breath:** This is the most initial and primary impact of repeated consumption of smokeless tobacco, happens due to the residue of smokeless tobacco is left in the mouth and stained teeth.
- **Gum infections:** Smokeless tobacco can irritate your gums,

The most common cause of Lung cancer is smoking. Risk of lung cancer is up to 30 times higher in long term smokers compared with lifetime non smoker. Moreover, tobacco smokers may be more susceptible to contracting COVID-19, as the act of smoking involves contact of fingers with the lips, which increases the possibility of transmission of viruses from hand to mouth. Smoking shisha or hookah, often involves the sharing of mouth pieces and hoses, which could facilitate the transmission of the COVID-19 virus in communal and social settings
— Dr Vikas Goswami, Senior Consultant Medical Oncologist, Max Hospital

- causing gum (periodontal) disease.
- **Tooth decay or dental caries:** Sugar is often added to enhance the flavor of smokeless tobacco, increases the risk for tooth decay. The main ingredients of smokeless tobacco are sand and grit, that wear down teeth, causing erosion and sensitivity
- **Leukoplakia:** Thick white patches inside the mouth, are known to be early signs of mouth cancer
- **Oral submucous fibrosis:** A chronic disease affecting any part of the oral cavity leading to stiffness of

Say no to tobacco

Even from studies before COVID-19 crisis, extensive proof underlining the deleterious impact of tobacco use on lung health and its causative connotation with respiratory diseases is all over healthcare research papers. The effects are damaging to the immune system of the smokers too and they are twofold more susceptible to influenza than non-smokers. Furthermore other severe symptoms along with a higher mortality rate were reported in smokers in the preceding MERS-CoV outbreak.

Now we know well that tobacco use is damaging to our respiratory system, with or without COVID-19. Moreover, COVID-19 has made the previously deleterious effects of tobacco, lethal. If you want to quit smoking, no time can be better than this. Research also support that the effects of smoking starts to

subside as soon as the habit is controlled. Near normal body system settings can soon be restored. There have been several studies reiterating the deadly effect of smoking on lungs. Chemicals present in tobacco smoking causes irritation of wind-pipe, voice box and other parts of respiratory tract. Excessive mucus is secreted as a response to the irritation. It also reiterating the deadly effect of reducing lung function and causing distressed breathing. Gradually the entire air way reduces in size. You are already aware of the chemicals found in tobacco harmful and cancer causing for both users and passive smokers. The writer is Dr Anshuman Kumar, Senior Consultant & Director, Surgical Oncology at Dharamshila Narayana Superspeciality Hospital

the oral mucosa, causing reduced opening of the mouth and inability to eat. ■ **Oral and throat cancers:** Head and neck cancer is the most life-threatening health risk linked with smokeless tobacco. Each time a person chews tobacco, poisons are released in the mouth putting them at a greater risk of mouth cancers. Ingredients like betel nuts made from betel leaves and slaked lime, present in smokeless tobacco, put people at a risk of cancers of the mouth, pharynx (throat), oesophagus (gullet), stomach and pancreas. Cancers of the lip and cheek are also common, as the tobacco is pressed against the lining of the mouth. The writer is Dr Nikhil Modi, Senior Consultant, Respiratory, Critical care & Sleep Disorder, Institutes of Critical Care, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi

Binging on chips, chocolates, popcorn while watching a Netflix series or two is our guilty pleasure. We all have had a cheat diet once a day to satisfy our sudden cravings, especially during the recent times when many of us are spending time back at home. Watching a movie without something to munch on seems like a big no, but that doesn't mean you have to take the unhealthy way.

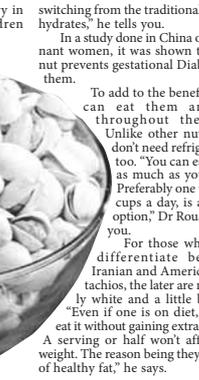
For all those who are looking for a healthy snacking option, pistachios are here to solve your woes. Not only they are much healthy but a recent study has found that they are a complete protein too. Dr Mike Roussell, globally renowned Nutrition Consultant, Author and Advisor, tells you that the research showing that American Pistachios are complete protein is extremely important because it shows that they contain nine essential amino acids that your body needs in a form that is readily bio-absorbable and available for your body to use. "This is unlike other plant proteins that are incomplete and where you need to add other complementary proteins to get the essential amino acids," he explains. Dr Roussell adds that American pistachios are your one stop shop as a source of plant-based protein. They are portable, they don't need to be cooked, you can enjoy it as an any-

Go nuts

Snacking on pistachios is a missing element in India. DR MIKE ROUSELL tells MUSBA HASHMI the numerous benefits of incorporating the nut in diet

time snack wherever you are. "American pistachios makes for a superfood for children as they being a complete protein promotes growth. They have more protein than any other nuts. It is also a good source of fibre for children and unlike broccoli you won't have to force feed it your kid," he says. American pistachios are also a great food for people with Diabetes. "If a person eats a cup or half of pistachios at night, it might help keep their blood sugar in control the next morning," Dr Roussell tells you. Pistachio being an easy to eat snack, also promotes mindful eating in adults. "One has to slow down, break the nut and then eat it. This leads to mindful eat-

ing. They are also great to carry in lunch boxes and help children switching from the traditional carbohydrate," he tells you. In a study done in China on pregnant women, it was shown that the nut prevents gestational Diabetes in them. To add to the benefits, one can eat them anytime throughout the year. Unlike other nuts, they don't need refrigeration too. "You can eat them as much as you want. Preferably one to three cups a day, is a better option," Dr Roussell tells you. For those who want to differentiate between Iranian and American pistachios, the later are naturally white and a little bit oily. "Even if one is on diet, he can eat it without gaining extra weight. A serving or half won't affect the weight. The reason being they are full of healthy fat," he says.



KEEP SKIN SUPPLE AND GLOWING



It is time that we take extra care of our skin. DR AJAY RANA shares tips that one can follow to keep it glowing

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to be locked at our home and self-isolate. It's been more than two months that we are stuck at home. At this time, wearing any makeup seems to be a thing of the past. It feels so liberating not to use any makeup or skin products. It is giving our skin some time to breathe.

But at this time we almost neglect to care for our skin. Because this is the time it needs unique care and attention. We generally forget that our skin is exposed to the summer heat and dust even if you are sitting in your home. And, because we all are under the air conditioner all the time, it may just make things even worse. Some people are observing a skin breakout and many other skin problems during the COVID-19 lockdown. We should know the reasons and how can take care to avoid such skin conditions:

- During this time of summer, heat and warm weather tends to aggravate dry skin, and especially in low humidity conditions. Going outdoors during the harsh sun that has become minimal these days, still drying of skin is unavoidable.
- Hydrate yourself through the day, as water help to get rid of toxins in the body. Most people don't drink water on a regular basis, and this also causes acne.
- Stop washing your face with any soap. Always use a good face wash to clean your skin. It removes dirt from the surface of the skin and keeps the face fresh, and will not dry out the skin as soaps do.
- Don't eat any kind of junk food. Always take a healthy diet, exercise, hydrate yourself, and wear sunglasses when you are outdoors. Foods which are rich in Vitamin D. So that it can keep your skin acne free.
- Even if we are confined to our house, we still need to follow a dedicated skincare regime for the nourishment of our skin. Nourish the skin with a face pack once a week and use a good face wash and toner every day. These are important for a glowing and healthy skin.
- We should stop using wrong products, especially for your skin. If anybody suffers from dry skin conditions, it is mandatory to use products that are suitable for the skin type.
- Wash your face regularly. Sitting at home does not mean that we do not need to wash our face. In this scorching heat, it makes us sweat and the dust clog the pores on the skin surface. So, it is always necessary to keep your face clean and fresh. Wash your face properly twice a day.
- Do not wash your face harshly. Splash some water on the face if you feel tired or hot. This will help the facial skin free of excess oil, sweat and bacteria and it rescues acne and pimples like skin problems.
- Always use moisturiser especially at the times when there is high chances of dry skin. Use moisturiser two-three times a day.

The writer is Dermatologist and Aesthetic Physician, Founder-Director, ILAEMD

SLIMLINE

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the weakness of food and health systems, disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations. As inequalities and malnutrition continue to sweep the world and India, the 2020 Global Nutrition Report stresses that the need to address malnutrition in all its forms by tackling injustices in food and health systems is now more urgent than ever. The report finds that India remains severely affected by malnutrition, with one of the highest rates of within-country inequalities in malnutrition globally. However, some progress has been made to tackle stunting and underweight, and the country has put in place innovative programmes aimed at reaching the most vulnerable. India has had some success in reducing rates of underweight in child and adolescents. Between 2000 and 2016, rates have decreased from 66.0% to 58.1% for boys and 54.2% to 50.1% in girls. However, this is still high compared to the average of 35.6% for boys and 31.8% for girls in the Asia region. In addition, 37.9% of children under 5 years of age are stunted and 20.8% are wasted, compared to the Asia average of 22.7% and 9.4% respectively.

Trend
Slazer

Varun is missing his people

Amid lockdown, actor **VARUN DHAWAN** says he is missing his people.

In an Instagram picture, the actor can be seen holding a teacup and his garden can be seen in the backdrop.

In the image, he put a sticker, which read: "Missing my people."

Varun had earlier expressed that he misses being on set.

He will soon be seen sharing screen space with Sara Ali Khan in the remake of 1995 hit film *Coolie No.1*.



"Today the world is battling its greatest battle against Coronavirus. In these difficult times, the

people who are battling this crisis head on, are frontline workers, the medical personnel, brave soldiers, police force, who are risking their lives to keep us safe. As a Mumbaikar, I say a big Thank You to the Mumbai Police Foundation."

—Rani Mukherjee



Actress **GENELIA D'SOUZA's** younger son Rahyl turned a year older on Monday, and she took to social media to pen a wish for the boy.

"Rahyl...Just when I thought I know what love is, someone so little and so precious came along to remind me how big love is. I want you to always know, you were wished for, longed for, prayed for and will...always always be loved because you are my most favourite thing of everyday," Genelia wrote.

Along with it, she posted a couple of pictures capturing moments from Rahyl's life.



Tenet extremely complicated: Robert

Actor **ROBERT PATTINSON** struggled hard to understand the plot of Christopher Nolan's *Tenet*, and says he wasn't aware of what was happening for most months of the filming.

In an interview, the actor opened up about the complicated film.

"There were months where I was like, 'Am I...?' Honestly, I had no idea if I'm even vaguely understanding what's happening," he said. Pattinson continued: "On the last day, I asked (co-actor John David Washington) about what was happening in a scene, and it was just so profoundly the wrong take on the character..."



A STREETSIDE NAMED DESIRE

With lockdown restrictions being lifted in some parts of the country, people have flocked the streets irresponsibly during a time which demands social distancing. How can local market vendors and shops ensure safety and hygiene, asks **TEAM VIVA**

With a few lockdown restrictions having been lifted, a large majority is seen frolicking in the streets in a manner that makes it seem that it is back to what life was prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. While advisories such as the practice of disinfecting hands regularly and covering face with masks are possible but maintaining social distancing with customers crowding around a *retri* or screening them with an infrared thermometer might seem easy for shopping malls or other corporate offices, but are somewhat exclusionary towards street vendors and hawkers due to the nature of their livelihood and their socio-economic standing.

Markets are an important part of any local landscape and ensuring their safety is a must. So how are local vendors being prepared to keep hygiene in place? Experts tell us that the fear is here to stay and the precautions are important to follow now more than ever.

Sangeeta Singh, head of street food programme, National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), said, "Everyone, including street food vendors, will have to get used to the new normal to start earning their livelihood. There are approximately more than three lakh vendors in Delhi alone, according to NASVI, which is a large number that has been unemployed due to everything being shut down. While the government is preparing these vendors for the new normal, most of them are quite unsure if they can immediately go back to selling food items, and are also worried about not earning enough because a lot of their food stands were next to public places like the metro station, bus stand, etc."

HK Sharma, owner of Babu Ram Paranthé Wala, a shop in Chandni Chowk, agrees that finding the first customer is quite difficult because of the non-operation of metro lines. He shares that they will ensure compliance with measures to protect themselves and the workers of the shop. Talking about the procedure being followed, he adds, "We are taking the basic safety measures such as wearing protective gears, using disinfectants to keep everything clean, opting for online payment and of course maintaining social distance. People are themselves so aware that it's unlikely they'll break the rules. Even if somebody does, we are ready with our strict protocols."

Ask him how important it is to follow them, he says, "This is something very serious. Everybody has to stick to the guidelines and not risk themselves and risk their own lives as well as of others. Remember what Modji said? *Jaan hai toh jahan hai*. So it's only if you have a life, you can have the world."



In order to have a proper protocol which was specially designed for street vendors, NASVI decided to coach them in various measures that they must take. The training focusses on three major aspects — maintaining high levels of personal hygiene, practicing social distancing at all times and frequent cleaning and sanitisation — among other things.

The NASVI also announced that it will train 500 street food vendors in collaboration with FSSAI to assist them in earning their livelihood by strictly following certain safety measures. As a part of the first phase, vendors were given training recently. They were informed and educated about the different kinds of precautionary measures which include food, safety, health and hygiene. They were also taught about the use of disposable plates, glasses and the safe use of alcohol-based hand sanitisers. Apart from this, the importance of social distancing and hand-washing was also taught to them.

The training is based on guidelines for food businesses during the pandemic. There are other examples too through which more such guidelines could be applied.



Maybe the solution would also come from market associations. Screening people at the same place where door-frame metal detectors are installed, restricting the entry to ensure that there are not more than a certain

number of people and keeping sanitisers at the entrance of a market are some ways that the associations can take up the responsibility of ensuring the safety of the vendors and the customers.

An example the Indian markets could learn from is that of the Maine Federation of Farmers' Markets, which, as soon as the US state discovered its first cases of the virus, issued guidelines in public welfare. It wants market customers and the public to know they are taking immediate and proactive steps to ensure markets are safe places to shop during the pandemic. The organisers were encouraged to streamline their markets to discourage the public from gathering in large numbers or lingering onsite. Inside the markets, the information booth will be well-stocked with hand sanitisers and there will be hand-washing stations available throughout the venue. All food sold at the market will be pre-packaged and sold by the vendors to reduce human contact with the items as much as possible. The federation also ensured that the food purchased at local farmers' market is safer than that sold in supermarkets.

Well, now the public is shattering the fear surrounding COVID-19 and stepping out onto the streets to do away with the monotony of sitting at home, we need fewer hands touching the products and ensuring these measures are observed.

Last sonata

Condolences pour in from the Hindi music industry after the demise of singer **WAJID ALI** due to Coronavirus. By **TEAM VIVA**

"Meri toh duniya bikul alag thi Andaz woh kho gaya Dekhna doabna ho gaya Doabna tairna ha gaya Kyu asar mere saath hai Mukhtasar mulaakat hai..."

It was singer Wajid Ali's voice which made this song from *Teri Meri Kahaani* (2012) quite a favourite among youngsters. The singer later revealed that he had initially composed the song for his own album but then decided to use it for the film because it matched the situation. Alas, the song's meaning now matches Wajid's current situation. His demise at 42 due to Coronavirus has come as a shock to many connoisseurs of Bollywood music as well as the Indian music fraternity.

He had tested positive for Coronavirus a few days ago and was also suffering from a kidney ailment, had undergone a kidney transplant recently. He had been admitted to Surana Hospital at Chembur where his condition had deteriorated and was on a ventilator for the last few days. He breathed his last in the early hours of the day.

Priyanka Chopra, who starred in the song, tweeted, "Terrible news. The one thing I will always remember is Wajid's laugh. Always smiling. Gone too soon. My condolences to his family and everyone grieving. Rest in peace, my friend. You are in my thoughts and prayers."



Wajid has judged various reality shows like *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, alongside other prominent names from the industry: Shekhar Ravjiani, who judged the 2018 show alongside Wajid and Richa Sharma, expressed his grief by mailing us some of their photographs from the show sets and said, "I'll miss my friend."

It was Salman Khan's *Pyaar Kiya Toh Darna Kya* (1998), for which the Sajid-Wajid composer duo first scored music for with *Teri Jawani*. The actor tweeted, "Wajid will always respect and remember you as a person. Love you and may your beautiful soul rest in peace."

The duo went on to compose several hit numbers for Salman stars including *Ladki Dupatta* and title track of *Mujhse Shadi Karogi* (2004), *Teri Mast Mast Do Nain* and *Hud Hud Dabang* in *Ek Tha Tiger* (2012) and more.

Music composer and singer Shankar Mahadevan wrote, "I am just not able to come to terms with this. It's shocking! Good bye dear brother. Love you! Till we meet on the other side. Prayers for your peaceful journey Wajid bhai."

Singer Sonu Mohapatra, who has also judged alongside Wajid in a reality singing show, recalled her experience during the time. She told us,

"I know that Wajid was going through kidney ailments for a long time now. Even two years ago, on the sets of *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, he had a small accident, where he had hurt himself but things became complicated because of his other medications and low immunity."

She added, "He was a generous, affectionate and lovely person who had come up the tough way. A tabla player, a composer, who had the intention to do good always. He would bring home-cooked food for all of us on the sets and used to be full of enthusiasm. I really got along with him very well and deeply regret losing touch during the lockdown."

Sona had also tweeted, "Heartbreaking news. Wajid is no more. Spent time on the *SRGMP* show with him as a co-judge and he was so kind and generous. I know he was ailing for a while, regret not picking up the phone on him in this lockdown. Stunned and sad."

Singer Mamta Sharma, who lent her voice to *Anarkali Disco Chali, Ferozi Se*, among other popular Sajid-Wajid numbers, expressed her grief by recalling her work with him as she considered him to be her "guru" and "mentor." She earlier said, "I am not in a clear state of mind right now because he was really close to us. Wajid bhai was just like family. I am too shocked to say anything. Last week, I spoke to him over a video call. He was absolutely fine and I thought he would be discharged in a few days. Meanwhile, this happened. I am still not out of this trauma. I cannot think of anything right now. Whatever I am today, it is because of him. Over the call, I was in tears looking at him but the smile on his face was intact and he was consoling me and saying 'Don't worry, I am ok, I am good, I will be alright.' He was such a strong person and a pillar of positivity."

"Rest in harmony, my friend. Had the pleasure of working with both Sajid-Wajid most loving and brilliant. My condolences to his family and especially Sajid. #RIPWajidKhan," Abhishek Bachchan tweeted.

"Gone too soon," music composer A R Rahman tweeted.

—With inputs from TN Raghunatha

Let's pledge for climate justice: Bhumi



Actor Bhumi Pednekar is urging the nation to become climate conscious and is looking to bring together the who's who of the film industry to spread awareness for nature conservation. She is a vocal climate activist and runs her own non-profit initiative called Climate Warrior that celebrates real-life heroes working towards climate change and as an advocacy platform to engage and rally the youth towards this cause. On this World Environment Day, Bhumi is looking to bring many issues that the world is facing as an impact of the climate crisis.

The actor says she wants every citizen to become a climate warrior and do their bit for the cause that is threatening our future generations. Bhumi says, "For World Environment Day, Climate Warrior is starting a small campaign — *One Wish For The Earth*. At this time and in this current scenario, there are many issues that the world is facing as an impact of the climate crisis.

The campaign endeavours to get thought leaders from my industry to tell the world what is the 'one wish' they have for the earth. I can't wait to share their thoughts to make the earth a better place. Let's pledge for climate justice and let's unite to save our planet."

We need an alternative to saliva: Bumrah

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Premier India pacer Jasprit Bumrah won't miss the hugs and high-fives as part of a wicket celebration but he will certainly miss applying saliva on the ball as an interim alternative should be provided to maintain the red cherry.

The ICC Cricket Committee, led by former India captain Anil Kumble, recommended a ban on using saliva on the ball as an interim measure to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Committee did not allow the use of artificial substances as a substitute move.

The new rule makes life tougher for the bowlers and Bumrah, like many former and current fast bowlers, feels there ought to be an alternative.

"I was not much of a hugger anyway and not a high-five person as well, so that doesn't trouble me a lot. The only thing that interests me is the saliva bit," said.

"I don't know what guidelines we'll have to follow when we come back, but I feel there should be an alternative," he added.

Bumrah said not being able to use saliva makes the game more batsman-friendly.

"If the ball is not well maintained, it's difficult for the bowlers. The grounds are getting shorter and shorter, the wickets are becoming flatter and flatter."

"So we need something, some alternative for the bowlers to maintain the ball so that it can do something - maybe reverse in the end or conventional swing."

When former West Indian



pacer Bishop pointed out that the conditions have been favourable to the fast bowlers over the last couple of years, Bumrah nodded in agreement.

"In Test match cricket, yes. That is why it's my favourite format, because we have something over there. But in one-day cricket and T20 cricket... one-day cricket there are two

"I WAS NOT MUCH OF A HUGGER ANYWAY AND NOT A HIGH-FIVE PERSON AS WELL, SO THAT DOESN'T TROUBLE ME A LOT. THE ONLY THING THAT INTERESTS ME IS THE SALIVA BIT,"

new balls, so it hardly reverts at the end.

"We played in New Zealand, the ground (boundary) was 50 metres. So even if you are not looking to hit a six, it will go for six. In Test matches I have no problem, I'm very happy with the way things are going."

He finds it amusing that

the batsmen keep complaining about the swinging ball.

"Whenever you play, I've heard the batsmen - not in our team, everywhere - complaining the ball is swinging. But the ball is supposed to swing! The ball is supposed to do some thing! We are not here just to give throwdowns, isn't it? (laughter)

Rohit & Virat defining pair of modern era



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Every cricketing era has a "defining pair" which builds the narrative and the duo of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma is a special one for India in modern times, says Sri Lankan legend Kumar Sangakkara.

Kohli and Rohit have aggregated nearly 36,000 runs (35,930 runs) across three formats and Sangakkara feels the duo has the same aura which Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid had in the late '90s and early 2000s.

"There is something very special about Virat and Rohit. That fact that rules have changed and run-scoring might have become slightly easier in one-day cricket, but it's incredibly hard, the volume of cricket that India athletes play," Sangakkara said on Star Sports 'Cricket Connected'.

Sangakkara feels that Kohli and Rohit deserve the respect also for the fact that players from bygone era didn't have to constantly play three formats.

"So, I think you have to have a lot of respect for Rohit and Virat but understand that it's all because of the players that

have gone before and have done all the hard work then as well."

"So, it's a knock-on effect, so in every era, there's always a defining pair and in the modern era, it's Rohit and Virat for India for sure," Sangakkara recalled the era of Dravid and Ganguly.

"If you take the modern-day game, India has two of the best players in Virat and Rohit, who play orthodox cricket but who are just absolutely destructive in any format of the game. You don't have to muscle the ball or put too much effort or look ugly doing it, they just play good cricket shots and results come," he concluded.

Advantage for Aus in D/N Test: Smith

PTI ■ MUMBAI



Star batsman Steve Smith says the experience of having played more pink ball games than India would give Australia 'slight advantage' when the two sides clash under flood lights in December but the Virat Kohli-led side has the batsmen to stand up to the challenge.

Cricket Australia last week confirmed that India will tour Down Under for a full tour comprising four Tests, three ODIs and three T20s. The second Test will be a day-night affair, starting from December 11 in Adelaide.

"We played a few more pink ball games, perhaps, than India which might be a slight advantage," the Aussie star batsman said in a Facebook session, hosted by Sony Sports India.

"India played pretty well in the day-night game they played at Kolkata. It's a different game but they certainly got the batters that can stand up to the conditions when it gets tough with the Pink ball. And their bowlers, they stand the seam up with quality."

Smith in best shape despite not picking up bat

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Top Australian cricketers resumed training on Monday at the Sydney Olympic Park with batting mainstay Steve Smith saying that he is in his best shape in years after putting the bat aside for two months to focus on physical and mental fitness.

David Warner and Mitchell Starc were among those who reported for training as the domestic pre-season began behind closed doors. Australia is one of the less-affected countries

from the COVID-19 pandemic with little over 7,000 cases reported so far.

"I'm probably in the best shape I've been in in years, doing lots of running, lots of gym stuff at home. It's been a couple of months of good hard work," said Smith.

"I haven't touched a bat, really. A couple of little drills at home but that's about it. I've just tried to switch off from a bit, which I don't do very often. I was just focusing on getting myself fit and strong and refreshing mentally," he said.

"They are world class players who are able to adapt to anything, so I see it being a pretty amazing contest," he said. India will first clash with Australia in a T20I series beginning October 11 and then return to defend the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with the opening match at Gabba, where the hosts have tremendous record.

"Our record at Gabba (Brisbane) against anyone, is good to be fair, that is a fortress for us, we wanted to play first Test there for a long period of time," the 30-year-old said.

Smith, one of the world's best Test batsmen, also admired the way the Indian captain goes about chases in white-ball cricket.

ECB to resume cricket behind closed doors

AFP ■ LONDON

The ECB has welcomed the UK government's decision to allow the resumption of professional sports behind closed doors which allows the return of competitive sport plan of hosting international cricket starting next month.

In the latest health and safety guidelines designed to prevent the spread of coronavirus, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Oliver Dowden on Saturday gave the green light to go ahead with its plan to return behind closed doors in safe and carefully controlled environments from June 1.

"We are extremely heartened by Saturday's announcement from the Secretary of State, which will support the return of pro-

fessional, domestic cricket behind closed doors, and provides a meaningful next step for recreational players to begin playing at their clubs again," England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said in a statement.

The board added that it will study the plan of hosting international cricket starting next month.

"Over the coming week, we will seek to understand the specific guidance from Government's medical teams so that we can provide support for cricket clubs who will be eager to see their communities safely playing in small groups."

"We extend our thanks to all those in Government who have worked hard to support the return of sport and we look forward to seeing players from across the game start returning to the field," it added.

Man U extend Ighalo's loan deal

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United extended Odion Ighalo's loan spell until January 2021 on Monday to ensure the Nigerian striker will be able to finish the 2019/20 season with the Premier League club.

Ighalo's initial loan deal from Shanghai Shenhua expired at the end of May, but the 30-year-old has been rewarded for an impressive return of four goals in eight appearances for United before football was shut down by the coronavirus pandemic in March.

"Manchester United have reached agreement with Shanghai Greenland Shenhua to extend the loan deal for Odion Ighalo," United said in a statement.

"He will now remain with the Reds until 31 January 2021, enabling him to build on an impressive start to life with the club he supported as a boy."



Ighalo could prove an important addition to Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's squad ahead of a packed schedule of once games get back under way later this month.

"They (Shanghai) have been great towards us, allowing him to play for his dream club," said Solskjaer last week.

"It's been a dream for him and hopefully he can finish what he started and win a trophy with us."

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Office of the Executive Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri.

Invitation for Bids

Bid Identification No. E.E. (R&B) Puri - 7 / 2020-21

- The Executive Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri, on behalf of Government of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in Double Cover system in ONLINE MODE only.
- Nature of work: Roads
- No. of work: 1 Nos.
- Tender Paper cost: Rs. 10,000/- for to be remit online only
- Class of Contractor: "B" & "A"
- Availability of Bid Documents in the website: From Dt. 02.06.2020 at 10:00 hours to Dt. 08.06.2020 at 17:00
- Date of opening of Bid: Dt. 09.06.2020 at 11:30
- EMD/Bid Security: As specified in the notice to be remitted on line only
- The Bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason therefor.

OIPR-34064/11/0001/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

RWS&S DIVISION, BOUDH

National competitive Bidding through E-Procurement

Tender Identification No. 02 / E.E. RWS&S, Boudh of 2020-21

The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Boudh, on behalf of the Government of Odisha invites Percentage Rate Bids in Single cover (p. contact) from the eligible class of experienced registered contractors through e-Tendering system for the piped water supply works as detailed in DTCN. The bid should be submitted on-line in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in separately for the work.

- Nature of work: Piped water supply work
- Estimated Cost: 8.00 lakhs to 22.00 lakhs
- No. of works: 03 No
- Tender Cost: 4000.00 to 8000.00
- Class of contractor: "C" & "D"
- Availability of Bid document in the website: Dt. 08.06.2020 11 hours to 17.06.2020 17 hours
- Date of seeking clarification: During the office hours of 08.06.2020 to 16.06.2020
- Date of opening Bid: 18.06.2020 at 12.00 hours

Further details can be seen in the bidding documents which is available in the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> subsequent corrigendum if required shall be appeared in the website. Authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason therefor.

Sd/-Executive Engineer, RWS & S Division, Boudh

OIPR-25039/11/0001/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, SAMBALPUR (R&B) DIVISION No.1: SAMBALPUR

e-procurement Notice

BID IDENTIFICATION No: EE/R&B/SBP/03/2020-21

E-mail - eeexengsbp@rediffmail.com Phone/Fax-0665-2548013

No. 5053 / Dated. 27.05.2020

- The Executive Engineer, Sambalpur (R&B) Division No.1, Sambalpur on behalf of Government of Odisha, invites Percentage Rate bids in Single/Double Cover System in ONLINE MODE for construction of Civil / Electrical Work as detailed in the DTCN from the eligible Class of Contractors.
- No. of works: 03 (Three)
- Tender Cost: Rs. 10,00,000/- & Rs.6,00,000/- (On Line)
- Class of Contractor: "B" & "A" Class Contractor and "HT" Class Contractor
- Date and time Available in Web site & receipt of Bids: 16.00 Hrs 10.06.2020 to 17:00 Hrs of 19.06.2020.
- Date of Opening of Tender: 20.06.2020 at 11:30 Hrs.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Web Site.
- Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer Sambalpur (R&B) Division No.1

OIPR-34042/11/0001/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL RWS&S DIVISION SAMBALPUR-768004

e-mail: eeexengsbp@rediffmail.com Tel No. 0663-2540982

QUOTATION CALL NOTICE NO. 01/SBP/OF 2020-21

The Executive Engineer, Mechanical R.W.S & S Division, Sambalpur, At-Ainthalpal, P.O: Budharaja, District: Sambalpur, Odisha, Pin: 768004 on behalf of the Government of Odisha invites sealed Quotation in conformity with Detail quotation call Notice from registered and established manpower service providers to provide service of water well drilling skilled personnel to the Sambalpur Sub-division office under Executive Engineer, Mechanical RWS&S Division, Sambalpur as per the requirement.

Sl. No	Description of Items	No	Estimated Cost (Approximately per year)	Cost of Bid document	EMD
1	Mechanical R.W.S & S Sub Division Sambalpur.				
	1.H.V Driver	3 Nos	Rs.485,568.00		
	2. Asst. driver	1 No.	Rs.1,39,596.00	Rs.4000.00	@1% of quoted value
	3.Khalasi	1 No	Rs.1,21,044.00		
	5.Helap	1 No	Rs.1,21,044.00		
			Rs. 8,67,252.00		

Tender document with detail technical requirement, scope of the work, term and condition will be available in the office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical RWS&S Division, Sambalpur from dt. 6.06.2020 to dt. 20.06.2020 up to 3.00 P.M on deposit of cost of tender paper (Non-refundable). The tender will be received 22.06.2020 up to 1.00 P.M on dt. and will be opened on dt. 24.06.2020 at 10.00 A.M in office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical RWS&S division, Sambalpur in presence of bidder or their authorised representative as availability. The interested man power service providers may submit the tender document complete in all respect and duly signed along with EMD in shape of NSC/POTD/KVP/POS duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer Mechanical RWS&S division Sambalpur and other requisite document failing which the tender is liable for rejection.

Telegraphic tenders will not be accepted. No tender will be received by Fax or E-Mail. The Bid document can also be downloaded from Government web site www.tendersodisha.gov.in as per above date and time.

The authority reserve the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason therefor.

OIPR-25136/11/0004/2021

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (MECH)