

**OPINION 6**  
 A LONG-DRAWN WAR

**WORLD 8**  
 MINNEAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO DISMANTLE POLICE

**SPORT 12**  
 KULDEEP TRYING NOT TO USE SALIVA



# the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY JUNE 9, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3

**KRITI OPENS UP ON WEIGHT LOSS 11 VIVACITY**



**CAPSULE**

**KASHMIRI PANDIT GUNNED DOWN BY TERRORISTS**

**Jammu:** In yet another "horrific act of terror", an unarmed Kashmiri pandit sarpanch was gunned down by the "unidentified" terrorists near his house in South Kashmir district of Anantnag late on Monday. **P5**

**4 HIZBUL ULTRAS KILLED IN SHOPIAN ENCOUNTER**

**Srinagar:** In yet another operational success, security forces killed four Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists on Monday in Jammu & Kashmir's Shopian district, taking the total number of slain terrorists during the past 24 hours in South Kashmir to nine.

**FROM WED. GRAND RAM TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION**

**Ayodhya:** The construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya is set to begin on Wednesday when the first bricks will be laid for its foundation, according to a spokesperson for the head of the temple trust. **P5**

**LOCKDOWN EXTENDED IN BENGAL, MIZORAM**

**Kolkata/Aizawl:** Mizoram and West Bengal on Monday announced extension of coronavirus lockdown, even as a large part of the country opened up under the phase-II of Unlock 1.0 that started on Monday.

## LG voids CM's 'Delhiites-only hospitals' order

Baijal cites SC rulings; Kejriwal says LG order will trouble Delhi residents; Sisodia alleges it's Covid politics to fail city Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a major development, Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Anil Baijal on Monday overruled the two controversial orders of the AAP Government — to reserve Delhi Government-run and private hospitals in the national Capital for only Delhiites, and allowing Covid-19 test of only symptomatic patients — terming that the City Government order were in contravention of the "Right to Life" under Article 21 of the Constitution.



The move may trigger a confrontation between the AAP dispensation and the LG office.

Baijal, who is also Chairman of Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), said all Government, private hospitals and nursing homes and clinics situated in Delhi have to extend medical facilities to all Covid-19 patients coming for moni-

toring and treatment without any discrimination of being resident or non-resident of Delhi. He also cited the Supreme Court judgements in this regard.

The LG also directed all the departments of the Delhi Government and other authorities concerned to strictly observe the strategy prescribed by Indian Council of Medical Research for Covid-19 testing in India without any deviation.

"In order to contain the spread of Covid-19, it is essential to conduct a thorough

contact tracing of affected persons, especially in containment zones and as such, the ICMR strategy for Covid-19 testing should be followed without any deviation," said the order issued by the LG.

Reacting to the LG order, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said the order overruling AAP Government's decision to reserve State-run and private hospitals for Delhiites has created a major problem and challenge for the residents of the city. "May be God wants us to serve the people of the whole country. We will try to provide treatment to all," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said, "The BJP pressurised the Lieutenant Governor and made him overrule our decision, now priority will not be given to Delhi residents in Delhi hospitals. Why is the BJP doing politics over Covid-19 and trying to fail the policies of the State Government."



A devotee undergoes thermal screening at the entrance of Hanuman temple after the authorities permitted opening of all religious places with certain restrictions in New Delhi on Monday  
 Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Sisodia said, "Yesterday, we decided that Delhi Government and private hospitals will be reserved only for people of Delhi for Covid-19 treatment. This was very necessary in view of the Covid-19 restorer and it was a well thought decision so that if cases rise, people in the national Capital can get treated.

### In case of community transmission in Delhi, will change strategy: Sisodia

**New Delhi:** The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) will hold a meeting on Tuesday to assess whether there is community transmission of Covid-19 in the national Capital. Addressing an online media briefing, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said if community transmission of the virus was taking place in Delhi, the AAP Government would have to change its strategy accordingly to deal with the situation.

### Kejriwal into quarantine, to undergo Covid test

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has gone into self-quarantine after developing sore throat and fever, and will get himself tested for Covid-19 on Tuesday, officials said on Monday.

The 51-year-old AAP chief, who is also a diabetic, was feeling unwell since Sunday afternoon.

"As the Chief Minister is unwell, he has gone into self-isolation. He has sore throat and cough. He will get himself tested for Covid-19 tomorrow," Deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia said during an online media briefing.

On Sunday morning, the CM held a cabinet meeting at his official residence which was attended by many Ministers, including Sisodia.

## After 75 days, India opens with caution

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The unlock India phase on Monday witnessed malls, restaurants and religious places re-opening after 75 days with utmost caution.

Social distancing, mandatory use of sanitizer and presence of "Arogya setu" app on mobile phones were some of the safeguards that were made mandatory, but these were also flouted at many places.

While several religious places refused to open up fearing the impact of crowding. Some other ran a trial run and postponed re-opening to two more days before new norms are put in place.

Interestingly, while the Government is trying to unlock the country, Mizoram Chief Minister CM Zoramthanga has ordered a complete lockdown in the State (with 42 confirmed cases) for two weeks from Monday midnight.

States like Maharashtra has not given a green signal to temples, hotels, and restaurants to reopen. However, the State Government has allowed private offices to resume with 10



A woman walks past a hoarding with a message that reads 'We missed you, welcome back' inside Select Citywalk mall after it reopened, in New Delhi on Monday  
 PTI

per cent of staff. The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) have resumed operations to carry passengers to their workplaces. However, only 30 people can sit and five can stand in a single

bus. Only one passenger will be allowed per seat.

In Uttarakhand, purohiths advised against the opening of "Char Dham teerath" in view of surge in Covid-19 cases in the State. The temple authorities

though agreed that businessmen engaged in religious travel tourism were facing economic problems, but said there is no justification for reopening temples until June 30.

**Continued on Page 2**

### Mandatory safeguards flouted at many places

### Centre advises door-to-door survey in 10 hotspot States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Monday asked officials of 45 civic bodies across 38 districts in 10 States, that are witnessing a surge in Covid-19 cases, to focus on house-to-house surveys, carry out prompt testing and undertake active surveillance measures to contain the infection and reduce mortality.

Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan along with senior officers of the Health Ministry held a high level review meeting, via video conference, with the district collectors, municipal commissioners, superintendent of district hospitals and principals of medical colleges from 45 municipal corporations.

The 38 districts are from Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh.

In view of the easing of lockdown and lifting of curbs, States were advised to make a district-wise prospective plan for the coming months.

**Detailed report on P4**

## Maha back to over 100 corona deaths in a day

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After a gap of 24 hours, Maharashtra was back to three digits in terms of Covid-19 fatalities on Monday, as 109 more people succumbed to coronavirus and 2,553 others tested positive for the pandemic in various parts of the State.

With fresh deaths and infections, the total number of deaths mounted to 3,169 and

the total number of infected cases rose to 88,528 in the State.

Countrywide, India on Monday added 9,594 cases and 273 deaths, which took its overall tally of cases to 2,67,096 and death to nearly 7,480.

With 1,562 persons testing positive for Covid-19 on Monday, the number of active coronavirus afflicted patients in Tamil Nadu reached 15,413. According to a press release issued by the Health

Department on Monday, till date the State has tested 33,229 persons. The day also saw 528 persons cured of the pandemic leaving hospitals for their homes taking the number of patients who were cured till date to 17,527.

But the death toll is a blot on the Tamil Nadu statistics as 17 persons succumbed to the pandemic on Monday and the total fatalities stood at 286.

**Continued on Page 2**

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	88,528	3,169	40,975
Tamil Nadu	33,229	289	17,527
Delhi	29,943	874	11,557
Gujarat	20,574	1,280	13,964
Uttar Pradesh	10,947	283	6,344
Rajasthan	10,876	246	8,110
Madhya Pradesh	9,638	414	6,536
West Bengal	8,613	405	3,465
Karnataka	5,760	64	2,519
Bihar	5,247	31	2,542
Haryana	4,855	39	1,700
Andhra Pradesh	4,813	75	2,720
Jammu & Kashmir	4,285	45	1,324
Telangana	3,650	137	1,742
Odisha	2,994	11	1,993

**Covid-19 IN INDIA**  
**TOTAL CASES: 2,67,096**  
**DEATHS: 7,480**  
**RECOVERED: 1,28,865**  
**ACTIVE: 1,29,200**

## Firms offer air tickets, more wages to entice migrants to join back

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After facing acute shortage of labourers, industries and companies are making all-out efforts to woo migrant workers by offering them advance payments, increased wages, and confirmed train tickets for their return. In some cases, companies are also providing flight tickets to migrant workers to bring them back from their home districts.

Farmers in Punjab and Haryana are also luring migrant labourers back for paddy transplantation. They are also sending buses to various destinations in UP and Bihar. They have offered free train tickets, free liquor, foods, mobile recharge to their labourers back for rice cultivation during kharif season.

According to Paraminderjit Singh, a farmer from Pathankot, he has sent two buses to Buxar's Rustampur village to bring back 50 farm labourers. Labourers were asking for almost ₹5,000 per acre for



paddy transplantation. Earlier, it used to be between ₹2,200 and ₹2,700, said another farmer.

Last week farmers of Bhatinda and Ludhiana sent buses to Bihar and eastern UP to pick up a group of 150 farm labourers from a cluster of villages. Another bus sent by a Ludhiana farmer had earlier picked up 30 migrant workers from Haripur village in the same district. Paddy transplantation is a labour-intensive exercise in which nurseries are transplanted in puddled fields, for which at least two to three workers per acre are required.

**Continued on Page 2**

### Prodged by Sonia, Deve Gowda to contest RS polls, his berth certain

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

Congress president Sonia Gandhi has successfully persuaded former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda to contest the June 19 Rajya Sabha elections from Karnataka. Gowda will file his nominations on June 9, his son and former Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy said on Monday.

Kumaraswamy said the JD(S) patriarch took the decision following the request from the Congress president, several national leaders, and party legislators. The JD(S), which has 34 seats in the Assembly, is not in a position to win a seat in Rajya Sabha on its own and will need support from the Congress with its surplus votes. A minimum of 45 votes are required for candidates to win. If he wins, this will be the second Rajya Sabha entry for 87-year-old Gowda, the first time being in 1996 as PM.

Gowda was defeated in Tumkur by BJP's GS Basavaraj by over 13,000 votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.  
**Detailed report on P4**

## Rajnath reviews LAC stand-off; China says resolution talks on



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday reviewed the situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh with Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat and three Services Chiefs — General M Naravane, IAF Chief RK Bhaduria and Admiral Karambir Singh. This came two days after talks between senior military commanders of India and China to defuse tension on the border

due to month-long stand-offs at multiple sites.

Favouring resolution of the ongoing issues on the LAC through dialogue after these talks, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) said in Beijing on Monday the situation all along the border is "stable and controllable" and the two sides are ready to engage in consultation to "properly solve the relevant issues."

Answering questions on the talks between Lt General Harinder Singh and Major General Liu Lin, MFA spokesperson Hua Chunying said, "One consensus is that the two sides need to implement the understanding reached by the leaders of the two countries and make sure that differences do not escalate into disputes."

She also said two sides will work to maintain peace and tranquility along the border and create a good atmosphere. The reference to leaders pertained to the informal summit meetings between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping in the last two years. It was agreed

between the two countries that boundary disputes will be resolved through the strategic direction given by the two leaders to their armed forces.  
**Continued on Page 2**

### Will respond in Parliament to Rahul's 'border info': Rajnath

**New Delhi:** Reacting to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's swipe "Everyone knows the reality of the borders", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said Rahul and some Opposition leaders had sought the Government's clarification on what is happening at the India-China border and he will speak on it in Parliament. "As the Defence Minister of the country, I want to say that whatever I have to say I will say it inside Parliament, I will not mislead the people," the Minister said.

## Coronavirus can infect half of hospital area within 10 hours: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Coronavirus DNA left on a hospital bed rail from the infected patients was traced in nearly half of all sites sampled across a ward within 10 hours. The trace of the contagion lasted for at least five days.

This alarming finding of a new study may explain why high number of hospital health workers are testing positive or succumbing to Covid-19.

The study by researchers from University College, London (UCL) and Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), published as a letter in the Journal of Hospital Infection, shows how the virus may spread across surfaces in hospitals.

According to a report on an average 6 per cent of all confirmed Covid-19 cases are among healthcare workers. The report by the International Council of Nurses says that at least 90,000 healthcare workers have been infected with the coronavirus across the globe. Instead of using the SARS-



CoV-2 virus, researchers artificially replicated a section of DNA from a plant-infecting virus, which cannot infect humans, and added it to a millilitre of water at the similar concentration to SARS-CoV-2 copies found in the respiratory samples of infected patients.

The researchers also cautioned that the virus will likely spread within bodily fluid such as cough droplets, whereas the study used virus DNA in water. "More sticky fluid such as mucus would likely spread more easily," warned the researchers.  
**Continued on Page 2**

# SHAH HAILS MODI'S LEADERSHIP 'India won't tolerate intrusion'

**New Delhi:** Citing surgical and air strikes ordered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi inside Pakistan, Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that Modi made the world realise that any intrusion into Indian borders will not be tolerated but punished.

"The world was made to realise that encroaching upon India's borders is not a child's play. Punishment is meted out here," Shah said at a 'virtual rally' for Odisha while referring to surgical and air strikes.

His comments came at a time when Indian and Chinese armies are engaged in a stand-off in Ladakh with both countries trying to defuse the crisis through diplomatic and military channels.

Shah, however, made no direct comment on the issue.

He asserted in his address, "Under PM Modi's leadership, any intrusion into the borders of India will be pun-

ished. Some used to say that US and Israel were the only countries which were willing and capable of avenging every drop of the blood of their soldiers. Modi ji has added India to that list."

India's borders used to be violated earlier and our soldiers beheaded, the senior BJP leader said, claiming that "Delhi darbar", a reference to the previ-

ous Congress-led UPA government, would keep quiet.

Such incidents happened during our times as well, he noted and referred to terror attacks in Uri and Pulwama during the Modi government's first term.

"Modi ji did not delay even for a moment. By ordering surgical and air strikes, he worked to punish (terrorists) inside

Pakistan," Shah said. Shah's strong emphasis on the Modi government's commitment to national security came on a day Congress leader Rahul Gandhi took a swipe at him for his remarks that India is strong in protecting its borders, saying everyone knows the reality of the situation at the country's borders, a clear reference to the Ladakh situation. **PTI**

## SHAH ASKS PARTY WORKERS IN ODISHA TO TRANSFORM STATE INTO BJP FORTRESS

**Bhubaneswar:** Senior BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday addressed a virtual rally for Odisha and called upon the party workers and leaders to transform the state into the party's "fortress" as its people have full faith in the leadership of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi. Addressing the rally from New Delhi, Shah during his 48-minute speech came down heavily on the opposition Congress but did not mention either the ruling BJP in Odisha or Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik giving a clear indication on the cordial relationship

between the two parties. Stressing on strengthening the party in Odisha, which has been under the BJP for 20 years, he said about 91 lakh people of the state had voted for BJP and elected eight MPs to the Lok Sabha and 23 MLAs to the state assembly in the 2019 elections. **PTI**

# Migrants to get 20% wage hike, other benefits after Jharkhand-BRO agreement

**PTI ■ RANCHI**

The Jharkhand government and the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) have reached an agreement to ensure that labourers of the state get prescribed wages and healthcare, accident, travel allowance and housing benefits, an official statement said here on Monday.

A total of 11,815 labourers from the Santhal Pargana region of the state will get an opportunity to work for the BRO with full benefits after a written agreement was reached between the authorities of BRO and the state government, it said.

The deliberations from the two sides began after migrant workers, who had returned to Jharkhand from Leh on May 29, apprised Chief Minister Hemant Soren of their exploitation, had been to the Birsa Munda Airport to welcome the first batch of 60

returnees, the statement, issued by the Chief Ministers Office (CMO), said.

The migrants had alleged that the contractors and middlemen used to pay them less than the minimum wages prescribed by the BRO.

The contractors also used to keep their ATM cards and withdraw one-third of the wages when they returned home, the migrants alleged before the chief minister.

"After coming to know from the labourers about the exploitation that they were not even getting minimum wages, the chief minister set up a special team which deliberated with the BRO authorities.

"After days of deliberations, a written agreement under the Inter-State Labour Act, 1979, Workmen Compensation Act, 1923 has been reached, which will enable the labourer to get benefits like prescribed wages, healthcare, accident, transport, housing benefits," it said.

# Poet Gulzar Dehalvi, 94, beats Covid-19

**Noida (UP):** "Us sitamgar ki meherbani se, dil ulajhta hai zindagani se" (It's the kindness of the oppressor, that entangles me more with life).

Perhaps nothing more than his own couplet can define Urdu poet Gulzar Dehalvi's recovery from COVID-19, who at the age of 94 has defeated the infection that has claimed over 7,200 lives in the country so far.

Anand Mohan Zutshi, famous as Gulzar Dehalvi, was admitted to the private Sharda Hospital, a dedicated COVID-19 facility, on June 1 and discharged on Sunday, District Information Officer Rakesh Chauhan said.

"Ten patients were discharged from the Sharda Hospital on Sunday, including the 94-year-old man, after successful treatment of coronavirus," Chauhan said.

The nonagenarian, known in literary circles for his passion and command over Urdu, previously had heart and thyroid-related issues besides age-related concerns, Sharda Hospital's medical superintendent Ashutosh Niranjani said.

"When I examined the patient, he was critically ill. His oxygen saturation was very low. So, we immediately decided to shift him to the ICU. His body had low oxygen levels with respiratory acidosis," the senior doctor said. He said the hospital then appointed dedicated staff and a doctor to take personal care of the patient. **PTI**

# Complete lockdown in Mizoram till June 22

**PTI ■ AIZAWL**

Cities and towns in Mizoram will be placed under a complete lockdown for two weeks starting Monday midnight because of a spike in coronavirus cases, but there could be "area-wise moderation", particularly in rural areas, a health department official said.

A consultative meeting of ministers, association of doctors, churches, NGOs, local and village councils chaired by Chief Minister Zoramthanga unanimously decided to impose a total lockdown till June 22 to contain the rapidly increasing COVID-19 cases in the state, the official said.

The chief minister told the meeting that a complete lockdown with "area-wise moderation" was essential to contain the virus as there were instances of violation of present

lockdown rules in many areas, which might lead to a community spread.

"The total lockdown will be imposed in strict manner in all cities and towns. However, certain areas especially in rural areas will be relaxed depending on the need of the people and essentiality of the area," he said.

Zoramthanga said Mizoram, like rest of the world, is going through a critical time due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

The northeastern state on Monday reported eight coronavirus cases, taking the tally from 1 to 42 in a week.

The meeting also agreed to limit home quarantine facility to persons with exceptional cases, the official said.

It decided to increase the quarantine period from the existing 14 days to 21 days, he said. The state-level task force

on COVID-19 or state executive committee of the State Disaster Management Authority will prepare fresh guidelines for the total lockdown, which will be issued on Monday night.

Zoramthanga said the government would conduct a sample test on as many returnees as possible with the help of RT-PCR machines.

All the patients who reported COVID-19 positive in the last seven days are aged between 21-30 and Delhi returnees. They have been placed under quarantine since their arrival to the state.

Of the 8 patients, 5 are from Champhai district near Myanmar border, 2 from Khawzawl district and 1 from south Mizoram's Saha district.

They have been shifted to COVID-19 care centre in their respective districts, officials said.

# Devotees prefer to stay away from temples in Rishikesh

**Rishikesh:** The ancient Neelkanth temple here did not open for devotees on Monday while few worshippers visited the Virbhadr Mahadev and Kunjapuri temples.

Neelkanth temple could not be opened due to opposition by residents, who said they fear spread of the coronavirus if pilgrims gathered there, area SHO Ranbir Singh Ramola said.

The temple Mahant Subhash Puri said he too was not in favour of opening the temple amid a rise in COVID-19 cases.

Virbhadr Mahadev and Kunjapuri Siddhpeeth temples in Rishikesh Municipal Corporation area were opened but they had few devotees.

People are afraid of stepping outside their homes as there has been a substantial spike in Covid-19 cases in recent weeks. **PTI**

# Rajnath reviews...

**From Page 1**

The Chinese response was more or less similar to the ministry of external affairs statement issued on Sunday in New Delhi after the military level talks. It said the two countries have agreed to "peacefully resolve" the stand-off situation in Ladakh in accordance with various bilateral agreements. The ministry also stressed that military and diplomatic dialogue will continue to resolve the prevailing situation in Eastern Ladakh.

"The two sides will continue the military and diplomatic engagements to resolve the situation and to ensure peace and tranquility in the border areas," the ministry said in a statement.

Stating that the meeting took place in a cordial and positive atmosphere, the ministry also referred to the agreement between the leaders that peace and tranquility in the India-China border regions is essential for the overall development of bilateral relations.

The ministry had further stressed

that both the countries noted that this year marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. "Both the countries have agreed that an early resolution would contribute to the further development of the relationship," the ministry had said.

As regards Rajnath's meeting here to take stock of the situation, sources said besides getting briefed about operational preparedness to meet any challenge, the defence top brass also conveyed their assessment of the talks to the leadership.

While there is still no clarity on the next round of senior-level talks, sources said the dialogue between local commanders on the ground would continue.

During the talks, India insisted that it wants a restoration of status quo ante of April before the standoff began and China pull back troops close to the LAC. India also said it will continue its infrastructure development in the border areas. China is objecting to the construction of roads close to the LAC while India says the construction is within its territory.

# Maha back to over 100...

**From Page 1**

Out of the 17 who breathed their last on Monday, nine were senior citizens, seven were in the age group of 40 to 58 while one person was 22 years of age.

Delhi reported 1,007 cases and 17 deaths. Total number of cases in the national Capital is now at 29,943, including 17,712 active cases, 11,357 recovered/discharged/migrated and 874 deaths.

The death toll due to Covid-19 on Monday went up to 45 in Jammu & Kashmir after four more patients died in Srinagar while 198 fresh cases were detected taking the total tally of coronavirus cases to 4,285 and active cases to 2916.

On ground zero, the situation is worrisome as several health institutions are struggling to cope up with the rush of patients especially in Kashmir valley.

A cursory look at the official figures tabulated by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir clearly suggests out of 3,363 coronavirus cases, only 774 are returnees while 2,589 cases are local residents of Kashmir valley.

According to health experts, it is a clear indication that community spread has already started in pockets of Kashmir.

# Coronavirus...

**From Page 1**

They had placed the water containing this DNA on the handrail of a hospital bed in an isolation room -- that is, a room for higher-risk or infected patients -- and then sampled 44 sites across a hospital ward over the following five days.

They found that after 10 hours, the surrogate genetic material had spread to 41 per cent of sites sampled across the hospital ward, from bed rails to

door handles to armrests in a waiting room to children's toys and books in a play area. This increased to 59 per cent of sites after three days, falling to 41 per cent on the fifth day.

Dr Lena Ciric (UCL Civil, Environmental & Geomatic Engineering), a senior author of the study, said: "Our study shows the important role that surfaces play in the transmission of a virus and how critical it is to adhere to good hand hygiene and cleaning.

"Our surrogate was inoculated once to a single site, and was spread through the touch-

ing of surfaces by staff, patients and visitors. A person with coronavirus though, will shed the virus on more than one site, through coughing, sneezing and touching surfaces."

The highest proportion of sites that tested positive for the surrogate came from the immediate bed-space area -- including a nearby room with several other beds -- and clinical areas such as treatment rooms.

On day three, 86 per cent of sampled sites in clinical areas tested positive, while on day four, 60 per cent of sam-

pled sites in the immediate bed space area tested positive.

Co-author Dr Elaine Cloutman-Green (UCL Civil, Environmental & Geomatic Engineering), Lead Healthcare Scientist at GOSH, said: "People can become infected with Covid-19 through respiratory droplets produced during coughing or sneezing. Equally, if these droplets land on a surface, a person may become infected after coming into contact with the surface and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

"Like SARS-CoV-2, the surrogate we used for the study could be removed with a disinfectant wipe or by washing hands with soap and water.

"Cleaning and hand washing represent our first line of defence against the virus and this study is a significant reminder that healthcare workers and all visitors to a clinical setting can help stop its spread through strict hand hygiene, cleaning of surfaces, and proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE)," advised the researchers.

# After 75 days, India opens with caution

**From Page 1**

In Andhra Pradesh Lord Balaji's Dwarka Tirumala temple in west Godavari district reopened for 'darsanam' but only held a 'trial run' as the temple would open only on June 10 or June 11. Devotees have been asked to bring 'Aadhar card, wear the mask, use sanitizer and maintain distance', said temple authorities. The entry would be of limited numbers and regulated.

The temple trust has written to the centre, asking them to allow theertham (holy water) to be given to devotees. "It is a matter of sentiment... So we have appealed to the central Government to allow theertham," Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams chairperson YV Subba Reddy said.

In Uttar Pradesh's Mathura, the western Uttar Pradesh town also famous for its landmark temples, many of the prominent places of worship remained closed over concerns over the pandemic.

The Eidgah mosque in Lucknow opened with the

Shahi Imam leading the morning prayers in a group of five. In Telangana too, religious places, malls, and restaurants re-opened bit with several SOPs (standard operating procedures), including s devotees having to wash hands and feet with soap and water before entering.

In Tamil Nadu too, the State with the second-highest number of coronavirus cases in the country after Maharashtra, religious places continue to remain closed. Restaurants in the State reopened after two months. The State Government has issued strict SOPs including no air conditioners, 50 percent occupancy, disinfection of chairs and tables after every use, sanitizers on every table, and thermal scanning. There are around 50,000 restaurants across the state, with around 20,000 in Chennai alone.

In Karnataka, places of worship opened to the public, with restrictions in place and new protocols like the use of sanitizers. Karnataka had asked permission to open places of

worship from June 1 but waited for a week after the centre came out with its guidelines. With restaurants open for dining in, people were also seen slowly venturing out to eat out.

The Home Ministry had last month said "Unlock1" will roll out across the country from Monday under which the nationwide lockdown which came into effect from March 25 will be relaxed to a great extent, including the opening of shopping malls, restaurants and religious places, though strict restrictions will remain in place till June 30 in the worst-hit areas.

In Punjab, while providing relief to the residents, the district administration has allowed the restaurants and other eateries to open up for home delivery. However, the takeaway and dining facility would not be allowed, and these relaxations will not be given in hot spots areas and containment zones.

"Restaurants, eateries, ice cream shops, sweet shops and juice shops in the district are allowed to open from 7 am to 7 pm only for home delivery," said District Magistrate Ludhiana, Pradeep Kumar Agrawal.

Although, no special per-

mission will be required for the home delivery of the food, yet the delivery person would have to comply with the guidelines issued by the Punjab Government. "The deliverable food item should be packed hygienically; delivery/transport vehicles should be cleaned and sanitized regularly, zero contact delivery while delivering food to the guest and contact with common touch points such as doorbell should be avoided; face mask/Gloves are mandatory for all delivery workers," the copy of the order reads.

Restaurants and eateries reopened in Madhya Pradesh and Goa with high precaution. "We expect that no more than 25 per cent of restaurants to open up because they are dependent on workforce which has gone their homes," said Goa hotel and Restaurants association president Gaurish Dhond.

"Restaurants, eateries, ice cream shops, sweet shops and juice shops in the district are allowed to open from 7 am to 7 pm only for home delivery," said District Magistrate Ludhiana, Pradeep Kumar Agrawal.

Although, no special per-

# Firms offer...

**From Page 1**

In another instance, three Chennai-based real estate developers have come together to charter a flight to ferry back a group of 150 skilled migrant workers from Bihar after June 15. One of the contractor of Prestige group has booked flight tickets to bring back 10 carpenters from Patna to Hyderabad. Currently, the Bengaluru-based Prestige Group is involved in three projects in Hyderabad.

Similarly, real estate body Credai's Tamil Nadu chapter is in talks with the state government to arrange what could be the first reverse 'shramik special' to bring back workers from home. Builders in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region are reaching out to construction workers in their villages over phone, urging them to return, assuring them of safety, security

and extra payments. In Delhi, an employer gave two month salary in advance to 10 labourers to convince them not to go home towns.

Praveen Khandelwal, general secretary, Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), said that over 80% of the total workforce has already left the city.

Not only employers, the state governments are also trying their best to adjust migrants labourers in the state. For instances, In Jharkhand, the Hemant Soren government has tied up with Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to give employment to over 11800 workers for infra projects including projects near the China border in Ladakh. Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the BRO for ensuring the welfare of workers in all recruitments in the future.

The Yogi Adityanath government in UP also plans to adjust migrants workers in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other industries in accordance with their skills. The Kerala government has introduced a scheme called Awas for migrant workers. In MP, industrial units are hiring fleets of vehicles to bring back labourers and deputed senior officials to visit and convince them to return.

On the other hand, migrants labour (skilled and unskilled) also now wants to return to their job and this is evident as most of the trains coming from Bihar, UP, Odisha and West Bengal to metros Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore also booked till June 30. A mass exodus of workforce has hit the operations in industrial, transport, farm, retail and other sectors, which reopened after an almost two-month hiatus. The

workers who have returned to their hometowns are from both skilled and unskilled sectors and include those engaged as machine operators in factories, loaders, drivers, house-keeping staff, as well as those involved in packaging, construction workers, retailers, farming, hand-embroidery workers, salespersons and security guards, among others.

As per the data, 5.7 million stranded migrants have been ferried back home in 4,155 sharmik special trains till June 4. UP has claimed 21.69 lakh workers had returned, and UP itself had sent back 1.35 lakh. Bihar has said 10 lakh had returned; Maharashtra has said 11 lakh have left the state. Gujarat said 20.5 lakh had gone back home. West Bengal said 3,97,389 migrant workers from other states were still stranded. Karnataka said in court that the state had facilitated the return of 3 lakh migrant workers.

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
**Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, (U.P.)**  
**Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com**

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
 E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

**Fresh-Tender Work**  
 A) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 22.06.2020 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened / downloaded on dated 23.06.2020 at 11.00 AM.

S.No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	35/GM-R/S.M./E/M-II/ET/2020-21	Annual Maintenance of Electrical works in Staff Quarter Type-I, II, III & IV, Sector-27 Noida.	25.69
2.	66/GM-R/S.M./E/M-III/ET/2020-21	Providing Street Lighting on Metro route road from Manav Rachana School, Sector-51 to Metro Station, sector-76, Noida (side of sector-50), Noida.	35.09
3.	70/GM-R/S.M./E/M-III/ET/2020-21	M/o Park Light (Strengthening of park light in different block park sector-53), Noida	40.68
4.	71/GM-R/S.M./E/M-III/ET/2020-21	M/o Street Light (Strengthening of street light on Internal & External road of A,B,C & E Block, Sector-72) Noida	53.12

**Re-Tender Work**  
 B) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 15.06.2020 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened / downloaded on dated 16.06.2020 at 11.00 AM.

S.No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	33/GM-R/S.M./E/M-III/ET/2020-21	Providing 16 Mtr Semi High Mast & Street Lighting in different block park sector-37, Noida.	34.74
2.	56/GM-R/S.M./E/M-III/ET/2020-21	Providing Street lighting arrangement in Park in front of A-90 Group Housing & back side of Manas Hospital in sector-34, Noida.	29.50
3.	04/GM-R/S.M./E/M-I/ET/2020-21	Providing & fixing Post lights in Park of Block A,B,C,D in sector-105, Noida.	26.77

**General Manager (R)**  
Noida

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**

# DEVOTEES PAY OBEISANCE AFTER TWO MONTHS

Social distancing and sanitisation measures put in place by management committees of temples, Gurudwaras, and shrines

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Many devotees on Monday thronged at religious places in the national Capital following the social distancing and sanitisation measures put in place by the management committees of the temples, Gurudwaras and shrines.

Devotees visited Gurudwaras across Delhi and listened to "shabad kirtans" after religious places were opened for devotees after almost two and half month period. The historic Gurudwaras in the city were decked up with flowers, hoardings and several colourful gates to welcome pilgrims and 'Langars' (community kitchen), were arranged at most Gurudwaras.

Incidentally, the religious places were closed in Delhi on March 23, two days ahead of

the nationwide lockdown imposed to check the spread of coronavirus. The famous Chhatarpur temple complex opened around 8.45 am with nearly 300 devotees visiting in the first hour, the temple authorities said.

"We have set up a sanitisation tunnel at the temple entrance and are using a thermal gun to screen people. No prasad and flowers are allowed," Kishor Chawla, CEO, Chhatarpur temple management committee, said. Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid Syed Ahmed Bukhari said the mosque was not opened for the first namaz of the day due to the corona curfew till 5 am.

"We are expecting good numbers for the second namaz around 1 pm. Social distancing and sanitisation measures have been put in place to prevent the

spread of the virus during congregational prayers," he said.

Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee (DSGMC) chairman Manjinder Singh Sirsa said that social distancing norms will be strictly enforced at the shrines to check coronavirus infection.

Many Devotees did 'sewa' and helped in preparing vegetables, chapattis in the 'langar' or community kitchen area. The enthusiasm of the devotees was multiplied when they were allowed to perform virtuous sewas at the Gurudwaras after long intervals due to national lockdown

The holy Sikh shrines saw religious fervour and devotion when people reached in early morning to offer prayers at Gurudwaras. The devotees continued to reach all gurudwaras

later in the day also.

"Sis Ganj Sahib, Bangla Sahib and Rakabganj gurudwaras attracted a large number of devotees. We are increasing the number of entry and exit points so that people do not come in contact with others and leave the premises after prayers," he added.

The head scarf given to non sikhs devotees to cover the head will not be given as precautionary measures and all devotees have been asked to cover their head from cloth, cap, handkerchief etc, he added.

Sirsa further said that sanitisation tunnels have been set up at major gurudwaras and social distancing is being enforced by ensuring that people do not stay longer inside the sanctum sanctorum of the shrines, he said.



A man dressed as Lord Hanuman dances as Hanuman temple was opened for devotees after a gap of more than 70 days, during the fifth phase of Covid-19 nationwide lockdown, in New Delhi on Monday

## G'gram reports 243 new cases, toll rises to six

Tally rises to 2,165

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram district on Monday recorded 243 fresh coronavirus cases, the highest number of positive cases in a single day so far. Six deaths were also reported from the city, taking the district's Covid 19 toll to six.

Earlier, the district had recorded 215 cases on June 4 and on June 7 the cases were 230. Officials said that 1,144 cases have appeared in the last 7 days. Gurugram currently has 1,577 corona positive patients admitted in different hospitals while the total number reached 2,165. While 579 have been cured and discharged.

The officials further said that the condition of ten patients is extremely critical.

Officials further pointed out that a majority of cases appeared in containment zones. The situation in containment zones is extremely precarious. Sources have said that a majority of residential societies and condominiums have positive cases. Places like Dundahera, DLF phase 3 Nathupur, Sirhaul, Mullahera, sector 10A, Devial, Rajiv Nagar, Om Nagar, Basai, Sector-9A and Prempuri colony are badly hit.

"We are receiving frequent cases in Gurugram. It is a concern for us. We are working hard to contain spread in limited places. On Monday, 128 patients recovered from illness and they were discharged from hospital," said a senior health official.

"The district administration has already constituted a separate medical team which will call every patient daily and register progress reports. If



needed, the team will also visit them for medical assistance," he said.

Apart from this, The Haryana Government has decided that shopping malls and places of worship will not reopen for the public in Gurugram and Faridabad districts, the two districts worst hit by Covid-19.

Banquet halls with a size of around 2,000 square feet would be allowed to operate with a maximum of 50 guests at a time and social distancing norms must be observed.

"Hotels, restaurants and other hospitality services would be reopened with 50 per cent maximum capacity with generic preventive measures across the district. The restaurants will have to obtain permissions from the concerned Deputy Commissioner certifying their seating capacity," said a senior administration official.

Also, The timing of opening for all would be between 9 am and 8 pm to ensure compliance of night curfew between 9 pm and 5 am.

## A few step out to shop; normalcy to take time

Malls, shopping centres, restaurants reopen

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Malls and shopping centres in the national capital reopened on Monday after two-and-a-half months with only a few stepping out to shop and eat.

Most shops and restaur-

rants reopened at Saket's Select City Walk, one of the prominent malls in the city but only a few shoppers visited it in the initial hours. Proper sanitization measures were put in place everywhere to avoid the spread of Coronavirus. Besides, all common areas were being sani-

tised at a regular interval. Staff were deputed at the entrance for measuring body temperature of visitors entering the premises. A contactless sanitiser dispenser and a disinfection tunnel have been installed at the entry gate of the mall.

Most shops pasted stickers on the floor to help visitors maintain physical distancing and the employees wore masks, face shields and gloves. Announcements were being made, asking people to follow

social distancing norms and wear masks all the time.

One of the staff members said only those with the Aarogya Setu application on their mobile phones were being allowed to enter.

"The shopping centre has introduced subtle changes in design and layout across entrances, public spaces. Crowd control and footfalls will be kept as outlined by the government across the premises, public spaces and retail outlets to

ensure that social distancing norms can be followed correctly," a spokesperson for Select City Walk, Saket, told PTI.

Most of the shops and offices at the 3CS Mall in Lajpat Nagar, however, remained shut.

Those who reopened shutters after a hiatus of two months said business was lean. The staff at a popular fast food restaurant said only four people had dropped by in the first three hours.

"Normally, we record around 200 footfalls till lunch. Today, only four people have come so far. People are scared. It will take months for normalcy to return," one of them said.

"We have been taking the temperature of the visitors and providing them hand sanitiser at the entry gate. Our staff has gone through an extensive screening process and has been maintaining a distance of two feet among them," an employee of the store said.

## Deputy CM to meet SDMA officials today

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday said that State Disaster Management authority's (SDMA's) scheduled meeting with experts will be held on Tuesday.

Sisodia said that in order to understand the spread of COVID 19 in Delhi, he will go as per planned and Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal will chair the SDMA meeting.

Sisodia also informed that he will attend the meeting on behalf of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal who is under self quarantine after experiencing Covid-19 symptoms (sore throat and fever).

Sisodia said, "CM Kejriwal is not keeping well, has a sore throat and mild fever. He has self quarantined himself and will take the test tomorrow. But he is also of the view that this meeting is crucial as it will help us ascertain if Delhi has entered the community spread stage of Covid 19. And our entire strategy to deal with the pandemic is going to change. So Hon'ble CM wants this meeting to take place as per planned, and he has authorised me to attend this meeting."

Sisodia said, "CM Kejriwal is not keeping well, has a sore throat and mild fever. He has self quarantined himself and will take the test tomorrow. But he is also of the view that this meeting is crucial as it will help us ascertain if Delhi has entered the community spread stage of Covid 19. And our entire strategy to deal with the pandemic is going to change. So Hon'ble CM wants this meeting to take place as per planned, and he has authorised me to attend this meeting."

## BOIS LOCKER ROOM CASE FIR filed after girl gets threats on social media

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Monday registered a First Information Report (FIR) on the complaint of a girl who had shared screenshots of chat from "Bois Locker Room", after she received "offensive" and "obnoxious threat" messages on social media.

The Bois Locker Room, a Instagram group, was being used to share obscene messages and morphed pictures of underage girls on the social media sites.

The girl filed a complaint



with the local police after she received obnoxious and offensive content for posting con-

tents about the Bois Locker Room chats. The complaint was then transferred to the

Cyber Cell of the Delhi Police. According to a senior police official, police has registered an FIR based on the complaint police had received from the girl.

"As per the complaint, she received obnoxious and offensive content. The nature of content received was threatening but primarily obnoxious in nature," he said.

The police said they are in touch with the complainant and have sought information from her.

Information about the Instagram group came to light

after a girl shared screenshots of its activities. Following this, the group started being called out on social media.

The police said during social media monitoring, it was noticed that the group was being used by the participants to share obscene messages and morphed pictures.

A case under relevant sections of IT Act and IPC was registered and during investigation, the 18-year-old admin of the Instagram group was arrested while a juvenile was apprehended in connection with the incident.

## 44 Malaria cases in city so far this year

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With four new cases, the number of people infected with Malaria in the National Capital has reached to 44 this year, according to the data released by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) on Monday.

The municipal Corporations have reported mosquito-breeding in at least 507 households and 4,775 legal notices have been issued this year so far. The dengue breeding checkers have checked 4984784 houses and also issued challans to 74 numbers of office and residential premises till 14 March.

Besides, at least 54 cases of dengue and 19 cases of Chikungunya also

reported this year.

According to the data out of these cases, 21 patients who were diagnosed with malaria were from different states while four of them did not provide their addresses.

The malaria parasite is transmitted by female Anopheles mosquitoes, which bite mainly between dusk and dawn. According to the World Health Organisation malaria is caused by the protozoan parasite Plasmodium. Human malaria is caused by four different species of Plasmodium: P. falciparum, P. malariae, P. ovale and P. vivax.

However, civic body officials said that preparations to contain the disease have been started.

Concerned over the spurt in cases, A senior SDMC official said that the civic body has started spraying insecticides in its areas besides the regarding officials are also planning to adopt a different approach to tackle vector borne diseases with Coronavirus.

"All the preventive steps have been taken to reduce the cases. The key to prevention of dengue is ensuring there is no clean stagnant water in homes and around, which does not allow the Aedes mosquitoes to breed, and therefore dengue cannot spread," he said.

Last year only one case of malaria was reported in 2019, seven in 2018 and nine in 2017 till the time, according to the data.



## Wazirabad anti-CAA sit-in 'springboard for riots': Chargesheet

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Monday filed chargesheet in two cases including the death of Head Constable Ratan Lal during the communal violence.

In its chargesheet filed on Monday, the Crime Branch of Delhi Police said that there was a "deep-rooted conspiracy" that triggered the communal riots in Northeast Delhi in which two Indian Police Service (IPS) officers were attacked and suffered injuries.

Delhi Police filed the chargesheet before the Metropolitan Magistrate Rakesh Kumar Rampuri who put up the matter for consideration of the charge sheet on June 22.

According to chargesheet, during investigation it emerged that the sit-in protest in the main Wazirabad protest since mid-January was used as a "spring board to propel riots" and the ensuing riots snow-

ballled into fierce rioting in various pockets of north east district and initially one community remained aggressive on February 24 which was followed by violent reaction of the other community on the next day.

Police said that in the investigation it has been established that the riots were not impromptu but were conspired with an intent to create communal strife, to malign the image of the country under the garb of democratically opposing the Citizenship Amendment Act.

The conspirators caused disruption by dual scheme of spreading misinformation on CAA and roads blockade (chakka jam), which triggered a major communal riot, police said.

When the mob attacked police officials on February 24, DCP (Shahdara) Amit Kumar Sharma, ACP (Gokulpuri) Anuj Kumar and other police officials suffered

## DELHIRIOTS



serious injuries.

While one charge sheet named 17 persons as accused, other was filed against six persons for the offences of murder, rioting, unlawful assembly, promoting enmity between groups on the basis of religion, caste, language etc and other sections and criminal conspiracy of the Indian Penal Code.

According to the FIR, the mob had then chased injured

police officers into Mohan Nursing Home and vandalized it.

Another FIR registered in the connection with the violence said that after attacking police officials, the rioters had barged into Saptrishi building on the main Wazirabad road near the protest site and had pelted stones and fired gunshots from its rooftop.

One of the rioters Shahid,

who was present at the rooftop, was killed with a gunshot injury, the second FIR had said.

The 925-page charge sheet filed in the murder case of Lal named 17 persons, including Shahrugh Mallick, Mohd Yunus, Mohd Ayub, Mohd Danish, Mohd Arif, Jalaluddin, Mohd Ibrahim, Mohd Nasir, Imran Ansari, Mohd Adil, as accused who allegedly were

part of a violent mob that attacked the police force on the main Wazirabad road, Chand Bagh, in north east Delhi on February 24.

The charge sheet was filed under sections 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions), 353 (Assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 332 (voluntarily causing hurt to public servant), 333 (grievous hurt to public servant), 147 and 148 (rioting), 149 (unlawful assembly), 336 (act endangering lives or personal safety of others), 427 (mischief), 307 (attempt to murder), 302 (murder).

Police also invoked provisions of sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence), 397 (robbery with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt), 120B (criminal conspiracy), 109 (abetment), 34 (common

intention) of IPC and relevant sections of the Prevention of Damage to Public Properties Act.

All the accused are in judicial custody in the case. The offences entail a maximum punishment of death penalty.

The charge sheet has been filed based on statements of eyewitnesses, video evidence collected from various sources including CCTV cameras and other technical evidence including call detail records.

The Delhi Police has listed 164 witnesses in the charge sheet to buttress its investigation against the accused persons.

The police charge sheeted six persons including Chand Mohd, Raiees Khan, Mohd Firoz, Sajid, in the case.

Chand Mohd confessed that on February 23 there was a buzz in the area that something major may happen and hence they were asked to remain ready for any eventuality, police said.

It claimed that Chand had further said that he along with his friends were present at the road and where the mob was shouting slogans to dissuade anti-CAA protests, police said.

Police further said that Chand too got involved and raised anti-religious slogans and pelted stones on police party and pro-CAA group members.

Chand said that when they saw some persons of their community had gathered on the rooftop of Saptrishi building, he along with his friends also barged into the building and went on the rooftop from where they started hurling stones at the police party and other groups, police claimed.

Police further alleged that firearms were used by the members of both the groups and Sajid also had a country made pistol which was allegedly fired at the mob gathered at the opposite side on the road.

# House-to-house survey in 10 hotspot States: Health Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Monday asked officials of 45 high-Covid-19-caseload civic bodies across 38 districts in 10 States to focus on house-to-house surveys, carry out prompt testing and undertake active surveillance measures to contain the infection and reduce mortality.

The 38 districts are from Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh.

"In view of easing of lockdown and lifting of curbs, States were advised to make a district-wise prospective plan for the coming months," said Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan in a high-level review meeting, via video conference, with district collectors, municipal commissioners, superintendent of district hospitals and principals of medical colleges from 45 municipal corporations.

To reduce the case fatality rate, the officials were briefed

- Union Health Ministry also asked the civic bodies across 38 districts in 10 States to carry out prompt testing and undertake active surveillance measures to contain the infection and reduce mortality
- The 38 districts are from Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, J&K, Karnataka, Uttarakhand and Madhya Pradesh



- To reduce the case fatality rate, the officials were briefed on measures that include prioritising high-risk and vulnerable segments like elderly people and people with comorbidities like diabetes while contact-tracing to prevent deaths
- They were also asked to focus on active surveillance measures, adequate testing and promoting health seeking behaviour for timely detection of cases
- The Ministry also highlighted that along with Covid-19 management efforts, care needs to be given to regular and essential health services that are also available for the citizens

on measures that include prioritising high-risk and vulnerable segments like elderly people and people with comorbidities like diabetes while contact-tracing to prevent deaths.

During the meeting, issues discussed include widespread infection in densely populated urban areas, with areas that shared public amenities, importance of house-to-house surveys, prompt testing, clinical management of cases and containment strategy which needs

to be implemented, it said.

"The State officials were advised on the measures to be taken in the containment zones for case management and buffer zones surveillance activities and promotion of Covid appropriate behaviour," the Ministry said.

They were also asked to focus on active surveillance measures, adequate testing and promoting health seeking behaviour for timely detection of cases.

In terms of infrastructure and human resource management for containment of Covid-19, the Health Ministry said proper planning for health infrastructure should be taken up, adequate number of surveillance teams should be provided and a system should be put in place for bed availability management.

The Ministry also highlighted that along with Covid-19 management efforts, care needs to be given to regular and

essential health services that are also available for the citizens.

Officials were asked to focus on areas like active house-to-house survey for timely detection, augmentation of the survey teams, efficient ambulance management, efficient triaging of patients at the hospitals and bed management, clinical management of the hospitalised cases through rotational 24x7 teams to ensure reduction in the fatality rates, the Ministry said in the statement.

## Study: Covid-19 compromised access to 1.85 mn abortions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Abortion access to around 1.85 million women was compromised at all points of care, including public and private sector facilities and chemist outlets due to the triggered restrictions, according to a study conducted by Ips Development Foundation (IDF).

Vinoy Manning, CEO, IDF said, "As majority of public health facilities and their staff are now focused on Covid-19 treatments and closures of private health facilities, access to safe abortions have been affected, which is a time-sensitive procedure. The study assesses the near-term impact of contagion on abortion access in India in the first three months following the commencement of the lockdown beginning March 25."

Dr Sushanta Kumar Banerjee from the Foundation

explained that telephonic surveys were conducted and consulted with several experts from FOGSI and social marketing organisations like PSI India Private Limited.

Following analysis of the data, "we have concluded that of the 3.9 million abortions that would have taken place in 3 months, access to around 1.85 million was compromised due to the pandemic restrictions."

The study estimates that access to abortion was highly compromised during lockdown between March 25 and May 3, 2020, in which around 59 per cent of women seeking an abortion could not access the services.

However, with the un-lock

phase, the situation is expected to improve — with 33 per cent abortions being compromised in 24 days.

To meet the needs of these deprived women, the Foundation has recommended rapid mapping of facilities for first and second trimester abortions, assessing facilities' preparedness especially for second-trimester abortions, improving referral linkage and spread the word about the availability of the service, streamlining the supply chain for medical abortion drugs, and lastly including mechanisms to offset additional travel and out of pocket expenditures.

"Many of these 1.85 million women will be coming into public and private hospitals seeking second trimester abortions and we should not be turning them away a second time," Manning said.

## Due to lockdown, delivery of 2 VVIP aircraft to be delayed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Due to the Covid-19 lockdown, the delivery of two VVIP aircraft including, Air India One for the Prime Minister, will be delayed.

According to officials, the manufacturer Boeing informed Indian authorities that the delivery of these two custom-made aircraft will be in September instead of the earlier promised delivery by July. Boeing will supply the custom-made B777 planes for VVIP travel to Air India.

In October last year, government officials had said that the delivery of these two planes, which are earmarked for VVIP travel only, would be done by July.

"There has been some delay, primarily because of Covid-19. The two planes are likely to be delivered by September," the officials said on Monday.

The two B777 aircraft worth ₹810 crore will be operated by pilots of the Indian Air

Force and not of Air India.

However, the new wide-body planes will be maintained by the Air India Engineering Services Limited (AIESL), which is a subsidiary of the Indian national carrier, the officials said. Currently, the Prime minister, the President and the Vice President fly on Air India's B747 planes, which have the call sign 'Air India One'.

The new planes will be used for travel of the dignitaries only.

These two aircrafts were part of Air India's commercial fleet for a few months in 2018 before they were sent back to Boeing for retrofitting them for VVIP travel.

The B777 planes will have state-of-the-art missile defence systems called Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) and Self-Protection Suites (SPS).

In February, the US agreed to sell the two defence systems to India at a cost of USD 190 million for these two aircrafts.

## Govt mandates RC details in 1-cm green sticker in all BS-VI vehicles

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has mandated a one-cm green sticker, providing registration details, in all BS-VI compliant motor vehicles. The order will come into force from October 1, 2020.

"Vehicles complying with BS-VI emission norms shall have 1 cm green strip at the top in the third registration plate," as per a notification issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. The order was issued amending the Motor Vehicles (High Security Registration Plates) order, 2018.

Earlier, the Government has said that from April 1, 2019, all motor vehicles will be fitted with tamper-proof, high security registration plates (HSRP).

This HSRP or third number plate will be fitted on the inside of the windshield of each new manufactured vehicle by the manufacturers.

Under the HSRP, a chromium-based hologram is applied by hot stamping on the top left corner of the number plates both at the front and back besides laser-branding of a permanent identification number with a minimum of 10 digits into the reflective sheeting on the bottom left of the registration plate.

The third number plate will also



have colour coding for the fuel used in the vehicle. The colour coding is done in order to detect polluting vehicles from the non-polluting ones.

A Road Transport and Highways Ministry official said it has been brought-forth that the BS-VI emission standards, which have been mandated from April 1, 2020, provide for strict emission norms, and requests were made to have distinct identification for such vehicles as is being made in other countries.

"Accordingly, a feature in form of a unique strip of green colour of 1 cm wide on top of the existing third registration sticker for the purpose of BS-VI vehicles of any fuel type i.e. — for petrol or CNG, which have a light blue colour sticker and a diesel vehicle which is of orange colour sticker — will have a green strip of 1 CM on top has been mandated," he said.

## HRD Min begins discussion with States on reopening of schools

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The HRD Ministry on Monday started consultations with States about the reopening of schools in the country which along with other academic institutions and colleges has remained shut across from March 22 onwards due to the Covid-19 pandemic related lockdown.

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, a couple of days ago, had indicated that the Government is planning to reopen schools across the country after August 15.

The opinions and suggestions from the State Governments will now be forwarded to the Union Health Ministry for the necessary coordination and prepare plan of action and the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

HRD Ministry sources said School Education Secretary Anita Karwal spoke to her counterparts in States and took their opinion on the opening of schools in the coming months, and online and digital education. "She discussed with State education secretaries about the pre-

paredness for the opening of schools, and what kind of arrangements will be made by the administration for the health and safety of students, and the hygiene measures in schools," Ministry sources said. Karwal earlier this month indicated that the pandemic has put the focus on the quality of digital education.

A senior HRD Ministry official said the States education secretaries have updated the HRD Ministry about the opening of schools and informed that everything will depend on the situation of Covid -19 pandemic in the State during the coming days.

"Process for opening of schools has begun but it takes more than two months to open schools, depending on Covid-19 pandemic situation," said the official.

Earlier in the day, the HRD Minister tweeted, "I have directed Anita Karwal, the Secretary of School Education and Literacy department, MHRD is taking a meeting of all state education secretaries to discuss health and safety of students, hygiene measures in schools and issues regarding online/digital learning in their States."

Pokhriyal directed officials to focus on online and digital education as much as possible. He cleared that no schools and colleges will open without SoP issued from Home Ministry for the opening of schools and all schools and colleges will have to follow the guidelines of Home Ministry as well as Health Ministry.

After the meeting sources said, "MHRD is taking all precautionary measures before the opening of schools and colleges, and ensuring that Covid-19 pandemic could not impact students in any part of the country."

"HRD Ministry doesn't want to take any risk regarding the health and security of students so HRD Minister has advised officials not to take any hurried decision for quick opening of schools that may spread Covid-19," he added.

As per the schedule announced last month by HRD Ministry, from July 1 to 15, there will be exams and the schools will open after the exam and thereafter all the pending entrance examinations like JEE-IIT NEET etc will be conducted.

## SC seeks reply from Centre, NDMA on plea for framing of policy to curb child trafficking

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Monday sought response from the Centre and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on a plea by an NGO seeking framing of a policy to prevent child trafficking which has allegedly seen a sudden rise during the Covid-19 lockdown.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde, hearing the PIL filed by the NGO — 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan', run by Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi — issued notices to the NDMA, Ministries of Home Affairs and Labour and Empowerment and nine states.

The bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and Hrishabh Roy, took note of the submissions of senior advocate HS Phoolka on behalf of the NGO and asked him to find and suggest "some way" to ensure that children are not "exploited".

## Deve Gowda to contest RS polls from K'taka

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda has decided to contest the June 19 Rajya Sabha elections from Karnataka, and will be filing his nominations on June 9, his son and former Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy said on Monday.

He said the JD(S) patriarch made his decision following the request of Congress president Sonia Gandhi, several national leaders and party legislators, and it was not an easy task to "persuade" him to enter the Rajya Sabha. He is going to file his nominations tomorrow.

"Thanks to Sri Deve Gowda for agreeing to everyone's consensus... From the people, former Prime Minister Deve Gowda has seen success and defeat. By the people, he has acquired higher positions. It was not an easy task to persuade Deve Gowda to enter the Rajya Sabha," Kumaraswamy tweeted.

The JD(S), which has 34 seats in the A' assembly, is not in a position to win a seat in Rajya Sabha on its own and will need



support from the Congress with its surplus votes. A minimum of 45 votes are required for candidates to win. If he wins, this will be the second Rajya Sabha entry for 87-year-old Gowda, the first time being in 1996 as Prime Minister.

Gowda was defeated in Tumkur constituency by BJP's GS Basavaraj by over 13,000 votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. As joint candidate of the then ruling Congress-JD(S) coalition, Gowda had chosen to contest from Tumkur at the last minute after vacating Hassan-his home turf, to grandson Prajwal Revanna (a current MP).

Election is scheduled on June 19 to fill four Rajya Sabha seats from Karnataka repre-

sented by Rajeev Gowda and BK Hariprasad of the Congress, Prabhakar Kore of the BJP and D Kupendra Reddy of the JD(S) that will fall vacant on June 25, with their retirement. June 9 is the last date for filing nominations.

Responding to a question about Kumaraswamy's tweet that Gowda is contesting on the request of Sonia Gandhi and whether the State Congress was kept in the loop, KPCC chief DK Shivakumar said what has been discussed internally, cannot be shared outside.

Stating that the State leadership cannot interfere in the decision taken by the high command, he said, "Things have been discussed with us...

Whoever is authorised to talk on a matter, only they have to talk about it. I cannot talk on a matter related to the former PM... It is a national issue, national leadership has decided something to send a message to the country, we will abide by it."

"It is his (Kumaraswamy) greatness that he has made a reference to our leader. I will leave it to him," Shivakumar said and asserted that the State unit would abide by the national leadership's decision.

According to JD(S) sources, Gowda was not keen on contesting the Rajya Sabha polls, and there was a feeling that taking support from the Congress will make it difficult for JD(S) prospects in the old Mysuru region, where the Congress is its traditional rival, as it happened during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, which both parties fought in alliance. After the alliance faced a rout in the polls, dissidence sprung up within, which eventually led to the collapse of the Congress-JD(S) coalition Government headed by Kumaraswamy.

## Cong attacks Centre over Int'l border problem, migrants' issue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday attacked the Centre over its ineffectiveness towards the International border problem and in tackling the migrants' issue within the country during the corona pandemic lockdown. Former party chief Rahul Gandhi also took a swipe at Home Minister Amit Shah for his remarks that India is strong in protecting its borders saying everyone knows the reality of the situation at the country's borders.

Rahul has been attacking the Government and the Prime Minister on the border stand-off with China in Ladakh and has been asking the Government to come clean on the situation there.

"Everyone knows the reality of the 'borders', but the thought is good to keep one's heart happy," he said in a tweet in Hindi. Rahul Gandhi tweaked a couplet from noted Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib to take a dig at the Home Minister.

Shah had on Sunday said India's defence policy has gained global acceptance and the world agrees that after the US and Israel, if there is any other country that is able to protect its borders, it is India.

Asking the Prime Minister not to view Centre's reliance on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) as the victory of the scheme or of BJP's political adversaries," Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi said the Government should look at the scale of benefits the scheme will provide to migrants.

The Congress asked the Government to expand the scope of MGNREGA to meet the growing work demand of 8 crore migrants expected to relocate in villages in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. He said Covid-19 has demonstrated the "unmatched value of a people-centric scheme like the MGNREGA with a humbled Modi Government being constrained to commit an addi-

tional ₹40,000 crore to it."

Singhvi said the scheme was a Congress brainchild and it has proved to be the world's largest social welfare scheme and "clearly the most efficacious government scheme". He said since the PM is "compelled to fall back on a UPA scheme", it is only appropriate that the Congress provides him with additional guidance for the next steps. The Congress leader said the Government has rightly given ₹40,000 crore extra, but it must remember that the scale of the disaster of Covid-19 will require its further expansion.

With 8 crore migrants expected to relocate due to Covid-19, the Congress leader urged the Government to increase the number of guaranteed days of employment to 200 from the current 100 under the scheme. Congress president Sonia Gandhi, in an article, has also said this is not about BJP vs Congress, but MGNREGA should be used to help people of India.

## World Met lauds IMD for 'accurate prediction' of Cyclone Amphan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has lauded the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for its "accurate prediction" of Cyclone Amphan.

In a letter, dated June 2, addressed to IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra, WMO Secretary General E Manaenkova said the cyclone advisories were provided to the WMO and in particular Bangladesh which was also affected by the storm.

"The accurate prediction of the genesis, track, intensity, landfall point and time as well as associated weather like storm surge, rainfall and wind by

IMD/RSMC New Delhi with a lead period of more than three days has immensely helped in their early response and actions," the letter said. "WMO secretary general used the information from the bulletins to communicate with the UN secretary general about Amphan. Those bulletins were also well-utilised by the WMO officer in New York to daily brief the relevant entities of the United Nations at its headquarters on the status and potential impact of Cyclone Amphan," the letter added.

WMO had earlier appreciated IMD for prediction of cyclone Fani in Odisha in 2019. Amphan intensified into a super cyclonic storm. It hit the

Sunderbans and West Bengal coast as an extremely severe cyclonic storm on May 20.

The Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre for Tropical Cyclones over the North Indian Ocean is based in Delhi. Through it, the IMD provides cyclone-related information to all the related countries in the North Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal.

The services provided by the IMD have been showcased as an "excellent lesson" and best practices in tropical cyclone forecasting and warning services and response actions leading to sufficient preparedness for mitigation of losses and damages.

## Soon, e-Mulakat for jail inmates with their kin: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/RANCHI

In a reform that can bring a big cheer to prisoners and their loved ones, the Centre is considering a digital interface meeting of jail inmates with their kin, to be enabled through a Government digital portal like Common Service Centres (CSC).

After the prototype success of e-Mulakat of such a platform in Jharkhand, sources in the Ministry of Information and Technology said the same can be replicated across the States but this has to be in agreement with the Centre and States.

Jharkhand Government's recently launched e-Mulakat has enabled around 300 such meetings between the jail inmates and their relatives.

"The family member has to pay ₹30 for such facility to the CSC operator for a maximum of 15 minutes interaction. It is estimated that this service has reduced administrative and security overhead of jails by more than 60 per cent. Issues of unhealthy practices as sometimes reported from jails/prisons regarding such a meeting is now negligible," said a Jharkhand Government official.

In normal cases, the family member has to travel a long distance to go and meet the person in the jail incurring costs and inconvenience. Besides, the jail authority has to put in a lot of efforts and formalities to enable it and then there is of course the risk of items being smuggled to the jail in such physical contacts between the



After prototype success of e-Mulakat in Jharkhand, sources in the Ministry of Information and Technology said the same can be replicated across the States but this has to be in agreement with the Centre and States

Jharkhand's recently launched e-Mulakat has enabled around 300 such meetings between jail inmates and their relatives. The family member has to pay ₹30 for such facility to the CSC operator for a maximum of 15 minutes interaction

If the system of all jails is centrally integrated with CSC, it is likely that a person of one State, say Bihar, staying in Maharashtra can visit the CSC in Maharashtra and do a Video Conference with the relative housed in jail in Bihar

inmate and an outsider. But through the digital platform, first a request is sent to the concerned jail authority online and after the request is accepted the interaction is allowed.

"Today the technology is available and what is required is a push at the administrative levels. It is a fact that life of

is likely that a person of one State, say Bihar, staying in Maharashtra can visit the CSC in Maharashtra and do a Video Conference with the relative housed in jail in Bihar. "The Home Ministry needs to ask all the State governments to implement in all jails across the country. How long we will give paroles. This is the safest method and an accepted norm for both the inmates and his relatives," said the official.

Presently, the Central Government's digital arm — CSC — has presence in almost all panchayats across the country giving access and services to most government related work, issues and solutions which include banking services to even examinations, tele-law, tele-medicine, and e-pashu for animals.

# Jaish trying to blast assets: J&K DGP

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Director General of Jammu & Kashmir police Dilbagh Singh Monday said Pakistan based terror outfit, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) is planning to target vital installations in Kashmir valley using their favourite terror tool—improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to inflict heavy casualties on the security forces and minimise its own losses.

Singh said that they have inputs that Jaish operatives were fabricating more IEDs. "Both our counter-terror and counter-infiltration grid has to stay alert. We have reports that JeM terrorists working at the behest of their handlers in Pakistan are developing more IEDs. We have alerted all our forces to thwart their nefarious design," he added. Earlier, on May 28, the joint teams of security forces had intercepted a vehicle borne IED and detonated the same, preventing a repeat of Pulwama type terror strike.

Meanwhile, DGP on Monday also claimed several other terror outfits operating in Kashmir valley were facing acute shortage of weapons.

Addressing a small group of TV reporters here in the laws of the police headquarters, DGP Dilbagh Singh said, "after eliminating five Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists in Reban area of Shopian four more HM terrorists were eliminated in Pinjoora area of the same district on Monday. He said in the last two weeks, the joint teams of security forces have so far eliminated 22 terrorists, which included 6 top commanders, in nine operations.

He said, out of these 22, 18 terrorists were active across three districts of Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian and with their neutralisation the local residents are expected to have a sigh of relief.

The DGP said that during the current year so far, 88 terrorists have been neutralised in 35 operations, 40 terrorist associates who were providing a

direct support system to these terrorists were arrested. He said that 240 OGWS were also arrested for helping these terrorists by instigating law & order problems and many of them were booked under PSA.

Referring to the prevailing security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Dilbagh Singh said Pakistan is attempting to push small groups of infiltrators inside the Indian territory from different routes along the LoC and the International border.

DGP said, for the first time we have noticed that the launching pads maintained by Pakistan remained active even during winter. "They did not wind up. The first terrorist group infiltrated the Keran sector on March 31. But our alert troops killed all of them," DGP said. Responding to a question on the number of terrorists at launch pads along the Line of Control (LoC), Singh said: "There is an assessment that the number could be around 150-250 for Kashmir

region and 125-150 for Jammu region."

On the launch of new outfits like Tehreek Resistance Front (TRF), Dilbagh Singh described the consignment of 22 weapons which also resulted in shortage of weapons. He said, now their border operatives are under pressure to ferry consignments of weapons from across the border. DGP said, "we have even received inputs that attempts were made to utilise the services of Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's) for airdropping of weapons but on ground zero we have not received any confirmed reports where we can say categorically that UAV's were used for airdropping of weapons."

DGP also confirmed ground reports that a group of infiltrators had managed to infiltrate via Nowshera sector in Rajouri and in the past even another group had managed to infiltrate via International border before reaching Kashmir via road link.

different terror outfits.

DGP claimed, in a joint operation, police teams from Handwara, Kupwara and Sopore busted the hideout and recovered the consignment of 22 weapons which also resulted in shortage of weapons. He said, now their border operatives are under pressure to ferry consignments of weapons from across the border. DGP said, "we have even received inputs that attempts were made to utilise the services of Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's) for airdropping of weapons but on ground zero we have not received any confirmed reports where we can say categorically that UAV's were used for airdropping of weapons."

DGP also confirmed ground reports that a group of infiltrators had managed to infiltrate via Nowshera sector in Rajouri and in the past even another group had managed to infiltrate via International border before reaching Kashmir via road link.

# Ram temple work to begin on June 10

**Ayodhya:** The work on the much-awaited Ram temple in Ayodhya will begin from Wednesday after an elaborate 'Rudra Abhishek' ceremony. The ceremony will be attended by a limited number of persons and will be held at the Kuber Tila temple.



In view of the corona crisis, plans to hold a grand "bhumi puja" ceremony has been put off for now. Mahant Kamal Nayan Das, spokesperson of Mahant Nriya Gopal Das, president of the Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, said that the temple construction work would begin after 'Rudra Abhishek' on June 10. "We will be following the tradition of Lord Rama by offering prayers first to Lord Shiva," he said.

Triloki Nath Pandey, 'best friend' of Ram Lalla, said that there is an ancient temple of Lord Shiva on the Kuber Tila.

The prayers would be held at the same temple at 8 a.m. on June 10.

He said that the special prayers would be performed by Mahant Kamal Nayan Das along with other priests on behalf of Ram Mandir Trust president. The ceremony would last about two hours, he added.

Meanwhile, devotees will finally be able to offer prayers to Lord Ram as the temporary

temple at the Ram Janambhoomi will open on Monday after a gap of 77 days.

The temple will be open for eight hours, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., then from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The devotees will have to wear masks and maintain social distancing. Only five persons will be allowed to enter the premises at a time and the Covid-19 protocols will be followed.

# Kashmiri Pandit sarpanch gunned down by terrorists

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In yet another 'horrific act of terror', an unarmed Kashmiri Pandit sarpanch was gunned down by the 'unidentified' terrorists near his house in South Kashmir district of Anantnag late Monday evening.

The deceased public representative has been identified by the police as 38-year-old Ajay Pandita (Bharti), Sarpanch of Lokbawan, Larkipora in Anantnag.

He was an active political worker in the area and was elected as Sarpanch last year after defeating a BJP candidate in the Panchayat polls. According to local reports, Ajay Bharti was demanding

security cover for the last couple of months but his requests were ignored.

His family members reacted angrily outside the hospital premises after learning news of his death. Feeling unsafe, they shouted slogans demanding immediate protection from the Government.

Several activists belonging to the Kashmiri Pandit community reacted angrily on various social media platforms and raised serious concerns over security of minority population in Kashmir valley. They also condemned the targeted killing of a Kashmiri Pandit public representative in cold blood.

Police spokesman in a statement said, "at about 6.00

p.m. Anantnag police received information about a terror crime incident in Lokbawan area of Anantnag, where terrorists had fired on a Congress Sarpanch". Police spokesman said, "the deceased was identified as Ajay Pandita (congress Sarpanch) son of Om Kar Nath resident of Lukbawan Anantnag. He was shot at by the terrorists near his house".

The injured, with grievous injuries was shifted to nearby hospital for treatment where he succumbed to his injuries. A case has been registered under the relevant sections of law and investigations have been initiated to ascertain the motive behind the killing of a public representative.

# Can't hold rallies like BJP due to lack of funds: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Inadequacy of superfluous cash comes in the way of Trinamool Congress organising a BJP-like mega virtual rally, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Monday.

"There is a difference between the BJP and us. We are not the same when it comes to financial capabilities. So it will not be possible for us to spend so much of money for organising a virtual rally like the BJP," Banerjee said when asked to comment on why she too was not holding a virtual rally like Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The Union Home Minister's June 9 Bengal rally -- similar to the one held for Bihar -- has an expected target of about two lakh attendees

## SHAH'S VIRTUAL BENGAL RALLY TODAY

and about 150 senior leaders. Shah's rally will be live-streamed on BJP's official YouTube, Facebook and Twitter pages on the 9th. State party president Dilip Ghosh earlier said that he would send recorded video messages appealing to the people to join the rally virtually to make it a success.

Speaking to the media persons the Chief Minister who on Monday announced the extension of a relaxed lockdown till June 30 said "they are spending crores of rupees for holding such rallies which we cannot afford at this point of time... However we have been holding video-conferences of party workers and leaders involving 20-25 people."

While Banerjee's statement on the issue was guarded her party MP from Krishnagar Mahua Moitra spoke a different language.

Tweeting on the Bihar rally she asked whether the topics like Ram Temple, CAA and Triple Talaq which were raised by Shah in the Bihar rally had been able to improve the condition of lakhs of migrant workers of that State.

"Bihar Virtual Jansabha by Mr. Shah has him focus on Ram Mandir, Art 370, Triple Talaq & CAA" but "has his survey team asked 10 lakh migrants who have returned to Bihar if ANY of these issues helped them during lockdown plight and arduous journey

home?" Moitra said.

She also confronted Shah on his claims that the Bihar rally had nothing to do with the coming State elections in that state saying if Bihar rally was not connected to the State elections there then surgical strike too had nothing to do with the general polls.

Meanwhile the Chief Minister while introducing further relaxations on unlocking 1.0 said the temples and wedding ceremonies could now host 25 people.

Earlier only ten people could attend such places. Extending the lockdown for the remaining sectors --- particularly cinema halls, schools and colleges --- Banerjee said decision regarding such places would be taken after June 30.

# 198 new cases take J&K's tally to 4,285

PNS ■ JAMMU

The death toll due to Covid -19 Monday went up to 45 in Jammu & Kashmir after four more patients died in Srinagar while 198 fresh cases were detected taking the total tally of coronavirus cases to 4,285 and active cases to 2,916.

On ground zero, the situation is worrisome as several health institutions are struggling to cope up with the rush of patients especially in Kashmir valley.

A cursory look at the official figures tabulated by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir clearly suggests out of 3,363 coronavirus cases, only 774 are returnees while 2,589 cases are local residents of Kashmir valley.

Shopian district with only 20 returnees has so far recorded 401 coronavirus positive cases while Baramulla district has recorded 54 positive cases of returnees and 428 local residents.

According to health experts, it is a clear indication that community spread has already started in pockets of Kashmir.

Sharing his assessment over the constant rise in the number of positive cases in Kashmir valley, Dr. A.G. Ahangar, director of the super specialty Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Sunday said that community spread of Covid -19 has already started in Kashmir.

Dr. Ahangar said, "Kashmir is facing community spread of Covid -19. This is a reality and we must accept it and learn to live with it".

Dr. Ahangar said there has been a large spike in positive cases indicating obviously that more and more people are getting exposed to the virus.

# Bangladeshi influx to Kerala continues during pandemic

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The issue of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh has been haunting Kerala and Tamil Nadu for quite some time and the coronavirus season has brought out startling revelations about the ever-increasing population of migrant workers who have crossed over to India illegally from the eastern borders.

The Pioneer came across a six-member Bangladeshi family who have settled in a colony in Ernakulam district's Cherai, a coastal village. Mohammed Zuhail and Mohammed Ruhail with their families reached Ernakulam from their native place Khulna district in Bangladesh via West Bengal. They do not have any authorised papers that entitle them to travel in India. But they managed 'to reach' Ernakulam where they are employed as

helpers and managed to get Rs 800 per day.

"Why you are targeting us? There are hundreds of people like us who have reached here and spread out in the district. Please do not make life difficult for us," said Zuhail when asked about how they managed to reach Ernakulam.

Zuhail is accompanied by his wife, two children and brother. There were 15 members in the team and some of them have dissipated into the Ernakulam population to do mean jobs for survival.

It may be remembered that many top intelligence officials in Kerala had expressed concern over the uncontrolled influx of Bangladeshis into Kerala who enter the country illegally through the open borders along the eastern sector. Zuhail hinted that they got help from the Indian side to make it to Kerala.

# 1,562 more test +ve in TN

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

With 1,562 persons testing positive for covid-19 on Monday, the number of active coronavirus afflicted patients in Tamil Nadu reached 15,413. According to a press release issued by the Health Department on Monday, till date the State has tested 33,229 persons. The day also saw 528 persons cured of the pandemic leaving hospitals for their homes taking the number of patients who were cured till date to 17,527.

But the death toll is a blot on the Tamil Nadu statistics as 17 persons succumbed to the pandemic on Monday and the total fatalities in the State stood at 286. Out of the 17 who breathed their last on Monday, nine were senior citizens, seven were in the age group of 40 to 58 while one person was 22 years of age.

The press release further stated that a total of 5.8 lakh

persons were tested for the disease till date. Chennai tested positive for 1,149 covid-19 patients and this took the total number of cases in the Metro to 23,298. The interesting news from the districts of Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur (all neighbouring Chennai) is that the number of persons tested positive for the pandemic has come down, much to the relief of the officials.

While Chengalpattu, housing some of the major industrial parks in the State, tested 134 positive cases, Kancheepuram tested just 18 cases. Thiruvallur which has been closely behind Chennai in the number of patients tested 57 cases and the number of active cases came down to 1386.

Meanwhile the demand to postpone the Class 10 public

examination grew louder on Monday. M K Stalin, president, DMK, asked the Government of Tamil Nadu not to play with the lives of children by conducting the public examination at this juncture.

Dr Ramdoss, founder of the PMK, an ally of the ruling AIADMK came out in the open questioning the government's move to go ahead with the examination scheduled from June 15 as there was no let up in the spread of coronavirus cases. Madras High Court will hear the State Government on June 11 in a public interest litigation which questioned the propriety of holding the public examination at the time of a pandemic. The petitioners said that the intransigence of the government in going ahead with the public examination would put the lives of nine children under threat.

# 91 new cases in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

A total of 91 persons tested positive for covid-19 in Kerala on Monday, according to a press release issued by the State Health Department. This includes 73 expatriates who returned to the State following the commencement of the Vande Bharat Mission flights from West Asian countries.

The last three days has seen Kerala testing more than 100 cases each day and Monday's figures have brought some relief to the health department of the State which by a special order had banned the Ayurvedic and other streams of Indian medicine from attending to covid-19 cases.

The day also saw two health workers in Thrissur district getting infected with the disease. A 41-year old male who was under treatment in a Thrissur hospital for coronavirus succumbed on Monday noon taking the total number

of deaths in the State to 16. The victim had co-morbid issues like kidney problems and breathlessness. He was under dialysis for some time.

The release said that 1,174 persons were undergoing treatment in various hospitals across the State for Covid-19 pandemic.

The number of hotspots in Kerala reached 150 on Monday with six more places joining the list following detection of coronavirus cases.

The State health department has till date tested 1.13 lakh samples while 1.97 lakh persons are under observation across Kerala. Meanwhile Government offices and other establishments were reopened on Monday as part of withdrawing the lockdown in operation. Public transport has been restored with strict guidelines and regulations. But private buses across the State were seen plying with capacity crowd throwing all guidelines to the winds.

# ED raids Cox & Kings Group 5 premises in Yes Bank fraud case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday conducted searches at five premises of promoters, directors, CFO and auditor of Cox & Kings Group (CKG) in Mumbai in a money laundering case in connection with ₹3,642 crore Yes Bank fraud probe.

The searches were conducted at the premises of Ajay Aji Peter, Pesi Patel, Abhishek Goenka, Anil Khandelwal and Naresh Jain Promoter/Directors/CFO/auditor of Cox & Kings Group in Mumbai under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the ED said.

The outstanding loans to the tune of ₹3,642 crore of Cox & Kings Group companies include ₹563 crors against Cox & Kings Ltd., India, ₹1,012 crore of Ezeego One Travel & Tours Ltd., India, ₹422 crore of Cox & Kings Financial Services Ltd., India, ₹1,152 crore of Prometheon Enterprise Ltd, UK and ₹493 crore of MALVERN Travel Ltd., UK.

The ED had recorded a money laundering case against Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor and Others on March 7 this year under PMLA, on the basis of an FIR registered by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) under IPC Sections relating to criminal conspiracy and cheating besides the provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act.

In the CBI FIR, it was alleged that during April to June, 2018, Yes Bank Limited had invested ₹3,700 crores in the short term debentures of Dewan Housing Finance

Corporation Ltd (DHFL).

Simultaneously, Kapil Wadhawan, MD of DHFL paid a kickback of ₹ 600 crores to Rana Kapoor and his family members in the garb of loan given by DHFL to DOIT Urban Ventures (India) Pvt. Ltd (Rana Kapoor Group Company). In addition to the above, Yes Bank Ltd. had also sanctioned a loan of ₹750 Crore to one of the RKW Developers Group company beneficially owned by Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and their family members. This loan of ₹750 crore was siphoned off by Kapil Wadhawan and Dheeraj Wadhawan through their shell companies and it was never used for the declared purpose.

"Investigation conducted under PMLA revealed the role of Rana Kapoor in money laundering and therefore he was arrested by ED on March 8 and he is in judicial custody now. During investigation, irregularities were also noticed in relation to the loan sanctioned to Cox & Kings Group which had created multiple layer of onshore and offshore subsidiary across the globe through which the monies were siphoned off. A formal complaint in this regard was filed on 18.03.2020 by Yes Bank," the ED said in a statement.

Malvern Travel Limited, UK (an entity of CKG) was having outstanding of Rs 493 crores which submitted the forged bank statement of RBS Bank, UK, State Bank of India, UK and forged end use certificates of BDO LLP ( Statutory Auditor of the UK based Entity) to avail the said loan from Yes Bank, the agency said.

# Pune's DIAT develops Nano-tech based disinfectant spray to combat virus

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a development that can come in handy in combating Covid-19, Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT), a Pune-based "deemed to be" University has developed a Nano-technology based disinfectant spray to disinfect all types of surfaces.

Named "Ananya", the disinfectant spray can be used by anyone -- from a common man to a healthcare worker and from individuals to people on a mass-scale.

This spray can be used on masks, PPEs, hospital linens and also on contaminated surfaces like medical instruments, elevator buttons, door knobs, corridors and rooms etc.

"This nano-technology assisted formulation will not only stop the corona virus from entering a human body, but it will also kill the virus when the virus comes in contact with this formulation layer on masks, PPE etc," a Pune-based defence ministry official said. According to the official, this is a water based spray and will be effective for more than 24 hours. This formulation adheres very effectively to fabric, plastic and metallic objects, and its toxicity to humans is negligible.

# Maha: 109 die, 2,553 test +ve

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

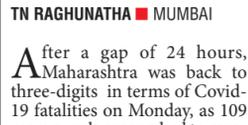
After a gap of 24 hours, Maharashtra was back to three-digits in terms of Covid-19 fatalities on Monday, as 109 more people succumbed to coronavirus and 2,553 others tested positive for the pandemic in various parts of the state.

With fresh deaths and infections, the total number of deaths mounted to 3,169 and the total number of infected cases rose to 88,528 in the State.

Taking into consideration 3,169 total deaths and 40,975 patients discharged from various hospitals ever since the outbreak of pandemic in the state, the state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" in the state at 44,374.

Of the deaths reported on Monday, Mumbai accounted for 64 deaths, while there were eight deaths in Aurangabad, seven deaths in Pune, six deaths each in Jalgaon and Solapur, four deaths in Dhule, three deaths in Ratnagiri two deaths each in Kalyan-Dombivli and Nashik and one death each in Uthmanagar, Vasai-Virar, Bhilwandi, Thane, Ahmednagar, Jalna and Nanded.

There have been a total of 1389 deaths in Maharashtra during the previous 14 days. On May 26 (Tuesday) the state had



witnessed 97 deaths, while there were 105 deaths on May 27, 85 deaths on May 28, 116 deaths on May 29 and 99 deaths on May 30, 89 deaths on May 31, 76 on June 1, 103 on June 2, 122 on June 3, 123 on June 4, 139 on June 5, 120 on June 6, 91 on June 7 and 109 on June 8.

Out of the 109 people dead, 71 were men while 38 were women. Fifty nine of the deceased were aged over 60 years, 44 were from the age group 40 to 59 years and 6 were aged below 40 years. "Seventy nine out of 109 patients (72.5%) had high-risk co-morbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease," a state health bulletin said. Out of the total deaths reported on Monday, 32 deaths occurred in the last two days and the rest are from the period May 3 to June 5.

With 64 new deaths and 1311 fresh infections, the total number of deaths mounted to 1702, while the total infected cases rose to 50085. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said that there were 26345 "active cases" in the metropolis.

# Traffic snarls, long queues in Mumbai as restrictions ease

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

With anxiety writ all over their face, Mumbaiers ventured out of their homes on Monday morning to get to their workplaces after 11-long weeks, only to spend hours on end either in queues or get stranded en route because of a limited number of public buses in operation and traffic snarls in various parts of the metropolis.

As the maximum city -- long known as a city that never sleeps, virtually woke up on Monday morning after the Maharashtra Government allowed 10 per cent attendance at private offices, hundreds and thousands left their homes early in the morning to become the first set of lot to report to their duty, only to face unprecedented hurdles en route.

With the suburban trains, called the city's lifeline, and the Metro services still not having resumed operations, Mumbaiers -- hailed often for their quintessential resilience -- had to depend on road transportation, a thing that they loathe during the normal times.

As early as at 7 am, there

were serpentine queues of private vehicles at the two entry points to the city -- Mulund toll naka on the north-eastern side and Dahisar toll post on the northern side. Before long, there were major traffic snarls along the Eastern Express Highway, Western Express Highway, Eastern Freeway and other main roads that lead up to the downtown south Mumbai where a majority of offices are located, with vehicles virtually crawling.

Even the people working at Bandra-Kurla Complex, Andheri and Goregaon had a horrid time reaching their work stations. Not unexpectedly, the attendance was relatively lower at private offices than the mandated 10 per cent because of lack of adequate transportation facilities -- coupled with chaos triggered by long-winding queues at bus stops and massive traffic snarls en route to offices.

With State transport and BEST buses reserved for them, the state government employees made it larger number to Mantralaya (the state secretariat) than the employees at the private offices.

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Shah's Bihar pitch

Considering Nitish has lost face over the migrant crisis, the BJP launches e-rally despite criticism on political opportunism



Much as he might defend his virtual rally for partymen in Bihar as an encouragement to the Corona warriors among them and an expression of concern for migrants, the inescapable fact is that Home Minister and BJP supremo Amit Shah has not lost time in sounding the bugle in the poll-bound State. Had the BJP Government been really concerned about migrants, then it would have provisioned for them in its lockdown strategies and not been reactive in sending them back when the reverse exodus caught everybody off guard. Or at least ensured direct cash transfers to them instead of simply eulogising them as "builders of India." So the e-rally looks like saving the party's political stock value, considering that there has been some erosion of its alliance partner and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has upset the poor with his initial reluctance to take the returnees back. Knowing the slippage could cost the BJP dearly and in the absence of a trustworthy local face from among its own so close to the November elections, Shah's move seems interventionist lest there be a further slide. Aware that he would attract charges of political opportunism in the middle of a mismanaged pandemic, Shah still chose to be the counterweight to an angry Opposition in the State, which has been playing up the plight of migrants and the insensitivity of the ruling regime towards them. Both stranded migrants and students from Bihar, so far a large part of Nitish's electorate, were taken aback by his stance of delaying their return. In fact, migrants compared his non-action to the swift rehabilitation efforts of his Uttar Pradesh counterpart, Yogi Adityanath, somebody he had blamed for encouraging the exodus in the first place. True, Bihar has a pathetic health infrastructure and the returnees have led to the COVID spiral in the State but by disowning responsibilities for the sons of the soil, Nitish attracted widespread criticism while clouding his image of being a powerful administrator. That had been taking a beating for a while, particularly after the Muzaffarpur shelter abuse case. But for the BJP, the warning bells came last week when Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) chief Chirag Paswan said the BJP might "want to have a change of mind" about the Chief Minister's face. Which is why Shah stepped in to reaffirm faith in Nitish being the face of the coalition to avoid further confusion.

So far, Nitish has been able to convert every crisis into an opportunity but post the exit of trusted aides Prashant Kishor and Pavan Varma, who contributed to his success in the 2015 Assembly elections, he has not quite been able to get a grip on crises. His own ideological clash with the BJP's controversial Citizenship Amendment Act and his categorical stand on the National Population Register (NPR) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) have been destabilising for him as well. But even as a shrewd politician he is known to be, Nitish looks extremely compromised by circumstance, unable to snap his symbiotic link with the BJP so closer to the State polls, and being forced to spell out his views on citizenship of minorities. With Kishor gone, he seems less and less a man of his own conviction and more like the BJP's puppet. And at a time when all other Chief Ministers are crafting their future on the success of their respective COVID management strategies, Nitish has clearly fallen behind. The Muslim and Yadav vote pie consolidates around Lalu Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD). But Nitish's voter base is still substantial on paper, comprising the numerically significant extremely backward castes (EBCs), which account for 30 per cent of his votes, the Mahadalits who account for 15 per cent, women, whom he won over with his landmark 2016 decision to impose prohibition in the state and a sizeable number of youths too. These easily comprise 45 per cent of voters in Bihar. But now some of his own supporters are against him for mishandling the issue of home-bound migrants. It is precisely for this reason that Shah moved in, even highlighting the persona of Narendra Modi. So the going for the BJP and Nitish will, henceforth, be uneasy. The BJP has been breathing heavy on Nitish, particularly after the JD(U)'s dismal solo performance in the Jharkhand Assembly polls. Although they had agreed to a 1:1 seat-sharing formula in principle, the BJP has the upper hand vis-à-vis him in the time of the pandemic. Nitish has burnt bridges with other federal front leaders to such an extent that he has no other option but to be with the BJP. Shah's rally means that the BJP, like in Maharashtra, may just be looking to harbour "first party" ambitions in the next round. For this November, it will be Nitish. If he fails, given the anger over the Patna floods, the Muzaffarpur encephalitis deaths, the accumulation of prohibition-related cases in courts and now the migrants, the BJP can justify considering a change. If the combine wins, the BJP will keep harping on the Modi brand as being the real magic. Either way, Shah has waged the war of perception.

## Who is to blame?

The Govt may insist there are beds but patients run from pillar to post to get themselves admitted. That, too, at a high price



It is the same old story that repeats itself in India, each time there is a crisis. And that is profiteering by unscrupulous elements. When the pandemic began, we witnessed a shortage and black marketeering of hand sanitisers, masks and liquid hand soaps. Thankfully this was brought under control by the authorities. Now, with the opening up of the economy and the surge in Coronavirus cases, we are facing a shortage of hospital beds, despite the Centre and State Governments assuring the citizens repeatedly that there are enough beds and that people need not worry or panic. If the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Union Health Ministry are to be believed, then only five to 6.3 per cent of patients affected by COVID-19 require hospitalisation. Out of these, about 2.94 per cent needed oxygen support, three per cent intensive care units and 0.45 per cent ventilator support. As on June 6, Delhi had 27,654 active cases and if we take the upper limit of patients needing beds, then the capital should need around 1,700 beds out of the 5,000 beds that the city Government says it has. Then why is there such a fight for beds in hospitals in Delhi and NCR? Is this because they are being kept for VIPs or those who can afford to pay premium prices? Or is it that the number of patients needing hospitalisation that is being bandied about by the ICMR and Union Health Ministry is flawed? A bit of both really. While the ICMR's assessment disputes State figures, which show that about 30 per cent patients need hospitalisation, private hospitals are known to be insisting on full down payment first before admission for either evaluation or critical care. Besides, each private facility has its own rate card, forcing patients to seek more affordable Government facilities.

Everyone knows that private hospitals are none too kind to patients and have no qualms in handing them big fat bills or turning away the poor. They have also been known to charge multiple patients for the same PPE that is worn by a doctor to check numerous people and been insisting on implementing their own testing protocols rather than that of Government approved laboratories. Now, the Delhi Government, which has been inundated with complaints of Corona patients not getting beds, has instructed hospitals to discharge all mild and asymptomatic patients and not admit such cases in the future. This is in keeping with the practice being followed by most nations. As we go into the next few months, with the expected surge in COVID-19 cases, one only hopes that the Centre, States and the healthcare stakeholders get their act together and see to it that there are no unnecessary casualties for lack of beds which otherwise are said to be lying vacant. For once, one hopes that it will be people first, not politics, pull or profits.

# A long-drawn war

COVID is a peculiar contagion; doctors must admit they don't understand it. What is needed is not costly vaccine but a new hydroxychloroquine-type of tablet. Ayurveda needs space too



SANDHYA JAIN

The grim impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, lockdown and cyclones Amphan and Nisarg that lashed both coasts have cast a shadow over the first year of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's second term. Still, it was an eventful year, beginning with the defanging of Article 370, scrapping of Article 35(A) and the bifurcation of the State of Jammu & Kashmir into two Union Territories viz, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Coupled with the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), this ended the nationality crisis of thousands of Hindus who had fled East and West Pakistan during and after Partition and gave justice to others who were denied rights despite living in the State for decades.

Islamabad protested the changed status quo in Jammu & Kashmir, though the international community largely accepted the change. The current face-off with China in Ladakh is more complicated: Is it an attempt to stave off a challenge to President Xi Jinping whose stewardship of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has caused dangerous distortions in China's economy, aggravated by Coronavirus, rendering millions of Chinese jobless? Though most Western industries have not exited China, there is a steep decline in demand for goods. One will have to see how events unfold in the mainland.

Within India, the virus has caused immense suffering. As it was alien and medical opinion confused, lockdown seemed a sensible precaution. But the virus defied three successive lockdowns and the summer heat that was supposed to kill it, and spread gleefully with every relaxation of lockdown, beginning with the opening of liquor shops in cities. Despite assertions that the virus is only a flu (that causes common cold), it is lethal enough to kill even in the sixth month of its arrival in India.

What began as an "elite" disease in most world capitals has become pervasive and the mode of transmission remains unclear. There was no Coronavirus in the urban clusters where migrant labour lived at the beginning of the lockdown. The Delhi-based labour that rushed to Anand Vihar bus terminal on March 28 did not have a single case of Coronavirus. The labour class in cities grew restive with no security of job or salary under extended



lockdowns; the Prime Minister's appeal to employers not to sack employees failed in the absence of financial support. Perhaps those who paid salaries could have been offered 100 per cent tax rebate during the lockdown period; loss to the exchequer would be miniscule.

By May, restive labourers demanded to return to their villages as they could not pay the rent. The Railway Ministry messed up by not running free trains. Asking State Governments to pay 15 per cent of the fare was graceless and logistically unsound; the Supreme Court noted the lack of food and water in the trains. Some trains going east ended up in south India; no heads have rolled till date. The airlines were problematic. Over 600 planes were cancelled on the first day on grounds that States refused to accept the flights. But there was no intimation to the passengers who were sent back from the Delhi airport after travelling from other States; no apology either.

The surge in Coronavirus cases began in the past few weeks when the lockdown eased and travel was allowed. How did people get infected during the lockdown and

allegedly take the infection to their villages? This is a very peculiar contagion; doctors must admit they do not fully understand it. Perhaps what we need is not a costly vaccine (holy grail of big pharma) but a new hydroxychloroquine-type of tablet. Ayurveda needs space in the COVID war.

Meanwhile, there is disquiet in Jammu province that domination by Kashmir province may continue in the new Union Territory if delimitation of constituencies is based on Census 2011, rather than Census 2021, which has been notified. Former Director Planning, J&K Government, HC Katoch, argues that the first Census was conducted in 1941; second in 1961. He has questioned the integrity of the 1961 figures.

In 1941, the population of Kashmir was 46.34 per cent (17.29 lakh) and Jammu 53.66 per cent (20.01 lakh). The area of Jammu & Kashmir was 2.22 lakh sq km, of which Pakistan gave China 54 per cent illegally (27 per cent of Kashmir and 18 per cent of Jammu). Thus, Kashmir lost a larger share of the population than Jammu. Katoch argues that it was widely believed that Census 1961 was manipulated to show high-

er population for Kashmir, a practice continued by the Kashmir-dominated bureaucracy in Census 1981 (none in 1971 due to war; none in 1991 due to unrest) and 2011. Effectively, Census 1961 was the base for all Census operations. In 1991, Kashmiri Hindus fled and the Jammu population increased in almost equal numbers.

Katoch argues between 1981 and 1991, population growth in absolute figures was higher in Jammu, while in 1991-2001, population of Srinagar started touching Jammu figures. This shows that population in Srinagar was shown comparatively higher even after the exodus of over three lakh Hindus.

However, besides the exodus, Kashmir's population growth rate should have been affected by militancy-related deaths of marriageable age population. Instead, there is a growth spurt in most militancy-affected districts of Kupwara, Baramulla and Srinagar. For instance, Kupwara population rose from 26.34 per cent to 27.51 per cent between 1961 and 1991 and jumped to 38.59 per cent in 1991-2001. Yet in the Jammu region, the population growth fell. Unless recti-

fied, this will deprive Jammu of its legitimate share of seats vis-à-vis Kashmir.

Another issue pertains to the new rules for recruitment of Class-IV employees. While the provision that any person can apply in any district of Jammu & Kashmir seems fair, Jammuites fear that this could trigger a demographic invasion of Jammu by "waves of Kashmiri settlements." Given the province's long fight against "land jihad" by illegal settlers in forest lands, Jammuites favour the old recruitment system under which Class-IV district and divisional level vacancies were made from among candidates from the respective districts or divisions. They point out that while Kashmiris can get jobs, buy or rent property, settle and live peacefully in any district of Jammu, candidates from Jammu lack similar freedom. Hence, Jammu jobs should be reserved for Jammu only. These are valid anxieties. Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah invested much political capital on the full integration of Jammu & Kashmir with the rest of India; they should not allow it to be frittered away.

(The author is a senior journalist. Views are personal)

## SOUNDBITE

Kohli has dominated over every world-class bowling attack in the world. He has managed to find a way to counter some of the best bowlers in the modern-day cricket.

New Zealand captain —Kane Williamson



You need to continue doing what you feel is right and then after few years, you need to reinvent yourself, craft and keep moving on.

Actor —Anupam Kher



One consensus (of the talks) is that the two sides need to make sure that the differences do not escalate into disputes. Both will work to maintain peace along the border.

Chinese official —Hua Chunying



No other leader got the same respect in the Congress as you (Scindia) did. It won't happen now because the RSS calls the shots in the BJP and you have criticised it in the past.

Congress leader —Digvijaya Singh



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Lack of an alternative?

Sir — It is appalling that India now ranks among the five worst-affected nations by Coronavirus. During the first lockdown, the country managed to check the spread of the virus well. It received world acclamation for keeping the disease under control. Even during the second lockdown, though we saw a rise in the number of cases, the situation was not that bad.

It was with the easing of lockdown norms that cases saw a massive surge. Now, the fifth lockdown is as good as no lockdown. Restrictions now are only symbolic. The spurt in the cases is a sequel to the movement of migrant workers. And now, reverse migration is happening. Places of worship, too, have opened.

Movement of people is set to increase manifold. The need to maintain social distance has gone for a toss. People are left with no alternative but to reconcile to the saying, "What cannot be cured must be endured," until a vaccine/cure is found.

KV Seetharamaiah  
Hassan

### Local issues need local solutions

As long as we do not have a potent cure to the Coronavirus, there is bound to be a spike in the number of infections. The process of declaring "containment zones" is the administration's response vis-à-vis the seriousness of the situation to arrest the spread of the virus. But should an entire region be put under lockdown every time such procedures are followed? For a country struggling to come out of the blemishes of a prolonged nationwide lockdown, another forced interment of its populace and the order to shut down all business and commercial activities in a particular region will add to the woes. This is not to say that the Government must endanger the lives of the citizens by concentrating only on reviving the economy, overlooking the risks of exposing them to the hazards of the deadly virus. Now, restaurants and other establishments, including places of worship, have opened. However, it remains to be seen as to how steadfastly the standard operating procedures, issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, will be adhered to once public movement resumes.

Moreover, considering local conditions, it is necessary for State Governments to mandate their own set of rules and guidelines as we pass the "unlock"

### Open with care

Sir — Amid a spike in Coronavirus cases, hotels, shopping malls and places of worship have resumed operations. All such sectors must open up with

care. It will be difficult for the hospitality sector to get back to normalcy as it struggles to get back customer confidence. Even as the Federation of Hotel & Restaurants Association of India has issued guidelines, much will

depend on the safeguards put in place. Fewer guests and slower service will leave businesses reliant on home deliveries, which may need safety assurances.

Himanshu  
Via email



Pachu Menon  
Margao

### Take stock of situation

Sir — India overtook Spain to become the country with the fifth highest confirmed COVID-19 infections. According to a WHO expert, the virus has not exploded in India but the risk of it happening remains. High COVID Test Positivity Rates (TPR) and rising deaths indicate that India isn't seeing the full picture. We need to increase testing. At present, only those extremely sick are being tested and a large section of the population could be missing out. While the national average TPR is below 10 per cent and the national case fatality rate is five per million, areas with high positive cases and fatalities such as Delhi, Ahmedabad and Mumbai show very high TPR and case fatality rate. Given that there are no chances of the numbers going down, a coordinated and comprehensive governmental intervention with a focus on strict implementation of social distancing can save the situation.

Venu GS  
Kollam

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## FIRST COLUMN

## Women in the big boys' club

After their success in controlling the pandemic in countries led by them, the UN wants more women leaders on the talks table to fight the second wave



ARCHANA DATTA

The pandemic has undoubtedly put the global leadership to the test. Nevertheless, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has appreciated some countries for demonstrating that "this virus can be suppressed and controlled." Among them, quite a few are women-led nations. One such State, Taiwan, is located precariously close to the country of origin of the Coronavirus, yet it could restrict the number of cases to 441 and casualties to seven. Taiwan's first woman President, Tsai Ing-Wen, keeping the SARS experience in mind, quickly insulated the country and instituted large-scale health screenings with the detection of the first case in the island nation. An academic-turned-politician, President Tsai, with an epidemiologist as Vice-President, steered through the crisis with an "extraordinary calmness and determination." Not far off in New Zealand, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declared a few weeks back that "the newly-reported infections have reduced to single digits." Jacinda has already earned applause for her sensitive handling of the Christ Church terror attacks. In the Corona-crisis her "hard work, earnestness in reaching out to the people, empathetic direct communication and openness to diverse views..." received many plaudits. She enforced "the strictest lockdown", yet, when cautioned by experts about its "unintended consequences" she promptly allowed limited gatherings.

Angela Merkel, the German Chancellor, a doctorate in quantum chemistry, has been described during the pandemic as her country's "scientist in chief." She handled the outbreak with her "characteristic rationality, coupled with an uncharacteristic sentimentality." Merkel was the political leader, "who executed, celebrated and personified evidence-based thinking" which helped Germany achieve a "relatively successful battle against COVID-19" with a lesser mortality rate than many of its European neighbours. There are many more such women leaders who have been on top of things. Premier Katrin Jakobsdóttir created a world record by testing more than 13 per cent of the population of Iceland while Finnish Premier Sanna Marin declared a state of emergency, a first for the country. The Norwegian Premier, Erna Solberg, administered the "most far-reaching measures ever experienced in peacetime", while the Danish Prime Minister, Mette Frederiksen, was the first in Europe to close the borders. Back home, Kerala's Health Minister KK Shailaja, a physics teacher-turned-politician, who was acknowledged for her effective interventions in the Nipah outbreak earlier, was instrumental in evolving a "unique COVID-19 virus control protocol", which the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) labelled, "as one of the best."

Public health experts, epidemiologists, virologists, social scientists *et al* extolled these leaders for "prompt and decisive actions and making the best use of scientific interventions." They have been applauded for their foresight, grit, composure, inclusiveness and humility. Undoubtedly, they acted differently in trying times. A noted US scholar commented that, "Women leaders brought in a fresh change in crisis management... disrupting the traditional image of leadership..." While another US academic opined that "women's greater tendency towards participative, relational leadership... in contrast to men's top-down, autocratic leadership helped them in the current crisis." Many researchers also contended that the "21st century demands a new type of leadership... as displayed by women politicians... different from the traditional command and control approach." Professor Nisar-Ul-Haq, Department of Political Science Jamia Millia University, also asserted that "women fare better in any crisis situation, even when they suffer the most like in a war or in a health crisis... their resilience, solicitude, multi-tasking help them to cope."

Some researchers, however, attributed their relative success to the "gender-equitable ecosystem in which they operated... where qualities like empathy, compassion and collaboration in leadership are much recognised." Some others also argued that women's leadership is not a "monolith." Many like Hong Kong Executive Carrie Lam drew flak for her COVID-19 management. So did Belgium's head, for having the second-highest death rate in the world. While countries such as South Korea, Vietnam and Australia, who had done fine, are all led by men, many researchers also hold the view that each leader should be evaluated on his/her strengths and weaknesses and not on their gender.

Fair enough! But what is the existing global scenario? Women in political space are a minuscule minority, with less than seven per cent as world leaders, only around 10 per cent countries, comprising just four per cent of the global population. In such a lopsided world of politics, leadership is often identified with "toxic masculinity" and "power" in negative gender stereotypes. Ravi Verma, Director of the International Center for Research on Women, Asia and member of the ICMR's COVID-19 national task force, outrightly rejecting such typecasts, posited that "women leaders in the present pandemic proved all negative stereotypes wrong by acting with conviction, remaining better informed, making firm decisions and securing people's trust."

Now, the pandemic is yet to run its full course. The UN has urged upon the nations to have "women at the table" in meeting the looming challenges of "a second spike in infections, labour shortages and social unrest." Isn't it high time that nations pay heed to the call of power-sharing?

(The writer is a retired Indian Information Service Officer and a media educator)

THE WHOLE WORLD AGREES THAT AFTER THE US AND ISRAEL IF THERE IS ANY OTHER COUNTRY THAT IS ABLE TO PROTECT ITS BORDERS, IT IS INDIA.

—UNION HOME MINISTER  
AMIT SHAH

## POINT COUNTERPOINT



EVERYONE KNOWS THE HAQEEQAT (REALITY) OF THE SEEMA (BORDER) BUT TO KEEP THE HEART HAPPY, SHAH-YAD IS A GOOD IDEA.

—CONGRESS LEADER  
RAHUL GANDHI

# Green the soil

The Centre's decision to ban 27 commonly-used pesticides in all three main categories, namely insecticides, fungicides and weedicides, is a move in the right direction



UTTAM GUPTA

The decision of the Centre to ban 27 commonly-used pesticides in all three main categories, viz. insecticides, fungicides and weedicides, in India has led to consternation among various stakeholders, particularly a certain section of the industry. To understand the issue and its implications, let us put a few facts in order. The manufacturing, import, sale, distribution and use of pesticides are regulated under the Insecticides Act (1968) with a view to prevent risk to human beings or animals and for matters connected therewith. The Registration Committee (RC) — set up under the Act — registers every pesticide after scrutinising the formula, verifying claims of efficacy and safety to human beings and animals and specifying the precautions against poisoning and any other functions. The RC is empowered to refuse registration of any pesticide if issues pertaining to safety have not been satisfactorily adhered to.

From time to time, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MoA&FW) — the nodal Ministry for regulation of pesticides — orders review of the registered pesticides with particular reference to the risk these pose to human beings, animals and the environment. Based on examination by a committee of experts, it arrives at an appropriate decision on "whether to allow their continued usage (with additional precautions, if any) or prohibit their use completely."

In 2013, an expert committee was set up to study the continued use or otherwise of a total of 66 pesticides, which are banned in two or more other countries, but continue to be registered for use in India. Based on its recommendations (the committee submitted its report on December 9, 2015), the Government banned 18 pesticides in 2018. However, it allowed continued usage of the 27 pesticides, to be reviewed after completion of recommended studies.

In a gazette notification issued on May 14, the MoA&FW issued a draft order intended to ban the manufacture, usage and storage of these 27 pesticides and sought comments or suggestions from stakeholders over 45 days. The notification says: "Sixty-six insecticides, which are banned or restricted or withdrawn in other countries but continue to be registered for domestic use in India, were reviewed by an expert committee set up by the MoA&FW. The Ministry considered recommendations of this committee and recognised that use of 27 insecticides is likely to involve risk to human beings and animals as to render it expedient or necessary to take immediate action. The pesticides to be banned include 2,4-D, acephate, atrazine, benfuracarb, butachlor, captan, carben-dazin, carbofuran, chlorpyrifos, deltamethrin, dicofol, dimethoate, dinocap, diuron, malathion, mancozeb, methimyl, monocrotophos, oxyfluorfen, pendimethalin, quinalphos, sulfosulfuron, thiodicarb, thiophante methyl, thiram, zineb and ziram."

The committee has found some of the above pesticides to be highly hazardous with potential to cause severe health effects viz. hormonal changes, neuro-toxic effects, reproductive and developmental health effects, carcinogenic effects as well as environmental impacts such as toxicity for bees. For others, adequate data needed for regulatory purpose are not available. While, arriving at the decision, the Government has also been guided by the fact that "newer" and "safer" alternatives are available for all the pesticides it intends to ban. The generic industry (a euphemism to describe manufacturers other than firms who are innovators) has taken umbrage to the ban, citing

“  
ALTERNATIVE SAFER PRODUCTS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE MARKET WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT FARMERS DON'T SUFFER. FINALLY, THE 27 PESTICIDES IN THE PROPOSED BAN LIST ARE LESS THAN 10 PER CENT OF THE CURRENT 289 PESTICIDES REGISTERED FOR USE IN INDIA. HENCE, BANNING THESE 27 IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE ANY ADVERSE IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION AND INDIA'S FOOD SECURITY. ALL THE MORE WHEN NEWER AND SAFER ALTERNATIVES ARE AVAILABLE FOR ALL OF THEM  
”



that this will chop off domestic sales — currently about ₹20,000 crore — by about 20 per cent. The export of pesticides will also take a hit of around 10 per cent on the existing ₹20,000 crore.

The manufacturers argue that farmers have been using these chemicals for a long time and have found them to be economical even as the alternatives are expensive and will lead to increase in the cost of cultivation. They have also questioned the timing of the decision. They argue that farmers have to put up with frequent locust attacks, especially of late, that have gripped agriculture in several States like Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Growers urgently need relevant pesticides like malathion whose supplies could be affected by the ban.

The arguments advanced by the industry are untenable. First, it is not as if this has come as a bolt from the blue. The Government has taken the decision only after a thorough examination and evaluation of their safety in the light of available evidence — a process that continued for seven years.

This process also involved consultations with manufacturers of the pesticides. They got full opportunity to present their case before the expert committee, including submission of studies to demonstrate their continued safety and efficacy. If they believe that these pesticides have caused no harm to humans, animals or the environment, they could have presented requisite data to substantiate their contention. But that was never done.

Now, 15 of the 27 pesticides that are proposed to be banned are considered "deemed to be registered pesticides" in the country owing to data lacunae since several years. It shows that from day one, firms who applied and got registration could not convincingly demonstrate their safety and efficacy to the regulator (courtesy, void in data). This has not been done till date which eventual-

ly drove the Centre to banning them.

Second, developments in various States (they are expected to ensure compliance with regulations on ground zero) signalled that the ban was in the making. In 2011, Kerala had banned monocrotophos, carbofuran and atrazine on grounds of public health concerns. In 2017, Maharashtra banned monocrotophos and acephate due to high incidence pesticides poisoning among cotton farmers. In 2018, Punjab said "no" to fresh licences for 2,4-D, benfuracarb, dicofol, methimyl and monocrotophos citing harm to humans and the environment.

Third, when it comes to a decision on pesticides which are hazardous, the only criteria the regulator relies on is "safety" and "efficacy." It also sees whether newer and safer alternatives are available. The decision can't be guided by any other consideration such as cost. Merely because an existing product costs less can't justify its continued use even if it is found to be unsafe. By the same logic, a new and safer product can't be debunked — simply because it costs more.

Without compromising on safety, even if one were to consider the economics of use, we need to make comparison on like-for-like basis. Here, one should not be looking only at the price but also the dose; in addition, the impact on crop yield and crop quality has also to be considered. Let us illustrate with an example.

One kilo of Acephate (this is on the list of pesticides proposed to be banned) — used for controlling cotton pests — costs around ₹550 per kg against an alternative say, Imidacloprid, a newer and safer molecule which is priced at ₹1,200 per litre. As regards dose, whereas 300 gm of Acephate is required to control pests over an acre, in the case of Imidacloprid, the requirement is less than 100 ml per acre.

The effective cost per acre for the lat-

ter thus works out to be ₹120 against ₹165 for the former. Higher crop yield and better crop quality with Imidacloprid serve as icing on the cake.

Fourth, an argument that banning will result in non-availability and affect farming operations is fallacious. The phase-out of any product takes prospective effect. In the instant case, taking 45 days for comments from stakeholders (from the date of notification i.e. May 14, 2020), the earliest the order can be enforced is July 1. That apart, normally the Government allows manufacturers to clear their supplies in the pipeline which are attuned to meet the demand.

To combat the locust attack, the very fact that the Agriculture Ministry itself is procuring malathion from none other than domestic manufacturers shows that the supply of even this pesticide (proposed to be banned) won't be a constraint for now.

Alternative safer products are available in the market which will ensure that farmers don't suffer. Finally, the 27 pesticides in the proposed ban list are less than 10 per cent of the current 289 pesticides registered for use in India. Hence, banning these 27 is unlikely to have any adverse impact on agriculture production and India's food security, all the more when newer and safer alternatives are available for all of them — as brought out in a comprehensive assessment by the expert committee.

Looking at all critical factors viz. safety, efficacy, availability, cost-benefit and so on, the Government's decision to ban 27 pesticides is apt. It will help in promoting use of newer, safer and environment-friendly crop protection solutions. It will drive companies to focus more on research and development and innovation to meet diverse needs of farmers, thereby helping them in boosting agricultural production and increasing their income.

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

# Where is our Corona management headed?

When we limit our testing, we cannot deal with an epidemic because we do not know the full extent of the disease



DR SUNIT MEDIRATTA

The number of Corona positive cases and casualties is rising on a daily basis in India ever since the Government decided to open up the economy. Now we have the dubious distinction of becoming the fifth worst-affected country in the world. We are seeing a surge of over 9,000 cases daily and the number of cases is 2,58,090 while there have been 7,207 casualties.

Experts believe that we will soon reach the number one slot because we still haven't changed our

social behaviour and hygiene habits. And the only other reason for the delay in reaching the top slot is the fact that the Government is trying to control the numbers artificially.

Mumbai and Delhi continue to be the worst-affected cities in India and we are well and truly into the community spread stage now.

The number of COVID-19 cases in Delhi has now crossed 27,654 and as expected, most Government and private hospitals have run out of beds with a long waiting list for patients to get into an ICU facility. This is quite evident from the appalling stories of families of sick patients running from one hospital to another in search of a vacant bed for treatment of their loved ones. One family even reached the doors of the High Court to secure a bed but unfortunately lost their loved one while waiting to get treatment. This has prompted the

Delhi Government to issue a directive under which no suspected patient will be denied admission and treatment by any hospital but only serious cases will be admitted to hospitals. Any mild or asymptomatic COVID-19 patient would be discharged by a hospital within 24 hours and the area district surveillance officer (DSO) would be informed about it. This has been done to free up beds for serious cases only. This is a positive step.

On June 2, the Government came up with a new App which allows people to search for vacant beds in a designated Covid treatment facility. This, too, is a good initiative. However, the App has been found wanting as the information being fed into it is out of sync with the ground reality.

Further, instead of making it easier for people to get tested and take precautions, the Government

has now set up new guidelines for COVID-19 testing. The earlier criteria were stringent enough and obviously we were not testing enough numbers. Now, the new rules forbid testing of people who are asymptomatic direct contacts of COVID-19 patients unless s/he is above 60 or has comorbidities like diabetes, hypertension or cancer.

The new guidelines are more rigid than those issued by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and are definitely not needed at a time when the city is experiencing a rampant and exponential increase in the number of COVID-19 cases.

Then on June 4, the Government decided to ban eight private labs in the city from carrying out tests for the contagion. The reason given was that the labs were not following protocols and by testing a large number of low-risk and

asymptomatic individuals, they were only making money and causing delays in issuing reports for critical patients. This makes sense, but what is puzzling is that labs in private hospitals like Gangaram and Fortis, which are among the larger private COVID-19 treatment facilities in the city, have also been barred from carrying out tests. The doctors at Gangaram Hospital involved in the treatment of Corona patients wonder if it makes any sense to ban a lab in a Covid-treatment facility.

In all, the ICMR had approved only 22 private labs in the city for Corona testing. Now eight of them have been issued notices and testing has stopped. This will further reduce testing capacity and cause further delays in issuing reports. In view of the rising cases, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has himself stated that there is a

need to ramp up testing as well as surveillance, contact tracing and containment in Delhi. Anyone who can afford it should be able to get tested by a private lab. Experts and epidemiologists have repeatedly maintained that widespread testing is the strategy for identification and containment of an outbreak. The positivity rate in Delhi has been 25.7 per cent for the last one week, the highest in the country, meaning that every fourth person tested was Corona-positive.

The rapidly rising cases have also resulted in nearly doubling of containment zones in Delhi within 12 days, from 83 on May 24 to 163 on June 5. When we limit our testing, how do we deal with an epidemic if we do not know the full extent of the disease? A study by ICMR has shown that nearly 28 per cent of asymptomatic people are positive in India. The other fallout of not test-

ing asymptomatic people is reflected in the death rates of patients undergoing planned and elective surgery. A recent study, published in the *Lancet* revealed that the mortality rate was 18.9 per cent in patients with COVID-19 undergoing elective surgery.

Doctors are appalled by the Government's decisions, which reflect a bid to artificially control the numbers in this pandemic. Many surgeons have expressed their anguish and have stated, "It does not make sense to perform an elective surgery on a patient without knowing the true extent of the risk involved."

The medical community sincerely hopes and prays for better sense to prevail in the health department. Because additional knowledge is never harmful.

(The writer is neurosurgeon at Apollo Hospital)

# Minneapolis city council votes to dismantle police

**Washington:** The police department in the US city of Minneapolis will be dismantled and rebuilt, city councilors have said, after the death in custody of George Floyd sparked nationwide protests against racism in law enforcement.

"We committed to dismantling policing as we know it in the city of Minneapolis and to rebuild with our community a new model of public safety that actually keeps our community safe," Council President Lisa Bender told CNN late Sunday.

Council Member Alondra Cano tweeted that the decision came through "a veto-proof majority of the MPLS City Council," which agreed that the police department "is not reformable and that we're going to end the current policing system."

A white Minneapolis police officer has been charged with murder in the May 25 death of George Floyd, after bystander video showed the officer's knee pinned on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes while he pleaded for his life and called for his mother.

It was the latest case of white law enforcement author-



Demonstrators take a knee for eight minutes and 46 seconds in front of the US Consulate General in Johannesburg, South Africa on Monday

ities being blamed for the death of an unarmed black person.

Floyd's death has sparked two weeks of mostly peaceful demonstrations across the country against racism in US law enforcement. Some marchers have called for the police to be defunded.

Last year, a black former Minneapolis police officer was sentenced to 12 years and six months in prison for the fatal shooting of an unarmed white Australian woman trying to report a crime.

Bender told CNN she was looking to shift police funding

toward community-based strategies, and that the city council would discuss how to replace the current police department.

"The idea of having no police department is certainly not in the short term," she added.

## Man drives at protesters in Seattle, shoots 1

**Seattle:** Authorities say a man drove a car at George Floyd protesters in Seattle Sunday night, hit a barricade then exited the vehicle brandishing a pistol.

At least one person was injured. The Seattle Fire Department said the victim was a 27-year-old male who was shot and taken to a hospital in stable condition.

Video taken by a reporter for The Seattle Times showed part of the scene in the city's Capitol Hill neighborhood, where demonstrators have gathered for days near a police precinct.

Seattle City Council members sharply criticised Mayor Jenny Durkan and Police Chief Carmen Best after police used flash bang devices and pepper spray to disperse protesters a day after Durkan and Best said they were trying to de-escalate tensions.

Authorities said rocks, bottles and explosives were thrown at officers in the city's Capitol Hill neighborhood on Saturday night. Police said via Twitter that several officers were injured by "improvised explosives."

## Family, friends prepare to pay final tribute to Floyd

**Houston:** Family and friends of George Floyd have started preparing to pay their final tribute and goodbyes to him at a funeral service here on Tuesday, weeks after the African-American was killed by a white police officer in Minneapolis, triggering widespread marches and violent protests across the US.

The 46-year-old victim, a native of Houston, was handcuffed and pinned to the ground by the white police officer who knelt on his neck as he gasped for breath. Floyd's death triggered nationwide violent protests with a section of the protesters resorting to looting and rioting across the country, leaving behind a trail of destruction.

His body arrived in Houston late on Saturday for funeral service and burial scheduled for Tuesday.

In a tweet on Sunday, Police Chief Art Acevedo confirmed that "George Floyd and his family are safely in Houston."

Floyd will be laid to rest next to his mother on Tuesday, confirmed a media representative for the Floyd family.

Biden is not expected to attend the service because of his Secret Service protection. However, he will still offer in-person condolences and will also record a video message for Floyd's funeral service, the aide said.

There will be two memorial services in Houston this week, a public viewing on Monday and an invitation-only memorial service on Tuesday.

The public viewing and private funeral will both be held at the same church, The Fountain of Praise at 13950 Hillcroft Avenue.

The public viewing is scheduled from noon to 6 pm (local time).



The casket of George Floyd arrives for a public memorial at The Fountain of Praise church in Houston on Monday

## New Zealand eliminates virus with zero active cases reported

**Wellington:** New Zealand appears to have completely eradicated the coronavirus — at least for now — after health officials said on Monday the last known infected person had recovered.

The announcement was greeted with joy around the country and means the nation of 5 million people will be among the first to welcome throngs of fans back into sports stadiums, embrace crowded concerts and remove seating restrictions from flights.

It has been 17 days since the last new case was reported, during which time an additional 40,000 people have been tested, bringing the total number tested to about 300,000. Monday marked the first time since late February there have been no active cases.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said she was confident New Zealand had halted the spread of the virus but it still must be prepared for more.

"We are confident we have eliminated transmission of the virus in New Zealand for now,



Pedestrians walk past a billboard featuring Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern with the word Aroha, meaning love, in Christchurch, New Zealand on Monday

but elimination is not a point in time, it is a sustained effort," she said at a news conference.

"We almost certainly will see cases here again, and I do want to say that again, we will almost certainly see cases here again, and that is not a sign that we have failed, it is a reality of this virus. But if and when that occurs we have to make sure — and we are — that we are prepared."

More cases are likely to be imported as people enter the country. For now, the border

remains shut to all but citizens and residents, with some limited exceptions.

Everybody who does enter has to go into quarantine. Ardern announced that the Cabinet had agreed to remove almost all remaining virus restrictions from mid-night, with the exception of the border strictures.

"We can hold public events without limitations. Private events such as weddings, functions and funerals without limitations," Ardern said.

## Pak's former PM Abbasi, Railways Minister Rashid test positive

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and incumbent Railways Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad were tested positive for the novel coronavirus on Monday, making them the latest amongst the country's top politicians to contract the virus that has infected over one lakh people in the country.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Maryam Aurangzeb confirmed that 61-year-old Abbasi was infected by the virus.

Abbasi, who is the Senior Vice President of the PML-N, served as the prime minister from August 2017 to May 2018 after his party leader Nawaz Sharif was de-seated by a court ruling in a corruption case.

He has gone into self-isolation at his house after receiving a positive COVID-19 test report on Monday, his party officials said.

PML-N chief Shehbaz Sharif wished Abbasi a speedy recovery.

Railways Minister Ahmad was tested positive for the novel coronavirus, according to a statement by his office.

"Sheikh Rashid has tested positive for COVID-19," the statement said, adding that he has gone into self-isolation and will remain in quarantine for two weeks as per doctors' advice.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader and former provincial minister Sharjeel Memon was tested positive for coronavirus on Sunday.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's provincial lawmaker Chaudhry Ali Akhtar was also tested positive for the virus, his spokesperson said.

The spokesperson shared that the Akhtar was in home isolation and had gotten himself tested after showing symptoms of the virus. Akhtar was elected from Punjab Assembly's Faisalabad III in the 2018 elections.

Five persons, including two officers, at Pakistan's Foreign Office have been tested positive for coronavirus, Foreign Office spokesperson Aisha Farooqui said on Sunday, adding that the cases emerged in the office within the past week.

## Iranian lawmakers chant 'Death to America' in Parl

**Tehran:** Iranian media say lawmakers in Parliament chanted "Death to America" during a session the previous day, allegedly in a show of support for protesters in the US over the killing of George Floyd.

The report on Monday says the chants followed a request by lawmaker Ahmad Naderi for a moment of silence over deaths of protesters.

Iran makes a point of daily

criticizing Washington in the wake of the ongoing turmoil in America and protests over police killings of African Americans.

State television in Iran, which in November put down nationwide demonstrations by killing hundreds, arresting thousands and disrupting internet access to the outside world, has repeatedly aired images of the US unrest.

## With Floyd's death, French anger grows over police brutality

AP ■ PARIS

France's Government is scrambling to address growing concerns about police violence and racism within the police force, as protests sparked by George Floyd's death in the U.S. Stir up anger around the world.

The country's top security official, Interior Minister Christophe Castaner, was holding a news conference Monday after Floyd-related demonstrations in cities around France.

Castaner promised last week to be "unforgiving" with violations by police, but pressure is growing on the government to act.

French President Emmanuel Macron has stayed unusually silent so far both about Floyd's death and what's happening in France.

Macron's office says he spoke to the prime minister and other top officials over the weekend, and asked Castaner to "accelerate" plans to improve police ethics that were initially promised in January.

Last week, the Paris prosecutor's office opened a preliminary investigation into racist insults and instigating racial hatred based on comments allegedly published by police in a private Facebook group.

Website Streetpress published a string of offensive messages that it said were published within the group, though acknowledged that it is unclear whether the authors were actual police officers or people pretending to be police.

Some of the reported comments mocked young men of color who have died fleeing police.

## Virus, racial unrest force Trump campaign to recalibrate

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Less than five months before voters will decide his fate, President Donald Trump is confronting a vastly different political reality than he once envisioned.

For starters, if the election were held today, he'd likely lose.

The president, West Wing advisers and campaign aides have grown increasingly concerned about his reelection

chances as they've watched Trump's standing take a pummeling first on his handling of the coronavirus pandemic and now during a nationwide wave of protests against racial injustice.

His allies worry that the president has achieved something that his November foe had so far been unable to do: igniting enthusiasm in a Democratic Party base that has been lukewarm to former

## Anti-racism protests 'subverted by thuggery': Johnson

**London:** The anti-racism demonstrations in the UK are "subverted by thuggery", Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said, condemning the attacks on police officers after 'Black Lives Matter' protests held over the custodial killing of George Floyd turned violent and the COVID-19 lockdown was breached by thousands of people for a second consecutive day.

African-American Floyd died in Minneapolis on May 25 after white police officer Derek Chauvin pinned him to the ground and knelt on his neck for more than eight minutes while the 46-year-old handcuffed man gasped for breath.

The footage, which went viral, showed Floyd pleading with the officer, saying he can't breathe. The four police officers seen in the footage have since been charged. Floyd's death has triggered widespread protests across the US and in

many other countries.

Johnson took to social media on Sunday to say that the anti-racism cause of the demonstrations had been betrayed by the "thuggery" of some protestors as the Metropolitan Police made 12 arrests for public order offences as well as criminal damage to monuments in central London.

"People have a right to protest peacefully and while observing social distancing but they have no right to attack the police," said Johnson.

"These demonstrations have been subverted by thuggery — and they are a betrayal of the cause they purport to serve. Those responsible will be held to account," he said.

The Met Police said a "small minority" of protestors had provoked scenes of violence and launched attacks at officers and threw objects, including glass bottles and fireworks at them.

## US SPL ENVOY KHALILZAD, PAK ARMY CHIEF BAJWA DISCUSS AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

**Islamabad:** Special US Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad discussed the steps required for the start of the intra-Afghan negotiations during his meeting with Pakistan Army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa, the American embassy in Islamabad said on Monday.

Khalilzad visited Islamabad on Sunday and held talks with

Bajwa on the Afghan peace process. He is travelling to Qatar, Pakistan and Afghanistan as part of efforts to bring peace in the war-torn country. During the three-nation tour, Khalilzad will review commitments in the recently signed US-Taliban Agreement and the US-Afghanistan Joint Declaration, specifically reducing violence and prisoner releases.

## Around the Globe

**Yerevan (Armenia):** Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian says he and his family have recovered from the coronavirus. Pashinian said on Facebook that he and his family members tested negative Monday for a second time in as many days.

**Dhaka:** China on Monday sent a 10-member team of medical experts to Bangladesh to help the country in containing the spread of the coronavirus, which has claimed 900 lives and infected 68,504 people.

**London:** The UK's compulsory 14-day quarantine for inbound travellers, by air, rail or ferries, came into force on the country's borders from Monday amid protests from the airline industry.

**Berlin:** The German Government is calling on people attending anti-racism protests to stick to coronavirus distancing rules. At least 15,000 people demonstrated in Berlin and 25,000 protested in Munich on Saturday.

## President 'worried' as South Africa's virus cases rise fast

AP ■ CAPE TOWN

South Africa's numbers of COVID-19 are "rising fast," according to President Cyril Ramaphosa, who says that he's worried.

More than half of South Africa's more than 48,000 confirmed cases have been recorded in the last two weeks, prompting concerns that Africa's most developed economy is about to see a steep rise in infections. South Africa has the most cases in Africa, whose 54 countries have reported more than 184,000 cases including more than 5,000 deaths, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

South Africa, with a population of 57 million people,

expects to see the COVID-19 deaths climb above 1,000 soon, Ramaphosa wrote Monday in his weekly letter to the nation.

"Like many South Africans, I, too, have been worried as I watch these figures keep rising," Ramaphosa wrote.

"While these numbers are broadly in line with what the various models had projected, there is a big difference between looking at a graph on a piece of paper and seeing real people becoming infected, some getting ill and some dying," he wrote.

Even as South Africa braces for increased cases and rising numbers of those hospitalized, the country is easing many restrictions of its 10-week-old lockdown.

### SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a man namely **Mohan, S/o Shivji Lal R/o 102, Prem Nagar- II, Nangloi, Delhi** has been missing since 28.05.2020. In this regard a **D.D. No. 013-A, dated 29/05/2020 has been registered at P.S. Khayala, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing man but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing man is as under:

**Name:** Mohan, **Gender:** Male, **Age:** 50 years, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Blue colour shirt and black colour pant.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing Man, kindly inform SHO/ Khayala, Delhi.

E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax : 011-24368639

SHO  
P.S. Khayala, Delhi,  
Ph. No. 011-28335686

DP/107/WD/2020

### UJVN LIMITED

(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprise)  
H. O. 'ULLJANAL', MAHARANI BAGH, ONE ROAD, DEHRADUN - 248006, U.P. No. 146151UR2915G202566  
Tel. : 0135-2763588, 2763808, Fax: 0135-2763507, website: [www.ujvn.com](http://www.ujvn.com)

Tender No. 355 Date : 08.06.2020

#### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For and on behalf of UJVN Ltd., Executive Engineer (Civil), Pashulok Barrage Rishikesh, invites sealed & separate tender from interested contractors for following work:

1. Tender Notice Reference: NIT No.-03/2020-21/EE(C)/Pashulok Barrage:-Annual Upkeep Works of the Office of General Manager (CD&H) at Hydrel Colony, Pashulok, Rishikesh.
2. Estimated Value of Tender : - ₹5.63 Lakh.
3. Tender Cost : - ₹590.00 (Including GST).
4. Earnest Money :- ₹14,500.00
5. Period of Completion : - 12 Months.
6. Last Date of Downloading : 29.06.2020 upto 17:00 hrs. (IST) of Tender
7. Last Date of Submission : 30.06.2020 upto 14:00 hrs. (IST) of Tender
8. Date of Opening Tender : 02.07.2020 at 11:00 hrs. (IST)

For eligibility criteria and full and further details kindly visit our web site. The tenders can be downloaded from our web site i.e. [www.uttarakhandjalvidyut.com](http://www.uttarakhandjalvidyut.com) and tender cost shall be paid at the time of submission of the tender.

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

### SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Anchal, D/o: Sh. Ratish Jha, R/o: Plot No. 36, Kh.No. 34/1, Nangli Poona Extension, Opp. Tata Tower, Delhi, Aged: 19 years, has been missing from the area of P.S. Swaroop Nagar, Delhi since 22.05.2020 vide DD No. 30A, Dated 22.05.2020, has been lodged at P.S. Swaroop Nagar, Delhi.**

Her physical description is as under:

**Height:** 4'7" Feet, **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Physique/BUILD:** Medium, **Clothing:** Pink Colour Suit, Black Colour Salwar and Hawai Chappal in Feet.

Any person is having any information/clue about this missing female, may inform SHO, Swaroop Nagar, Delhi at E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> Tel No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641

S.H.O  
P.S. Swaroop Nagar, Delhi  
Ph. : 011-27811415, 27811738

DP/244/ON/2020.

### NORTHERN RAILWAY

#### TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering)

Name of work with its location	Roll out of PMS Phase-II under the work of Computerization of Parcel Management System over major stations of DLI Division.
App. Cost of the work (₹)	₹ 26,57,151.84/- only
Tender Document Fee (₹)	₹ 3,540/- only.
Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	₹ 53,200/- only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM office, New Delhi-110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender	Tender uploading / closing date & time-01.07.2020 up to 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website <a href="http://www.irps.gov.in">www.irps.gov.in</a> & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.
Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-919 Dated: 08.06.2020	1302/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

# Sensex, Nifty end marginally up

**30-SHARE BSE SENSEX SURGED OVER 640 POINTS IN EARLY TRADE**

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark gauges Sensex and Nifty on Monday pulled back from the day's highs but managed to settle with marginal gains as investors rushed to book profits following a stellar rally.

The 30-share BSE Sensex surged over 640 points in early trade, mirroring bullish sentiments in global markets in the wake of surprisingly strong US jobs data, but an intense volatility gripped the index as the session progressed.

After fighting bouts of volatility during the day, the Sensex ended 83.34 points, or 0.24 per cent, higher at 34,370.58.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty closed 25.30 points, or 0.25 per cent, up at 10,167.45.

On the Sensex chart, IndusInd Bank was the top gainer, soaring around 7 per cent, followed by Axis Bank, Bajaj Finance, ONGC, Titan, Infosys and Tech Mahindra.

Among the top losers were: Mahindra and Mahindra, Ultratech Cement, HDFC Bank, Tata Steel and Nestle India.



Shares of Reliance Industries (RIL) jumped around 3 per cent during the day, hitting one-year peak, after the company sold 1.16 per cent stake in its digital unit Jio Platforms to Abu Dhabi Investment Authority for ₹ 5,683.50 crore.

Its shares, however, closed 0.51 per cent lower as investors cashed in on recent gains.

Of the 30 constituents on the Sensex, 16 shares closed in the green and 14 in the red. Sectorally, BSE oil and gas, IT, industrials, consumer durables, utilities, bank and finance indices surged up to 2.79 per cent, while basic materials, healthcare, metal and auto fell up to 0.90 per cent.

In the broader market, midcap and smallcap indices surged up to 0.93 per cent.

Meanwhile, crude oil prices rose after major oil producing nations agreed to extend a production cut to counter the blow to demand in the wake of COVID outbreak.

International oil benchmark Brent crude futures rose 0.95 per cent to USD 42.70 per barrel.

On the impact of coronavirus cases and related developments on sentiment, analysts said that in India, the numbers continue to rise and the markets seem to be ignoring this, for the time being, giving more priority to the news of the economy opening up.

## Rupee edges higher to close at 75.55 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian rupee on Monday settled with a marginal 3 paise rise at 75.55 against the US dollar as sustained foreign fund inflows offset impact of rising crude oil prices on investor sentiment.

The Indian currency opened at 75.59 against the US dollar and finally settled at 75.55, registering a rise of 3 paise over its previous close.

It had settled at 75.58 against the greenback on Friday.

During the four-hour session, the rupee saw an intra-day high of 75.50 and a low of 75.64. Forex traders said a weak dollar overseas also helped the rupee, but rising crude oil prices weighed on the domestic unit.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.09 per cent to 96.85.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.97 per cent to USD 42.71 per barrel.

On the equities front, the BSE Sensex ended 83.34 points, or 0.24 per cent, higher at 34,370.58. Similarly, the NSE Nifty closed 25.30 points, or 0.25 per cent, up at 10,167.45. Foreign institutional investors were net buyers in the capital market, as they bought shares worth Rs 813.27 crore on Monday, according to provisional exchange data.

The weakness in dollar index and stronger global equities supported the emerging market currencies. In the first week of June, foreign institutions have bought equities worth USD 2.6 billion, traders said. "Indian rupee gained on expectation of foreign fund inflows and in line with stronger Asian currencies," Devash Vakil, Deputy Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities said, adding the near-term focus will remain on US FOMC meeting on Wednesday.

Vakil further noted that the rupee is expected to consolidate in the range of 75 to 76 in the coming days.

## RIL stock hits all-time high of ₹1,624 defying naysayers

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

As the stock price of Reliance Industries Limited hit an all-time high of ₹1,624 on the BSE, the RIL story has defied experts and naysayers who cast doubts on the share's intrinsic value and commented that the price will fall post rights issue that closed on June 3.

The RIL all-time high came on Monday, a day after it announced 1.16 per cent stake sale in Jio Platforms, to Abu Dhabi Investment Authority for ₹5,683 crore. Since the countrywide lockdown was announced on March 24, Reliance has generated 66.5% returns for its shareholders, more than double the 28.6% returns generated by the benchmark Nifty-50. The all-time high of RIL has defied defied experts and naysayers and continues to hit new record highs. RIL share price was adjusted for the rights issue ahead of the record date of May 14, 2020. The price had corrected nearly 4% as the share went ex-rights. In the F&O segment, RIL's lot size was revised to 505 from 500 earlier. RIL closed India's largest rights issue with 1.6 times oversubscription with strong demand from the non-promoter category.

## Bank credit growth will nose dive to 1% due to Covid impact: Crisil

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic impact will lead bank credit growth to nose dive to only 1 per cent in 2020-21, as against the 6.14 per cent achieved in the last financial year, a report said on Monday. Domestic rating agency Crisil, which estimates bank credit growth to come at 0-1 per cent in this financial year, had earlier predicted it to expand by 8-9 per cent. Bank credit is an important factor illustrative of the general economic climate because it denotes aspects like the investments which are happening in a country or consumption of high-value items.

Crisil expects a 5 per cent contraction in India's GDP for 2020-21. "The impact of the pandemic on credit growth will be a whopping 8 per cent," a Crisil statement said stressing that lenders' confidence needs to be boosted to push the number up.

"This crisis is unprecedented and so will be its economic fallout - such as lower capex demand as well as lower discretionary spends, to name some - which will slow down credit offtake significantly across segments in the current fiscal," its senior director Krishnan Sitaraman explained.

The low-base and a gradual economic recovery will push up the credit growth to high single digits in 2021-22, the agency said.

It, however, rued that in the present, the uncertainty has made lenders risk-averse.

"While the Reserve Bank of India has been reducing policy rates and the government has introduced measures to encourage lending, banks continue to be risk-averse, as reflected in higher surplus liquidity parked with the central bank and the high credit spreads for most borrowers," its director Subha Sri Narayanan said. Sitaraman said the corporate loan portfolio, which constitutes over half of the overall assets, will be the worst hit and is expected to de-grow during the fiscal because the lockdown has led to significant disruption in operations with limited capacity utilisation across sectors. Job losses and salary cuts will reduce expenditure on discretionary items and result in a slide in retail loans, which account for about a fourth of bank credit, it said.

Purchase of new homes and vehicles are expected to be delayed, impacting demand for financing, it said, adding disbursements across most asset classes will see a significant decline this fiscal.

## World shares mixed as investors weigh US data, OPEC deal

AP ■ BANGKOK

Global stock markets were subdued on Monday as investors weighed the strength of US economic jobs data from last week against longer-term concerns about the coronavirus' impact on world growth.

Momentum continued in some markets from a rally on Friday, when the US Government said employers added 2.5 million workers to their payrolls in May, when economists were expecting them instead to slash another 8 million jobs. That raised hopes that the worst of the recession may have already passed. But economists cautioned that many risks still loom on the long road to a full recovery. "One should ... Be cautioned against reading too much into any single month-on-month change, particularly during such times of uncertainty," Jingyi Pan of IG said in a commentary.

After broad gains in Asia, European stock markets were less buoyant, with Germany's DAX edging up 0.1% to 12,866 as the Govt reported that

industrial production plunged by nearly 18% in April. That compared a nearly 9% drop in March at the height of Europe's coronavirus lockdowns.

The CAC 40 in Paris fell 0.1% to 5,193, while Britain's FTSE 100 was up 0.1% at 6,493.

US futures were higher, auguring more gains on Wall Street when it opens, with the contracts for the S&P 500 up 0.6% and those for the Dow industrials up 0.8%. Crude oil prices were steady after major oil producing nations agreed over the weekend to extend a production cut of nearly 10 million barrels of oil a day through the end of July to counter the blow to demand from the coronavirus pandemic. The price of oil had risen last week on expectations of that move, and lost some of its gains on Monday after OPEC officials did not commit to extending the cuts past July or establishing a way to enforce the production limits. And amid reports that output in the U.S., which is not part of the cartel, was rising again, OPEC said the outlook remained uncertain.

## Be open, be impatient, be hopeful: Pichai to graduates

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Google CEO Sundar Pichai had a special message for the graduating class of 2020, urging them to be open, hopeful and "impatient", and exuded confidence that they have a "chance to change everything".

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, on-ground graduation ceremonies are giving way to virtual ones.

Google's video platform YouTube organised a virtual event to give a farewell to these students.

The ceremony saw participation from former US President Barack Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama, Korean pop group BTS, singers Beyoncé and Lady Gaga, former Defense Secretary Robert M Gates, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and activist Malala Yousafzai.

"I don't think this is the graduation ceremony any of you imagined. At a time when you should be celebrating all the knowledge you've gained, you may be grieving what you've lost: the moves you planned, the jobs you earned, and the experiences you were looking forward to. In bleak moments like these, it can be difficult to find hope," Pichai said.

## Now 22 lakh 'Nil' GST filers can file monthly returns via SMS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Monday rolled out short messaging service (SMS) facility for taxpayers filing 'Nil' monthly GST returns, a move which will benefit about 22 lakh registered taxpayers.

"In a major move towards taxpayer facilitation, the government has today onwards allowed filing of Nil GST monthly return in Form GSTR-3B through SMS," the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said in a statement.

This would improve ease of GST compliance for over 22 lakh registered taxpayers who had to otherwise log into their account on the common portal and then file their returns every month.

Nil return SMS can be sent to 14409 after 1st date of subsequent month. Now, businesses with nil or no entry in all the tables in form GSTR-3B can file return through an SMS using the registered mobile number and the said return will be verified by a registered mobile number based one time password (OTP) facility. These taxpayers with "NIL" liability need not log on to the GST portal, the CBIC said.

## RBI proposes comprehensive framework for sale of loans

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Monday proposed a comprehensive framework for sale of loan exposures, which could be standard, sub-standard or non-performing assets (NPAs), as part of the overall exercise to deepen the market for lending.

Loan sales may be resorted to by lenders for any reasons ranging from strategic sales to rebalance their exposures or as a means to achieve resolution of stressed assets by extinguishing the exposures.

Presently, the guidelines for sale of loan exposures, both standard as well as stressed exposures, are spread across various circulars of the RBI.

"A dynamic secondary market for bank loans will also ensure proper discovery of credit risk pricing associated with each exposure and will be useful as a leading indicator for impending stress, if any, provided that the volumes are sufficiently large," the RBI said while issuing the comprehensive draft framework for sale of loan exposure.

The stakeholders can send their comments on the draft framework to the RBI by June 30.

Lenders, the RBI said, resort to loan sales for reasons ranging from strategic sales to rebalance their exposures or as a means to achieve resolution of stressed assets by extinguishing the exposures.

The draft guideline proposed by the RBI for sale of loan exposures deals with various issues like asset classification of the loan to be transferred.

## IL&FS sells GIFT City stake to reduce ₹1,230 cr debt

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

IL&FS on Monday said that it has completed the sale of its 50 per cent stake in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City Company Limited (GIFTCL) to the Government of Gujarat. In a statement the crisis-hit lending group said that the sale will reduce its consolidated debt by over ₹1,230 crore.

IL&FS has received ₹ 32.71 crore as equity value for shares as sale consideration, it said.

The sale was completed after the approval of the Principal Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) through its order dated May 22, 2020.

Gujarat Urban Development Company Limited (GUDCL), as the joint venture partner and the holder of the balance 50 per cent in GIFTCL, offered to purchase IL&FS Ltd's share in GIFTCL through exercise of a contemplated right of first refusal under the joint venture agreement. GIFTCL is a company engaged in the business of real estate development and is currently developing an international financial services city in the Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar region, including design, development, financing, operation and maintenance of the same.

## IRDAI encourages electronic submission of claim papers

IANS ■ CHENNAI

In a policy-holder-friendly decision, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on Monday asked the heads of non-life insurers to encourage policy-holders to file electronically documents relating to Cyclone 'Nisarga' claims.

"It is interesting to see IRDAI asking insurers to accept soft copies of documents and encourage policy-holders to adopt electronic communication due to Covid-19 pandemic," an industry official, speaking on the condition

of anonymity, told IANS.

Cyclone 'Nisarga' hit Maharashtra recently. According to IRDAI, the cyclone has resulted in damages to properties in Maharashtra, Gujarat and other neighbouring States. The industry official said even in the case of Cyclone 'Amphan' damage claims, the regulator had asked the general insurers to accept soft copies of the documents due to Covid-19.

"Whether the IRDAI would ask insurers to accept soft copies of claim papers in the normal course as well has to be seen," he added. Queried whether the insurer

ers would ask for hard copies of the documents at the time of claims settlement, he said the guideline does not mention that. In order to mitigate the hardship for the policy-holders/claimants who had lost their properties/loved ones, the IRDAI has issued guidelines for immediate registration and settlement of claims.

The IRDAI has also asked the non-life insurers to appoint a nodal officer for each of the cyclone-affected states and also a nodal officer at district level, and publicise the contact details of the nodal officers and also start 24x7 helplines.

**Rajasthan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Bikaner**  
Bijay Bhawan Palace, Near Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Circle, Bikaner  
334001 (Rajasthan) India Phone No. 0151-2540022  
E-mail: [comprajivas@gmail.com](mailto:comprajivas@gmail.com), [purchaserajivas01@gmail.com](mailto:purchaserajivas01@gmail.com)  
Website of RAJUVAS: [www.rajivas.org](http://www.rajivas.org)  
No. RAJUVAS/Pur/F. (cattle and poultry feed)/2020-21/418 Dated:01-06-2020  
**NOTICE INVITING BID**  
Applications on RAJUVAS prescribed registration form are invited by Rajasthan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Bikaner for empanelment/ registration of bidders, for supply of Cattle and Poultry Feed Raw Materials for one year. The last date of submission of form duly filled along with documents and Bank Drafts is upto 04.00 PM of 25.06.2020. Details of Registration form/Bidding Document can be downloaded from State Public Procurement Portal website [www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) or RAJUVAS website [www.rajivas.org](http://www.rajivas.org). The duly filled application form along with all documents and Bank Drafts may be uploaded on e-mail [comprajivas@gmail.com](mailto:comprajivas@gmail.com), [purchaserajivas@gmail.com](mailto:purchaserajivas@gmail.com) Bank Drafts are required to be submitted in physical form before scheduled closing date and time.  
Raj.Samwad/C20/708 **COMPTROLLER**

**बिहार सरकार**  
**Office of the Principal,**  
**Vardhman Institute of Medical Sciences**  
Pawapuri, Nalanda(Bihar) PIN Code- 803115  
Principal Mob. No- 9431648784  
Website- [www.vimspawapuri.org](http://www.vimspawapuri.org)  
E-mail- [drpkchoudhary13@gmail.com](mailto:drpkchoudhary13@gmail.com)  
[principal.vims.pawapuri@gmail.com](mailto:principal.vims.pawapuri@gmail.com)

**निविदा आमंत्रण**  
वर्द्धमान आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान पावापुरी, नालन्दा के केन्द्रीय एवम् विभागीय पुस्तकालय हेतु वित्तीय वर्ष 2020-21 में मेडिकल पुस्तकों की नवीनतम एवं मूल संस्करण, विभिन्न विषयों/विशेषताओं के जर्नल (राष्ट्रीय एवं अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय) की आपूर्ति करने हेतु प्रकाशकों/प्राधिकृत वितरकों/अधिकृत विक्रेताओं जो FPBA नई दिल्ली के मापदण्डों की शर्तों को पूरा करते हैं एवं G.O.C. के द्वारा पुस्तकों की आपूर्ति के प्राधिकृत एजेंट/सदस्य हों, से निम्न शर्त एवम् स्थिति (Terms and Condition) के साथ विज्ञापन के प्रथम प्रकाशन की तिथि से 21 दिनों के अन्दर मुहर बन्द लिफाफे में सिर्फ निबधित डाक/स्पीड पोस्ट द्वारा निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। अवकाश की स्थिति में अगला काय दिवस मान्य होगा। निविदा प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि के पश्चात् एक निश्चित तिथि को क्रय समिति के समक्ष निविदा खोली जायेगी जिसमें निविदा दाता स्वयं या उनके प्राधिकृत प्रतिनिधि उपस्थित रह सकते हैं, जिसकी सूचना कॉलेज के वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध करा दी जायेगी। निविदा संबंधी विस्तृत जानकारी एवं पुस्तकों की सूची कॉलेज के वेबसाइट [WWW.VIMSPAWAPURI.ORG](http://WWW.VIMSPAWAPURI.ORG) पर उपलब्ध है।

**प्राचार्य**  
वर्द्धमान आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान  
पावापुरी, नालन्दा  
PR. No.1985(health)2020-21  
नोवल कोरोना के संघर्ष में विस्तृत जानकारी एवं सहयोग हेतु Toll Free No. **104** पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।  
खात सामग्री- संबंधी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।  
किसी भी तरह आपदा की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु आपदा प्रबंधन के हेल्पलाइन नं. 1070 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

**बिहार सरकार**  
**स्वास्थ्य विभाग**  
विज्ञापन सं० - 05/2020

राज्य के चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय एवं अस्पतालों में योगदान नहीं करने वाले नवनियुक्त सहायक प्राध्यापकों हेतु आवश्यक सूचना

राज्य के चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय एवं अस्पतालों में विभागीय अधिसूचना संख्या-1214(17)-1229(17) दिनांक-18.12.2019 द्वारा नवनियुक्त सहायक प्राध्यापकों से प्राप्त अन्यायवेदनों के आलोक में विभागीय आदेश संख्या-148(17) दिनांक-04.02.2020 एवं विभागीय आदेश संख्या-261(17) दिनांक-26.02.2020 द्वारा योगदान हेतु अवधि विस्तारित की गयी थी। पुनः दिनांक- 18.12.2019 के प्रभाव से अधिकतम 03 माह का अवधि विस्तार किये जाने की सूचना प्रेस विज्ञापन के माध्यम से प्रकाशित की गयी थी। विभागीय अधिसूचना संख्या-1214(17)-1229(17)दिनांक-18.12.2019 एवं 270(17)-277(17) दिनांक-27.02.2020 द्वारा सहायक प्राध्यापक के नियमित पद पर नियुक्त एवं पदस्थापित वैसे नवनियुक्त सहायक प्राध्यापक, जिन्होंने पदस्थापित स्थान पर योगदान नहीं किया था, को दिनांक- 15.04.2020 तक पदस्थापित स्थान पर अनिवार्य रूप से योगदान करने हेतु विज्ञापन सं० 04 / 2020 प्रकाशित की गई थी।

विभागीय अधिसूचना संख्या-415(17)-417(17) दिनांक-14.04.2020 द्वारा नियुक्त सहायक प्राध्यापकों को भी 15 दिनों के अंदर योगदान करने का निदेश दिया गया था। परन्तु लॉकडाउन के कारण निर्धारित तिथि तक कई नवनियुक्त सहायक प्राध्यापकों द्वारा योगदान नहीं दिया जा सका। अतः सम्यक् विचारोपरान्त उपर्युक्त अधिसूचनाओं से आच्छादित वैसे नवनियुक्त सहायक प्राध्यापक जो अबतक किन्हीं कारणों से योगदान नहीं दे पाये हैं, उन्हें एक अंतिम अवसर देते हुये सूचित किया जाता है कि वे दिनांक-15.06.2020 तक पदस्थापित स्थान पर अनिवार्य रूप से योगदान कर लें अन्यथा समझा जायेगा कि वे योगदान करने के लिये इच्छुक नहीं हैं तदनुसार इनकी अस्थिति रद्द समझी जायेगी।

(सिविकानन्द ठाकुर)  
सरकार के अवर सचिव  
स्वास्थ्य विभाग, बिहार

PR. No. 02073 (Health) 2020-21  
नोवल कोरोना के संघर्ष में विस्तृत जानकारी एवं सहयोग हेतु Toll Free No. **104** पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।  
खात सामग्री- संबंधी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

**IMPORTANT PUBLIC NOTICE**  
In order to ensure safe and comfortable journey for our bonafide passengers, they have been advised to reach their designated railway station viz. New Delhi, Delhi Jn., Anand Vihar, Hazrat Nizamuddin and Delhi Sarai Rohilla Stations, 90 minutes before the departure of their train.  
It has been observed that many passengers arrive at station 8-10 hours before the departure of their train causing overcrowding inside the station premises and queue outside the station, thus making it difficult to maintain the mandatory norm of social distancing.  
**Passengers are therefore advised that in case its unavoidable, they may come maximum of 4 hours before the departure of train. The entry in the station premises before 4 hours of the departure of their train shall not be allowed, as is being followed in case of Airports. This is being implemented for the larger benefit of our valued bonafide passengers as a short term measure.**  
**Railway Enquiry No. 139 Security Helpline No. 182**  
Please join us on   
**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Always at your service  
Visit us at : [www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in)  
1305/2020  
Serving Customers with a Smile



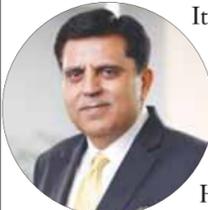
# HEALTH

## SleepWell

Sleeping poorly on a regular basis may lead to the fatty arterial plaque buildup known as atherosclerosis that can result in fatal heart disease. The researchers analysed the diagnostic data of more than 1,600 middle-aged and older adults using a national dataset — Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis



## CARE & SUPPORT ELDERLY



It is time when our elders need more care than ever. However, it is difficult to do

so if your parents don't live with you. **RAJIT MEHTA** shares tips that can help

These are trying times for all of us. With COVID-19 cases rising every day and social distancing becoming the norm, we are struggling with being there for our friends and family the way we usually would. Especially if you have senior parents that don't live with you.

Families need to create a shield for seniors in the family to ensure they're taken care of and have a better chance of protection against COVID-19. Here are a few tips to make life easier for the elders in the family during the pandemic, even if you're not living with them:

**Take care of their mental health:** Understand and address the vulnerabilities seniors in your family might be dealing with. It is important to ensure you are able to help them process what is happening around them, the situation they are in, and the repercussions they are dealing with.

★ Check on them regularly. While they may know you're there for them, regular catch ups can serve as reminders. Talking about their situation can also help them process it better, in a healthier way.

★ Address any concerns they may have and talk to them through the solutions you're providing.

For instance, if they are living alone and are worried about the task of going and getting essentials, you can arrange for them to be delivered, while explaining the process and asking them for their opinion. Making them a part of the solution can help them deal with anxiety.

**Take care of their emotional health:** It is important for them to convey what they are feeling. They need to be able to manage and express the emotions that arise from what they are experiencing. You can help them by:

★ Getting accustomed to digital modes of communication that can help add a touch of intimacy through video calls and photo exchanges. Encourage them to touch base with friends and family as often as possible on video calls.

★ Befriending their neighbours, while maintaining social distancing. A neighbour can be a huge help, especially when you are away. Small gestures like fetching groceries, checking-in in person, sharing a home cooked meal can make a huge difference.

**Take care of their physical health:** Ensure they have access to fresh, nutritious food, their medication, and are able to get ample exercise.

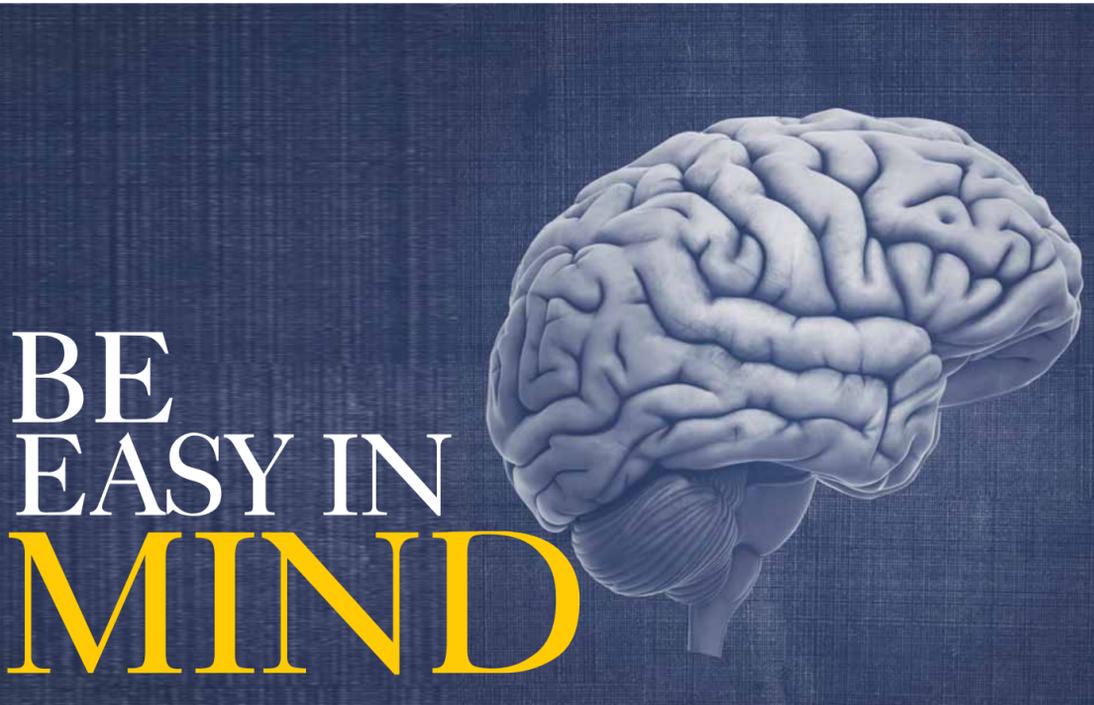
★ It is important to ensure they eat sensibly. Access to fresh fruits and vegetables, timely cooked meals and cutting down on processed foods can help maintain a healthy lifestyle.

★ If you live in a different city/ country, ensure they have an emergency contact.

**Take care of their occupational health:** Ensure they keep busy. If they are constantly occupied in one activity or the other, it will help them keep their head above the water.

★ Create mobility and ensure they exercise. Small walks around the house, some yoga/breathing exercises can go a long way.

The writer is CEO & MD, Antara



# BE EASY IN MIND

World Brain Tumour Day was on June 8. Doctors tell you symptoms to look out for, treatment and how it is important to pay attention to severe and prolonged headaches

The population in general has first hand knowledge of brain tumour from movies or serials, where the protagonist either dies in the end or comes out with successful surgery, with bald head and a large bandage, and happy ending prevails. Even in real life, large section of the society does not have adequate knowledge about brain tumours.

There is a misconception that every tumour will either kill or result in coma with multiple problems, mental and physical. A mass awareness effort for the public is needed. A large majority of the brain tumours can be treated successfully. Most patients go back to their normal life. According to a study, central nervous system tumours' incidence in India ranges from around 5 to 10 cases per 1,00,000 population. Although a severe disease, adequate knowledge and timely treatment can save many lives.

**Not all tumours are cancerous-**

- Non cancerous tumours are called benign
- Cancerous tumours are called malignant.

**SYMPTOMS**  
The symptoms of a brain tumour depend on its location in the brain, because each part of the brain controls the specific functions in the body. The symptoms also depends on the rate of growth and the rapidity with which the pressure rises inside the brain.

Not all headaches are due to tumours.  
Features with suggest that the symptoms may be of a brain tumour.

- Severe headache not relieved by common medicines.
- Headache with persisting or pro-

- jectile vomiting
- Altered sensorium or loss of consciousness.
- Unexplained confusion even in normal things
- Seizures or fits in an adult.
- Blurring of vision
- Impaired hearing or abnormal sounds in the ear.
- Hormonal imbalance
- Sexual dysfunction
- Drastic behavioural changes
- Difficulty in balancing

**CAUSES**  
Till date the cause for brain tumour is not established though many theories are being pursued. However this has not prevented increasingly successful treatment.

The need of the hour is to increase awareness about the disease, so that it can be reported in early stage when disease is curable.

The writer is Dr Ashish Shrivastav, Senior Consultant, Neurosurgeon, Dharamshila Narayana Superspeciality Hospital

## Treatment

**Edible medicines can treat Brain tumours:** While some brain tumours need urgent surgeries, in few cases surgeries can be avoided with medicines. Yes, this fact surprises many but this is truth, edible medicines can also cure particular type of brain tumours. Not all brain tumours are alike. Cases can vary according to age and other factors involved in those cases we doctors keep taking follow ups timely and keep monitoring the tumour. Hence, the treatment of every tumour is decided by the location, size stages etc of tumours.

The treatment of brain tumours can include microscopic or endoscopic surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, etc. Apart from that ongoing progress in medical science and technology have made treatment more advanced and chances of

patient's coming to normal lives are getting higher. Undoubtedly still after some major surgeries there is little risk of getting complications like weakness, hormonal imbalance, impaired vision or other problems, but in most cases after timely and proper required treatments patients not even come back to their daily routine rather they lead healthy lives as well. Treatment of brain tumour requires patience and cooperation with the patient. Strong emotional support of family members and friends is required for such patients as any type of mental pressure or stress can lead to more complications. Help such patients in keeping positive attitude and healing.

The writer is Dr Anurag Saxena, Senior Consultant and Clinical Lead, Neurosurgery and Spine Surgery, Narayana Hospital, Gurugram

## Don't ignore those headaches

Headache is the most common medical complaint in our society. Almost all people experience it at some point in their life though the duration, severity and emotional reaction to it differ from person to person.

Most of the time the headache, though troublesome but is harmless. It can be a sign of stress or it may be result of common medical disorders such as migraine, anxiety, depression, refractory error of eyes, sinusitis or high blood pressure. However it can be a symptom of life threatening underlying disease like brain tumor.

Headaches which start in the afternoon and continue till late evening, feels like tight band around head and back of neck are most common and known as tension headache.

Migrain is throbbing headache usually on one side of head, associated with pain in eye on same side and nausea. One feels relief by taking rest in a quiet and dark place.

If one feels bursting headache early in the morning along with vomiting it is usually due to brain tumor. Person with brain tumor may also complain of visual deterioration, imbalance on walking, limb weakness and seizures. Young children

usually do not complain till advanced stage of disease. So parents needs to be vigilant.

As headache may be symptom of serious disease it is important to seek medical advice if they become severe, regular or persistent.

The doctor after thorough examination may do certain tests like CT scan or MRI of brain to diagnose the cause of headache to treat accordingly.

The writer is Dr (Prof) Ishwar Chandra Premsagar, Senior Consultant and Chief of Neuro & Spine Surgery, Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre

# BEWARE OF FRAUD

A recent report found that 70 per cent of mustard oil available in market is adulterated. Not only food fraud is causing an economic headache but it is damaging people's health, says **CHANDER S JEENA**

To spread awareness about food safety and to reduce the causes of food-borne diseases, the second World Food Safety Day (WFSD) was observed on June 7, 2020. The calls to action are ensure it is safe, grow it safe, keep it safe and eat it safe & team up for safety.

In the current scenario, with the pandemic situation, its importance becomes more relevant and needs attention from all the stakeholders. While Government & business operations must ensure food safety, agriculture and food products need to adopt good practices, consumers need to be aware of their rights for having authentic & safe food. While the world needs a new era of smarter food safety, there are various challenges ahead in achieving this. One of them is food fraud. It has become a major issue around the globe. According to *PriceWaterhouseCoopers* study, food fraud is estimated to cost the global industry \$30-40 billion a year. Not only is this issue causing an economic headache but it is damaging people's health. Consumers are losing faith in their food as the number of contaminant cases has increased exponentially. Understanding its seriousness, Interpol, together with

Europol, has been conducting operation OPSON since 2011 targeting fake and sub-standard food and beverages. In the latest seizure conducted between December 2018 — April 2019, 78 countries took part in this and resulted in more than 67,000 checks carried out at shops, markets, airports, seaports, and industrial estates. 672 individuals were arrested, around 16000 tonnes, and 33 million liters of likely fake food and drink worth Euro 100 million seized.

Unfortunately, the situation is not very different in India. Recent news reported in the media shows an alarming state of affairs. Very recently, Delhi Police busted a gang which had been operating for the past seven years who were involved in the manufacturing of fake cumin. More than 450 bags each containing 20 Kg of fake cumin were seized by the police. The seized fake cumin was made of stone dust, semolina, and

a grass paste. Consumption of this could cause serious health hazards. This is just one of the many instances across the country but reflects on the gravity of the situation.

Harcourt Butler Technical University conducted a study in Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh), which is a big market for edible oil and supplies to other states. The report found that 70 percent of the mustard oil available in the market is adulterated. In another category, FSSAI banned more than 170 brands of coconut

Oil in Kerala in 2018, after they were found to be adulterated. Adulteration of food products not only decreases the quality but can also lead to several ill effects on health. Nearly 4% of the one lakh food and beverage samples analysed by the states and Union Territories last year were found to be unsafe, about 16% were sub-standard and 9% were mislabelled, shows data released by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

All stakeholders need to become aware of the role they can play in developing the food safety ecosystem and actively contribute towards it. As a country requires more development in current national food laws and an urgent need to adopt an effective traceability system to improve and change within the current food industry and food supply chain. To bring about a change there are various challenges which need to be addressed, such as enhancing visibility and transparency for food export products, minimising the risk of food safety issues such as certifications, agro-terrorism threats, reduction in food wastage, and reducing product recall cost.

The writer is Secretary of Authentication Solution Providers' Association



## SLIMLINE

Disney+ Hotstar, a streaming platform, is now offering global health and wellness content to its subscribers. With the aim to strengthen the health and fitness category, the platform has entered into a strategic alliance with Brilliant Wellness to introduce value-added content from top fitness experts, yoga and spiritual gurus, along with celebrity nutritionists spread across more than 100 fitness programmes.

Additionally, Indian startups and game-changers Sarva and Cult.Fit, known for their state-of-the-art workout models, have also come on board to instil a healthy lifestyle and fitness regime among audiences bound by social distancing and lockdown restrictions.

As per estimations by Brilliant Wellness, there are about 200 million people in India seeking fitness services and this market is growing at a CAGR of 10%. There has been a significant shift in outlook when it comes to health due to the Covid -19 pandemic. People are now more inclined towards virtual workouts and are on constant lookout for interactive sessions.

**DOCYARD**  
DR BHUSHAN BHAVSAR  
Managing Director  
HERBAL CONSULTANTS PVT LTD



## Give immune system a boost

When the pandemic hit us in India earlier this year, it forced us to look back to our rich heritage, for modern science was unable to find a panacea. As the scientific community continues its sincere efforts to develop a vaccine, developing immunity remains an individual's best defence against the highly-contagious COVID-19 virus. The extensive knowledge base of Ayurveda on preventive care derives from the concepts of *dinacharya* or daily regimes and *ritucharya* or seasonal regimes that are key to maintain healthy life.

Immunity, based on the Ayurvedic principle, is categorised as *bala* or the concept of strength, *vyadhi kshamathwa* or the concept of resistance to developing illness, and *ojas* or the concept of supreme resilience. The concept of *bala* refers to the ability of the body to repair and nourish itself and be effective in disease prevention, whereas *vyadhi kshamathwa* is the ability of the immune system to fight against the disease-causing pathogens. The former is acquired through proper *aahar* (food), *vihar* (lifestyle changes) and *yoga*, while the latter is immune power gained via *aushadhi* or various herbal supplements and medicines used for recovery after encountering pathogenic organisms.

**Aahar:** It is the most important aspect as food contributes to building the cells of the body and enable them to fight off diseases. It is recommended to have fruits such as oranges, sweet lime, strawberries, papaya, guava, apple, and mango throughout the year as per the season of their availability. Include turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, fennel, spinach, carrot, green leafy vegetables, fresh asparagus, whole grains, honey, and nuts in the diet.

These are necessary for being rich repository of nutrients as well as antioxidants that guard the body against free radicals, molecules that can harm cells. Ayurveda prescribes drinking plenty of warm water. Avoid alcohol, meat, processed food,

products that are high in salt, fats or sugar, such as carbonated drinks, packaged fruit juices and ready-to-eat food. In the modern life, ghee and milk are taken in moderation but they are cherished in the ayurvedic tradition for their Ojas-enhancing properties. Ghee contains essential fatty acids and can be digested easily.

**Vihar:** Maintain a healthy lifestyle and avoid irregular sleep, stress, smoking; all of these weaken the body's defence system. Avoid stress and make every effort to stay happy — build a social network, think about the brighter side, and exercise a hobby. Ensure that your routine has some amount of exercise and a large amount of good sleep to maintain healthy weight.

**Yoga and pranayam:** Yoga is the gateway to holistic well-being. Yogasanas, such as *ardha matsyendrasana*, *uttarasana*, *mat-syasana*, *bhujangasan*, *halasan*, *dhanurasan*, together with *pranayam* (breathing techniques) such as *anuloma viloma* and *bhastrika* help in boosting immunity naturally, without any supplements.

**Aushadhi (herbal supplements):** Referred to as *rasayana*, there are herbal supplements in Ayurvedic practise which act as strong antioxidant and immunity builder. The popular and well-known ones include *amla* juice (dose: 10ml twice a day) and *chawanprash* (5 gm twice a day with warm milk). Herbs such as *ashwagandha*, *triphala*, *neem* and *guduchi* are also used for building immunity.

## SUMMERCoolERS

**LADY FINGER:** Lady Finger, also known as *okra* or *bhindi*, is high in dietary fiber and metabolism and thus, it is good for digestion, constipation and also aid in prevention of diabetes. Folate present in *okra* reduces the neural tube defects in a new born baby. So it is highly recommended for women during pre conception period or pregnancy.

It is high in Vitamin K which helps in strengthening the bones in our body. People diagnosed with asthma are strongly suggested to consume lady finger. It helps prevent sun strokes. With regular usage of *okra*, in either raw or



cooked form, you can avoid obesity.

Vitamin C found in *okra* actually helps maintain a younger looking skin and repair body tissues. If you are tired of your distressed hair, try using *okra* to get that bounce back. Boil it with some water and the transparent mucilage that you get can be used to get your bouncy hair back.

Trend Slazer

Kriti opens up on weight loss

Actor KRITI SANON, who had put on 15 kilos for the role of a pregnant woman in Laxman Utekar's forthcoming *Mimi*, has shed the most of it during the two-and-half month lockdown.

The actor took to Instagram to talk about her weight loss journey and thanked her dietician for helping her with the process.

Kriti shared a photo with her dietician on her Instagram story and wrote: "For those who want to get their daily diet routine on track she's the one you need."



# CLOSER TO THE HEART

The *Anubhav Series* of Spic Macay reflects upon our rich culture and heritage as it aims to connect the youth with the legends of classical music, dance and other folk art forms

*During fragile times, one must learn to cherish the grounds that continue to build you, for they also cherish your presence with light, hope and creativity...*

These lines asserted by Goitsemang Mvula not just make one hopeful but ask us to reflect upon the current world too. They make one believe in the fact that no matter what, the show must go on.

Academician, Professor Emeritus in the department of Mechanical Engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, Dr Kiran Seth, shares, "Nature is telling us, 'you better look into yourselves, you better stay at home, you better not be greedy all the time trying to get more sensual satisfaction outside'. You have to find your place within. The whole emphasis in our heritage has been moving inward."

Now that the pandemic has paved way for a new virtual world, various art events have geared themselves up and have turned it to their advantage by taking themselves to the digital platforms. This has also helped them stay relevant in the current times. Dr Kiran, founder of the Spic Macay, *Anubhav Series*, came up with the idea of connecting with our inner selves. He did not have to look far from home, our own rich culture and heritage came to the rescue. The series is an effort to connect the youth with the legends of classical music, dance and other folk art forms, with an objective to give them a holistic exposure of our rich cultural heritage online.

He feels that if we are more interested in the outward journey, that is, about the transformation and modernity all around, we will get more affected by things like COVID-19. But if we focus more on the inward journey, you will be less affected by such things as it demands



an introspection within us. "It is a lifestyle change, which is being prescribed by nature to us. We must remember our ancestors have taught us a way of living and bounce back to our roots," says he.

Virtual settings provide a new home for self-expression. One wonders if it was easy getting the youth for an online session. It is likely that there must have been some challenges. Ask Dr Kiran about them and how difficult was it to shift it online? He tells us, "Since last couple of years, we started live Facebook streaming of certain events but didn't publicise it much as the core aim has always been on the experiential learning in presence of the gurus. Quite a few were apprehensive, some suggested that we should have the

sessions once the lockdown is opened, some debated about connectivity issues, there were some valid concerns too, on how to monitor registered participants to follow a holistic routine from 4 am yoga to the day's workshops, lecture demonstration and evening concerts from 6.30 pm to 9 pm and much more.

Another main challenge is the diverse content available online. You can't keep the audience hooked for more than half an hour as they switch to other events or videos. But a few volunteers and I, including National Convener Pankaj Malhotra, were convinced that this is the right time and we stressed upon the fact that we have nothing to lose. Even if a handful of students are inspired, it will be an achievement for us. That's how it all started."

"I admit that there were certain issues such as our Facebook page was not operational for two days but technical team worked to restore as it was an important part of our daily updates and campaigns. The inaugural day started with a few glitches as every one couldn't receive confirmation of their assigned workshops, but these were resolved promptly with the help of volunteers," adds he.

The change would bring about drastic transformation to the world as things wouldn't be the same the way we knew. So there arises a question naturally. As compared to the physical performances, did the event grab as much audience online? While on a digital platform, it's never enough as to how many viewerships

we get, the 50,000 student registrations (majority in 14 to 26 age group) was a success considering a convention on premise would have upto 2,000," shares Pankaj. Certainly, he has a tendency to spot the brighter side.

The global health crisis has taken away the stage from people, and therefore, their ability to perform in the public space. For the arts community, performance is their fighting spirit. To get through this uncertain time, they have to keep on performing. This has got everybody wondering how the pandemic is reshaping the future of arts and culture in our society. Many artistes believe that online is great medium and there will be more adoption of digital platforms in the near future but classical arts thrives on the connection with human beings. This factor is here to stay.

Dr Kiran feels, "When it was decided to hold the entire series of programmes using online platform, there were concerns, whether it can really offer the same level of experience or not." However, they had examples of various art galleries, literature festivals, music concerts, and other public displays of art, happening online, which inspired them. The social media was flooded with multiple programmes by the hour making it difficult to choose.

"The slowdown of the economy might have an impact on the classical arts. People would want to first fulfill their basic needs. Art will no more be their priority. But at the same time, we should not forget that arts and culture have survived centuries and will continue to adapt without losing their ethos and core values. Online medium is not a replacement for the live performance experience. The key thought will be to figure out a way where people are fine with buying tickets to watch a performance online," adds he.

**'This pandemic has helped me realise that life is too short. We need to value each day to the fullest and make the most of each day we are living. Additionally, we need to appreciate our existence first in order to appreciate our mother earth. We have to be grateful for what we have, and do as much as we can to give back to our planet.'**

—Jacqueline Fernandez

Actor ANANYA PANDAY launches new fastrack first signature girls' collection.

She says: It's the weirdos or the odd-balls, who make the world a fun place to live in. If not for us, the world would just be a huge ball of boring, flying through the space. It is a blend of quirk, pop and play and is inspired by those eccentric ones, who love being the square peg in a round world."

It is a reflection of Ananya's personality and will appeal to those young girls who like her, are brave enough to embrace their peculiar side.



## LIFE'S A FULL CIRCLE

Producer EKTA KAPOOR shares that *Kehne Ko Humsafar Hai 3* is about tangled relationships in the form of love, complexities and pain



Producer Ekta Kapoor has come up with the third season of *Kehne Ko Humsafar Hai*. It explores the dark, toxic and complicated side of relationships. She believes that it's going to be dark, dogma and delicious that showcases life always comes a full circle.

**What's the biggest challenge and responsibility as a maker when you speak about mid-life crisis and toxic relationship?**

The third season, primarily revolves around three main characters — Rohit (Ronit Roy), Ananya (Mona Singh) and Poonam (Gurdeep Kohli), who talk about their tangled relationships in the form of love, complexities and pain. I think, after a point, most of the people come to

a point where they start questioning their own decisions in terms of relationships, career or anything else, likewise the characters of the show.

**Infidelity is the core reason of many breakups. How would one justify it in the society? Why are there judgements when a woman has an extra marital affair while men feel they can get away with that?**

Infidelity is perceived differently by both genders; for men, it's more physical and for women, it affects them more mentally, however both are infidelity. I feel it's actually the lack of communication that breaks down a relationship causing people to look outside the marriage.



## Sona brings Sufi from a feminine perspective

Singer Sona Mohapatra releases a female interpretation of the classic Sufi hit, *Nit Khair Manga*. The video is the first of its kind collaboration of art pieces and music in India. It has been composed by Ram Sampath.

The traditional Sufi Qawali is sung by many male music stars across the ages but made famous by Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Sona has now included a funk-fusion rendition of the same in her documentary film *Shut Up Sona*, which is currently being played at the documentary festival in North America, Hot Docs Toronto. Retaining the soul and authenticity of the original, Sona's rendition is fresh and powerful yet keeps alive the essence of this ode.

A big admirer of Sufi music, the artist and performer abides by the genre's message of love and peace but also wants to push the boundaries by challenging the notion of as most of the songs in this genre is sung only by male singers traditionally.

At a time when the world stands divided and distraught by the pandemic, she hopes that the song is a reminder of the goodness that exists around us. Sona says, "I am so happy to finally present my recorded version of *Nit Khair Manga* to the world. I have performed this classic on stage for a decade as an ode to Nusrat Saab and his artistry but my interpretation is very different and from a feminine perspective. As an artist, I believe in taking a stand for what is right and also spreading positivity. The world really needs it at the moment, more than ever. I hope this helps us carry the message of unity and love above all."



Friends lacks diversity: Marta

*Friends* co-creator MARTA KAUFFMAN has confessed that she didn't do enough to promote diversity on the popular American sitcom *Friends*, which is considered to be an iconic show.

Kauffman co-created the show with David Crane. She opened up about what it lacked during the virtual 2020 ATX TV...*From the Couch* session.

When she was asked about what she wished she knew when she started her career in television, she said: "I wish I knew then what I know today," said a visibly emotional writer-producer.



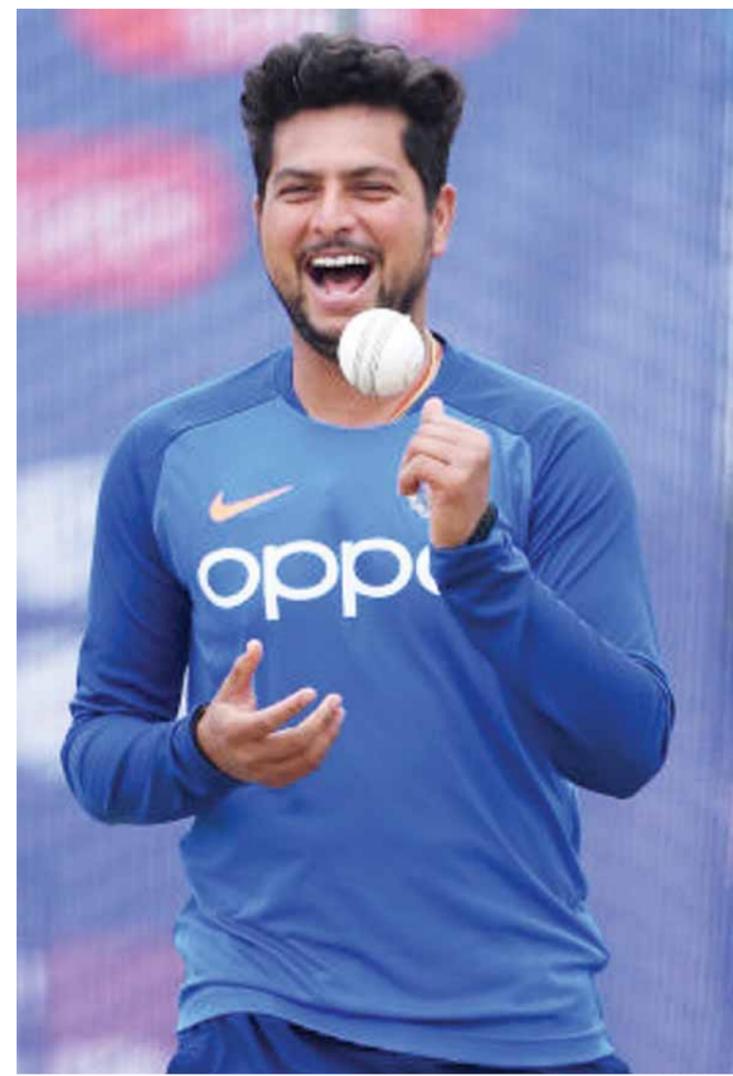
**This season also deals with an older woman relationship with a younger man. How important is it to normalise this taboo in this society with dignity?**

I don't think it is something new that we are trying to showcase through the show. If a woman have had a failed relationship in her 40s and is divorced, she could certainly fall in love again with a man, irrespective of his age. She has the right to make that decision for herself without thinking about society or its norms.

**Is season 4 on cards?**

Yes, it will have a fresh new base and may be loosely based on the real life story of a Bollywood star-wife and her extra marital affair. The new season will have the nuances that the first three seasons had, but with a totally fresh cast.

The show is written by Mukta and Jaya and directed by Abhijit. It also features some dialogues that truly justify and showcase the emotional mindset of each character that will stay with the audience for long.



# KULDEEP TRYING NOT TO USE SALIVA

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

India's left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav has again started training in earnest, bowling four hours daily, and is striving hard to curb his natural instinct of applying saliva on the ball.

With lockdown restrictions being eased out, and BCCI urging players to start their skill training at the local level, Kuldeep under tutelage of his childhood coach Kapil Pandey is sweating it out at the local Rovers ground, where he learnt all his cricket.

"I have started training at the Rovers ground in Lal Bangla area. In fact I am doing two sessions per day. In the morning from 7:30 to 9 am, I do my physical training. Then I go back home and comeback in the evening. From 4 pm to 8 pm, I am regularly bowling in the nets," Kuldeep told PTI Bhasha during an interaction.

"It's only been a week that I have started outdoor training. All this while, I was at home maintaining social distancing norms. Now I believe within next few weeks, I would be ready for competitive cricket as and when it starts," said Yadav, who has played 6 Tests, 60 ODIs and 21 T20 Internationals for the country. For the 25-year-old, the

"I HAVE STARTED TRAINING AT THE ROVERS GROUND IN LAL BANGLA AREA. IN FACT I AM DOING TWO SESSIONS PER DAY. IN THE MORNING FROM 7:30 TO 9 AM, I DO MY PHYSICAL TRAINING. THEN I GO BACK HOME AND COMEBACK IN THE EVENING. FROM 4 PM TO 8 PM, I AM REGULARLY BOWLING IN THE NETS."

biggest concern is controlling the habit of using saliva, something that he feels is conditioned to follow.

"Look, since childhood, we have this habit of applying saliva on the ball to keep the shine. With new ICC rules in place, I am trying to get rid of the habit.

"I believe it needs to be imbibed in training sessions first. Hopefully, we will have some alternative in place," said

Kuldeep, who already has 167 international wickets, across formats, in his kitty.

ICC has banned the use of saliva but players can use sweat to shine the ball.

Asked what is the format he would like to play once cricket resumes, Kuldeep said that T20 will be his choice.

"Once competitive cricket resumes, I would prefer playing IPL. That is in case normalcy returns."

While he has started training, he feels that cricket is not priority right now when the country is struggling badly to flatten the curve of COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have seen the crisis of migrant labourers across India especially in Delhi and Mumbai. People are jobless and you can't just think about your sport," said the talented spinner.

So how has he helped people who have faced financial distress? Kuldeep replied, "I have always believed in this philosophy that charity should be done quietly. Yes, I am associated with a few NGOs plus I have tried to help people in my native Kanpur."

"But if you ask me to divulge details, I won't because in my opinion, that's not the right thing to do," Kuldeep added.

# Kane all praise for Kohli

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Natural ability married to insatiable hunger for improvement — that's New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson's assessment of his India counterpart Virat Kohli and his record-breaking batting achievements.

Williamson highlighted the difference in Kohli in comparison to 2008 when he made his ODI debut.

"You can say that it was only a matter of time before he (Kohli) was making some strong inroads to the full international scene," Williamson was quoted as saying in Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected'.

"At the moment, leading the way in cricket and setting the standard as a batter and breaking all these records. A lot of that probably has to come down to his maturity, his ability to make very good decisions," he said.

Williamson said he is fortunate to have played against Kohli.

"Not only is he gifted with his ability and his natural ability, but you're marrying that up with this constant drive and hunger to improve and just be better day in and day out," he said.

"It has been great to meet at a young age and follow his progress and journey."



# 'Stokes doesn't need extra pressure of captaincy'

PTI ■ LONDON

Kevin Pietersen reckons that star all-rounder Ben Stokes must not be burdened with captaincy if regular skipper Joe Root is unavailable for England's first Test against the West Indies. The former England skipper instead backed wicketkeeper-batsman Jos Buttler for the top job.

England red-ball captain Root is a doubtful starter for the series-opener, starting July 8 as his wife is due to give birth to their second child.

As per the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) guidelines Root will be required to undergo seven days of self-isolation before rejoining the national team.

"Do I want to see Ben Stokes change from who he is and the current player he is? Probably not, Jos Buttler would be my guy," said Pietersen.

Pietersen is sceptical about Stokes being loaded with added responsibility of leading the team.

"The entertainers and the guys that have to carry the mantle in the team sometimes aren't the best captains and sometimes struggle with the extra added pressure," Pietersen said.

"As a player you are looked



at completely differently until that phone call comes and you are announced as the Test captain. Responsibilities change, communication changes, the way in which you carry yourself in the dressing room changes," he added.

Recalling his short stint as captain, Pietersen said he hated the job.

"I struggled with it, I absolutely hated it and I was rubbish. You have to change and I couldn't command the respect of the dressing room, you say

something and it is frowned upon, it is a completely different story," Pietersen said.

Last week, Root threw his weight behind Stokes for being the interim captain.

"I think if Ben was captain he would be fantastic. One of his great qualities as vice-captain and as a leader is that he sets the example, the way he goes about his training, how he wants to bowl in difficult circumstances, the way he stands up in different scenarios with the bat," Root had said.

# 'Dhoni's mental toughness made him special'

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Former Zimbabwe cricket captain Tatenda Taibu feels that Mahendra Singh Dhoni's mental toughness separated him from his contemporaries.

"...The first time I saw Dhoni, if I'm to be honest...He had come with the India A side. I thought Karthik was more natural than Dhoni. And still in keeping, he is more natural...Even in batting he is more natural," Taibu said on Fan Play-Sports Ruler 'Inside Out With Baggs' on YouTube channel.

Taibu then went on to explain Dhoni's technical prowess.

"Now, the way he (MSD) keeps, his hands are not always together like you always have the little fingers together... When he catches his hands are always not like that..."

"But he always manages to catch the ball and whip the bails in a flash with a very different technique...Very different and odd technique," Taibu added.

Taibu also said with Dhoni it was similar with his



batting as the technique was different but it was about his hand-eye coordination and mental toughness too.

"Same thing about his batting...Different technique. But great hand-eye co-ordination. But I don't think it's only his hand-eye coordination but probably his mental toughness."

"Normally if you don't look the part, so to speak, it's easy for coaches to just put you aside. But Dhoni backs that up with statistics," Taibu added.

About Australian great Adam Gilchrist, the Zimbabwean said he was a natural batsman but not a natural 'keeper and used to put in

more time on his wicket-keeping than batting.

"Gilchrist was a natural batsman and not a natural wicket-keeper. He always used to put more time on his keeping than his batting because his batting was very natural. Hitting the ball was quite easy for him," he added.

Taibu, who had burst into the scene at a young age and also led the country, said he had learnt a lot from the international stars like Indian greats Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid among others, especially about training.

# Players need to open up mental fatigue: Domingo

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bangladesh head coach Russell Domingo wants to create a team environment in which players can openly talk about issues related to physical and mental health.

Domingo also said he expects players to be honest about their mental health.

"Regarding mental fatigue I think it's something players need to be honest and open about," Domingo told Cricbuzz.

"Not all players will be comfortable to talk about those aspects, but we want to create an environment where in our team, our players can openly talk about how they are feeling and whether they need a break, and whether it's mental or physical," he added.

Mental health of elite cricketers has come into the spotlight after Australian batsman Glenn Maxwell took a break to deal with his unspecified problems, followed by young batsman Nic Maddinson. English players like Steve Harmison, Marcus Trescothick and Graeme Fowler have dealt with depression.

Domingo said it is important that the cricketers share and open about any difficulties they face.

"We have got to respect that because it's an important aspect to the game," he said.

Former ODI captain Mashrafe Mortaza had recently spoken about mental health in Bangladesh cricket. He said the socio-cultural factors in his country is such that mental issues are still considered a taboo and thus players are reluctant to talk about them.



# Clarke appointed officer in Order of Australia

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia's World Cup-winning former captain Michael Clarke was on Monday appointed an officer in the Order of Australia, joining iconic ex-skipper Allan Border and Steve Waugh who have received the national recognition.

Clarke, who led Australia to the 2015 World Cup title, has been appointed an officer in the general division of the Order of Australia, an honour for achievement or meritorious service.

Reacting to the news, Clarke told Channel 9: "To be honest, I thought it was an April fool's prank in June. Very surprised but in the same breath very honoured."

The other Australian captains who have received an AO include Ricky Ponting, Mark Taylor, Steve Waugh, Allan Border and Bob Simpson. Clarke has been honoured for "distinguished service to cricket as a player at the national and international level, through leadership roles, and to the community."

# Hearing on Man City appeal against ban begins

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester City's appeal against a two-year ban from European competition opened before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) on Monday by videoconference, a court official told AFP.

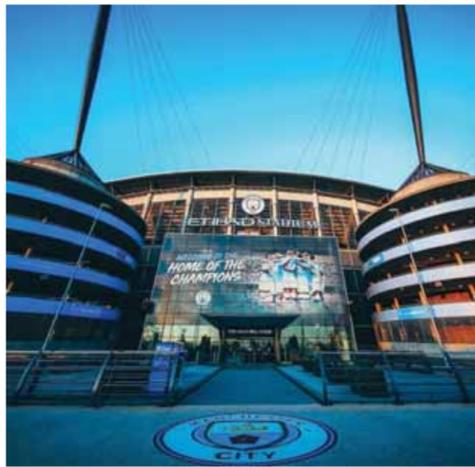
City are accused of overstating sponsorship revenue to hide their failure to comply with UEFA's financial fair-play (FFP) rules between 2012 and 2016. In addition to the ban, they were also fined 30 million euros (\$34 million, £27 million).

"The hearing has started well and the video conference is working well," Matthieu Reeb, the secretary general of the Lausanne-based CAS, said.

The remote hearing, which pits Manchester City against UEFA lawyers, opened 09:00 local time (0700 GMT) and is scheduled to last three days before closing on Wednesday evening.

Reeb said a decision could be announced in July.

Even if City's appeal to CAS fails, the English champions could present a further appeal before the Swiss Federal Court, also based in Lausanne.



UEFA's case was prompted by a series of leaked emails published by German magazine Der Spiegel in 2018 that seemed to show how City manufactured extra sponsorship revenue from a series of companies with connections to the club's Abu Dhabi-based owner Sheikh Mansour.

Under the Sheikh's ownership, City's fortunes have been transformed, winning four Premier League titles in the past eight years.

However, the billions invested in players and managers have not yet delivered the club's first Champions League title.

City are still involved in this season's competition and

will be allowed to compete should the 2019/20 edition of the Champions League return in August, no matter the outcome of the appeal.

Another European powerhouse, Italian club AC Milan, has already been excluded from European competitions for failing to comply with the FFP rules, after losing their appeal to CAS in June 2019.

A two-season ban from the competition would represent a huge blow to City's prestige, finances and hope of keeping manager Pep Guardiola and key players like Kevin De Bruyne and Raheem Sterling.

"Two years would be long. One year is something I might be able to cope with," De Bruyne told Het Laatste Nieuws last month.

City banked 93 million euros from prize money and television rights alone by reaching the quarter-finals of last season's Champions League.

The further loss of gate receipts and commercial revenue would make it extremely difficult for the club to meet FFP regulations without cutting costs.

# New tennis tournament in France aims to young audience

AP ■ PARIS

With discussions ongoing over whether the U.S. Open or the French Open can even take place later this year, a new digitally friendly tennis tournament starts Saturday in southern France with four Top 10-ranked players involved.

Co-founder Patrick Mouratoglou hopes the Ultimate Tennis Showdown (UTS) - whose first edition features ATP Finals winner Stefanos Tsitsipas and U.S. Open semifinalist Matteo Berrettini - can change the way tennis is viewed by allowing a younger audience to access the raw feelings of players.

"I would like the fans to benefit from better access to the players' emotions, especially on the court where the code of conduct is a significant obstacle to that," Mouratoglou said.

"UTS aims to appeal to a younger, more engaged new generation of fans in order to grow its fanbase community."

Players compete every weekend for five weeks in a round robin format, their matches streamed on a live platform, with multiple screens, cameras and speakers capturing every sight and sound, according to organizers.

And that's the whole point: allowing viewers unprecedented access to all that goes on in a game. Ramping up the rawness, rather than filtering it out. Mouratoglou, who is also the coach of 23-time Grand Slam winner Serena Williams, founded the UTS with Australian player Alexei Popyrin, who is also playing.

# Liverpool mayor wants Merseyside derby at Goodison Park

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool's potential title-winning clash against Everton should be played at Goodison Park instead of a neutral venue, according to the city's mayor Joe Anderson.

The Merseyside derby will be the first match for Jürgen Klopp's side once the Premier League restarts following the coronavirus interruption.

If second placed Manchester City lose at home to Arsenal on June 17, then leaders Liverpool can wrap up their first English title for 30 years with a victory over their city rivals.

At present the game is scheduled for Goodison on June 21, but there have been calls from police chiefs to move it to a neutral venue to avoid fans congregating outside in violation of social distancing rules.

The fixture was on a list of 'high risk' games drawn up by police chiefs last month and Anderson previously said it was not a good idea to restart the season because fans would not stay away.

Yet Anderson has changed his mind and believes the match could safely be staged at Goodison.

"We are in a better place than we were four weeks ago and we've been able to convey why it's so important nobody congregates outside or near grounds," he told The Athletic website.



"We have had the opportunity since then to speak to fans and the clubs have done their part and got the message across that supporters need to stay away."

"Both clubs have made it clear. Jürgen Klopp has made it clear."

"So I would have no objection to the games being played at our clubs' home grounds, both the derby at Goodison and Liverpool's games at Anfield."

Merseyside Police have no objections to the derby being played at Goodison.

The matter will be discussed at Liverpool City Council's Safety Advisory Group meeting on Monday.