

**OPINION 6**  
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VIOLENT PROTESTS ENGLUF US

**SPORT 12**  
'WE NEED AN ALTERNATIVE TO SALIVA'

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# The Pioneer



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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



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

**MARKETS**

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BANKNIFTY 8,828.15 (+205.41)

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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 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 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.

## 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 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 2,356. 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
Jharkhand	9,100	199	6,213
Uttar Pradesh	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 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 190 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 circumstance, the DGCA order said.

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 instructions.

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 suggestion 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 delhion.suggestions@gmail.com and call on 1031 by Friday 5 pm."

"Delhi to open salons 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.

Kejriwal said, "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 delhion.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.

## CAPSULE

### NO BADGE NEEDED FOR DRIVING RENTED CAB

**New Delhi:** Tourists and others hiring cabs and motorcycles for self-driving will not be required to carry badges if they are holding a domestic driving licence or an international driving permit (IDP), the Government said on Monday.

### DANIEL PEARL CASE: PAK'S SC BACKS ACQUITTALS

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday rejected a petition filed by the Sindh Government to suspend a High Court verdict that overturned convictions of al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his three aides in the kidnapping and murder case of American journalist Daniel Pearl.

### MUSIC DIRECTOR WAJID KHAN PASSES AWAY

**Mumbai:** Bollywood's one of the finest music directors, of the popular music composer duo Sajid-Wajid passed away in the early hours on Monday morning due to complications arising from a kidney infection, that included cardiac arrest and coronavirus infection. Close family and brother Sajid attended his last rites on late Monday afternoon. He was 42. He had a kidney transplant, and was on the ventilator for the last four days.

## 1,000 foreign goods delisting 'erroneous', CAPF to list afresh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After the Central Police Canteens that cater to the Central paramilitary forces withdrew 1,000 foreign items from their stores, Welfare and Rehabilitation Board (WARB) Chairman and CPT DG AP Maheshwari on Monday said the items were erroneously delisted and action is being taken against errant officials.

The move by the WARB follows instructions from the Home Ministry to rescind the order for removal of "imported" products sold at canteens. On May 29, an order delisting the "imported" products was issued.

However, a number of products manufactured by Indian companies also figured on the list. Now a new reworked list will be brought out, officials said.

Maheshwari said, "This is clarified that the list issued by Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandar (KPKB) on 29th May

2020 regarding delisting of certain products has been erroneously issued at the level of



CEO. The list has been withdrawn and action is being initiated for the lapse."

DIG-rank officer RM Meena is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) KPKB that runs paramilitary canteens across India.

The KPKB had formulated three categories of products to discriminate between locally manufactured and imported. In the first category, products made in India from scratch were included.

Moody's Investors Service on Monday downgraded India's sovereign credit rating for the first time in more than two decades, saying policymakers 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's GDP shrinking by 4.4 per cent — first full fiscal contraction in more than four decades, as the country faces a prolonged period of slower growth.

Accordingly, India's foreign-currency and local-currency long-term issuer ratings have been downgraded to Baa3 from P-2. India's local-currency senior issued-currency 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.

Detailed report on P9

## Polls to 18 RS seats deferred due to corona now on June 19

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The polls to 18 Rajya Sabha seats in seven States, deferred due to the coronavirus pandemic, will be held on June 19.

The elections assume significance not just because it will be the first such electoral process ever since the outbreak of the Covid-19 contagion but also since it is politically crucial for the BJP and the Congress locked in a fierce contest in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, where the likes of Jyotiraditya Scindia, Digvijay Singh and KC Venugopal are in the fray.

Out of the 18 seats going to polls, four seats each are from Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat, two from Jharkhand, three each from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and one each from Manipur and Meghalaya. Votes will be polled from 9 am to 4 pm on June 19 and counting will be done from 5 pm onwards on the same day. The results will be declared on June 22.

## Monsoon keeps date with Kerala

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Southwest monsoon arrived in Kerala on Monday as predicted by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) bringing heavy rain to several parts in the State and marking the commencement of the four-month long rainfall season in the country. This year, monsoon rainfall would likely get 102 per cent more rain between June and September than what the IMD forecast in April.

Further away, from the west coast a cyclone Nisarga is brewing in the Arabian Sea and likely to hit north Maharashtra as well as the Gujarat coast by June 3. The cyclone will bring heavy rainfall on coastal areas of Mumbai and Gujarat and may inundate low-lying areas.

Announcing the arrival of Southwest monsoon in Kerala, Madhavan Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, on Monday said India would get 102 per cent more rain than between June and September.

"Most parts of India, except for the north-east are expected to get more rain than normal. North-west India is expected to get 107 per cent of



Fishermen on their traditional boats as they set out to fish in the morning in Kochi, Kerala on Monday

its normal, Central India-103 per cent and 102 per cent over south peninsula. North-eastern India, including Bihar, West Bengal, is expected to get only 96 per cent of its long term average.

Rain in July were likely to be 3 per cent above what's usual for the month but August would see a 3 per cent decline," Rajeevan said while releasing second Long Range forecast for southwest monsoon 2020.

In last 24 hours, most parts of Kerala have reported heavy to very heavy rainfall.

"While unclear so far, the presence of the cyclone could delay the progress of the monsoon and put it into a 'hiatus', he said.

The IMD also stated that some possibility of development of weak La Nina conditions in the later part of the monsoon season that is good for the monsoon.

# Punjab reduces power tariff

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Expected to provide ₹ 354.82 crore relief to as many as 69 lakh domestic power consumers, Punjab power regulator on Monday announced 25-50 paise per unit reduction in the electricity rates.

Announcing the new tariff order for 2020-21 on Monday, the regulator said that in 2020, till March 31, 2021, the Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (PSERC) maintained status quo on the power rates for the industrial sector by neither increasing nor reducing the power tariff for the small traders or the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

"No increase in tariff for small shopkeepers (non residential supply consumers having load up to 500 units). No increase in the fixed part of the tariff for small, medium and large industrial consumers," read the order.

At the same time, the industry has also allowed to operate at night on special night tariff with 50 percent fixed charges and energy charges at the rate of Rs 4.83 per kWh for large and medium industrial consumers using electricity exclusively during night hours from 10 pm to 6 am at a special rate of Rs 4.83/kWh for consumption of power exceeding the threshold limit.

Continuing with its policy of encouraging the industry in promoting the productive use of surplus power by offering lower energy rates, the regulator has reduced the 4.83/kWh for consumption of power exceeding the threshold limit.

The decision is expected to help the small units overcome some of the economic losses suffered due to the lockdown.

The Commission has also accepted the suggestion made by industrial consumers that consumer availing supply at higher voltages should not be treated at par with the consumers getting supply at lower voltages. Accordingly, "voltage rebate" has been excluded from the ambit of capping of energy charges.

The tariff for the farm sector (Agriculture pumps) has been raised from ₹ 5.48 per kWh to ₹ 5.57 per kWh against the power utility PSPCL's proposal of ₹ 6.95 per kWh. "With this, the cross-subsidy of AP category has been reduced from (-) 17.82 percent to (-) 14.41 percent," it added.

To simplify the billing, the Commission has decided to accept the PSPCL's proposal to merge the consumption slabs of 301-500 units and above 500 units for the DS sub categories for consumers above 250 kWh. The regulator determined the Aggregate Revenue Requirement of the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) at Rs 31,100.62 crore against a demand for Rs 41,720.97 crore. With expected revenue at the existing tariff being Rs 30,875.79 crore, the consolidated gap (deficit) worked out to be Rs 224.83 crore, which would be recovered in the remaining 10 months of the current financial year.

The regulator noted that the main reason for the revenue gap was the reduction in proportionate increase in larger packaging) and Rs six per pint.

# 65 fresh COVID-19 cases reported in Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana on Monday continued to battle a surge in infections with 65 new cases of novel coronavirus, raising the total of infected cases to 2,356. Of the 65 new cases reported on Monday, 129 are from Gurugram alone. Sira reported 28 cases, the second highest district of the State followed by 25 new cases in Faridabad.

Only seven patients recovered from various hospitals of the State over the last 24 hours on Monday. The State has a recovery rate of 44.78 per cent, fatality rate at 0.89 per cent while tests per million being conducted are 4,804. The doubling rate in the State is eight days. As per the bulletin, 21 deaths have been reported so far in the State.

With 1,055 people cured and discharged from the hospitals, there are 1,280 active

COVID-19 cases in Haryana now. Gurugram reported 129 new cases, taking the total in the district to 903. Faridabad reported 25 new case, taking the total in the district to 392. Sonapat reported 13 cases, taking tally to 212. Jhajjar reported four, taking tally to 101. Two more corona virus cases reported in Nuh, taking total to 72. Palwal reported 11 more cases, taking the tally to 70. Two more cases reported in Jind, taking tally to 29. Sira reported 28 more cases, taking count to 43. Four more cases have been reported in Bahawalpur, taking tally to 19. Five more cases reported in Bhiwani, taking tally to 38. 14 more cases have been reported in Rohtak, taking tally to 45.

According to officials, a total of seven COVID patients were discharged from various districts including three in Palwal, two in Panipat and two in Sira.

FOUR FRESH CASES IN CHANDIGARH

Four fresh cases of COVID-19 were reported from Bapu Dham colony, taking the total tally to 297 in Chandigarh. The active cases in the city stood at 79 while the cured patients are 214 till Monday evening.

Altogether 15 residents of Bapu Dham colony (BDC) were declared cured and discharged from PGIMER.

Four new positive cases have been reported from BDC on Monday. These include 19-year-old male, 18-year-old female and 42-year-old male. They are all family contacts of the positive case reported a day before, stated the Chandigarh

Health Department's evening bulletin.

"The fourth case is of a 28-year-old female resident of Bapu Dham colony. She had delivered a baby on May 31 at Civil Hospital Manimajra. She is a community contact in the same locality. All her 10 family contacts have been sampled," the bulletin stated.

With four more cases, the BDC, a containment zone has till now reported 222 positive persons. The city has so far reported four Coronavirus related deaths.

Till now, 4816 samples have been tested in the city.

COVID-19 TALLY IN HIMACHAL RISES TO 339

The number of coronavirus cases in Himachal Pradesh on Monday rose to 339 as seven more people tested positive for the disease, officials said.

Three fresh cases were reported from Chamba, two from Solan and one each from Hamirpur and Mandi, Special Secretary (Health) Nipun Jindal said.

Most of them had recently returned from Tamil Nadu, Mumbai and Delhi, the officials said.

In Chamba, two men, aged 27 and 29 years, had a travel history to Tamil Nadu where as an 18-year-old man had returned from Delhi on May 30. Deputy Commissioner Vivek Bhatia said. The number of active cases in the state now stands at 213 including 166. A total of 120 COVID-19 patients have recovered.

Hamirpur has the highest number of active cases at 81, followed by 54 in Kangra, 20 in Shimla, 19 in Una, 12 in Chamba, 11 in Bilaspur, seven each in Shimla and Mandi, two in Sirmour and one in Kullu.

## REDUCED RATES BECAUSE OF CORONA PANDEMIC

The state power regulator stated that the "relief" has been provided to the people in the wake of hardships faced by the poor section due to the coronavirus crisis.

"In view of the hardship being faced by the poorer section of society due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the per unit tariff for domestic consumers with load up to 50 kW and for consumption slabs of zero to 100 units and 101 to 300 units have been reduced by 50 paise and 25 paise respectively," stated the new tariff order.

CM WELCOMES REDUCED POWER TARIFF

Welcoming the PSERC's decision to reduce the domestic power tariff in spite of the revenue gap resulting from the lockdown, the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Monday said that the government will not open till the government takes decision on the last lockdown in State. The State government is yet to take a decision on reopening of shopping malls, theatres and other places of gathering. Also, it did not allow opening of schools, bars, the garment and clothes shops in the State. The CM said that the decisions on relaxations have been taken very carefully keeping the

# Liquor gets costlier as Punjab imposes COVID cess for 2020-21

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Liquor gets costlier in Punjab. Clipping with a huge financial crunch, the State Government on Monday decided to impose COVID cess, from June 1, on all categories of liquor, including imported foreign liquor and imported beer, expecting to mop up additional revenue of Rs 145 crore through the imposition of additional excise duty.

The Government has raised additional excise duty and additional assessed fee on liquor in the range of Rs two to Rs 50 depending upon the type of liquor.

With the new COVID cess, the Punjab Made Liquor (PML) will cost Rs five per quart or Rs three per pint more; the Indian made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) to cost Rs 10 per quart more (and a pro-

portionate increase in larger packaging) and Rs six per pint.

As a result of the increased excise duty, the beer prices have been increased by Rs five for every 650 ml and wine by Rs 10 for every 650 ml, while the ready-to-drink alcohol prices have also attracted an additional excise duty of Rs five per bottle.

The imported foreign liquor will become dearer by ₹ 50 per 750 ml (₹ 30 hike in case of other sizes) and imported beer would cost ₹ 7 per 650 ml more. The decision was taken by the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, who also holds the portfolio of the Excise Dept, in the wake of ₹ 26,000 crore revenue shortfall amid the coronavirus pandemic and extended lockdown.

Notably, Punjab is one of the highest per capita consumers of liquor in India. The state has already incurred

loss of Rs 500 crore excise duty in April. The liquor business in Punjab generates approximately Rs 6000 crore revenue.

Giving a go-ahead to the imposition of Covid cess on liquor with effect from June 1, the Chief Minister said: "The state is facing a revenue shortfall of Rs 26,000 crore, which is 30 percent of the total budget revenue estimates, for 2020-21, necessitating some tough measures to generate additional revenue."

The Chief Minister's decision came after he accepted the recommendation of the Group of Ministers, which was constituted on May 12 to examine the matter, to levy additional excise duty and additional assessed fee on liquor during the current financial year. The proceeds of the additional levy shall be utilized entirely for COVID related expenditure, said the Chief Minister, directing the

Department of Excise and Taxation to charge the cess in the current year, at the time of issuance of permits for transportation of liquor from L-1/L-13 (wholesale licenses).

Earlier, Capt Amarinder had asked the Group of Ministers (GoM), comprising the Finance Minister, the Education Minister, the Housing and Urban Development Minister and the Forests and Wildlife Minister, to examine the matter regarding the levy of Special Cess or COVID Cess on the sale of liquor, to partially recover some of the revenue losses amid this unprecedented crisis. In line with GoM's recommendations, the Department of Excise and Taxation has decided to impose Additional Assessed Fee on imported foreign liquor and imported beer, and Additional Excise Duty on other types of liquor.

# Jharkhand locks with caution on Monday

## Intra-district public transport allowed with SoP

PNS ■ RANCHI

Amid the number of COVID-19 cases increasing at a rapid pace in Jharkhand, the State Government today issued an order enlisting relaxations under Unlock 1.0 towards opening a number of commercial activities. The relaxations, Chief Minister Hemant Soren tweeted, are for lockdown but not for ignoring precautions.

The order issued by Department of Home, Prisons and Disaster Management, signed by Chief Secretary Sukhdeo Singh, allows intra district public transport in small commercial vehicles. However, the transportation will be guided by a Standard Operating Protocol, which includes social distancing,

maintaining of record of passengers by drivers, end to end transportation and cap on the number of passengers sitting in the vehicles.

The order further allows opening of TV, Mobile, consumer electronics shops, refrigerator and air conditioners along with their service centres. It also allowed to open call centres, which were earlier not allowed in a municipal area.

The order also allows opening of jewellery shops, shops of watches, spectacles, automobiles, shops selling kitchenware and furniture, and accessories, batteries, garages, motor workshops among others.

However, restaurants in the district headquarters can open only for home delivery services. According to the order, all relaxations that already there before Monday's order will continue in the State.

Chief Minister Hemant Soren, addressing media persons in the evening said that



relaxations given by the government can be lifted if there is increase in the number of cases and violation of government guidelines. He said that religious places and places of worship will not open until the government takes decision on the last lockdown in State.

The State government is yet to take a decision on reopening of shopping malls, theatres and other places of gathering. Also, it did not allow opening of schools, bars, the garment and clothes shops in the State.

The CM said that the decisions on relaxations have been taken very carefully keeping the



Commuters ride their vehicle near Albert Ekka Chowk during the first day of the 'Unlock-1' in Ranchi on Monday. Vinay Murmu / Pioneer photo

interest of the people of State and schools, colleges and other institutions will also not be opened very soon. The government has already announced closure of schools in State till June 30.

The order issued on Monday states that the government is taking a cautious approach while implementing the directions of the Ministry of Home Affairs as several migrants have returned to

Jharkhand from states and countries that are severely affected by Covid-19. "At the same time it was felt necessary to open up economic activities and to ease out hardships faced by the people," it said.

# Odisha issues own guidelines post lockdown

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As the Covid-19 lockdown in positive 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 will 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,' it said.

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.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

In a meeting held on 29 May 2020 of Women Resource Association Society, Dehradun, it was decided that the registered office of Women Resource Association Society has been changed from 51 B Rajor Road, Dehradun to M 10 Chandrakolony, Rajpur Road, Dehradun. Objection in any manner to anybody for the above should be intimated to the Deputy Registrar, Firms, Societies & Chits Annikaat Vihar, Doon University Road, Dehradun. Aman Naithani (President) Women Resource Association

# 26 new COVID-19 cases surface in J'khand

PNS ■ RANCHI

As many as 26 new cases of COVID-19 infection surfaced in Jharkhand on Monday, taking the total count of cases reported in the State so far to 661, health officials said. New cases of infection were reported from eight districts on Monday, including East Singhbhum, which alone reported 10 cases in the day, officials added.

Cases were also reported from Garhwa, Hazaribag, Bokaro, Jharia, West Singhbhum, Simelega and Lohardaga on Monday. With Monday's findings, the number of migrants tested positive for COVID-19 reached 461, which is more than 70 per cent of the total cases reported in Jharkhand so far, health officials said. "At least 26 new cases of COVID-19 infection were reported today. Ten of them are from East Singhbhum," said Health Secretary Nitin Madan Kulkarni. Koderna also reported four cases on Monday, another health official said.

According to a daily COVID-19 bulletin released by the National Health Mission (NHM), at least 461 patients recovered from COVID-19 infection on Monday and were discharged from hospital. According to figures with the NHM, at least 296 COVID-19 patients have recovered in Jharkhand so far. There are more than 360 active cases in State as reported on Monday late evening. More than half of the 661 odd people infected by



SDO Lokesh Mishra along with police personnel at Katarbagian near Namkom Police station, after found a COVID-19 positive case, in Ranchi on Monday. Ranjan Lal / Pioneer photo

COVID-19 virus so far in Jharkhand are in the age bracket of 11 to 30 years - a trend that highlights how young people were as prone to the virus as their older counterparts, health officials said. Out of the 661 cases, 393 are in the age bracket of 11 to 30 years and 209 in the age bracket of 31 to 50 years, the NHM report said. According to NHM, more than 70 per cent of the COVID-19 cases reported in

Jharkhand are migrant workers. At least 461 migrant workers have tested positive in Jharkhand since May 5, the NHM bulletin said.

The Government has so far collected samples of 82,818 COVID-19 suspects from across the State, and more than 600 of them have tested positive. At least 69,187 of the 76,000 odd samples collected have been tested so far, the NHM report said.

# Haryana opens inter-State borders but would assess situation daily: Min Vij

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on Monday said the state has been opened but if the situation demanded, curbs could be reimposed on the state's borders, emphasising that the situation at the borders will be assessed daily.

"The Centre has said there shall be no restriction on interstate and intrastate movement of persons and goods. At the same time, they have given the states the right to make their own assessment of the situation and take action based on that," Vij told reporters.

"We will assess the situation daily. If the need is felt, we have the right to take action and we will take it," said Vij, who also holds the health department portfolio.

The Haryana Government had on Sunday issued fresh guidelines for the next phase of lockdown and decided to open its interstate borders, including those with Delhi from June 1

and places of worship, hotels and malls from June 8.

Seeking to follow the Centre's guidelines for the next phase of lockdown, starting June 1, the State Government also decided to allow interstate movement of people and goods.

Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar held a meeting with some of his senior Ministers including Vij and officials on late Sunday evening and took a call on the Centre's fresh lockdown guidelines, termed as Unlock 1.0. "It was decided in the meeting that there will be no restriction on interstate and interdistrict movements of people and goods," a state government statement had said after the three-hour meeting.

Vij had justified the earlier sealing of the borders with the national capital, saying coronavirus cases in Haryana would have been at par with Delhi had they not taken the step. Haryana government had maintained that a spurt in

infection has been due to rising cases in districts adjoining the national capital owing to the cross-border movement of people from Delhi.

Vij on Monday also said that the shops will remain open from 9 am to 7 pm. "For shops in market places, it has been decided that they will open daily with only 'left-right' or 'odd-even' system from 9 am to 7 pm and the shops will remain shut for a day as per whatever is their weekly day off," he said.

During the lockdown earlier, the shops used to open on the left side of the road on one day and on right side the other day and shops with odd number were allowed to open on one day while the following day shops having even number would open the other day.

The deputy commissioner concerned can, however, impose suitable restrictions in highly congested markets depending on their own assessment.

COVID-19

120 patients discharged on Mon

52 new cases also reported, Corona count jumps to 958 in U'khand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In what can be termed as good news for Uttarakhand battling from the returning migrant triggered spike in the number of novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) cases, 120 patients of the disease were discharged from various hospitals of the state on Monday after their recovery. On the day 52 new patients of the disease were also reported by the state health department which increased the Covid-19 count in the State to 958.

On Monday, 21 new patients were reported from Champawat district while nine

patients were reported from Dehradun district. Similarly eight patients were reported from Haridwar district while six patients surfaced in Pithoragarh district. From Bageshwar district five cases were reported while health department found three new patients in worst affected Nainital district.

In a big relief to the health department, 122 patients were discharged from hospitals. In Nainital district 86 patients were discharged from the hospitals while 12 patients were discharged from Udhampur Singh Nagar district. Seven patients were discharged from Champawat district while six patients got cured from Covid-19 in Uttarkashi district. From Bageshwar and Dehradun districts, five and three patients of Covid-19 were discharged. In Pauri one patient of the disease was discharged. In Champawat district 15 patients were reported the day have a travel history

from Mumbai while two had recently returned from Delhi. In Haridwar district all the eight positive patients reported on the day have a travel history from Mumbai.

The additional secretary, state health department, Yugal Kishore Pant said that reports of 730 samples were found negative for the disease on Monday. He added that reports of 6417 samples are still awaited by the department. On Monday, a total of 993 samples were collected for COVID-19 testing.

The authorities have so far taken swab samples of 31703 suspected patients for COVID-19 test. Out of the total samples taken, 382 percent samples have been found positive for the disease. A total of 1792092 people have so far downloaded the 'Aarogya Setu App' on their smart phones. The doubling rate of disease in the state is 34.4 per cent. The recovery rate in the state jumped from

11.24 per cent on Sunday to 21.53 percent after discharge of 122 patients on Monday.

Uttarakhand now has 727 active cases of the disease. Pushing the Nainital district from the top of the table of active patients to second spot, Dehradun with 194 active cases came on the first position on Monday. Nainital now has 153 active cases. The Tehri district is at third spot with 77 active cases while Haridwar has 69 active patients of the disease. Almora district is closing on to Haridwar with 60 active cases while Udhampur Singh Nagar has 43 active patients. Pauri and Pithoragarh districts have 29 and 27 active cases respectively. Champawat district now has 26 active cases. Uttarkashi district has 14 active cases while Bageshwar and Chamoli districts have 16 and 13 active cases of the disease respectively. Rudrapur district is at 15th position with six active patients of the disease.

Auto-rickshaw, Vikram drivers find few passengers

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The members of Dehradun Vikram Union stated that the operation of Vikrams will not be continued in the city if the operators keep sustaining heavy losses in the next two weeks.

Recently, the auto-rickshaw and Vikram unions had decided to resume operation according to guidelines issued by State Government to which they did not agree before. As stated by a Vikram union member Kuldeep Chaudhary, more than 50 per cent auto-rickshaws and Vikrams did not operate on the roads of Dehradun on Monday. According to the operators, there are not enough passengers for every public transport vehicle in the city in current Covid-19 crisis.

While talking to this correspondent, several drivers and owners said that neither did the administration hike the fare nor did it allow them to carry more passengers due to which they are compelled to bear heavy losses.

"I earned only ₹80 on Monday which is not even going to pay for the fuel in my auto-rickshaw," said auto driver Kedar Rana. Another driver Soham Das said that when he could not find a single passenger from 8 AM to 3 PM, he returned home and resumed his temporary work of selling vegetables.

Most of them who drove their vehicles on Monday did not even earn enough to pay

State Governments of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh have provided monetary help to the drivers of public transport vehicles

for their fuel, said Chaudhary. He said that State Governments of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh have provided monetary help to the drivers of public transport vehicles.

Uttarakhand Government has not initiated any kind of help so far but expects public transport operators to ply their vehicles with less than half passengers.

"It would help everyone if the Government would at least hike the fare of public transport."

This way, people can safely travel with less passengers and the operators would still be able to collect the same amount with the less number of passengers," said Chaudhary.

He informed that the current operation of vehicles is just a trial to know whether operators can earn enough to survive during the current time. If they continue to make loss, they will not operate in the city till the situation gets normal again.

SCPCR chief seeks probe into girl's death during lockdown

PNS ■ DEHRADUN



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The chairperson of State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) Usha Negi recently received a complaint from a man regarding the death of his six year old daughter who died during the lockdown in April.

The case is from Bhagal Singh Colony here which was sealed in April after several Covid-19 positive patients were found there.

According to the complaint, the girl got injured at night while playing with her siblings but during the lockdown and barricading in the containment zone, the father could not take her to the hospital.

The next day, the father informed the police and asked for permission to get his daughter treated in a hospital. The complainant further alleged that the police refused permission and advised him to get her

examined by the doctor provided by the administration.

The complainant has accused in the letter that the doctor did not check the girl physically and prescribed medicine just by looking at her.

The complainant said that the next day her condition got worse and after the girl was denied treatment in Government Doon Medical College (GDMC) hospital stating only Covid-19 patients get treated there, she was referred to Coronation hospital where the doctors declared her dead in the night.

The complainant alleged that due to the negligence of police and doctor, the girl could not receive proper treatment on time and died.

Negi has asked the Director General (Law and Order) for an investigation into the matter and submit the investigation report to the commission within one month.

People throng markets in Unlock 1.0 as U'khand Govt goes into quarantine

CM Rawat, three of his Cabinet colleagues go into quarantine, many Babus skip office day after Satpal Maharaj reported +ve for Covid-19

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

People thronged the markets and other places on Monday, the first day of lockdown stage V termed Unlock 1 in Uttarakhand even as three members of State Cabinet including Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat and some bureaucrats went into self imposed quarantine. After shocking disclosure of senior Cabinet Minister and spiritual guru Satpal Maharaj, his family members and staff being found positive for Covid-19 on Sunday, fear gripped the Government circles in Uttarakhand.

The fact that the infected minister had attended the cabinet meeting on Friday in which CM Rawat and cabinet ministers Harak Singh Rawat, Subodh Uniyal and Madan Kaushik were present sent the system into a tizzy. The chief secretary Utpal Kumar Singh was also present in the cabinet meeting in which some other senior bureaucrats were summoned.

As a precautionary measure, the Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat and his cabinet colleagues, Harak Singh Rawat, Madan Kaushik and Subodh Uniyal went into a self imposed home quarantine. The CM is also learnt to have cancelled all his engagements for next few days.

The Government spokesman and senior Cabinet Minister Madan Kaushik said on Monday that the CM and three cabinet ministers who were in the cabinet meeting decided to go under self imposed home quarantine after the sample of cabinet minister Satpal Maharaj was found positive for Covid-19. He added that the CM and ministers would follow the decision of district administration on the subject.

Meanwhile many bureaucrats including the chief secretary Utpal Kumar Singh didn't attend their offices on Monday which gave rise to speculation that they too have gone into a self imposed home quarantine.

Later in the day, the secretary of med-

Minister refutes rumours about officiating CM

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

State Minister Dhan Singh Rawat has refuted rumours about the possibility of him being made the officiating chief minister with the CM Trivendra Singh Rawat going under self-quarantine. Rawat went under self-quarantine as a precautionary measure after cabinet minister Satpal Maharaj tested positive for Covid-19 on Sunday, a couple of days after attending a cabinet meeting.

Following this disclosure on social media that there was "activity" in Delhi hinting at the possibility of Dhan Singh Rawat being made the officiating CM. Rejecting such claims, the state minister said that such rumours were being spread by anti-social elements.

"Projecting me as the officiating CM is completely wrong and condemnable. I strongly condemn such people and have directed the police to take stern action against such persons. Even though the CM is under self-quarantine, during the Covid-19 pandemic, he is constantly in touch with ministers, MLAs and senior officials through video conferencing and the phone, issuing necessary instructions so that our state overcomes this global pandemic soon. I request all social media friends to not believe the false information spread on the social media," the state minister posted on Facebook.

Big crowds in markets

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In stark contrast to the State secretariat that looked deserted, surging crowds were witnessed in different markets of Dehradun and other cities on the first phase of Unlock 1. One reason for increase in the crowds on the roads was the fact that large number of offices also opened on the day. The social distancing norms were thrown into air in the crowded markets near Clock tower and other areas. The shops selling computers and mobiles witnessed big crowds and the shopkeepers reported good business. The state police registered 13 cases for violation of lockdown on Monday. The director general (DG) law and order, Ashok Kumar said that people should remain alert and follow the rules of lockdown. He said that those who are in home quarantine should strictly follow the orders and should not venture out.

Dehradun, Ashish Srivastava told the media persons on Monday afternoon that he has sought the report on the issue from the departments concerned and state administration.

On Monday, the conference room where the meeting of the state cabinet was held on Friday was sanitised and the entry was kept restricted. The positive report of minister Satpal Maharaj has also instilled fear among the employees of the state secretariat. The association of secretariat employees demanded that the secretariat should be closed for few days and the employees should be allowed to work from home in order to prevent them from being infected.

Negi said that the district magistrate (DM) of Dehradun would decide on the high risk and low risk categories of the officers and the ministers based on the guidelines of the government of India. The DM



Guest column

BY

ASHISH KAUL



Nepal needs a shakedown before it becomes a bone for China

You can change friends but not neighbours," that is what our late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee always upheld. Wise it may be, India has often found itself riddled with thorns that grew along the roses we planted. Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka and now Nepal.

Vajpayee's statement has always reminded me of one context, our relations with China and Pakistan. We have been a very tolerant neighbour to Pakistan, with a user brother attitude, forgiving, guiding, helping and a lot more can be added here.

However, one must admit that Pakistan will never be a reciprocal neighbour in a foreseeable future primarily because of how India and Pakistan define secularism. On the other hand, Nepal is the same country which has been beloved, trusted and cared for by its neighbours in India since times immemorial. So when Nepal throws in the towel all of a sudden, we should be worried given the open border policy and social relationship struc-

ture that both of us have lived with. To understand the present, we need to take a peek in the past to understand the nuances of being Nepal.

The Past: India inherited the boundary with Nepal, established between Nepal and the East India Company in the Treaty of Sugauli in 1816. Kali river constituted the boundary and the territory to its east was Nepal. The dispute relates to the origin of Kali.

Near Garbyang village in Dharchula Tehsil of the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, there is a confluence of different streams coming from north-east from Kalapani and north-west from Lumpyadhura.

The early British survey maps identified the north-west stream, Kuti Yangti, from Lumpyadhura as the origin, but after 1857 changed the alignment to Lipu Gad and in 1879 to Pankha Gad, the north-east streams, thus defining the origin as just below Kalapani.

Nepal accepted the change and India inherited this boundary in 1947.

In the spirit of letter it was resolved that Kali river in the Kalapani region demarcates the border between India and Nepal.

The treaty of Sugauli signed by the Kingdom of Nepal and British India (after Anglo-Nepalese War) effected in 1816 located the Kali river as Nepal's western boundary with India. However, over decades, the discrepancy in locating the source of the Kali led to boundary disputes between India and Nepal with each country producing maps supporting its own claims.

The Present: While India considers the issue as a discrepancy between two brotherly states, Nepal has elevated this into a formal rhetorical spit in the face dispute. Nepal has allowed itself to be entangled to affirm Kali originates from a stream at Lumpyadhura, north-west of Lipulekh.

It states that Kalapani, Lumpyadhura and Lipulekh fall to the east of the river and are part of Nepal's Dharchula district. Nepal further states that Lipulekh was deleted from the country's map by the kings to get favours from India.

It goes to the extent to say the territory of Kalapani was offered to India by King Mahendra - after the 1962 India-China war - who wanted to help India's security concerns due to perceived lingering Chinese threat.

Kalapani was not a part of Nepal-India dispute. It was Nepal's territory that the king had allowed India to use temporarily - to conclude, Nepal states the new map is in fact a document that was in circulation in Nepal till the 1950s.

India's stand has been far less stern with diplomatic messaging that reaffirms that Kali originates in springs well below the Lipulekh pass, and the Sugauli treaty does not demarcate the area north of these streams. India has a deep rooted administrative structure especially for revenues and

land records that state Kalapani was on the Indian side and counted as part of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.

Nepal's deliberate effort to make the Lipulekh pass a disputed tri-junction (between India, China and Nepal) in which Nepal has an equal share is easily perceivable just like Nepal's communist regime's bonhomie with China.

On the other hand, despite the continued open border between both countries and the people to people contact, the levels of distrust in Nepal about India have only increased. Way back in the 1980s, the two sides set up the Joint Technical Level Boundary Working Group to delineate the boundary.

The group demarcated everything except Kalapani and Susta area. Officially, Nepal brought the issue of Kalapani before India in 1998. Both sides agreed to demarcate the outstanding areas (including Kalpani) by 2002 at the prime ministerial level talk held in 2000 which is yet to happen. Nepal's current political

angel, KP Sharma Oli and his stable career as Prime Minister also needs a deep perspective.

Oli did fight and win the elections in 2017 by flaunting his Nepali nationalism card, the flip side of which is anti-India stance. This is not a new phenomenon but has become more pronounced in recent years.

Oli donned the nationalist mantle vowing to restore Nepali territory and marked a new low in anti-Indian rhetoric by talking about "the Indian virus being more lethal than the Chinese or the Italian virus".

His domestic political situation was weakening since the day he became the PM. Under the Nepali constitution, a new PM enjoys a guaranteed two-year period during which a no-confidence motion is not permitted.

This ended in February 2020 creating a do or die situation for him as he was supposed to choose between being NCP co-chair or the PM of Nepal. On the sidelines, the re-

ruption of the Kalapani controversy coincided with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurating the 80-km road on May 8 thus providing Oli a political lifeline.

A subsequent comment by the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Manoj Naravane, on May 15 that "Nepal may have raised the issue at the behest of someone else" was perhaps a little too early as some political analysts in India believe.

Way forward :

Nepal has enjoyed a historical and cordial relation with India. It's in the best interest of these two countries to wipe out the differences and act mature.

India needs Nepal's presence as a good neighbour for various reasons, most of them connected with strategic indications whereas Nepal will need to maintain good relations with India to ensure a free trade route for its inbound purchases from China via Kolkata port and then road route. A choke on this route has

in the past and can always crush Nepal beyond redemption. Also livelihood of close to 6 million Nepalese nationals entirely depends on India. Looking at Indian point of view, India would like to maintain good relations with Nepal primarily to keep a check on all possible offence which may be planned by two of its notorious neighbours - China and Pakistan.

So being together with and for each other is the only way to create a win-win situation. So is there a way forward without having to discipline Nepal? Perhaps no, and if India lets go of Nepal that easily then India perhaps is still not ready to accept that socio-cultural bonhomie has no place to drive foreign policy in the sub-continent. China and Pakistan have time and again proved that the "Bhai Bhai" rhetoric no matter how good it may sound on television news - has always resulted in an inundated India.

(The author is a business leader and a bestselling author)

# 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.

Shah would be followed by most 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 speech on the social networking site.

"The virtual rally can be very 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 Assembly segments in Bihar, one in Patna, one in 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 "not touching 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 will be followed by the Centre 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 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.

"Over 91,818 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). The laboratories have been tested 38,32,707 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 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. Even if 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 in a video "virtual Parliament" as an option in the long run and to adopt technology to enable Parliament Sessions to tide 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, 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 strong emphasis on 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 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 the House committees 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 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 long-term 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 long-term 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?

Have they crossed into Indian Territory even beyond China's own "Claim Line," pitched hundreds of tents, constructed concrete structures and built a few kilometres of road along the LAC in Galwan River Valley as also on the north bank of Pangong Tso Lake Area and is it an attempt to occupy our Chinese troops' have occupied the "Finger Heights near Pangong Tso Lake?" asked the Congress.

**Himalaya Food International Ltd**  
 Regd. Office: 118, 1st Floor, 12 Gagandeep Building, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008  
 Tel: +91 11 45108609, Fax: +91 1704 225178  
 E-mail id: [cs@himalayainternational.com](mailto:cs@himalayainternational.com)  
 website: [www.himalayainternational.com](http://www.himalayainternational.com)

## 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 notices 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") 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](mailto:beetalra1@gmail.com). Members may also intimate the same to the Company by writing at [www.himalayainternational.com](http://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, Mr. S.S. Goyal Practising 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](http://www.evotingindia.com), under help section or write an email to [helpdesk.evoting@cdsindia.com](mailto:helpdesk.evoting@cdsindia.com) or to Ms. Surabhi Maheshwari Company Secretary at [cs@himalayainternational.com](mailto:cs@himalayainternational.com)

This Notice is available on our website at [www.himalayainternational.com](http://www.himalayainternational.com) and the website of CDSL at [www.evotingindia.com](http://www.evotingindia.com) and also on the website of Stock Exchanges at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com)

For Himalaya Food International Ltd.

S/-  
 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

# 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-

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

PNB ■ NEW DELHI

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 dwarapalaks or temple gate guardians and a 6th or 7th Century serpent king (Nagaraja).

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

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.

The Food Ministry is doing all necessary arrangements to include remaining 13 states and UTs to the national cluster.

A technical team has imparted the requisite orientation training to the technical teams and concerned officers of these states through video conferencing and necessary guidelines/instructions for the implementation of national/inter-state portability were also provided to them, Paswan said.

They have a virtual meeting on June 4. After that, we will send the two Dwarapalaks 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

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

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

The scheme targets to benefit over 50 lakh Street Vendors, who had been vending on or before 24 March 2020, in urban areas including those from surrounding peri-urban/ rural areas.

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

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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.

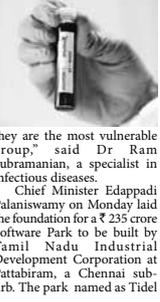
Both India and Australia are a party to the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transport of Ownership of Cultural Property.



1,162 test positive in TN, 11 die

Total reaches 23,495 KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI The day Tamil Nadu chose to relax the lockdown and allow factories, IT companies and business establishments to resume operations saw 1,162 persons testing positive for coronavirus, the highest number of cases to be registered on a single day. On Sunday, 1,149 persons had tested positive for the pandemic.

UNLOCK 1.0



Park would offer 25,000 direct employment in the field of futuristic technology, said a release by the Tamil Nadu Government. Despite the ever increasing number of patients, the State is limping back to normalcy as the lockdown which was in force for the last 65 days has entered its last phase. Barring the four districts of Chennai, Thiruvallur, Kancheepuram and Chengalpattu, lockdown is being relaxed all over the remaining 33 districts, though remnants of the restrictions are still visible.

Reshuffle in Bengal BJP ahead of 2021 polls

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A head of the June 8 video conference with Home Minister Amit Shah, the Bengal BJP has effected massive organizational reshuffling that saw shunting of a known "plain-speaker" senior leader Chandra Bose a scion of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

At a crucial time ahead of the next year's Assembly elections which the BJP is seeing as a chance to bring about a second change in Bengal. The reshuffling... further tightens the stranglehold of Ghosh in the State party... also takes place ahead of the five-day video conference with Shah who would speak to all the party workers and office bearers from June 8 onward, sources said.

Chennaiites face difficulty to reach other TN dists

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the first time in recent history, Chennai has become out of bounds for people from other districts in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, every Chennaiite desiring to go out of city limits to other districts in the State should undergo tests for coronavirus, according to the guidelines formulated by Department of Health.

They have gone back to their villages in Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The proprietors are struggling to get workers. "The local people would not agree to work on the salary which we pay to the migrant labourers and hence it is not viable to open the shops," said the owner of a popular eatery.



A shopkeeper assists customers at a shop after the authorities eased restrictions during Covid-19 lockdown 5.0, in Srirangam on Monday

Goa likely to allow more activities, hints Sawant

IANIS ■ PANAJI

Goa may make room for allowing more activities, other than those specified by the Central government in Unlock-1, Chief Minister Sagar Jadhav hinted on Monday.

Yogi to give ration kits, ₹1,000 to each destitute

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to provide ration kits and ₹1,000 to all destitutes who do not have ration cards. In his meeting with Team 11 officials on Monday, the Chief Minister said that efforts should also be made to provide ration cards to these people.

76 new cases, 34 discharged in Andhra

AMARAVATI ■ ANDHRA PRADESH

The state's death toll climbed to 66 on Monday morning. The Koyambedu market connection again surfaced on Monday, when it was reported that eight of the positive cases detected in the past two hours had visited the Chennai market.

While people spilled over to the streets thronging market places in thousands at the end of 67 days confinement, the enforcers of law were hardly to be seen around, sources complained.

People crowd streets on Day 1 of unlock 1.0 in WB

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The City of Joy tended to miss a heart beat on Monday the first day of 'unlock 1.0' even as things degenerated into a mega mix-up when citizens threw all cautions to the wind thronging public places and boarding packed up public buses—that ran far and few between—in mad desperation to reach their work places.

The Bengal Government had extended lockdown on June 1, permitting total attendance in MSMEs, mining, jewelry and tea industries. Expressing great concern over the way things were shaping up post lockdown Dr. Sumit Jana said "it seems that the people are preferring jahan (livelihood) to jaan (life). People don't seem to understand that they are at great risk and the way the number of cases are going up we soon climb up the list of worst affected countries."

Appeal for Identification



General public is hereby informed that one person Name: Unknown, S/O: Unknown, R/O: Unknown, Age: About 45 Years, Height: 5'5", Sex: Male, Complexion: Dark, Built: Thin, Face: Round, Wearing: Blue and White Colour Shirt, Black Pant and bare footed. Place of Recovery: Found dead on 19.04.2020 at Footpath, Telephone Exchange, Asaf Ali Park, Delhi.

In this regard DD No. 46-A, Dated 19.04.2020 has been lodged at Police Station, Darya Ganj, Delhi. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign.

Guj offices, shops re-open, buses are back on roads

Gandhinagar: With the announcement of relaxations in lockdown norms, the wheels of administration in Gujarat started rolling again, here on Monday, after more than two months of shutdown.

The Government offices, including the Secretariat, returned to normal functioning. However, curbs continued for offices located in containment zones and employees residing in those areas. According to the government announcement, all shops outside the containment zones have been allowed to operate from Monday. Sports complexes and stadia have been allowed to open... not for spectators, only for sports-persons and games.

Advisory issued for prayers in UP mosques

Lucknow: The Islamic Centre of India has issued a fresh advisory regarding opening of mosques from Friday onwards.

The Maulana said that the Friday prayers would be held in four different groups so that social distancing is maintained. He said that all carpets and rugs would be removed from mosques and a distance of six feet would be maintained between each person. The mosque would be cleaned with disinfectants before and after each prayer. The cleric said that soap would be provided for 'wuzu' (washing of hands and feet) and people should bring skull caps from their homes, instead of using the ones provided in a mosque.

Metro Railway, Kolkata UP-KEEP OF TRACK AND TRACK BED Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Kolkata for and on behalf of the President of India invites Tender Notice for e-tendering for the following work. Name of Work : Zone No. 101 Zonal Contract for Up-Keep of track and track bed of both U & DN Line from Km. 7.14 to Km. 16.18 between KECN (Ex.) to KMUK (In.) including 'Y' siding at KMDI with Tollygunge Yard and Carshed lines of Metro Railway, Kolkata. Tender Value : ₹ 4,04,08,023.46 (approx). Cost of Tender Document : ₹ 10,000/- Earnest Money : ₹ 3,52,100/- Completion Period : The Contract shall be completed 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.irps.gov.in

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION General public is hereby informed that one male was found at in front of Hanuman Mandir, Under Flyover, Kashmir Gate, Delhi on 12.05.2020. In this regard a DD No. 20A us 174 CrP, Dated 12.05.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Kashmir Gate, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as under: Name: Unknown; Sex: Unknown; R/O: Unknown; Age: About 36 years, Height: 5'3" Foot, Face: Long; Complexion: Shallow; Built: Thin; Wearing: Naked. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform the undersigned.

INDIAN RAILWAYS GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR) MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAIL MANTRALAYA) (RAILWAY BOARD) New Delhi, dated 01.06.2020 E-TENDER NO. 2020RS174700 Executive Director, Railway Stores (S&M), Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), Government of India, invites e-Tender for procurement of 36,000 Nos. Upgraded High Tensile CBC Freight Stock for Indian Railways to ROSO specification No. WD-70-BD-100 (Rev.02) with latest revision, if any. 2.0 The interested suppliers are advised to visit the website http://irps.gov.in for details of the tender and submission of their e-bids. 3.0 No manual offers will be accepted against e-tender. 4.0 Tender will be closed at 15:00 hours on 15.07.2020. Director Railway Stores (Wagon), Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India

बिहार सरकार कायदासुधार अखिर्ता का कार्यवाहक लोक स्वास्थ्य प्रमण्डल, बक्सर। शुद्धि पत्र निर्वाह आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या - PHED/BXR-01-(MVS)/2020-21 (फैब्रुअरी - निविदा पत्रिका के अनुसार बेयसाईड www.eproc.bihar.gov.in पर) लोक स्वास्थ्य प्रमण्डल, बक्सर अनर्वात निर्वाह आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या - PHED/BXR-01-(MVS)/2020-21 पत्र सूचना - 01 फेब्रुअरी को आरंभ - 00175 फेब्रुअरी - 21 से, तथा निरामक प्रक्राशन हिन्दुस्तान प्रमण्डल पर 15 दिनांक 06.05.2020 को प्रकाशित। यह अपरिहार्य कार्यवाही निम्न प्रकार से विवरण किया जाता है।

## Another push

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



**T**he Coronavirus and its shape-shifting effect on the economy have been debilitating but the Government has been reacting to it 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 up 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 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, benefitted. 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 will 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 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 reinventing 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**

**T**he crest and trough of the Sino-Indian relationship has been witnessing its lowest ebb ever since the Doklam standoff of 2017. Now, an expected repertoire 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 (however severe) towards their own advantage has been the hallmark of both regimes.

While this is certainly not the sort of diet for a rising superpower, 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, which still follows racism in its neighbourhoods 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 tank," 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**  
**”**

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 to 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 form 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 a different manner... 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, which still follows racism 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

**O**n 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

**M Pradyu**  
 Kanpur

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto: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 also 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'.)

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

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



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 to the producer. 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 de-motivated.

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 drawback). 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 pieces 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 to 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 current 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 APMC acts. 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 a 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 State 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 Nations (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-LGBTQIA+ 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 graffiti 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 to disperse protesters who had smashed the windows of prominent buildings, overturned cars and set fires, with smoke seen rising from near the Washington Monument, it said.

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 under the name House, while First Lady Melania Trump and their son Barron were 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 direct action 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 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 PLANS 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. 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 says 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 is 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 faviavir, 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-



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 420,000 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 postponing 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

### 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

## 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 favourite 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's 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 S&P 500 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 indices also helped the key equity indices extend gains for the fourth session in a row.

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

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tough sanctions over China's new national security law for Hong Kong and Chinese PMi data showed fresh signs of economic recovery, he added.

"The market further rallied in the afternoon session with much broad-based buying seen in both large and mid cap stocks tracked by respective indices," Narendra Solanki, Head - Equity Research (Fundamental), Anand Rathi, said. Broader midcap and smallcap indices surged up to 3.03 per cent.

The Home Ministry on Saturday said 'Unlock-1' will be initiated in India from June 8 under which the nationwide lockdown effectuated on March 25 will be relaxed to a great extent, including opening of shopping malls, restaurants and religious places. "Buoyant Asian and European markets helped sentiments. Volumes were also healthy suggesting high delivery activity. Financials, Materials and Auto stocks did

## SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

**E-Tender Notice No. 141MY/2020 Dated: 26.05.2020**  
The undersigned on behalf of President of Indian Railways, tenders for the following works

Sr.	Description of work	Approx. Value
1.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A (Mysuru station and Divisional Office).	Rs. 1,00,00,000/-
2.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A-1 (Mysuru Railway colonies and hospitals).	Rs. 1,75,00,000/-
3.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A-2 (Mysuru Chamarajaganahalli section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
4.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A-3 (Mysuru Chamarajaganahalli section).	Rs. 75,00,000/-
5.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A-4 and A-5 (Mysuru Arsenahalli section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
6.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A-6 (Hassan-Kanivanahalli section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
7.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone A-7 (Chikajalur-Hannar section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
8.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-1 (Bangalore Road-Kadur section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
9.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-2 (Bangalore Road-Kadur section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
10.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-3 (Chikajalur-Hannar section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
11.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-4 (Chikajalur-Hannar section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
12.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-5 (Chikajalur-Hannar section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
13.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-6 (Hannar-Karjaj - Kottur Ammanahalli).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
14.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-7 (Chikajalur-Hannar section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-
15.	Zonal contract for execution of works and supply of materials including supply of cement and steel for the period from 01.07.2020 to 30.06.2021 Zone B-8 (Chikajalur-Hannar section).	Rs. 50,00,000/-

**Last date of submission of bids: 11.06.2020**  
**Up to 11 hrs. of 16.06.2020**  
For details log on to [www.treps.gov.in](http://www.treps.gov.in)  
Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Mysuru  
141MY/2020/2020

# 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 MSMEs to use 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

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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.

# 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 (RLLR) 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.

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.

**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 Chief 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 of 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](http://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 Hawai 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/EE(NW)/1(2020-21)  
PRESS NOTICE/TENDER-20

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 from 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-1/EE(NW).	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>

ISSUED BY P.W. (R/O) Advt. No. J.S.V. 51(2020-21)

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 (IN TIME)	AMOUNT / END (APPROX) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1.	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION NO. 1, SOHANIA	PROVIDING SEWERAGE SYSTEM IN VILLAGE KHANPUR KALAN DISTT. SONPAT	29.05.2020 08.06.2020	319.75 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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 03 ITEMS)*	01.06.2020 30.06.2020	NI	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	450.67 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	7036 NO. LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-2570121-124,2584125,2585125 supplies@hry.nic.in
12.	DIRECTOR GENERAL, SUPPLIES & DISPOSALS, HARYANA	SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF LED BASED SPV FABRICATION OF 18.0 KL CAPACITY DIESEL TANKERS	01.06.2020 03.07.2020	4500.00 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
14.	WATER SERVICES DIVISION, SADIAPUR	REPAIRING OF DAMAGED G.I. WING WALL OF FALL AT RD 2859 OF WVC MUL + 12 OTHER WORKS	01.06.2020 08.06.2020	2.02 LACS	<a href="http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in">www.etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01735-242638 xendadupur@yahoo.com
15.	PWD B&R GURUGRAM	PROVIDING 500 KW SUB STATION AT HARTIKRU MULTI SKILL DEVELOPMENT CENTER (HNSDC) GURUGRAM	29.05.2020 15.06.2020	41.80 LACS	<a href="http://www.etenders.nic.in">www.etenders.nic.in</a>	0124-2320874 Pwd.eesg@punjab.govt.hry.nic.in
16.	HEALTH AMBALA	E-TENDER FOR OUTSOURCING OF MANPOWER FOR SUPPORT SERVICES, ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND CLEANING & SANITATION SERVICES FOR CIVIL HOSPITAL AMBALA CITY. + 1 OTHER WORKS	04.06.2020 14.06.2020	4 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	Civil Surgeon
17.	FOREST YAMUNA NAGAR	SMC WORK C.C. STUO NO. 1 TO 4 AT BIR TAPU R.F ON BANK OF YAMUNA RIVER IN BHOGWANSHAR BLOCK OF JAGRIH RANGE + 5 OTHER WORKS	29.05.2020 04.06.2020	53.92 LACS	<a href="http://www.haryanaforest.gov.in">www.haryanaforest.gov.in</a>	dfp.yry@hry.nic.in
18.	PWD B&R BR, GURUGRAM	PROVIDING RMI & CABLING IN GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE AT VILLAGE CHAINDA IN DISTRICT FARIDABAD + 2 OTHER WORKS	31.05.2020 11.06.2020	END 47200/-	<a href="http://www.etenders.nic.in">www.etenders.nic.in</a>	0124-2320874 Pwd.eesg@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	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9315944983 cpspalwal@gmail.com
20.	WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT DEPTT, HARYANA (PALNDA PLANT GHARSIWADA)	TRANSPORTATION/LOADING/UNLOADING OF RAW MATERIAL (FOOD ITEMS) FOR THE YEAR 2020-21 TENDER ID:- FISHING NETS LIKE HARA, CHAT JAL, DRAG NET CAST NET, HAND NET ETC. (AS PER SPECIFICATION) - DETERMINATION OF VARIOUS SPECIFIC NET RATES	30.05.2020 10.06.2020	8.5 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01746-253855 pangitidntw@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 SPECIFIC NET RATES	OPENING DATE 22.06.2020	10,000/-	<a href="http://www.haryan.gov.in">www.haryan.gov.in</a>	97114-33362 fishes@hry.nic.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in) RO NO. 81099



**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 oral 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 dhatu (blood). The aggravated vata brings impaired blood into the channels carrying the raj (menstrual blood), leading to increased menstrual blood flow.

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tion 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 essential oils 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

they are rich in both magnesium and potassium. They also contain a lot of vitamin A it is good for our vision. It is also believed that sweet potatoes are m e m o r y enhancing food. 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 flavour of smokeless tobacco, increasing 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 supports that the effects of smoking start 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 reiterates the deadly effect of deposits in the alveoli of lungs 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 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 ways.

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 back 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-

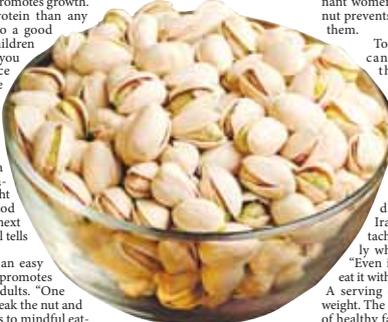
## Go nuts

### 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 carbohydrates," 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 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.

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## 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 a couple of 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 under 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 at regular intervals, keep well and have 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 nightly cleansing ritual 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 keep 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 some of the exclusion 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 the 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 Paranthi 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 Modiji 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 disposal 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 hand-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 bikal aag hai Andaz woh kho gaya Dekhna doobna ho gaya Doobna tairna ho 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 bhai'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 Ravijiani, 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 *Lad Dupatta* and the title track of *Mujhe Shadi Karogi* (2004), *Teri Mast Mast Do Nain* and *Hud Hud Dabangg* in *Dabangg* (2010), *Mashallah* 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, Feroz*, 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 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 more awareness on this burning issue.

"Climate change, as a concept, is still not considered as a real issue today by a lot of people. There are such varied and grave climatic issues happening across the world which people are not even realising. For instance, increase of floods, melting ice caps, increase in sea levels, food and crop getting destroyed, heat waves across countries and continents," says Bhumi.

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

# Rohit & Virat defining pair of modern era

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 and an interim measure 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 I am 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 be 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.

**"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 something! We are not here just to give throwdowns, isn't it? (laughter)

"This is what I tell batsmen all the time. In one-day cricket, when did the ball reverse last, I don't know. Nowadays the new ball doesn't swing a lot as well. So whenever I see batsmen say the ball is swinging or seaming and that is why I got out - the ball is supposed to do that."

"Because it doesn't happen so much in the other formats, it's a new thing for the batsmen when the ball is swinging or seaming," said the 26-year-old.

The Ahmedabad-born pacer finds himself in an unusual position as he has not bowled for over two months due to the lockdown imposed in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

When India will play next is not clear yet and Bumrah said he is not sure about how his body will hold up when he returns to action.

"I really don't know how your body reacts when you don't bowl for two months, three months. I'm trying to keep up with training so that as soon as the grounds open up, the body is in decent shape."

"I've been training almost six days a week but I've not bowled for a long period of time so I don't know how the body will react when I bowl the first ball."

"I'm looking at it as a way to renew your own body. We'll never get such a break again, so even if you have a small niggle here and there, you can be a refreshed person when you come back. You can prolong your career," he said.

Bumrah has risen rapidly in international cricket despite experts having reservations about his longevity due to his unorthodox action.



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. They play beautiful cricket shots and are very technically correct. Dravid may be a little bit more so, but the ability to be as destructive with such rate and precision stroke-making is something that has to be really admired.

"If you look at Rahul and Dada, both of them are orthodox batsmen. They play beautiful cricket shots and are very technically correct. Dravid may be a little bit more so, but the ability to be as destructive with such rate and precision stroke-making is something that has to be really admired."

"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 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



## Smith in best shape despite not picking up bat

PTI ■ SYDNEY

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 it a bit, which I don't do very often. I was just focusing on getting myself fit and strong and refreshing mentally," he said.

opposition player. You got to admire someone like that and what he has done for Indian cricket."

Asked about his comparisons with the Indian icon, he said, "I admire Virat a lot. He's an amazing player. The way they play the game now, the sheer passion he has for cricket... His body sort of transformed over time. He's so fit, strong and powerful now. Pretty amazing for 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 board to go ahead with its 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 for live competitive sport to return to 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 professional, 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 guidelines laid down by the government to safely resume the game.

"Over the coming week, we will seek to understand the spe-

cific 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.

ECB said it will study the guidelines laid down by the government to safely resume the game.

"Over the coming week, we will seek to understand the spe-

# Everyone entitled to their own opinion: Rabada on his aggression

IAN ■ CAPE TOWN

South Africa speedster Kagiso Rabada reflected on the previous season and admitted he felt out of place and rusty. Rabada, who has been leading the Proteas' bowling attack for a while now, also opened up regarding his on-field aggression, which has gotten him into trouble many-a-times in recent past.

The 2019-20 season was rather indifferent for Rabada, according to his own high standards. He failed to live up to the expectations on the India tour and scalped just seven wickets in three Tests as the hosts romped to a 3-0 victory.

"The past season was a disappointment," Rabada was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. "Even though I see that my stats are okay, I just felt really rusty and a bit out of place."

Rabada did better on home soil against England, where he scalped 14 wickets in three matches. Rabada couldn't feature in the fourth Test as he was handed a one-Test ban for his celebration after taking the wicket of England Test captain Joe Root in the third Test.

"It's passion, but everyone has their opinion and they are entitled to their own opinion," Rabada said.

"I have identified things that I needed to identify and I will address them with the people that are closest to me and who I feel should be helping me address it."

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# 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 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."



# BFI to nominate Phangal for Khel Ratna

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

World Silver-medallist Amit Phangal and bronze medalist Vikas Krishnan were on Monday nominated for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award by the Boxing Federation of India, which picked only Olympic-bound names as its nominees for the annual honours.

The BFI has nominated world Bronze-winning trio of Lovlina Borgohain (69kg), Simranjit Kaur (64kg) and Mamish Kaushik (63kg) for the Arjuna awards. Of these, Borgohain has won the world Bronze twice, the most recent being last year.

For the Dronacharya awards, the BFI has finalised the names of national women's coach Mohammed Ali Qamar and assistant coach Chhote Lal Yadav.

"The nominations of the athletes and coaches have been on the basis of their performance during the last four years," the BFI said.

The 24-year-old Phangal (52kg), also an Asian Games champion, has not won any national sports award. He was being nominated for the Arjuna award for the past three years but was not considered by the selection committee because of a 2012 "inadvertent" dope offence.



"He is allowed to compete for the country and his medals are celebrated. He deserves to be honoured as well," BFI Executive Director R K Sacheti told PTI.

"Youth level ki galtiyan to sab jagah maaf hoti hain. I didn't do it intention-

ally. I only took a medicine prescribed to me without knowing the consequences. I am hopeful I will be considered," Phangal had told PTI in a recent interaction.

Commonwealth and Asian Games Gold-medallist Krishnan (69kg) won the Arjuna award in 2012. The 28-year-old had turned professional in 2018 after his CWG top finish followed by a third Asian Games medal - a Bronze.

He returned to the amateur circuit last year with the South Asian Games, winning a gold there before qualifying for the Olympics at the Asian qualifiers in Jordan in March this year.

Of the three Arjuna contenders, Kaushik has had a great run for the past couple of years, winning a Bronze in his maiden world championship (2019) to qualify for the Olympics after a Silver at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Both Kaur and Borgohain booked their Tokyo tickets at the Asian qualifiers. Qamar, an Arjuna awardee, was India's first Commonwealth Games gold-medallist in boxing and has been in charge of the women's camp for over a year now. This was after serving as an assistant coach for one year.

Yadav is closely associated with six-time world champion M C Mary Kom and she has been crediting him for keeping her focussed in the past couple of years.

# Real to play at training center on La Liga restart

AP ■ MADRID

The Spanish league is resuming in less than two weeks with Real Madrid playing its games at the club's training center.

Madrid will host Eibar on June 14 at the 6,000-capacity Alfredo Di Stefano Stadium, a venue used mostly by the club's "B" team at the Ciudad Real Madrid center on the city's outskirts.

Madrid is not stopping renovation work at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium as all remaining league games are likely to be played without fans because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The league on Sunday confirmed the dates and times of the first two rounds of matches to be played after the competition was stopped mid-March because of the pandemic. The first game will be the Sevilla derby between Sevilla and Real Betis on June 11 at 10 p.m. Local time (2000 GMT).

Defending champion Barcelona, which has a two-point lead over Real Madrid after 27 rounds, will resume at Mallorca on June 13, while Atletico Madrid visits Athletic Bilbao the following day.

The league has announced that every game will include an "applause

to infinity" tribute to the "heroes who are fighting to overcome" the pandemic. Pre-recorded applause uploaded in videos by fans will be played in the 20th minute of matches.

"We have created this initiative to help fans be a part of La Liga's return and also as an opportunity for them to show their support for the heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic," said league president Javier Tebas, who gave his weekly interview to league broadcaster Movistar on Sunday.

"We want them to feel close to their team, even if they cannot be in the stadiums cheering them on, and for players to feel the support of their fans."

Most games will be played late in the day to take into account high temperatures in Spain, but some will be brought forward based on favorable weather forecasts. There will be a couple of matches at 1 p.m. Local time in the first weekend.

The second division will resume June 11 with the second half of the game between Rayo Vallecano and Albacete, which was suspended at halftime in December after Ukrainian Roman Zozulia of Albacete was subjected to Nazi taunts by opposing fans.