

**OPINION 6**  
LEARNING IN  
TIMES OF CRISIS

**MONEY 9**  
MARKETS RESUME RALLY  
AS BANK STOCKS SPURT

**SPORT 12**  
COPPA ITALIA SEMIS  
ON JUNE 12-13

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## Send migrants home in 15 days: SC

Apex court says it intends to pass such order to Centre, State Govts on June 9

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday gave two-week time to the Centre and the States to complete the transportation of all stranded migrant workers to their native places and fixed June 9 as the date to pronounce its order on the issue.

A Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan was hearing the matter in which it had taken suo motu cognisance on the plight of migrant workers who were stranded across the country due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

The Centre informed the court on Friday that around one crore migrant workers across the country have already reached their destination — around 41 lakh by road transport and 57 lakh by trains.

During the hearing, the advocates representing various States gave the figures of migrant workers as per which, over 11 lakh and 20.5 lakh people have gone back from Maharashtra and Gujarat respectively.



Counsel appearing for Bihar and Uttar Pradesh informed the SC they have so far received 28 lakh and 21.69 lakh migrants respectively.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta informed the Bench, also comprising Justices SK Kaul and MR Shah, that so far 802 trains have been operated from Maharashtra for trans-

porting migrant workers.

Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, representing the Delhi Government, told the top court that around two lakh workers are still in the national Capital and only around 10,000 of them have expressed their desire to return to their native places.

The counsel appearing for

Gujarat told the SC that out of around 22 lakh migrant workers in the State, 20.5 lakh have already been transported back.

Senior advocate PS Narasimha, appearing for Uttar Pradesh, said that around 5.50 lakh migrants workers were brought back into the State from Delhi borders for which buses made over 10,000 trips.

### PLIGHT OF MIGRANTS

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○Over 11 lakh and 20.5 lakh people have gone back from Maharashtra and Gujarat respectively

○So far 802 trains have been operated from Maharashtra for transporting migrant workers

The counsel appearing for the Bihar Government told the court that around 28 lakh migrant workers have returned to the State. The lawyer said that the Bihar Government is taking steps to provide them employment and so far, skill mapping of around 10 lakh migrants has been done.

The counsel representing West Bengal said that around 3.97 lakh stranded migrants are in the State and relief camps were serving around one lakh meals. The counsel said that West Bengal is more of a receiving State and they will provide every assistance which is needed to bring people back.

The counsel representing Kerala said that around 4.34 lakh migrants were there and over one lakh persons have already been transported. The Kerala Government said 1.61 lakh wanted to stay put.

When Kerala's counsel said that Railways is under the Central Government and they should take care of the cost of return by migrants, the Bench said that all States must make their own arrangements.

## No new scheme for year, Central ministries told

Spending on only PM Garib Kalyan and Atmanirbhar Bharat allowed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Resource-starved as it is, the Government will not start any new schemes for a year, the Finance Ministry said on Friday making it clear that any spending will only be allowed in the Prime Minister's "Garib Kalyan Package" and the recent announcements made under "the Atmanirbhar Bharat package". No other scheme would be approved.

Schemes already approved under the Budget will also stay suspended till March 31, 2021.

The drastic move is to tighten spending amid rising coronavirus cases with no clarity on when the pandemic will peak in the country.

"It may be appreciated that



in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is an unprecedented demand on public financial resources and a need to use resources prudently in accordance with emerging and changing priorities," the expenditure department, under the Finance Ministry, said adding that it has been receiving many new proposals for in-principle approval from various Ministries or departments.

All Ministries have been told to stop sending requests for new schemes to the Finance Ministry. Spending will only be allowed in the Prime Minister's Garib Kalyan Package and the announcements made under the Atmanirbhar Bharat package, it said.

## At 6th rank, India races ahead of Italy

Fourth straight day of 9,000+ cases, highest deaths in Maha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India climbed to the sixth spot in the world table of worst-hit coronavirus nations by leaving behind Italy after recording the fourth straight day of 9,000 plus new cases on Friday. Now the US, Brazil, Russia, Spain, and the UK are ahead of it.

The country recorded 9,045 new cases and 279 deaths on Friday, which took its overall count of new cases to 2,35,767 and deaths to 6,642.

Maharashtra sank into deep despair on Friday as the State recorded highest-ever daily tally of 139 deaths and as many as 2,436 new infected cases. With the fresh deaths and infections, the total number of deaths rose to 2,849, while the total infected cases jumped to 80,229.

Taking into the total number of deaths so far and the fact that 35,156 patients have been discharged from various hospitals so far, the State health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" at 42,215.

Of the deaths reported on Friday, Mumbai accounted for 54 deaths, while there were 30 deaths in Thane, 14 deaths each

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	80,229	2,849	35,156
Tamil Nadu	28,694	235	15,762
Delhi	26,334	708	10,315
Gujarat	19,119	1,190	13,011
Rajasthan	10,087	213	7,162
Uttar Pradesh	9,733	257	5,648
Madhya Pradesh	8,762	377	5,637
West Bengal	7,303	366	2,912
Karnataka	4,835	57	1,693
Bihar	4,598	29	2,233
Andhra Pradesh	4,250	73	2,565
Haryana	3,597	24	1,209
Jammu & Kashmir	3,324	36	1,086
Telangana	3,290	113	1,627
Odisha	2,608	10	1,604

in Pune and Jalgaon, eight deaths in Malegaon, seven deaths in Kalyan-Dombivli, five deaths in Ratnagiri, two deaths each in Solapur and Nashik, one death each in Vasai-Virar-1, Bhiwandi, and Aurangabad-1.

Tamil Nadu saw 1,438 persons testing positive for coronavirus on Friday, the highest ever number to be tested positive on a single day. With the addition of 1,438 patients into the pool, Tamil Nadu has 12,697 active Covid-19 cases on Friday. Till date 28,694 persons have tested positive for the pandemic in the State, according to a medical bulletin by the Tamil Nadu Government.

The death tally on Friday was 12 and this took the total

number of fatalities till date to 232. Out of the 12 who breathed their last on Friday, four were in the 80-82 age

group, three were in 70-72 group, one was 68, two were 56 and 50 years of age, and a 44-year-old person.

**ELISA test kits can be used to determine infection exposure among public: Study**  
New Delhi: Indigenously developed ELISA testing kits for Covid-19 have been found to be sensitive and specific for the detection of novel coronavirus antibodies in human serum samples and can be used for determining infection exposure among the general population, a study said. *PTI*

**Top court asks if pvt hospitals ready to charge Covid patients at Ayushman rate**  
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday asked private hospitals whether they are ready to provide treatment to Covid-19 patients at the charges prescribed under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. The Ayushman Bharat is aimed at providing health cover to poor and vulnerable persons. *PTI*

## Second Covid-19 death in 24 hours in State

ROSHAN KUMAR ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand on Friday reported the seventh death due to Covid 19. In last twenty-four hours this is second death of a corona patient in State, as on Thursday a retired army personnel died due to infection. The Friday death was of a retired government school teacher, who was admitted at Rajendra Institute of Medical Science (RIMS) from Bhagwan Mahavir Medica Superspecialty Hospital as the patient health deteriorated. Sources said that in both the cases (retired army man and teacher) they were earlier admitted at Bhagwan Mahavir Medica Superspecialty Hospital, but were referred to RIMS after their health deteriorated.

Confirming the death, State Health Secretary Nitin Madan Kulkarni said, "The patient was admitted at RIMS on Friday early morning from Medica after his health deteriorated." Kulkarni said that the health department has issued show cause notice to Bhagwan Mahavir Medica Superspecialty Hospital in both the incidents.

Sources said that the 70-year-old retired teacher and resident of Simdega was admitted at Medica with kidney ailments, but during treatment it was found that he was corona positive. Sources said that the patient was referred to RIMS in



A health person screening migrants labours from Chhatishgarh before arranging for everyone to go home at Khelgaon chowk in Ranchi on Friday *Patan Lal | Pioneer*

serious condition and he died reaching RIMS early morning.

The retired jawan who died on Thursday was admitted in the Neurology Wing of the hospital on Wednesday after he fell from a terrace and sustained severe head injuries earlier this week.

The deceased was referred to RIMS from Medica Superspecialty Hospital, where his swab samples for Covid-19 tests were collected. However, he died while undergoing treatment at the neurology wing of RIMS by the time his test result was out, doctors said.

The army jawan was cremated at city's sole gas crematorium at Harmu Muktidham amidst police protection. The crematorium which is gas based became functional this month after remaining dys-

79 new cases surface in J'khand on Friday

functional for more than a decade. The second death of corona patients in State has come when State Government is planning to move towards giving more lockdown relaxations. On the other hand as per health bulletin till filling of reports State witnessed growth of 79 fresh cases, which is highest cases in a day. With the report of 79 fresh cases the number of corona positive patients has gone up to 922. Out of 922 cases, the active cases is 505 while 410 persons have recovered and discharged from hospital. Also cause of concern is that out of 922 cases, the number of migrant positive cases district-wise from May 2, 2020 onwards is 654.

## Raaj Tilak-famed producer Anil Suri succumbs to coronavirus

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Bollywood producer Anil Suri, who had backed films like Raaj Kumar-Rekha starrer "Karmayogi" and "Raaj Tilak", passed away due to coronavirus on Thursday. He was 77.

Anil's brother, film producer Rajiv Suri, said he had fever on June 2 but his condition worsened the next day with breathlessness. "He was rushed to Lilavati and Hinduja, but both denied him a bed," Rajiv claimed.

"He was then taken to Advanced Multispecialty Hospital on Wednesday night. He had Covid-19. On Thursday evening, they said something is amiss and he was put on ventilator. He died around 7:00 pm," said Rajiv. Last rites of Anil were held on Friday morning at Oshiwara cremation ground.

Besides Rajiv, Anil is survived by two children and wife. Rajiv, who had produced Basu Chatterjee's 1979 film "Manzil" featuring Amitabh Bachchan and Moushumi Chatterjee, said it was heartbreaking to lose one of his favourite directors and brother on the same day.

Chatterjee breathed his last on Thursday morning.

## Need to be responsible, aware about environment: CM

Natural beauty is the identity of the State, says Soren

PNS ■ RANCHI

Chief Minister Hemant Soren today said that Jharkhand is a State set up in the lap of nature. "The lush green forests, fields, rivers and streams and natural beauty are the hallmarks of this region. In view of these natural resources, this State is known as Jharkhand. At the present time we all need to be responsible and aware of the environment," he said while addressing media persons on the occasion of World Environment Day on the premises of Van Bhawan, Doranda, Ranchi on Friday.

The CM said that biodiversity is the vision of the government. "We all have to formulate this vision together. It is the responsibility of all of us to hand over a green area to our future generations. The greener our Jharkhand State will be, the happier life will be for the people of Jharkhand. Anyway, the people of Jharkhand have always been nature lovers," he



Chief Minister Hemant Soren pays tribute to a replica of an elephant's eye in the remembrance of an elephant who was recently killed in Kerala, on the occasion of World Environment Day at Van Bhawan in Ranchi on Friday *Vinay Murmu | Pioneer*

planted saplings on the occasion. He also appealed to all media personnel present on the occasion to plant saplings.

On this occasion, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Shashi Nand Keolayar, Chairman of Jharkhand State Pollution Control Board, AK Rastogi, Member Secretary of State Pollution Control Board, Rajeev Lochan Bakshi, Press Advisor to Chief Minister Abhishek Prasad, Senior Pvt Secretary to Chief Minister Sunil Srivastava and other officials were present.

## CM asks DCs to ensure no one starves in State

Also says no woman should sell alcohol, Govt aims to provide jobs to all

PNS ■ RANCHI

Chief Minister Hemant Soren today asked all deputy commissioners of the State to ensure that no one dies of hunger in Jharkhand. "Take this seriously. If this happens, this will not only be shameful but also be painful. We all have to discharge our duties with sincerity. Monitor and review ration distribution, Didi Kitchen, MGNREGA works and other schemes also augment these schemes and connect people with employment," he said while talking to all DCs and DDCs through video conferencing here on Friday.

The CM said that middlemen should not find a place in the schemes. "Middlemen have been reported to have job cards. Employment of villagers is the priority of the government. Work fast. Take care of any kind of negligence. Work should be done to identify

workers at block and panchayat level and provide them employment and pay workers' wages on time," said he.

The CM said that the women of the State should not sell liquor in the local markets. One has to take the initiative to link such women to other jobs without forcefully removing them and to create new employment opportunities by forming a group of women. All DCs should plan for gradually making women aware not to sell liquor and provide work according to them, he said.

Soren said that during the monsoon, some schemes may be closed due to rains. "In such a situation, prepare an action plan for the villagers as per the monsoon so that they can be linked to employment even during the rains. All the DCs should prioritize this work. Identify the skilled people as well, so that they can be linked to employment in industries, mining, construction and other sectors according to their skills. Wherever the machine is being used in the work being done under MGNREGA in the State,



Chief Minister Hemant Soren holds meeting with all Deputy Commissioners and Deputy Development Commissioners through video conferencing in Ranchi on Friday *Pioneer photo*

then seize that machine. All the DCs should issue information in this regard that if the machine is caught working, then for the first time one month, second time for three months and third time for six months keep the machine in the police station. More complaints have been received from Dhanbad and Deoghar to get the work done by JCB machines," he said.

The CM said that the government has set a target of planting fruit trees under Birsra Green Village Scheme on about 20,000 acres of GM and

Rayyati land. All the DCs should pay attention to this work.

The villagers have to lease those fruitful trees in the coming time through the scheme. Under the scheme, the Horticulture Sakhi Scheme entrusts the responsibility of conservation of fruit plantation on five acres of land to the group of women, ensuring economic independence.

The CM directed DC, Ranchi to link the returned workers from various states with the work of construction sector. He said that the gov-

ernment is also planning to construct ponds, small reservoirs and check dams under MGNREGA so that the capacity of ground water can be increased. The CM also directed the DCs to stop rain water by making rams. Employment is to be provided to the people through such works. Notice that there is encroachment in the catchment area of the capital's Kanke dam and the Getlasud dam in Ormanjhi. The condition of Getlasud Dam should not be like Kanke Dam, he said.

On this occasion, Minister Alamgir Alam, Chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh, Director General of Police MV Rao, Additional Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Rajiv Arun Ekka, Principal Secretary Dr. Nitin Madan Kulkarni, Secretary Aradhana Patnaik, Secretary Amitabh Kaushal, MNREGA Commissioner Siddharth Tripathi, OSD to Chief Minister Gopalji Tiwari, Sr Pvt Secretary to CM Sunil Srivastava were present.

# Adityapur pins hopes on Tata Motors to revamp production

Commercial vehicle major set to manufacture 2500 units in June  
PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Hit by lockdown, Asia's largest industrial belt, Adityapur Industrial Area is pinning hopes on Tata Motors to revamp its production. With commercial vehicle major restart of manufacturing operations for its commercial vehicles from its plants located at Jamshedpur, the industrial units of Adityapur are hopeful to give a fillip to its operations.



The sprawling Adityapur Industrial Area houses 1200 units- including 11 large-scale, 64 small scale and 166 tiny industries and most of these units depend on Tata Motors.

According to information Tata Motors has plans to manufacture about 2500 vehicles at its plant and most of the work order will be given to its ancillaries at Adityapur. "We have started functioning after the first phase of unlocking. Several of the industrial units have started receiving orders. We need support from the Government too to be back on the track, said an official of Adityapur Small Industries Association (ASIA).

Tata Motors produces truck and bus chassis of various models by sourcing parts of the vehicles produced in the ancillary units in the Adityapur industrial area. After the lockdown started on March 25, assembling work at the Tata Motors plant came to a standstill. Ancillary units in

# Substandard N95 masks being sold at premium price in market

ASHIS SINHA ■ BOKARO

Amidst Coronavirus epidemic, inferior quality duplicates N95 face mask or respirator flooded in the market, are being sold for Rs 250-450 a piece in Bokaro.



Lookalike N95 respirator or masks are being supplied in the market, admitted health experts, distributors and shop owners. N95 masks, which are one of the most advanced antipollution and anti-contamination masks available in the country, might be manufactured locally, which are inferior in quality, said Vinod a medical staff.

"The duplicate masks cannot filter 95 percent of airborne particles like the N95s. We are selling them because people want to buy them. People feel some protection is better than nothing," said Piyush, a distributor in Sector 4 at Bokaro. "Now we are out of stock, we have already placed a fresh order in May with a Delhi-based company, but yet to receive the consignment," he added.

The original N95 mask can filter particles up to 0.3 microns in diameter, is itself "moderate protection" against the novel coronavirus that has a diameter of 0.12 micron, said a medical expert adding "Under the present circumstances it is the best bet."

Lookalike N95 masks are also in huge demand not only in the urban areas but in rural pockets too since after the coronavirus cases were reported in the country. Against an earlier demand (during April) of 50-75 masks a day, it was 250-400 a day for the past 15 days as the inflow of migrants increased in the district, said Sandeep, another distributor in Chas.

"We are out of stock for the past four days. Fresh supply has not come since last month," said Gaghander, another distributor in Chas. The duplicate or inferior quality of N95 masks are not approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), which tests and authorises medical equipment, said a dis-

tribut health department official. "Must look for a NIOSH-approved label on the packaging or on the mask," added the official.

Civil Surgeon A K Pathak said, the lookalike N95 mask which may have three layers (two synthetic and one foam) still cannot stop a healthy person from catching the viral infection. "The N95 too does not guarantee 100 percent protection against virulent viruses," he added.

While asking of inferior quality and overpricing sale of masks in the market Civil Surgeon said, Drug and Cosmetic department officials can keep a tab over the quality and overpricing sale of the N95 masks in the market.

Pathak advised people not to panic and maintain good personal hygiene instead. "Must wash hands often with soap, use hand sanitiser, avoid crowded places and keep a distance of at least one meter from others," added Civil Surgeon.

# HR challenges in post Covid-19 world

BY DR KUMAR MOHIT SPRING

Presently, we are living in an era of uncertainty. The coronavirus pandemic has jolted the entire world into a state of shock. The global economy has been pushed into recession. Human Health and wellbeing is threatened and certainty of life has become unpredictable.

In India the situation, however is still better than most nations. Our prime minister has taken some very proactive and suitable measures to ensure that this dreaded killer disease does not spread beyond control. However, the spread of the pandemic has far reaching implications, both for the people as well as the economy of the country.

In this mercurial environment, the HR department needs to future proof the organization. However, there are 4 major issues which pose a challenge. The 4 issues include Health and wellbeing of employees, Job security, Cost Reduction and Sustainability of Operations

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF EMPLOYEES

The organization needs to make available an effective and sanitized work environment so that the employees are safe and secure. Social distancing

has become the norm of the day. Wearing of masks/gloves will be mandatory. Every vehicle coming into the plant/office/workplace will have to be sanitized.

## JOB SECURITY

Due to the need for social distancing, the number of workers will be reduced. This would lead to 'Restructuring'. Big organizations that are labour intensive will be forced to end their contracts on the lines of "No Job/Work Available". Recently the private cab/taxi giant 'Uber', laid off close to 3700 of its employees, who were mostly cab drivers. These instances of job insecurity may lead to a panic situation.

## COST REDUCTION

Due to the economic distress created by the global pandemic there is constant pressure on the management to reduce cost. Also the govt. directive, to pay full salaries to employees adds to the burden. The future demand of the products/services of organizations is also unpredictable. All these hard facts are reasons for which cost reduction has become a necessary evil in all organizations.

## SUSTAINABILITY OF OPERATIONS

Right now the work-

force/employees of every organization globally, are desperate to go back to work. There are myriad reasons for this; livelihood/finances/family etc. These desperate times will lead to desperate measures because now the existence of mankind is at stake. A small effort to restart is enough to boost the morale of the employees. Once operations commence, the synergy will carry on the process in its own momentum, and in a matter of sometime the people will rise again.

There are now instances of countries where the lockdown is being relaxed to stabilize the economy and also to provide livelihood to people for their existence and sustenance. Even in India, we have gone from Lockdown 4.0 to Unlock 1. As we move forward, we need to accept/adapt this virus as part of our existence and find ways in which we can protect ourselves and make this planet a better place to live in for our generations to come.

In all these situations, the HR department needs to adapt and evolve significantly with Covid19 by working against time and circumstances.

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at the Dept of Human Resource Management, XISS, Ranchi)

# BE Department's e-magazine, paperless work launched

PNS ■ BOKARO

Mukul Prasad, Executive Director (Personnel and Administration), BSL, launched the first issue of the e-magazine Steel Business Scenario (April-May) compiled by the Business Excellence (BE) Department.

This is a bi-monthly e-magazine for internal distribution in SAIL. The magazine contains various chapters like world steel business scenario, Indian steel business scenario, national and international steel news, news clippings, news of various SAIL steel plants during the Covid-19 epidemic.

General Manager (BE) Anupama Tiwari and General Manager (BE) B. Banerjee were instrumental in the news com-

pilation and launch of e-magazine.

Also In the backdrop of the Digital India program of the Central Government, BSL is poised to implement paperless work culture in all its offices. Under this campaign, Director in-charge (M & H) Dr. AK Singh, ED (P & A) Mukul Prasad, ED (Projects) R. Kushwaha, ED (MM) VK Pandey, ED (F& A), DK Saha and ED (Operations) AtanuBhowmick, Assistant General Manager (C&IT) were present.

PK Surya gave information on the paperless methodology software. There is a plan to implement paperless methodology in BSL in a phased manner.

# Palamu MP takes pot shots at Govt for doing with 'in-charge' at top slots

Daltonganj: It is now BJP MP Palamu V D Ram who has taken pot shots at the government a day after senior BIP leader Babul Marandi pulled up this government with working with 'In charge' officials at the top posts here in the state bureaucracy resulting in poor law and order situation with naxal menace rearing its head again.

MP V D Ram told this correspondent today on phone from Delhi "It is a piece of news to me that state DGP post is being run by an in-charge. I have read Marandi ji's reaction in this regard. I also feel this post is very sensitive and important and hence a regular one on this post is always desired without any more delay."

Ram further said, "I know many state governments do have in charge on top posts. It has been so also in this State but the best course is to have a regular one on some such posts which every looks at."

MP said if there are some exceptions in this regard of running vital posts with just in charge even then this cannot be made a rule as it is the government and its people that

suffer acutely at the end. Sources said it was Babul Marandi, who is reported to have raised this issue of posts of Home Secretary and DGP being run by in charges.

Ram stepping in the political cup of Marandi and in the same vein asked the State government to explain as to how the post of Home Secretary here is also being run by an In-charge like the post of DGP.

He quipped, "If there is the scarcity of officers to fill up these posts?"

"This is no good a situation for any state be it our state Jharkhand as these two top posts Home Secretary and DGP are the beacons of the state bureaucracy and when there is this adhocism by way of in charge holding these posts the state bureaucracy is bound to sag down," reiterated V D Ram.

V D Ram who is himself a former DGP of Jharkhand and is now a two term BJP MP from Palamu said, "Frankly speaking the grip of an incharge of any department/post cannot be that strong which a regular one can wield quite easily. It also raises eyebrows." PNS

## Revised Advertisement DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & COOPERATIVE SUBMISSION ON AGRICULTURE EXTENSION (SMAE) UNDER NATIONAL MISSION ON AGRICULTURE EXTENSION & TECHNOLOGY (NMAET)

Invitation for submitting application for providing service on contractual basis at the Block Level in National Mission on Agriculture Extension & Technology, Jharkhand. The Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry & Cooperative, Government of Jharkhand invites application from unemployed/serving/Private sector organizations or otherwise with requisite qualification and experience as elaborated below for provided services against following posts on contractual basis.

Adv. Office Letter No 377 dt. 15.10.2019 and PR No 220026 Agriculture (19-20)-D Dated 19.10.2019 is being revised as follows :-

Sl No.	Description of post	No. Of post	Relaxed Qualification	Experience	Service basis	Contract period (In Year) Maximum	Monthly consolidated remuneration (In case of Contract) and for other calculation on the basis of pay scale
1	Block Technology Manager (BTM)	06	Graduate/ Post Graduate in Agri./Allied Sector with computer skills includes integrated course M.Sc in Agriculture, Rural & Tribal Development (ARTD)/Forestry/Sericulture/ Diploma in Agri Business Management.	Maximum 2 years field experience in Agri. Related activities if Post Graduate otherwise 3 years.	Contractual	one year or Till Plan Extension	Consolidated Rs. 30000/p.m. (Rs.25000+5000) An annual increase of 10% in emoluments for such employees who continue in their employment for one year.
2	Assistant Technology Manager (ATM)	15	Graduate/ Post Graduate in Agri./ Horti./Agri Economics/ Marketing/Veterinary Science/ AHD/ Fisheries includes B.Sc/Botany/Bio-tech/Forestry/Sericulture/Diploma in Agri Business Management.	No Experience Required.	Contractual	one year or Till Plan Extension	Consolidated Rs. 25000/p.m. (Rs.21000+4000) An annual increase of 10% in emoluments for such employees who continue in their employment for one year.

Note :-  
1) Previous Qualification for the post of BTM & ATM will be as it is. Applicant who have already applied, no need to apply again.  
2) Relaxed qualification is for only new Applicant.  
3) Previous Merit & Interview List has been cancelled.

**Vacant Post of Block Technology Manager (BTM) & Assistant Technology Manager (ATM)**

BTM						ATM					
No. of Vacant Post Category wise						No. of Vacant Post Category wise					
Gen	ST	SC	BC-I	BC-II	Total	Gen	ST	SC	BC-I	BC-II	Total
2	0	2	1	1	6	8	3	3	1	0	15

The conditions of providing services on contractual basis are as follows :-

- (i) Posts advertised shall be filled up only on contractual basis initially for a period on one year or till the extension of Plan.
- (ii) The total number of vacancies as indicated above will be filled up as per requirement strictly in accordance with merit.
- (iii) Period of providing services would be for a maximum period of the programme.
- (iv) Monthly Performance Monitoring and Appraisal would be carried out to ensure achievement of the objectives behind this arrangement.
- (v) The contract shall be effective from the date of actual contractual engagement.
- (vi) The selected personnel would assist the Deputy Commissioner-Cum-Chairman (ATMA)/Project Director ATMA Chatra as the case may be in carrying out various functions and also carry out the instructions issued by Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry & Cooperative, Govt of Jharkhand from time to time in a time bound manner.
- (vii) Reservations as per the policy of Government of Jharkhand shall be applicable as per district roster.
- (viii) Successful candidates on contract basis will have to sign a contractual agreement with the Project Director, ATMA CHATRA.
- (ix) The candidates having age less than 45 yrs. will be preferred, but their age should not exceed 65 yrs. as on date of advertisement.
- (x) The contractual engagement shall not confer any right or claim of extension/absorption under the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry & Cooperative, Govt. of Jharkhand.
- (xi) Duly filled in application should reach in the office of Project Director ATMA CHATRA on or before 25.06.2020 at 5:00 pm. Interested and eligible candidates are invited to submit the application enclosing their details CV in the prescribed format along with attested copies of marks sheets, cast certificate, professional qualification, experience etc. and an application fee of Rs 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred only) Non Refundable in the form of Demand Draft in favor of Project Director ATMA CHATRA from any nationalized bank. Application will be accepted only by Registered Post to PROJECT DIRECTOR, ATMA CHATRA, Combined Agriculture Building, Tapez, Chatra (Jharkhand).
- (xii) The appointing authority for this post will be Project Director, ATMA, Chatra. The selection of the candidates for this post would be done by the selection committee in the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner-cum- Chairman, ATMA, Chatra.
- (xiii) Candidate applying for this post will have to personally appear in the ATMA Office for Computer Efficiency Test after Merit List.
- (xiv) One candidate can apply for only one Post.
- (xv) Priority will be given to Local Candidate.
- (xvi) Application Format Can be downloaded from NIC Chatra Website ie chatra.nic.in & atmachatra.in
- (xvii) All right is reserve for appointment authority regarding this advertisement.
- (xviii) The undersigned has the right to cancel the above advertisement without assigning any reason.

PR 229025(Agriculture)20-21\*D  
District Agriculture Officer-Cum Project Director, ATMA Chatra

## कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, धनबाद।

### अति-अल्पकालीन कोटेशन आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या - 01/2020-21

अनुमती कोटेशन दाता से नीचे वर्णित कार्यों के लिए दिनांक- 12.06.2020 को 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक कोटेशन की मॉग की जाती है। कोटेशन निम्न कार्यालय में जमा किया जा सकता है, उसी दिन संबंधित कार्यालय में 3:30 बजे अपराह्न में कोटेशन खोला जायेगा।

(क) कार्यपालक अभियंता, पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, धनबाद।

क्रमांक सं०	कार्य का नाम	सामग्रियों की विवरणी
1.	पथ निर्माण कार्य हेतु सामग्रियों का दर निर्धारण करने का कार्य, (वर्ष 2020-21)	सामग्रियों की अनुसूची संलग्न

पथ निर्माण कार्य हेतु सामग्रियों का दर हेतु आपूर्ति की जाने वाली सामग्रियों की सूची दिनांक- 10.06.2020 तक कार्यालय अवधि में अद्योहस्ताक्षरी के कार्यालय से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमण्डल, धनबाद।  
PR 229058 (Road) 20-21 (D)

## कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, (ग्रामोका0मा0) कार्य प्रमण्डल, लातेहार

### अति अल्पकालीन निविदा

कोटेशन आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या 01/2020-21  
एतद द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि मुख्य अभियंता, ग्रामोवि0 (ग्रामोका0मा0) झारखण्ड राँची के पत्रांक 306 (अनु0) दिनांक 26.05.2020 के द्वारा सामग्रियों का दर श्रोत पर ROYALTY सहित एवं GST रहित कोटेशन प्राप्त करने का निर्देश प्राप्त हुआ है।

उक्त के आलोक में सभी आपूर्तिकर्ता से अनुरोध है कि अपने-अपने आपूर्ति किये जाने वाले सामग्री का दर श्रोत पर ROYALTY सहित एवं GST रहित कोटेशन मुहताबद लिफाफा में अद्योहस्ताक्षरी के कार्यालय में उपलब्ध कराया जाय।

Sl. No.	Name of Materials	Unit	Quoted Rate	
			In Figure	In Words
1. निर्माण सामग्री दर हेतु QUOTATION प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय - 13.06.2020 अपराह्न 3.00 बजे तक।				
2. निर्माण सामग्री दर हेतु QUOTATION की सूची कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, (ग्रामोका0मा0) कार्य प्रमण्डल, लातेहार से कार्यालय अवधि 10.00 बजे से अपराह्न 3.00 बजे तक प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।				
3. दर हेतु QUOTATION आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग, (ग्रामोका0मा0) कार्य प्रमण्डल, लातेहार।				

कार्यपालक अभियंता ग्रामीण विकास विभाग (ग्रामोका0मा0) कार्य प्रमण्डल, लातेहार  
PR 229041 (Rural Development)20-21#D

## कार्यालय :- असेनिक शल्य चिकित्सक-सह-मुख्य चिकित्सा पदाधिकारी, लातेहार

### आम सूचना

"Protecting Youth from Tobacco/Alcohol, Manipulation and Preventing them from Tobacco and Nicotine use" विषय पर Poster/Industry Drawing Competition को Online/Digital माध्यम से जिले के सभी सरकारी/निजी शैक्षणिक संस्थान के छात्र/छात्राओं के द्वारा प्रतियोगिता कार्यक्रम में भाग लेने हेतु आमंत्रित किया जाता है तथा अनुरोध है कि प्रतिभागी दिनांक 06.06.2020 से 22.06.2020 तक Awareness and Prevention से संबंधित Poster/Slogan Drawing Competition को Online/Digital माध्यम से WhatsApp No. 7677091377 या Email ID :- ntplatehar@gmail.com पर निम्नलिखित विवरणी के अनुसार भेजना सुनिश्चित करें।

- प्रतिभागी का नाम :-
- वर्ग :-
- संस्थान का नाम :-
- प्रखंड का नाम :-
- जिला का नाम :-

उक्त प्रतियोगिता में प्रथम तीन विजेतों को पुरस्कृत एवं 10 प्रतिभागियों को संतावना पुरस्कार प्रदान किया जाएगा तथा अन्य सभी प्रतिभागियों को असेनिक शल्य चिकित्सक सह मुख्य चिकित्सा पदाधिकारी एवं जिला नोडल पदाधिकारी NTCP के संयुक्त हस्ताक्षर से Diagit माध्यम से Certificate of Participation दिया जाएगा।

जिला कृषि निवारण पदाधिकारी सह नोडल पदाधिकारी, NTCP, लातेहार  
मुख्य चिकित्सा पदाधिकारी, लातेहार  
PR 229032 (Health Med Edu and Family Welfare)20-21#D

# Cong vows to bring State's economy on fast trajectory

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee (JPCC) on Friday vowed to bring back the ruined economy of the State's fast moving trajectory very soon and at the same time it also urged the Central Government to provide food-grain for next six months as the State is going to witness shortage of food-grains in near future.

Talking to the media persons after holding the meeting of Congress Relief Committee meeting, JPCC Chief cum Finance Minister, Rameshwar Oraon said that the economy of the State has suffered a lot due to the lockdown and Corona epidemic. At present it is the priority of the State Government to bring the economy on a positive trajectory, he added.

"A road map and action plan are also prepared for this. It will take time, but it is sure that the economy will be on the right track. At present, revenue collection is decreasing by more than 30 per cent every month. We will make the tax collection more comprehensive and we will appeal to the people for their cooperation. The availability of food grains is also a big responsibility for the next six months, because from now and till December there will be a shortage of food grains. Therefore, we urged Union Minister of Food Supply Ram Vilas Paswan that the Central Government should provide food grains to the poor states like Jharkhand for six months," said Oraon.

State Congress Spokesperson Alok Kumar Dubey and Lal



Jharkhand Pradesh Congress COVID-19 Relief Monitoring Committee members during a meeting, Pradesh Congress Control Room in Ranchi on Friday. Pioneer photo

Kishorenath Shahdeo were present on the occasion.

In another event, Rural Development Minister, Alamgir Alam distributed foodgrain packets among 300 auto rickshaw drivers.

Addressing the auto rickshaw drivers on the occasion, Alam said that the Government is trying to provide relief to every section affected by the lock down and the migrants. "The Government is very serious to provide jobs to

laborers, so far 500000 laborers have been given employment under the MNREGA and this will continue. The Government is also very serious to stop the migration at any stage in the coming time and the person wants to go outside the State for a job then he has to get permission from the State Government," he added.

Meanwhile, the first meeting of the Jharkhand Shramik Rojgar Coordination Committee was held through video conferencing at the State Congress Headquarters, under the chairmanship of the convener of the committee, Rajiv Ranjan Prasad.

Speaking on the occasion Prasad said that the committee is formulating a database to provide jobs to those migrant labourers who returned to the State recently.

## INBRIEF

### YOGODA SATSANGA ASHRAM RELIEF WORK



Yogoda Satsanga Sakha Ashram in Ranchi founded by Paramahansa Yogananda served around 6,000 needy and vulnerable families in Ranchi and nearby villages during the lockdown period. Assistance to these families was provided in the form of ration, cooked food, and sanitary kits. Dry rations included items like rice, dal, vegetables, spices, and oil which can support a family for a week. The dry ration kits were prepared in the ashram by sannyasis & volunteers. Over the past week, several hundred ration kits were distributed in Huang Hatu panchayat, Karam Toli, Siromtoli, Hindipiri, Chutia, Itki etc. Vegetables grown by the Ashram were provided to the local police station in Chutia, who used them in the community kitchen to prepare Khichiri, which was then distributed among thousands of needy individuals. Also, devotees of Yogoda Ashram provided cooked food to around 50 people for two months near Ranchi and Hatia station. Overall, over 20,000 kgs of foodgrains and 18,000 kgs of vegetables were distributed.

### APS RANCHI CHAPTER HOLDS MEET

Ranchi chapter of Association of Plastic Surgeons met at a clinical meet at RPS Hospital, Bariatu on June 05. The meeting was presided by Dr Ajoy Kr Singh (RPS hospital) and Dr Arvind Prakash (Medanta Hospital). Two new members were welcomed, Dr Tanmay Prasad (Devkamal Hospital) and Dr Saurabh Sharma (RIMS). There were three clinical presentations. Dr Tanmay talked on coverage of hand defects by groin flaps, Dr Pankaj Kumar showed his good results of microvascular repairs for defects and Dr Vikrant talked about liposuction for body contouring. The meeting was attended by Dr Vijay S Das (ex DGHS), Dr Anant Sinha (Devkamal Hospital), Dr Raj Kumar Pathak (Devkamal hospital) and Dr C P Sinha (RIMS). It was decided to have a clinical meet once a month and to create more awareness amongst fellow doctors and public in general.

### SCS CELEBRATES WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

On World Environment Day, a series of activities for students from UKG to class XII was organised at Surendranath Centenary School. UKG students drew and coloured butterflies and flowers while for class II the topic was 'My school garden or kitchen garden'. Students of class IV and V made posters on importance of water conservation and ceasing the use of plastic. Students from class VII - X planted saplings with their parents and wrote slogans to expand greenery. Principal Samita Sinha said, "No effort is small. Each helping hand counts to support this initiative and spread awareness. Let us all join hands to protect our environment to ensure a healthy and safe future." Students showcased their talent while they stayed home.

### WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

In response to covid-19 crisis, SBPS organised an online "Go Green" activity to spread awareness among the students to join hands and save our Mother Earth. The school received an overwhelming response from the parents and the students. Despite being confined to their homes, children actively participated in various competitions. We are immensely proud to see the efforts put in by the students that made this competition a great success.

### DPS STUDENT WINS POSTER COMPETITION

Adrija Sarkar of Class XI at DPS Ranchi made the school proud by winning an Online Poster Competition organized by Jharkhand Biodiversity Board on the occasion of International Biodiversity Day (IBD) 2020. She would be awarded a certificate and a cash prize of Rs 5000. The competition was conducted on May 22 and the topic was "Effect on Nature Due To Present Lockdown". She presented a stupendous creation by representing a lady in the center as Mother earth and other plant and animal lives which are equally important to maintain the ecological balance.



### CATERERS DEMAND RELAXATIONS FOR SMOOTH BUSINESS

In a bid to attract attention of the State Government towards plight of the caterers, Jharkhand Caterers Association (JAC) urged the State Government on Friday that they should be allowed to start their business after providing some relaxation in the guideline issued by the Government. Addressing a press meet, JAC Secretary, Arun Singh said that in the hour of epidemic and lockdown a large number of people related to catering business suffered heavily so that the State Government should provide them some relaxation to bring their business on the right track. The Government should give permission to attend 200 persons in wedding or other functions instead of 50 persons, he added. JAC president Ranjan Kumar said that the e-pass should be issued for those who have to attend functions as after 9 pm they can go anywhere during curfew.

### JPCC OBSERVES ENVIRONMENT DAY

On the occasion of World Environment Day, Chairman of Jharkhand Pradesh Professional Congress, Aditya Vikram Jaiswal distributed 51 Tulsis saplings at many places including Lalpur in the Capital City and also planted 50 mango saplings. On this occasion, Jaiswal said that World Environment Day is celebrated all over the world for the protection of environment. He said that human life will be safe only by balancing the environment. Plant trees - Under life savings, every human being must plant trees on the world environment.

### NSUI PLANTS SAPPLINGS AT RU

On the occasion of World Environment Day, a delegation of the State NSUI led by State secretary Amarjeet Kumar met Vice Chancellor of Ranchi University and offered him 51 Tulsis saplings as greetings that in the interest of the students under the guidance of UGC the university promoted 800,000 students in the next semester. NSUI, along with the Vice Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, planted those plants in the garden of Ranchi University and pledged that in the coming days, they will plant more plants, so that in the coming time, they can move one step towards purifying the environment. Vice Chancellor of Ranchi University, Dr Ramesh Pandey said that NSUI is doing a good job towards environment and students' interest. On the occasion, Pro Vice Chancellor Kamini Kumar and Controller of Examinations Rajesh Kumar also praised the NSUI.

### BAU CELEBRATES ENVIRONMENT DAY

World Environment Day was observed on Friday in the Forestry Faculty of Birsa Agricultural University (BAU) by following social distance. Several mohini saplings were planted on the faculty campus by teachers and personnel including Dean of the Faculty MH Siddiqui and this year it was resolved to plant a large number of saplings on the university campus in the monsoon.

# BJP to reach 35L houses on Modi Govt's first anniversary

PNS ■ RANCHI

The Jharkhand BJP has planned big celebrations for one year of Modi 2.0. The party has decided to reach out to 35 lakh households in the State highlighting the major work carried out by the Narendra Modi government in the last one year. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 30 this year completed one year of his second tenure.

State BJP president Deepak Prakash talking to media persons highlighting the achievements of Modi 2.0 said, "The party has decided to reach out to people at their houses. Maintaining social distancing as the country is fighting the pandemic two BJP workers will visit households. The BJP workers will carry the letter of Prime Minister Modi and the booklet comprising the work carried out by the Modi government in its second tenure."

Some of the works which will be highlighted includes abolition of Article 370 and 35 (A) from Constitution which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, nullifying Triple Talaq and paving way for construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya based on judicial process.

The BJP cadres, apart from visiting 35 lakh households, have also decided to hold two virtual rallies which will be attended by around 25,000 to 30,000 people.



Jharkhand Pradesh Congress COVID-19 Relief Monitoring Committee members during a meeting, Pradesh Congress Control Room in Ranchi on Friday. Pioneer photo

The party has also planned to hold two virtual rallies in every Assembly constituencies which means that party will hold 162 rallies.

Tasks have also been assigned to different morchas to hold rallies. In the BJP organization, there are seven morchas namely SC morcha, ST morcha, OBC morcha, Kishan morcha, Mahila Morcha, Alpasankhyak (minority) morcha and Yuva morcha.

State BJP president Prakash appreciating Modi government work in handling the corona crisis said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has handled the corona crisis in a better way. Introducing lockdown timely and announcing a relief package helped in tackling the crisis more effectively."

Thanking Modi for announcing a Rs 20 lakh crore economic relief package, Nadda said this is around 10 per cent of the GDP and the prime minister's proactive

approach will build a self-reliant India. The BJP state president also appreciated PM's call of vocal for local claiming that it will make Indian industries self-reliant at the same time strengthening Indian industries.

The State president at the same time criticized the Hemant Soren government for its poor handling of migrant woes. He said, "The state has still not prepared any data about migrant workers reaching the state and has no plan or strategy for their employment." Prakash said that the Modi government only believes in taking credit of the work done by others. "Bangalore based law schools arranged the flight tickets for migrant workers from Mumbai to Ranchi, but the Soren government is taking credit. Similarly, train facilities were arranged by Railways but Soren is taking credit as if his government has done everything," added Prakash.

# RMC prepares for post-lockdown gift for urban poor

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ranchi Municipal Corporation (RMC) is set to allocate houses to the houseless people constructed by Jharkhand Urban Infrastructure Development Company Limited (JUIDCO) on the sprawling premise of Old Jail campus worth Rs 17 crore under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana for urban poor.

It has come as a post-lockdown gift for the poor who will now have their own house.

The G+3 building comprises 180 flats and the project was commissioned in 2015-16 during the regime of Raghubar Das government.

This was the initiative of the state Urban Development department. A large number of poor families were living on the vacant premise of Old Jail besides the adjoining area. This newly built colony has been named as Veer Birsa Nagar situated in the heart of the city capital.

The Urban Development department roped in an NGO Mahila Housing Trust Pvt Ltd to carry out a survey to ascertain the number of poor homeless families living in the area. The NGO submitted a list of 153 fam-

ilies and recommended that they qualify for the PM housing scheme.

The construction work was more or less completed in September last year and the then chief minister had inaugurated the housing project on October 22.

During the last week of March, JUIDCO finally handed over the building to RMC.

"But due to lockdown we could not take any further action in this regard. Now from June 10 we will start the process to hand-over flats to beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will have to make a notional payment of Rs 50000," assistant Municipal Commissioner Rajnish Kumar informed The Pioneer.

He said that RMC officials will visit the doorsteps of beneficiaries to handover them flat occupation paper.

Kumar said that allocation of house will be done through lottery.

"We will complete allotment in a phase wise manner. In the first phase a total of 126 beneficiaries were selected. Out of these as many as 71 families have made the necessary payments and the official process has been completed," said Kumar.

# World Environment Day celebration held at CCL

84 lakh saplings planted CCL till date

PNS ■ RANCHI

On the occasion of World Environment Day 2020 the environment flag was hoisted at CCL headquarters in Ranchi. CCL Director Technical (Operations) V K Srivastava, Director Technical (P&P), Bhola Singh and Director (Finance) NK Agarwal graced the occasion with their presence.

Adhering to the norms of social distancing, the employees of the company took the pledge to preserve the rich biodiversity of our planet and to live in harmony with nature and its diverse species. CCL has given utmost priority for protection of environment. Under the Kayakalp scheme it has implemented various awareness programs involving the different stakeholders on the importance of the environment and mother nature. It has carried out an extensive plantation drive in its operational areas and has planted around 84 lakhs saplings till date. In the FY-2019-2020, Coal India Limited has implemented afforestation activities in over 812 hectares of lands.

Addressing the gathering Srivastava said that everybody should give priority to environmental conservation in their personal lives, through which one can guarantee a clean and healthy environment for our future generations. Bhola Singh delivered the message of Chairman Coal India, Pramod Agarwal and encouraged everybody to assist in environment conservation. NK Agarwal, administered the environment oath to the employees and motivated everybody to carry out plantation activity.

CCL has been aware of its responsibility towards the environment and has carried out various activities in its operational areas to reduce pollution.

# Loan amount for SHGs increased to ₹20 Lakh: Dipti

PNS ■ RANCHI

There is a need to provide loans to all SHG beneficiaries of the State and the loan amount in this scheme has been increased from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh, said Special Secretary, Finance Department Deepti Jayaraj on Friday during State Level Bankers Committee meeting.

Jayaraj also said that e-stamping will be started soon in Jharkhand, right now this facility is applicable only in Delhi and Rajasthan in the Country.

SLBC's quarterly meeting held on Friday through video conference, following the guidelines of the Central Government and the Jharkhand Government. In this meeting Joint Secretary, DFS, Government of India, Madnesh, Special Secretary, Finance Department Deepti Jayaraj, General Manager, RBI Ranchi Sanjeev Dayal, General Manager, NABARD, AK Padhi and General Manager of SLBC,



Officials during 7th State Level Bankers' Committee meeting in Ranchi on Friday. Pioneer photo

Ravindra Kumar Das were present in the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion General Manager of SLBC, Ravindra Kumar Das said, in the hour of Corona epidemic and lock down in the Country, the bank, police, medical department and media personnel are doing commendable work. These people are the Corona warriors of the society and the Country and

due to their contribution the banks achieved their targets.

Deepti Jayaraj said that there is a need to provide loans to all SHG beneficiaries of the State and the loan amount in this scheme has been increased from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh. She told that e-stamping will be started soon in Jharkhand, right now this facility is applicable only in

Delhi and Rajasthan in the Country.

Madnesh Mishra said that to encourage digital transactions, more and more people should transact through digital medium.

He said that 161 villages in Jharkhand still do not have banking facilities within 5 km of the villages and it needs to be connected to banking services soon.

# Nature smiles as humans stay home

DIVYA MODI ■ RANCHI

The novel Coronavirus is claiming numerous lives around the globe, but it is surprising how the pandemic is affecting the environment in more ways than one. In spite of the lockdown being lifted, with humans in Ranchi still cooped up in their homes to avoid containment, nature is healing itself.

According to experts, with lesser vehicles plying the City roads and most of the industries also closed, a significant difference can be felt in the air quality here. Since the beginning of industrialization, mankind has exploited nature for more than 200 years and earth has now taken this time to heal herself.

"One of the most important positive effects of this virus is that it has led to a tremendous reduction in the pollution levels. The Air Quality Index (AQI) in Ranchi is presently varying between 50- 65 whereas before the outbreak of the virus it used to be somewhere between 125- 130.

The atmosphere is also free of dust particles and poisonous gases like carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide. People suffering from asthma do not require an inhaler at the moment," said Environmentalist and Assistant Professor Department of Geology Ranchi University, Dr Nitish Priyadarshi.

In the month of May and June where temperature levels would soar to around 42- 43 degree Celsius, this year it has crossed the 40 degree mark just a few times. Due to frequent showers and lower temperature levels, the ground water level has not depleted this summer which is unlike any other year. With all

hotels and malls shut, there is no misuse of water as well.

"There is a reason why the Britishers had made Ranchi their summer capital. When just last year it would be impossible to sit without a cooler or an AC, this year it is hardly required. It seems as if the Ranchi of yester years is back," added Priyadarshi.

Birds like Bulbul which had vanished for some years can now be seen in the clear blue skies. A wide variety of butterflies can also be seen hovering around the City. It is also the ideal time for stargazing as numerous stars and constellations can be seen at night.

"With lack of air, sound and light pollution, birds can be heard chirping as early as 4 am. It is generally humans who visit a zoo to see caged animals but right now the situation has reversed. In various parts of the world animals can be seen wandering the streets wondering where humans have vanished. Nature can be seen in its true colours," said the Environmentalist. It is high time for humans to learn a lesson or two. As a habit people should now impose a self lockdown and leave their homes only if needed. Once a week they should also opt for a public transport system.

The government should also impose a complete lockdown once a month. With so many migrant labourers coming back, the public transport system should be encouraged. Battery operated vehicles should be brought to Jharkhand which will serve a dual purpose of providing employment and healing nature," he added.

# Home Min to procure arms/ammunition from pvt firms

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Ministry is seeking to procure arms/ammunition from private firms besides State-run Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) for the Central paramilitary forces and Central Police Organisations.

A meeting was held via video conferencing last Friday with at least 17 private firms and the Ministry may float tenders to procure such items from non-state players, sources said.

The meeting under the subject head "Procurement of Arms and Ammunition by CAPFs/CPOs from Private Domestic Manufacturers" was

held under the chairmanship of Minister of State in the Home Ministry G Kishan Reddy with private sector industries having licence for manufacturing arms/ammunition. The meeting was held to explore the possibilities to enhance the procurement of these items from private companies besides the OFB.

The Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) or the Central paramilitary forces with a combined manpower of about 10 lakh include the Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), National

○ A meeting was held via video conferencing last Friday with at least 17 private firms and the ministry may float tenders to procure such items from non-state players, sources said

○ The meeting under the subject head "Procurement of Arms and Ammunition by CAPFs/CPOs from Private Domestic Manufacturers" was held under the chairmanship of Minister of State in the Home Ministry G Kishan Reddy with private sector industries having licence for manufacturing arms/ammunition



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Security Guards (NSG) and Assam Rifles. The CPOs include organisations under the Home Ministry like Bureau of Police Research and

Development (BPR&D). The CAPF and CPOs were also represented in the meeting. The online meeting connected to 40 locations

arms/ammunition industry.

The list of invited companies with industrial licence to manufacture arms/ammunition included Indtech Construction Pvt Ltd (small arms and ammunition like 5.56 mm, 7.62 mm, 9 mm, 12.7 mm and 14.5 mm calibre)Larsen & Toubro Ltd (armament including ammunition/ordnance like missiles, rockets and torpedo land/naval mines), Vem Technologies Pvt Ltd. (Assembly, Integration & checkout of arms and ammunition, rockets and missiles), Sec Industries Pvt Ltd. (static and mobile launchers for air launch missiles of short, medium and long range, rockets,

bombs & ammunitions) and Hyt Engineering Company Pvt Ltd (manufacture of shells for ammunition of various calibres).

Other companies included Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd(empty shells and required fuses for ammunition and explosive such as bombs, mines, missiles and torpedoes excluding the filling of explosives), Lords Vanija Pvt Ltd (manufacture and assembly of ammunition, empty fuses, primers and switches), Micron Instrument Pvt Ltd (weapon systems like mortars, rocket launchers, grenade launchers and missile launchers besides

ammunition for anti-aircraft guns, artillery guns, tank guns etc as also sub assemblies weapon systems).

The list also included Premier Explosives Ltd, BF Elbit Advanced Systems Pvt Ltd, Solar Industries India Ltd, Kalyani Strategic System Ltd, Himachal Futuristic Communication Ltd, Continental Defence Solutions Pvt Ltd, Shan Arms Industries Pvt Ltd, Pipav Defence and Offshore Engineering Company Ltd and Hughes Precision Manufacturing Ltd.

An official privy to the discussions said tendering for procurement of these items outside OFB.

## Cong names Kcharge as RS candidate from K'taka

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

The Congress on Friday announced veteran party leader Mallikarjun Kcharge as its candidate for the June 19 elections to the four Rajya Sabha seats from Karnataka.

"Congress President Sonia Gandhi has approved the candidature of Mallikarjun Kcharge as Congress candidate for the ensuing biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka," All India Congress Committee Press release said.

The four seats represented by Rajeev Gowda and BK Hariprasad of the Congress, Prabhakar Kore of the BJP and D Kuppendra Reddy of the JD(S) will fall vacant on June 25 with their retirement. June 9 is the last date for filing nominations. The Congress, with 68 MLAs in the Assembly, can win one of the four seats easily on its own, so Kcharge's victory is said to be certain.

Kcharge, who was popularly known as "solillada Saradara", (a leader without defeat) faced his first electoral loss in his political life spanning several decades against BJP's Umesh Hadvay in Gulbarga by a margin of 95,452 votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

A nine-time MLA and two-term Lok Sabha member, he had served as Congress' floor leader in the previous Lok Sabha, and also as Union

Railway and Labour Minister in the UPA Government. Kcharge (77) had also been a Minister in several Congress Governments in the State in the past and had also served as KPCC president and Leader of the Opposition in the Karnataka Assembly.

His son Priyank Kcharge is currently MLA representing Chittapur constituency and had served as a Minister during the previous Congress and coalition Governments.

While the ruling BJP with 117 members (including Speaker), can ensure victory in two seats, the JD(S), with just 34 seats in the Assembly, is not in a position to win a seat in the Rajya Sabha on its own, as a minimum of 44 votes are required for a candidate to win.

Speculations are rife that the Congress is likely to support the JD(S) with its surplus votes for the remaining one seat if the regional party fields its supremo and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, and in return may seek favour during the legislative council polls slated later this month. No final decision has been taken in this regard yet, party sources said.

The JD(S) will hold its legislative party meeting to decide on the strategy for RS polls and decide on a candidate. The BJP too, with several aspirants, is yet to finalise its candidate for the RS polls.

## IgG Elisa kits to conduct sero-survey to find virus exposure on Covid warriors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has validated IgG Elisa kits of three companies — Gujarat-based Zydus Cadila Healthcare Ltd, Euroimmun US Inc and Calbiotech Inc, both from the USA to conduct sero-survey to measure Covid-19 exposure in the vulnerable population like healthcare workers, frontline workers and people living in containment zones.

The IgG ELISA kits are the first indigenous antibody detection kits for coronavirus.

Zydus had licensed the Covid Kavach Elisa IgG test kit developed by the ICMR. The medical research body had earlier claimed that its test kit has an impressive 100 per cent specificity and 98 per cent sensitivity.

Three batches of 'Covid Kavach ELISA IgG kits' developed by Zydus Cadila Healthcare Ltd, one batch of Euroimmun Anti-SARS-COV-2 ELISA IgG by Euroimmun US Inc, USA, and a batch of Erbalisa Covid-19 IgG ELISA manufactured by Calbiotech Inc, USA have been approved.

The ICMR said "responsibility for batch to batch consistency lies with the manufacturer".

"Depending upon the level of sero-prevalence of infec-



tion, matching public health interventions can be implemented for prevention and control of the disease," the research body said.

Further, it should be used for survey in high-risk or vulnerable populations like healthcare workers, frontline workers, immune-compromised individuals, individuals in containment zones, to know who have been infected in the past and have now recovered.

The ICMR has also provided details of seven pharma companies to whom it has transferred the technology to undertake the production of indigenous Covid Kavach

ELISA IgG kits which help in the antibody detection for Covid-19. These test kits have the advantage of testing 90 samples in a single run of 2.5 hours so that healthcare professionals can proceed quickly with the necessary next steps.

"The ELISA tests have been validated in the laboratory. However, the performance of the test may be subject to variation under field conditions," the ICMR added.

The IgG ELISA/CLIA tests which are US-FDA approved can be used directly after due marketing approval from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

## Famotidine drug may reduce symptoms of non-hospitalised Covid-19 patients: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Researchers report on 10 people (6 men; 4 women) who developed Covid-19 infection, all of whom happened to have been taking famotidine during their illness

A widely available and inexpensive drug, Famotidine (Pepcid AC) that is used to ease the symptoms of indigestion may prove a worthy contender for treating coronavirus in those whose disease doesn't require admission to hospital, as per a finding, published online in the journal Gut.

The effects were felt within 24 to 48 hours of taking famotidine, and a rigorous clinical trial is now warranted to see if the drug could be an effective treatment for Covid-19, the researchers said.

It belongs to a class of drugs known as histamine-2 receptor antagonists, which reduce the amount of stomach acid produced. Famotidine can be taken in doses of 20-160 mg, up to four times a day, for the treatment of acid reflux and heartburn.

The researchers report on ten people (six men; four women) who developed Covid-19 infection, all of whom happened to have been taking famotidine during their illness.

The severity of five cardinal symptoms — cough; shortness of breath; fatigue; headache and loss of taste/smell



as well as general unwellness — was measured using a version of a 4-point scale normally applied to assess the severity of cancer symptoms (ECOG PS).

Seven of the patients tested positive for Covid-19, using a swab test; two had antibodies to the infection; and one patient wasn't tested but was diagnosed with the infection by a doctor.

Their ages ranged from 23 to 71 and known risk factors for Covid-19 severity, including high blood pressure and obesity.

All started taking famotidine when they were feeling very poorly with Covid-19, the symptoms of which had been going on from 2 up to 26 days at that point.

Improvement was evident across all symptom categories assessed, but respiratory symptoms, such as cough and shortness of breath, improved more rapidly than systemic symptoms, such as fatigue.

## Int'l Yoga Day to go social this year

This year's theme will be 'Yoga at Home and Yoga with Family'



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid Covid-19 pandemic, International Yoga Day this year would be celebrated on digital media platforms and there would be no mass gatherings, the Government said on Friday. This year's theme will be "Yoga at Home and Yoga with Family".

People will be able to join Yoga Day celebrations virtually at 7 am on June 21. Indian Missions abroad are trying to reach out to the people through digital media as well through the network of institutions which support yoga, officials said.

The AYUSH Ministry had earlier planned to hold a grand event at Leh which, however, had to be cancelled because of the pandemic.

Besides, through the "My Life My Yoga" video blogging competition which was launched by the prime minister on May 31, the Ministry of AYUSH and ICCR seeks to raise awareness about yoga and to inspire people to prepare for and become active participants in the observation of IDY 2020.

## UPSC Civil services preliminary exam to be held on Oct 4

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The civil services preliminary examination 2020, postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, will be held on October 4, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) announced on Friday.

It said the personality test of the candidates selected through the last year's civil services preliminary and main examinations will resume from July 20. This year's preliminary test was originally scheduled to be held on May 31, but was deferred due to the nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said the announcement of fresh date for the civil services preliminary exam would allay apprehensions in some quarters of it being cancelled. "It would also allay apprehension from the minds of some quarters who thought that they would become overage by the next year in case the exam was postponed. Candidates need not worry. The examination will be held as per the UPSC's

schedule," he said.

The civil services examination is conducted annually in three stages — prelims, main and interview — by the UPSC to select officers for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and the Indian Police Service (IPS), among others. Lakhs of aspirants take the examination every year to be part of the country's coveted civil services.

The decision on announcement of fresh date was taken in a meeting held by the Commission to review the prevailing situation due to Covid-19 lockdown. "Taking note of the opening of lockdown and progressive relaxations being announced by the Central government and various states, the Commission decided to issue a revised schedule of examination/recruitment tests," the UPSC said in a statement.

According to the revised calendar, the civil services preliminary examination 2020 will be held on October 4 (Sunday). The main examination 2020 will begin from January 8, 2021 (Friday) for five days, it said.

## COVID19 - PARCEL CARGO EXPRESS TRAINS

### BOOK YOUR PARCEL IN TIME-TABLED PARCEL CARGO EXPRESS TRAINS (PCETs)

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Parcel Spl. No.	Station From	Dep. Time	Station to	Arr. Time	Days of Run	Dates of run
00309	Howrah	08:15	New Delhi	07:00	Mon, Tue, Thu, Sat	Upto 15.06.2020
00310	New Delhi	16:45	Howrah	16:30	Mon, Wed, Thu, Sat	Upto 17.06.2020
00311	Sealdah	07:40	New Delhi	10:00	Wed, Fri, Sun	Upto 14.06.2020
00312	New Delhi	16:45	Sealdah	19:30	Sun, Tue, Fri	07.06.20 to 16.06.20
00401	Guwahati	01:30	New Delhi	13:15	Daily	Upto 30.06.2020
00402	New Delhi	14:30	Guwahati	02:30	Daily	Upto 30.06.2020
00403	New Delhi	21:45	Jammu Tawi	08:15	Daily	Upto 30.06.2020
00404	Jammu Tawi	18:10	New Delhi	04:40	Daily	Upto 30.06.2020
00463	Howrah	17:30	Amritsar	08:30	Daily	Upto 03.07.2020
00464	Amritsar	18:40	Howrah	07:30	Daily	Upto 30.06.2020
00625	KSR Bengaluru	16:45	Hazrat Nizamuddin	17:45	Friday	12.06.2020
00626	Hazrat Nizamuddin	09:00	KSR Bengaluru	10:30	Monday	08.06.20 & 15.06.20
00761	Renigunta	06:00	Hazrat Nizamuddin	15:20	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun	Upto 07.06.2020
00762	Hazrat Nizamuddin	06:00	Renigunta	16:24	Tue, Wed, Fri, Sun	Upto 09.06.2020
00763	Hyderabad Deccan	19:30	Amritsar	09:10	Friday	12.06.2020
00764	Amritsar	05:00	Hyderabad Deccan	18:20	Monday	08.06.20 & 15.06.20
00901	Bandra Terminus	20:00	Ludhiana	03:00	Mon, Wed, Thu, Sat	Upto 28.06.2020
00902	Ludhiana	23:30	Bandra Terminus	06:30	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat	Upto 30.06.2020

The parties interested to book their Parcels in these trains may contact the concerned Divisional Officer / Parcel Supervisor. Division wise contact numbers of concerned Officers / Supervisors are available on Northern Railway's website [www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in) at About us>Covid Corner>Covid\_19 Parcel Trains section.

**NOTE** The time table and operation status of all the above mentioned trains can be seen on the National Train Enquiry System (NTEs)

**Note:** (1) Parcel have to be loaded/unloaded within allowed halt/time. (2) No passenger is permitted to travel by these trains. (3) The trains will be escorted by security officials.

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## Rain likely to pick up pace from next week: IMD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday said rainfall activity in central and south India is likely to pick up pace from next week due to a cyclonic circulation which is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal and aid in the progress of the monsoon.

The low pressure area will form somewhere near the coast of Myanmar. A low pressure area is the first stage of a cyclonic disturbance; not all low pressure areas intensify into cyclones.

IMD director general Mrutunjay Mohapatra said a low pressure area is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal and move towards Odisha next week. "A low pressure is a cyclonic circulation and the

first stage of any cyclone. However, it is not necessary that every low pressure intensifies into a cyclone. This will help advance monsoon and bring good rainfall during the next week," Mohapatra said.

In its tropical cyclones bulletin dated June 5, the IMD said the low pressure area has a "low", or 1-25 per cent, chance of turning into a 'depression' by mid next week. A depression is the second stage on the IMD's eight-level cyclone classification system.

If this predicted weather disturbance reaches the fourth stage — 'cyclonic storm' — on the IMD's scale, it will be given a name — Cyclone Gati.

Monsoon had hit Kerala on June 1 on its normal onset date. The IMD had earlier predict-

ed that the monsoon would be delayed by four days, but Cyclone Nisarga helped push the monsoon to reach Kerala on its normal onset date.

"Conditions are becoming favourable for further advancement of Southwest Monsoon into some more parts of central Arabian Sea, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, southwest and east central Bay of Bengal, entire southeast Bay of Bengal and some parts of west central Bay of Bengal during next 2 days," the IMD said.

According to the IMD, the country as a whole has received 9 per cent more rainfall than the normal since June 1.

The north Indian plains will also witness rainfall due to a western disturbance, the IMD said.

## Cong dubs Modi's 'vocal for local' call, stimulus package as jumla

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday dubbed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "vocal for local" call and the economic stimulus package to make the country self-reliant as yet another jumla to divert the attention of the people from "real issues".

Addressing a video Press conference, senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal asked how can India become self-reliant till it creates innovation and intellectual property in its universities.

"This is an act of self-deception. This is another 'jumla' (rhetoric) that you sell to the people of the country. We are only manufacturing 'jumlas', statements and slogans. That is the only thing we make in India and we are masters at that under this government," he said, taking a swipe at the BJP-led government.

Sibal said while the Prime Minister calls for "Atmanirbhar Abhiyaan", his Government has failed to help make the poor, the farmers, the migrant workers, the industry or the States to become self-reliant.

Similarly, his exhortation to industry to push "Made in India, Made for the World, to expand globally, not be dependent on another country in the strategic sector, did not have a clear roadmap as to how this goal should be achieved, the former union minister said.

The Rs 20 lakh crore 'Atmanirbhar' package does not lead to expansion of Government expenditure, as it includes measures already announced by RBI and the budget and amounts to less than 1 per cent of GDP, as against 10 per cent claimed by the Government, he noted.

"The reality is that Modi's 'Atmanirbhar' idea is merely a slogan like innumerable others," Sibal said. He also called for private investment in the universities to create innovation and ideas, which he said did not amount to privatisation.

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**(A) 12/SPE/PE(PH-II)/ET/2020-21** - Supply of Green Fodder in temporary Gauvansh Ashray Sthal, Vill-Nagli Wajidpur, Sec.-135, Noida, Cost -Rs. **6898500.00**

**2. 09/SPE/PE(PH-II)/ET/2020-21** - Cleaning & Desilting of main drain from Expressway Sec.126 to Irrigation drain via Sec.-127, 128, 129, 130 & 135 Noida, Cost -Rs. **5362058.90**

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(S.C. Mishra)  
**Sr. Project Engineer**  
(Public Health), Noida

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# One held for pregnant Kerala jumbo's death

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Wilson, a farmer from Edavanna in Malappuram district was arrested on Friday by Kerala Police in connection with the gruesome death of a pregnant elephant which was fed coconut stuffed with explosives.

According to sources in the police team probing the incident, Wilson said that the coconut stuffed with explosives was placed in the farm to get rid of pigs which frequently raided the crops. Though initially it was reported that the elephant had bitten explosive-laden pineapple, it turned out to be a coconut filled with deadly explosives.

The police is in search of Abdul Kareem and his son Riyazuddeen, owners of the farm where Wilson is employed as a labourer. Kareem and Riyazuddeen are absconding and it is believed that they would surrender before the

police late this evening or on Saturday. Sources in the investigation team said that both Kareem and Riyazuddeen were into poaching of wild animals in a big way. Wilson was an expert in assembling explosives and stuffing it in fruits to trap the animals.

The police has filed cases against the three under various sections of the Kerala Forest Act and Wildlife Protection Act. If proved correct, the accused could be sentenced up to seven years imprisonment.

Forest officials with whom *The Pioneer* spoke were of the view that the elephant was from the Silent Valley Reserve Forest and had trespassed into the farm lands in the periphery of the forest. "It is difficult to pinpoint the exact spot where the incident happened. It could be either in Malappuram or Palakkad districts. The vast farm land stretches across the two districts," said Mohan Krishna, the Forest official

who broke the news to the outside world through his social media posting.

He said it was not with any ulterior intention that the Forest Department said the incident might have taken place in either Malappuram or Palakkad districts. "When we understood that the incident happened at Mannarakkadu, we corrected the same immediately," he said.

Kerala based Cyber Warriors hacked the website of People For Animal, a portal belonging to the NGO led by Maneka Gandhi, former union minister for environment for her reported outburst against Malappuram district while condemning the incident.

Muslim League leader P K Kunhalikutty MP and K C Venugopal of the Congress along with the CPI(M), CPI leaders condemned the BJP and Sangh Parivar organisations for their efforts to communalize the issue.

# TN: 1,438 more test positive

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI/CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu saw 1,438 persons testing positive for coronavirus on Friday, the highest ever number to be tested positive on a single day. With the addition of 1,438 patients into the pool, Tamil Nadu has 12,697 active Covid-19 cases as on Friday. Till date 28,694 persons have tested positive for the pandemic in the State, according to medical bulletin issued by Tamil Nadu Government.

The death tally on Friday was 12 and this took the total number of fatalities till date to 232. Out of the 12 who breathed their last on Friday, four were in the 80-82 age group, three were in 70-72 group, one was 68, two were 56 and 50 years of age and a 44 year old person. While eight persons were having diabetes mellitus and hyper tension as co-morbid conditions, there were two cases of allergic bronchitis and acute respiratory distress syndrome. Two of the deceased were suffering from chronic kidney ailments.

The bulletin said that till date 15,762 persons have been discharged from the hospitals fully cured. The State has tested a total of 5,60,673 samples till date out of

which 5,31,295 samples were found negative.

Chennai continued to be the district which tested the highest number of positive cases - 1,116. Thiruvallur, Chengapattu, Kancheepuram and Cuddalore continued to the districts closely following Chennai in the number of positive cases detected in the State.

The possibilities of any decrease in the number of patients testing positive in Chennai look bleak according to doctors in Government service. "The chief minister himself has said that there are six to seven persons staying in small rooms in the narrow lanes of Chennai. How is it possible to maintain norms like social distancing in these areas?" asked a doctor in one of the Government hospitals on Friday.

Unperturbed by the growing number of coronavirus cases in the State, the Government is going ahead with preparations for the Class X public examinations which begin on June 15. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy has written to the heads of 11 global automobile giants asking them to explore investment opportunities and set up shops here.

# Situation tense along LoC in J&K following intense shelling

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Situation along the line of Control in frontier districts of Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu division remained tense with continuous exchange of intense shelling in the area for the last couple of days.

Since June 1, the Pakistan Army has been resorting to heavy exchange of fire along the line of control with a clear objective to push small groups of heavily armed infiltrators inside the Indian territory.

An havaldar of the Indian Army sacrificed his life in the line of duty in Sunderbani sector of Nowsheera in Rajouri late Thursday night. Defence Spokesman, Lt-Col Devender Anand said,

"Havaldar Mathiazhagan P, hailing from Sreerangai Kadu, Idappadi Tehsil, Salem district of Tamil Nadu had received critical injuries during unprovoked ceasefire violation by the Pakistan Army in Sunderbani sector



Havaldar Mathiazhagan P

of Rajouri late Thursday evening". Lt Col Anand said, "The injured soldier was evacuated to the Army hospital where he succumbed to his injuries".

In the same district, a terrorist was neutralised by the joint teams of security forces in Panjah Mehari area of Kalakote tehsil. The security forces had launched search operations in the area after receiving inputs about the presence of a group of heavily armed terrorists in the area.

Massive searches were launched at day break on Friday to track down the footprints of other terrorists

holed up in the area. However, security forces could not establish fresh contact with the hiding terrorists in the area till late evening.

According to police, "the entire area has been kept under tight cordon while efforts were on to ascertain the identity of the terrorist". The security forces had also recovered 1 AK 47 rifle, three magazines, hand grenades (Chinese make), four Anti personnel mine, detonators, mobile handset with SIM card and other items.

Earlier On June 1, three heavily armed terrorists were neutralised by the alert Indian troops in Kalal area of Nowsheera while continuous cordon and search operations were launched by the security forces in Poonch to track down the footprints of infiltrators.

On Friday, fresh searches were launched in Mendhar tehsil of Poonch after receiving inputs about the presence of suspected terrorists hiding in the area.

# Urbanisation, slums main cause of virus surge in Chennai: CM

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI/CHENNAI

The unabated increase in the population of slums and failure in the programmes launched to eradicate slum areas are the reasons behind Chennai being the epicenter of coronavirus pandemic in Tamil Nadu, according to Edappadi Palaniswamy, Chief Minister. "Chennai has about 87 lakh people living in narrow streets and there are several houses with 6 to 7 people staying in them," Palaniswamy told reporters last Tuesday after presiding over a meeting of senior IAS officers and medical professionals.

The metropolis has one of the highest densities of population among south Indian cities, according to Prof C Murukadas, Tamil Nadu lead economist who headed the Department of Economics, University of Madras for more than two decades. He said massive urbanization and the resultant unabated increase in the number of slums have

made Chennai a volcano which could explode at anytime. "We have opened a Pandora's Box and I doubt whether we would be able to restore Chennai to its lost purity," he told *The Pioneer*.

He had alerted the Governments at the Centre as well as in States about the disastrous consequences of rapid urbanization, increasing population and free-for-all entry into the country's major metropolises in his research and the resultant book "Slum-Free Cities - A Sisypus Challenge for India" published in 2014.

While the book won him accolades from abroad, the people who matter chose to ignore his findings. Dr Murukadas says the figure quoted by Chief Minister that 87 lakh people live in slums and overcrowded narrow lanes/streets of Chennai is way of the mark. "The Urban Agglomeration (UA) of Chennai has resulted in the city's population crossing the 89 lakh mark in 2013 itself. UA stands for

continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining urban Out Growth or two or more physically contiguous towns together and any adjoining urban outgrowths of such towns," he explained.

He said he had visited many slum dwellings in the metropolis in India and abroad. The living conditions in the units in India are shocking. "All these single room or double room units house 10 to 12 persons. Most of the men are unemployed and it is the women who are the breadwinners. Men while away their time playing cards and drinking alcohol from the earnings made by the woman of the house," said the professor.

Quoting the estimates made by the Committee on Slum Statistics/Census, Prof Murukadas points out that the slum population constituted 75.26 million (26.31 per cent) out of the 286 million urban population of the country in 2001. "As per the estimates the slum population of India is estimated to have

reached 93.06 million in 201. The slum population of Chennai could be somewhere near the 25 lakh mark. Another 25 lakh stay in narrow lanes in unhygienic conditions without basic facilities like toilet," he said. Toilet facilities are available at the community level only. "The extremely limited latrines and their overuse by too many persons have made the slum areas unhygienic and filthy," he said.

He says unless the Government introduces massive population control measures India is in for major disaster. "There should be a mechanism whereby the entry of people to major metros are regulated by law. Those who are not employed and do not have even rented places to stay should not be allowed into the cities. The Slum Clearance Programmes launched by the governments were all piecemeal measures and have gone awry," said Prof Murukadas who is working on a project to come out with a sequel to Slum Free Cities.

# 1 more dies, 182 new infections in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir on Friday recorded 182 fresh cases of coronavirus, taking the total tally of cases to 3,324 and active cases to 2,202.

In Kashmir, a 5-day-old baby from Kulgam tested positive along with five doctors, and seven pregnant women.

However, senior government functionaries heaved a sigh of relief after test reports of senior bureaucrats and other government officials of the health department tested negative in Jammu. These officers had come in contact with a senior IAS officer at a high level meeting in Jammu. The IAS officer had later tested positive after his return from Srinagar.

Meanwhile, with one more death reported from Kashmir the death toll too has gone up to 36 while the total recoveries touched 1,086 on Friday. According to the media bulletin,

74 cases were reported from Jammu division while 108 cases were reported from Kashmir division. Moreover, 38 more Covid-19 patients were recovered and discharged from various hospitals, 16 from Jammu division and 22 from Kashmir division.

According to the media bulletin, out of 3324 positive cases, 2202 are Active Positive, 1086 have recovered and 36 have died; 04 in Jammu division and 32 in Kashmir division.

In Kashmir valley, out of 108 positive cases, Shopian district reported a maximum number of 42 cases followed by Srinagar with 22 fresh cases. Meanwhile, three districts of Anantnag, Kulgam and Srinagar have so far recorded over 350 plus cases. Kupwara and Baramulla in Kashmir valley have reported 308 and 331 cases so far respectively.

Jammu district has so far reported 190 positive cases followed by Ramban with 164 cases and Udhampur with 123 cases.

# Goa active cases climb up to 130: CM

**Panaji:** Goa's active coronavirus cases have increased to 130 in the wake of detection of 96 positive cases in South Goa's Mangor hill area, already declared a containment zone, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said on Friday.

Continuing to rule out community transmission in the state, Sawant said that four persons who landed in Goa from Dubai on Tuesday on a Vande Bharat Mission flight had tested positive.

Sawant said that the key reason for the spike in corona infections in Goa was the quick spread of the virus in Mangor hill cluster, located in the jurisdiction of Vasco urban health centre.

As many as 72 persons tested positive there on Wednesday and Thursday. IANS

# Bengaluru Covid infection rate 0.003%: Minister

IANS ■ BENGALURU

The Covid infection rate in the city is a minuscule 0.003 per cent compared to a population of 1.2 crore people, said a minister on Friday.

"The population of Bengaluru is estimated at 1.2 crore. The total number of infected persons in the city from the last two months to Thursday evening was 424," tweeted state Primary and Secondary Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar.

He said Bengaluru's infection rate is 0.003 per cent.

Out of the 424 cases, 148 are currently active, 262 discharged, 13 dead and one non-Covid death.

A Covid patient committed suicide by jumping from a building and was categorized as a non-Covid death.

Though the rate of infection in the city is not as high as other places in the state, it has witnessed the highest number of Covid deaths in Karnataka.

These statistics are for Bengaluru Urban, as categorized by the state Health and Family Welfare department.

Though the city bore the burden of the highest number of cases for a long time, infection spikes have resulted in other towns and districts overtaking the city.

Currently, Udipi is grappling with the highest number of active cases in the state at 481, followed by Kalaburagi (375), Raichur (318), Yadgir (271).

The initial Covid cases in Karnataka were recorded in the city in people who returned from international travel.

Incidentally, the outskirts of the city categorized as Bengaluru Rural, has one of the lowest infection rates.

Bengaluru Rural has seen only 19 infections until now, out of which only seven are active with 11 discharges and only one Covid death.

Till Thursday, Karnataka had seen 4,320 Covid cases, out of which 2,651 are active.

# Mamata slams BJP for playing 'dirty politics' in crisis situation

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday attacked the BJP for playing dirty politics at a time when the State is passing through bad times.

"I do not want to name people who are vitiating the affairs of the State... But there are some political parties who are taking advantage of the current crisis after corona pandemic and super cyclone Amphan hit Bengal. They are playing dirty game to win political mileage. At a time when our Government is trying its best to fight out the crisis these political parties are talking about toppling it," Banerjee said asking "Is it the time to play politics taking advantage of a crisis that has hit the large cross sec-

tion of people?" She said, "They (BJP) are talking of throwing me out of power. But have I said the same thing about Prime Minister Narendra Modi? Have I called for throwing Modi out of power? I have never said that Modiji should be removed. So why are they disturbing me here... This is not the time to play politics"

Attacking the BJP leadership for sitting back in the safety of their houses when her party men were out fighting corona and reaching relief to the distressed people she said "these leaders were in hiding in the cool comforts of their houses and now they have suddenly come out to take political advantage of the situation."

Hitting back the BJP said it was the Chief Minister who

was politicizing the issue and not the BJP. Senior BJP leader Rahul Sinha said, "the Chief Minister's Government is stopping the BJP men from traveling to the cyclone-hit areas whereas they are allowing the CPI(M) and Congress to reach relief because she is afraid of our growing popularity.

To fight corona she did not bring in doctors or nurses from outside but she brought in election strategist Prashant Kishore to tour the affected region... If this is not politics then what is?"

Meanwhile, a seven-member central team is visiting Bengal to evaluate the post Amphan situation. The team led by senior IAS officer Anuj Sharma on Friday visited Amphan affected areas of North and South 24 Parganas.

# 139 die, 2,436 cases in Maha on Fri

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra sank into deep despair on Friday, as the state recorded highest-ever day's tally of 139 deaths and as many as 2,436 new infected cases.

With the fresh deaths and infections, the total number of deaths rose to 2,849, while the total infected cases jumped to 80,229.

Taking into the total number of deaths so far and the fact that 35156 patients have been discharged from various hospitals so far, the state health authorities pegged the number of "active cases" at 42,215.

Of the deaths reported on Friday, Mumbai accounted for 54 deaths, while there were 30 deaths in Thane 14 deaths each in Pune and Jalgaon, eight deaths in Malegaon,



seven deaths in Kalyan-Dombivli, five deaths in Solapur and Nashik, one death each in Vasai-Virar -1, Bhiwandi and Aurangabad-1.

Of the 139 deaths today, 75 were men while 64 were women. Seventy eight were aged over 60 years, 53 were from the age group 40 to 59 years and 8 were aged below 40 years. "One hundred ten out of 139 patients (79%) had

high-risk co-morbidities such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease," a state health bulletin said.

Out of the total deaths reported today, 27 deaths occurred in the last two days and the rest are from the period from April 21 to June 2 2020.

In Mumbai, with 54 new deaths and 1459 fresh infections, the total number deaths mounted to 1519, while the total infected cases rose to 46080. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said that there were 25,768 cases in the metropolis. Some key observations made in Friday's health bulletin included: The recovery rate in the state is 43.81 per cent, while case fatality rate in the state is 3.55 per cent.

Currently, 5,45,947 people are in home quarantine. There are 72,375 beds available in quarantine institutions. As many as 30,291 people are in institutional quarantine now. There are total 83 laboratories functional in the state for COVID-19 diagnosis - 46 government ones and 37 private ones. Out of 5,22,946 samples sent to laboratories, 80,229 have been tested positive for COVID-19 until Friday.

The number of tests per 10 lakh population in the state is 3827, as against 2832 per 10 lakh population in the country. There are 3479 active containment zones in the state currently. Total 18,026 surveillance squads worked today across the state and surveillance of 69.18 lakh people done so far.

# No need for CBI probe in Tablighi Jamaat event: Centre to SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday told the Supreme Court that probe into assembly of people at Anand Vihar Bus Terminal in east Delhi and at Tablighi Jamaat event in Nizamuddin Markaz is being conducted on day-to-day basis by the Delhi police and there was no need for CBI investigation.

The Ministry of Home Affairs gave in detail the steps taken by the Delhi Police which is making all efforts to complete the investigation within the time frame to submit the charge sheet in the trial court.

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices AS Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy allowed the petitioner Supriya Pandita to file rejoinder affidavit to the reply of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and listed the matter for further hearing after two weeks.

Pandita in her plea had sought various reliefs including CBI probe into the matter related to the assembly of peo-

ple at Anand Vihar Bus Terminal and Markz in Nizamuddin after nationwide lockdown was announced alleging that Delhi police has failed to control the people and the Nizamuddin Markaz chief Maulana Saad was still evading arrest.

Detailing the steps taken by Delhi police, the Ministry of Home Affairs in its affidavit said that investigation in Markaz matter is being conducted on a day-to-day basis, in accordance with the mandate of law and all efforts are being made to finalize investigation and submit a report under section 173 CrPC (charge sheet) before the trial court in a time bound manner.

"In view of the facts and circumstances it is respectfully submitted that prayer D (direction for CBI probe) of the writ petition does not merits any consideration by this court," the reply affidavit said, adding that plea needs to be disposed of.

# Top court asks if pvt hospitals ready to charge Covid patients at Ayushman Bharat rate

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday asked private hospitals whether they are ready to provide treatment to Covid-19 infected patients at the charges prescribed under the Government's Ayushman Bharat Scheme. The 'Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana' is aimed at providing health cover to poor and vulnerable persons in the country.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde observed that the apex court is not asking all the private hospitals to treat certain number of Covid-19 patients for free.

The bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy, said it is asking only those private hospitals, which have been given land at concessional rates by the government, to treat certain number of coronavirus infected patients for free.

"I just want to know if hospitals are ready to charge at

Ayushman rates," the CJ observed during the hearing which was conducted through video-conferencing.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, told the bench that government is doing its best for the lowest strata of society, and people who cannot afford treatment are covered under the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

The top court, which posted the matter for two weeks from now, was hearing a plea which has sought a direction for regulating the cost of treatment of Covid-19 at private hospitals across the country.

During the arguments, the bench observed that there is an earlier judgment which said that hospitals, which have been given land on concessional rates, should treat certain number of patients for free.

"Why cannot these hospitals treat a certain number of patients for free," the bench observed, adding, "Please ensure they do some service".

# Day tally dips, but no respite as AP corona count reaches 3,427

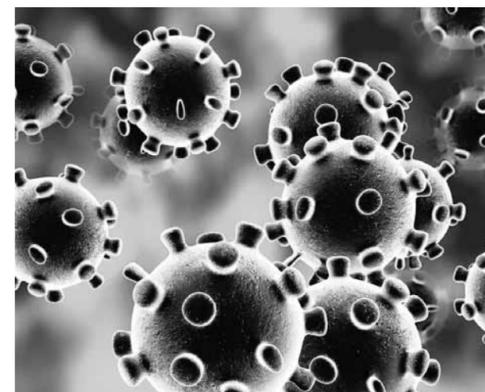
**Amaravati:** Yet another fluctuation was witnessed in Andhra Pradesh when the state's single-day count of Covid-19 cases dipped to 50 on Friday.

On Thursday, the state had reported an all-time high of 98 cases for the second time in four days. With the latest update, the state's tally rose further to 3,427.

According to the medical bulletin issued by the state nodal officer, 9,831 samples were tested in the 24 hours ending 9 a.m., Friday. In comparison, 9,986 tests were conducted in the preceding testing cycle.

On Friday, 21 persons were discharged from hospitals, taking the cumulative tally of cured persons to 2,294. Andhra Pradesh currently has 1,060 active cases that are being treated at various hospitals.

Meanwhile, with two deaths reported from Krishna district, the death toll in the state climbed to 73 on Friday morning. Andhra Pradesh's mortality rate of 1.69 per cent



ranked 10th among the states of India, according to figures issued by the Andhra Pradesh government on Wednesday.

Friday also saw the cumulative tally of Covid-19 cases among the returnees from other states rise to 700 from the Thursday figure of 616 cases. The tally of active cases climbed to 442 from the 372 cases reported on Thursday.

On a positive note, 14 persons from this category were discharged during the day.

With four new cases detected among foreign returnees, their cumulative tally climbed to 123 on Friday.

However, the tally of active cases in this category dropped to 119 following the discharge of three persons in the last 24 hours. IANS

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Delhi reeling

Witnessing a surge in COVID cases, the Delhi Government has put in place new triage rules but this may not be enough



**I**ncreasing instances of potential Coronavirus patients lying for hours outside the hospital before admission or even dying before they see a doctor in Delhi are being shared on social media. This has grabbed media attention, too. Unfortunately, some are using such instances to score political points about Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's handling of the pandemic. But the fact remains that despite the national capital boasting about having the best urban healthcare infrastructure in the country, it is getting thoroughly overwhelmed. It would have been so no matter who or which party had been in power. With more than 25,000 cases, Delhi, like Mumbai, is seeing a surge given its dense population as a result of India's uneven development over the past seven decades. While the virus has started a conversation around public health and the lack of it all across the country, it will not take away the fact that despite Indian doctors and nurses being at the forefront of treatment across the world, Indian healthcare itself is all but a flaky shell.

As such, India should have begun large-scale testing weeks ago when more testing kits were made available. While testing numbers have gradually increased now, given the country's population, it remains woefully inadequate. Those who want to be tested are denied one. Even those patients who need to go to a hospital for other emergency procedures are not being tested, either at admission or when discharged. The Delhi Government's decision to "triage" all those patients who show signs of COVID-19 symptoms will not be effective until more tests are done. This will also help it understand the future course of action. Should school yards and stadia be turned into treatment centres or not? To what extent should the lockdown be eased? Where should non-critical patients be sent? And if there is a substantial number of asymptomatic carriers, can Delhi or any other city consider opening up of malls and restaurants and add to a bursting bulge? There is a prevailing anxiety as doctors and virologists warn that public engagement should be minimal in the viral storm months of June and July. The fact of the matter is that in India and in other countries across the world, the response by Governments to the pandemic has been woeful. Of course, hindsight is 20-20 (ironically) but many things should have been and could have been done differently. One thing that can still be done differently and that should be done is to test, test and test to establish a pattern. At the same time data must be used to calibrate further actions. There will be many more cases in the next few days of people dying from the virus and many more tragic stories will be written about. The question that Kejriwal and, in fact, every other Chief Minister in India needs to ask is: When will these stories end? By July or by 2021?

## Cong crisis in Gujarat

Party loses more MLAs before Rajya Sabha polls, a steady slide since it won 81 Assembly seats in 2017



**T**he Congress, for all its attempts to appear as a responsible Opposition, is not quite being able to hold on to its own members and convince them of its leadership or its political capital. Just as the party was recovering from the exit of Gandhi loyalist and aspirant leader Jyotiraditya Scindia over a Rajya Sabha ticket, its MLAs in Gujarat have resigned in quick succession days before the Rajya Sabha polls. Two legislators, Akshay Patel and Jitu Chaudhary, resigned on Wednesday. And yesterday, it was Brijesh Merja, the MLA from Morbi constituency. The latter even gave up primary membership of the Congress. With

this, a total of eight Congress MLAs have resigned since March. Before the polls were announced, the Congress had 73 MLAs in the Gujarat Assembly and was looking to win two of the four seats. Now that looks remote. The ruling BJP, which has 103 MLAs in the Assembly, is now eyeing a third seat. What is sad is the Congress had put up a determined show against an ascendant BJP, winning 81 seats in the 2017 Assembly elections, notching up its best performance in the State in years. Although the BJP had won, the Congress did deliver a psychological blow back then. It was expected to consolidate after this booster shot but since then the party has only seen a steady stream of exits, losing 16 MLAs. It is all too easy to blame the BJP for poaching MLAs but then the ruling party has made no bones about Operation Lotus or its attempt to avenge and wrest the psychological edge the Congress had in 2017. Knowing this full well, the Congress should have been vigilant and proactive, considering it wanted to make Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home State, a prestige issue. Instead it rested easy on the verdict without realising that the BJP's mammoth Lok Sabha showing and its near decimation would require more groundwork in State units and at least holding on to them. The rural vote did work for the Gujarat Congress then but it didn't build on it by breaking into Thakor voters for instance or work on the aspirations of its MLAs.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi may be crafting an image change in the middle of a pandemic, appearing to contribute to the national revival effort by holding conversations and dialogues with eminent men friendly to him, but it's not reaping results on the ground. Particularly at a time when capable leaders of the Congress have proved their mettle as Chief Ministers in the battle against the disease spiral, be it Rajasthan's Ashok Gehlot or Punjab's Amarinder Singh. It would have worked had he focussed on COVID-19 management in Gujarat, one of the worst-hit States, and done more on-the-grounds, like he did with migrants. Even his think tank-like advisories seem too tutored and self-serving than well-meaning. He may want to rebrand himself as a serious ideologue but webinars and conversations with public intellectuals will not help him if he wants to stay relevant in electoral politics. It is not that Gandhi hasn't tried to strip down his dynastic entitlements but he needs to be seen as a leader who has a grasp on issues. More importantly, he must make himself available to local units. Both the Scindia and Gujarat fiascos have shown that he needs to keep the party herd immune from political inducements. What Rahul and his strategists must do is to diminish the trust deficit in him as a deliverable leader, build on his natural strengths like when he did padayatras and entered people's homes and localise his appeal. The Congress is not short of advisors, he needs to show that he can be a leader of the masses, not of the podium.

MJ WARSI

**N**ations across the world have taken different yet significant measures to limit the spread of COVID-19. The most immediate one taken by almost all countries was to cancel physical face-to-face teaching in schools and higher education institutions. All kinds of social and religious gatherings and public events, too, were banned. With a sudden shift from the classroom to e-learning, many wondered whether the adoption of online education would continue to persist post-pandemic and how such a shift would impact the education market.

Indeed, in India, too, physical classrooms have replaced online classes. The transition has mostly been smooth in private universities though public institutions are yet to adapt to the changes. This has led to widespread debates on the future course of classes — whether they should be conducted online or not. Realising the long-term impact of COVID-19, faculty members, too, are finding it hard to conduct online classes with ease. On the other hand, students have been left clinging on to their mobile phones, laptops and computer screens. What, however, is certain is that a post-COVID world must gear itself to adapt to some changes. Being physically present in a classroom may not be the only learning option anymore — not with the rise of the internet and new technologies, at least. As long as there is access to a computer with a robust internet connection, students can attend live sessions or watch pre-recorded classes. Does this mean that online education will soon replace classroom education? It should be kept in mind that even though there have been huge technological advancements, they aren't flawless. E-learning comes with its own set of challenges.

**Challenges and possibilities:** In the case of traditional classrooms, lack of engagement is problematic for teachers and students alike. Unlike online education, here, they cannot pause or rewind the classes in case they miss out certain chapters. On the other hand, online education is not as easy as speaking into the microphone at the one end and connecting a laptop or phone and listening on the other. There are other challenges with this form of education that have to be faced by both — faculty as well as students. While the former will have to put in extra labour to generate lectures, it will be difficult for the latter to make sense of it online. Then, how will this form of education compensate for the academic loss suffered by students? Practically speaking, there is no alternative to classroom activities.

Most important of all, even after so much digitisation, rural India will face unprecedented challenges due to poor connectivity and frequent power cuts that would affect the productivity of the classroom. Talking about access to electricity, according to Mission Antyodaya, a nation-



wide survey of villages conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development in 2017-18, 16 per cent of India's households received one to eight hours of electricity daily, 33 per cent received 9-12 hours and only 47 per cent received more than 12 hours a day. Further, according to data collected by the National Sample Survey as part of the Survey on Education (2014), only 27 per cent of households in India have some member with access to internet. Access to internet does not necessarily mean that a household actually has internet at home.

While increasing ethernet connectivity should be the larger goal, in the short term, data on mobile phones must be subsidised. Device ownership, too, is a problem and for this, the Government must provide for cheap smartphones for students to get on with the business of teaching. Organisations such as the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL), IGNOU and other such bodies offering distance education as well as the Government must assess current and future infrastructure requirements for digital age and bridge the gap.

But what if e-learning becomes the way of life for education? What would be the major issues and areas that

require introspection? And what does this mean for the students going forward?

Most universities are now offering web-based file-sharing services to their faculty members and research communities. However, there are several other ways to make multimedia resources accessible over the internet. Certainly, the most familiar one is YouTube, which though ubiquitous and easy-to-use, does present challenges to classroom use that must not be ignored. The most glaring one is the comments section. The instructor can take it for granted that some comments will not be suitable for projection on a classroom screen.

Similarly, advertisements found lining the video could be a problem, too. Regardless of the product being promoted, the classroom need not be turned to a search service in order to access multimedia resources. To avoid this, a number of web browser extensions are available that provide for an unsullied viewing experience, hiding comments, menu side bus and advertisements from the view. A number of cloud-based tools, too, are available that allow files to be stored and shared across a remote host, which at the very least offer the instructor the flexibility to adapt. Foremost among these are Dropbox, which is a file hosting service that offers free

data storage across several operating platforms. Amazon cloud drive offers 5 GB of free storage and provides a straight forward web-based interface for uploading and retrieval of files. Similarly, GoogleDocs allows for the uploading of entire folders to the cloud, making remote storage of a set of organised files quite easy.

**Make the digital transition:** Technological prospects for classrooms have evolved in remarkable ways since the COVID-19 pandemic. We have witnessed the successful introduction of smartphones that are capable of running audio-visual clips and interactive language drills; tablets are now replacing the laptop as an essential classroom gear; and there has been a rich array of online dictionaries. Further, news media and unicode blogs are now searchable in original scripts; a sea of websites are dedicated towards the study and dissemination of literature. The worldwide popularity of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google classroom, Zoom, Cisco Webex and the user-centred design of web has addressed concerns of language use. Even mini tablets are now equipped with built-in digital camera. In fact, they allow students to use audio and video editing software immediately upon recording. All of these advancements offer promising

ways for the students to do their homework, going far beyond just a paper and pen.

The time has come for us to adapt to new and innovative teaching methods. So, what next? Most experts and researchers across academic institutions agree that there is a need to create standardised online education platforms. Besides students and teachers must be trained to get accustomed to using digital technologies. Others highlight the necessity to introspect on the nature of these platforms and how students must be taught using different online tools and methods while keeping accessibility and the challenges in mind.

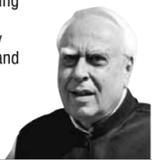
To look for possibilities, there is lack of clarity among teachers and researchers about the plan of action, especially with respect to teaching, examination, results, internships and placements. Challenges are many that need to be overcome. Some students without reliable internet access and technology struggle to participate in digital learning. This gap is seen across countries. Education is going to be digital in the foreseeable future. We will be better prepared to handle it only with the right kind of infrastructure and policies in place. The Government must pay heed.

(The writer is a linguist, author and columnist)

## SOUNDBITE

We are only manufacturing *jumlas*, statements and slogans. That is the only thing we make in India and we are masters at that under this Government.

**Congress leader**  
—Kapil Sibal



People have had the time to introspect and understand that there is no planet B. This is the only world we have and it's our only chance at survival.

**Actor**  
—Bhumi Pednekar



Issues of human dignity will not abide standing on the sidelines. To the Black community — we see you. You matter and your lives matter.

**Apple CEO**  
—Tim Cook



In the context of China, they (the Congress) started finding fault without realising that China is a baggage left by Rahul Gandhi's great grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru.

**Union Minister**  
—Jitendra Singh



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Cowardly act

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Elephantine problem" (June 4). It was heart-wrenching to know about the horrific death of a pregnant elephant in Kerala's Palakkad district after she ate a pineapple filled with firecrackers that was allegedly left by some locals. Amid the Corona crisis, one had expected that this would be the time for nature to reclaim its lost space. The death of a wild elephant in Kerala serves as a reminder that we humans have long forgotten what humanity is.

In Kerala, which boasts a literacy rate of 93.91 per cent, it is a practice for locals to use explosive-laced traps to get rid of wild animals, especially boars. And this wasn't the first time that such traps have claimed the life of an elephant here.

Though one arrest has been made in the present case, it is a travesty of justice that the maximum punishment for the murderers would be just seven years in jail. There's an urgent need to strengthen animal and wildlife protection laws, too.

**Tushar Anand**  
Patna

### A turning point for America

**G**eorge Floyd, an Afro-American, had been living in Minneapolis for several years after moving there from his native Houston, Texas. Handcuffed at gunpoint, he was pinned to the ground as the police officer, Derek Chauvin, kept his knee pressed hard on his neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds. "I can't breathe," he cried repeatedly but his cries fell on deaf ears. About six minutes into that period, Floyd fell silent. Why did Chauvin do the unthinkable? Years ago, Rohith Vemula, a Dalit PhD candidate at the University of Hyderabad, found himself ousted from the hostel and was forced to live in a tent. A distraught Vemula committed suicide. In the searing note he left behind, he said, his "birth was his fatal accident." Floyd was Black, born to parents of African origin in a racially divided America. His birth, too, "was his fatal accident."

Martin Luther King Jr, the redoubtable civil rights leader, reached Memphis, Tennessee on April 3, 1968, to support the striking African-American city sanitation workers, who were facing crass racial discrimination there. He was shot when standing in the hotel balcony the next day. Addressing an angry crowd, Senator Robert F Kennedy said, "For those of you who are Black and are tempted to be filled with hatred and mistrust of the injustice of such an act, against all White people, I would only say that I can also feel in my own heart the same kind

### Reconnect with nature

Sir — Coronavirus has elicited varying degrees of response from nation-states. Weeks after the



of feeling. I had a member of my family killed but he was killed by a White man." He was referring to his slain brother John F Kennedy. It calmed the crowd, albeit temporarily. Floyd was no Martin Luther King Jr. Yet, the killing in cold blood highlighted the deep-rooted prejudices persisting in American society. And for US President Donald Trump, Floyd's death "on the streets of Minneapolis" was just "a grave tragedy." His open threat to deploy the US military reservists of the National Guard against the angry anti-racism protesters to "dominate" the streets, was, by no means, a healer's touch. Perhaps, this may well be a defining moment for America's racial politics.

**Haridasan Rajan**  
Kozhikode

spread of the virus, it was more than evident that even countries with the best medical and public health infrastructure could find no match to this biological invad-

er. Containment through isolation was seen to be the lone weapon.

By virtue of the progress made in science, we may find a

cure for COVID-19 but like every other microbial onslaught till date, we have to pay a heavy price. When will mankind learn the universal tenet of simple living and high thinking as advocated by our *rishis* of yore?

**R Narayanan**  
Navi Mumbai

### Mired in confusion

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Trump's expansionism" (June 4). US President Donald Trump's call to transform G-7 into G-11 lacks clarity. He has failed to convince nations on the need to upgrade the grouping. He has only said that it has become outdated. Besides, an analysis needs to be done on the failures of G-7. Given that the US would be going to polls in November, it remains unclear how this would shape up. India has taken the right step by showing willingness to attend the G-7 summit but it must be impartial as it has till now on international affairs.

**Manisha**  
Via email

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## FIRST COLUMN

## Firms need a new perspective

Business processes will change due to the pandemic and so should the way valuations of companies are done



HIMA BINDU KOTA

Coronavirus cases are rising exponentially in India even as the country is in the midst of unlocking the economy. With the Government allowing almost all sectors to restart, companies are faced with the new challenge of valuing their businesses as a consequence of the pandemic. Nothing is the same now. The financial markets, the economy, real estate and almost all sectors have seen major turbulence and the uncertainty will not end anytime soon. According to the 2020, *Brand Finance India 100* report, during the pandemic, the combined valuation of India's top 100 brands dropped by \$25 billion as compared to the start of this year. The uncertainty in future cash flows is now a hard reality. Organisations have to renew ways of measuring risks associated with the cash flow of their businesses as the categories of risk may have increased in the light of COVID-19.

The elements which are a part of the discount rates used in valuations, including the risk-free rate and unsystematic risks, may have changed, altering the way businesses approached valuations before the crisis. All business valuations are done on projections. However, in these unprecedented times, there is every chance that these projections might change. It has become difficult to quantify the short-term and long-term financial projections and the shape of economic recovery is also uncertain. It may be 'V' shaped, 'U' shaped or even 'W' shaped. Moreover, some industries may bounce back faster than the others. Even though governments across the world are providing economic stimulus, the fact remains that consumer demand may still be slow and may possibly see a paradigm shift in the long-term.

So, during these times, selecting a valuation model relevant to one's own business is imperative. All three valuation methods — income, market and asset — are available to business managers and analysts. However, in the present situation, some methods may be more appropriate as compared to others. For example, of the two income-based approaches that are used to value a company, one may be more appropriate than the other now. The first method, the Capitalisation of Cash Flow (CCF) method is used by mature firms, which are relatively stable in their growth expectation and cash flows. Under this method, the valuator assumes a steady growth rate, picks a single income stream and predicts future income based on historical numbers.

On the other hand, the Discounted Cash Flow (DCF) method is more flexible and allows for more variations in the future cash flows based on varying growth rates, changes in the interest rates of debt repayments and any other factors that may change in future and could affect cash flows. Given this rising economic uncertainty and market disruption, DCF, with its flexibility to allow modelling of performance of future years of a business individually, with varying growth rates and cash flows till businesses stabilise, may be a more useful method. This method will not be devoid of challenges as valuations may still have to consider multiple scenario analysis to capture the growing uncertainty in the next 18 to 24 months.

Organisations can value their business using other methods as well. However, additional considerations need to be applied in doing so. For example, if a company was using the market approach of valuation earlier, it needs to make relevant adjustments in the financial parameters now. It may not just use an average of the previous three or five-year period, as it may not be applicable in these uncertain times. So usage of previous years' financial metrics during these times needs more analysis and adjustments.

Cash flows and the ability of a business to continue its operations and generate cash flows are important for business valuation. In addition, cash balance and the rate at which money is being used by an organisation also determine its survival and ability to continue doing business. So any changes that help a firm to preserve capital and cash flows, now and in the near future, will help in the valuations as it can give a good idea of how long a company can survive in these turbulent times.

The longer-term prospects of any organisation are also important in assessing its value. However, every dark cloud has a silver lining and tough times help some companies to thrive or re-engineer themselves, like grocery and food delivery, manufacturers of PPE and digital businesses. These and similar other businesses by virtue of their relevance in these times, or because of timely reinvention, are actually booming during the outbreak. With world economies going through disruptions and maybe permanent changes in consumer behaviour, some companies would take advantage of the situation and do better than pre-pandemic times. Going forward, due to the unpredictability of the business environment and future cash flows, valuations cannot be done by just numbers. Stories of survival, tales of flexibility and the ability to either scale up or scale down at a short notice should be definitely part of valuations. Many things may not remain the same in the aftermath of the outbreak. Business processes will change and so should the way valuations of companies are done.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Amity University, Noida)

DELHI GOVERNMENT RE-TESTED 30 SAMPLES FROM RML HOSPITAL WHICH WERE DECLARED COVID-19 POSITIVE. THE RESULTS OF 12 SAMPLES WERE NEGATIVE.

—AAP SPOKESPERSON  
RAGHAV CHADHA

## POINT COUNTERPOINT



IT IS NOT RIGHT TO DO POLITICS OVER THE COVID-19 SITUATION IN DELHI AS IT WEAKENS THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DISEASE.

—UNION HEALTH MINISTER  
HARSH VARDHAN

## Give back to 'city makers'

The absorption of jobless migrant workers in newer fiscal activities with dignity would significantly depend on the nature and type of Government policies put in place to jumpstart economies of cities



ARJUN KUMAR

Symmetric to global trends, COVID-19 has had multi-dimensional impacts on the Indian economy and society. Amid rising concerns over the lives and livelihoods of the poorer sections of the population due to the nationwide lockdown, the Government announced seemingly bold economic packages. However, with a few exceptions, lack of coordination in the official sphere at the ground level has had appalling consequences, especially on the millions of "city makers", the urban informal workers, who represent a significant share of the workforce and contribute in multiple ways to the economy.

Employed mostly in the unorganised sector and living in informal settlements in cities, they have borne the major brunt of the lockdown. They have no job contracts, no regular work, are often employed casually and are without any social safety nets to support them and their families during exigencies. Moreover, their livelihood opportunities are constrained by multiple barriers that include deplorable housing conditions, inadequacies of urban services, in-built socio-economic disparities relating to caste and gender and also the policies and practices of governments.

**The challenges during the lockdown:** An IMPRI survey to understand the impact of the lockdown on the lives of migrant workers revealed that almost three-fourth of the 3,121 respondents from over 50 cities of India were engaged in informal employment, i.e. daily wage work, petty trades/business and as temporary workers without any social security benefits. It was found that six out of 10 workers had lost their jobs during the lockdown, with unemployment being highest among the casual labourers and self-employed respondents. A whopping 74 per cent of the casual labourers lost their jobs while 67 per cent of the self-employed workers could not pursue their economic activities due to the lockdown.

The workers, who had no other option but to remain confined within their houses without any work, could neither realistically practise social distancing, nor could they afford it. The inability to earn during the shutdown translated into 54 per cent of the people being unable to pay rent for their accommodation.

The loss of jobs had a spillover impact on the education of children, too, as most city-makers send their offspring to Government schools. In the prevailing new normal of online teaching methods and reliance on digital modes of learning, education has become a distant dream for the children of migrant labourers because they have no smartphones for accessing such education, forget about computers.

With 88 per cent of the city makers depending on household income, savings, financial help from relatives and friends and so on, for meeting their health-related expenditure, this temporary job loss has added to their anxieties that any kind of health emergency, including COVID-19, would exacerbate.

**What they want:** Quite understandably, most people want to return to work and almost three-fourth of the respondents said that they would join the same job in which they were engaged prior to the lockdown, if possible. In other words, this loss of jobs or livelihood options was considered as a temporary phenomenon.

However, the absorption of jobless migrant workers in newer fiscal activities with dignity would significantly depend on the nature and type of Government policies put in place to jump-

“ IN THE US, A SUM OF \$300-\$400 IS BEING GIVEN WEEKLY TO THE UNEMPLOYED AS AN ALLOWANCE. THEREFORE, TO ENSURE A DIGNIFIED ASSISTANCE TO THE POOR, THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA CAN AFFORD TO GIVE \$1 (ABOUT ₹75) A DAY TO EACH POOR PERSON. IF WE GIVE ₹2,000 PER MONTH ASSISTANCE TO 12 CRORE PEOPLE (THE BOTTOM QUARTILE POPULATION IN THE URBAN ECONOMIC LADDER), IT WILL TRANSLATE TO ₹24,000 CRORE A MONTH AND ₹72,000 CRORE FOR THREE MONTHS. THIS IS CERTAINLY DOABLE

”



start economies of cities. This can mostly be done by providing boosts to local businesses and small and micro-enterprises.

**The challenges:** A defining challenge for devising appropriate mitigating policies for the city makers is the lack of data about them both prior to and during any kind of emergency. So, preparedness and early action by the communities are essential. To benefit from any Central and State Government relief measures — both cash and non-cash — people must possess Government documents (ration card, Aadhaar card), bank account and be enrolled in different Government welfare schemes and so on.

The survey revealed that coverage of and eligibility for Government support programmes was a major concern, as evident from the possession status of various important documents by the respondents.

About 23 per cent of the respondents did not have ration cards, 32 per cent did not have zero-balance Jan Dhan bank accounts and on an average only one out of 10 respondents were covered under the Government of India's flagship public health as well as life insurance schemes — Ayushman Bharat, PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima and PM Suraksha Bima Yojna.

About 65 per cent of the surveyed respondents were aware of the AarogyaSetu App and among them 62 per cent reported use of the app. Only 38 per cent respondents were aware of State WhatsApp helplines. For other apps and e-initiatives, the awareness levels of the respondents were very poor. Roughly about 20-30 per cent of the respondents were aware of State e-coupons for rations, State e-pass or other different State apps and use of these apps among them turned out to be even more pathetic.

Lack of access to smartphones and unstable internet connectivity were the major impediments in using the apps and portals.

Regarding their awareness on eligibility for Government support programmes, only 37 per cent of the respondents thought that they were eligible for benefits under the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojana (having an outlay of ₹20 lakh crore for the COVID-19 response). However, only 34 per cent of the respondents could avail benefits like cash transfers and free ration under this scheme.

**The solutions:** In the light of the above evidence, it becomes extremely important to think of precise policy improvements to tide over the crisis. To start with, the stringent Aadhaar-requirements for accessing different schemes must be relaxed for at least the next six months. Another option could be a job assurance programme that would give needy households livelihood security during health crises.

Essentially, the COVID-19 crisis requires extremely localised and coordinated responses. So, city governments and their elected representatives should decide on vigorous delivery of basic urban services that might be the most effective in their contexts. Financially-empowered city governments with clear functional domain and adequate institutional capacity can respond rapidly and contain the outbreak of COVID-19.

It is equally important to improve and expand the coverage of the Public Distribution System (PDS). Bridging the awareness gap regarding available Government support programmes, especially the PDS, through timely and reliable information and expanding the coverage of such programmes to the needy but non-registered segments via certain temporary forms of authentication as alternatives, can be very useful.

The last Economic Survey (2019-20) spoke of "Thalinoomics", which says that a good vegetarian and non-vegetarian platter costs a minimum of ₹25 minimum and ₹40, respectively. Therefore, in order to ensure that the

poorest sections of the population are able to fulfil their dietary requirements, each identified needy person must be provided with a dollar a day (around ₹2,000 per month).

Further, for everyone to be vigilant about the spread of COVID-19, digital literacy for children belonging to poor families, and smooth transfer of digital payment of welfare schemes, poor households should be provided an Android phone either for free or at a subsidised rate through PDS shops. In addition, the private sector (under the CSR component) should come forward and provide free SIM and data coupons to Below Poverty Line households. It is the most opportune time to ensure digital literacy among the people.

In the US, \$300-\$400 are being given weekly to the unemployed as an allowance. Therefore, to ensure a dignified assistance to the poor, the Government of India can afford to give \$1 (about ₹75) a day to each poor person. If we give ₹2,000 per month assistance to 12 crore people (the bottom quartile population in the urban economic ladder), it will translate to ₹24,000 crore a month and ₹72,000 crore for three months. This is certainly doable.

Moreover, if we can give an Android phone in a graded manner to around five crore people (prioritising the elderly, women and children going to Government schools) in the cities, it would amount to around ₹30,000 crore (cost per handset around ₹6,000). Overall, this would amount to ₹100,000 crore and would be crucial as India moves into the "unlock" phase. Such provisioning is certainly doable and would just need a reorientation of the Budget 2020-21. And to this, the ₹35 lakh crore worth of forex reserves could be rightly utilised to pay for the war against COVID-19, as it would help distribute the pain similar to the Keynesian tenets during World War-II and create a better society.

(The writer is Director, IMPRI)

## Enlarge role of local govts in handling crisis

The lockdown exit plan will gradually give way to decentralised responsibilities to panchayats and municipalities. The sooner this shift takes place the better it will be



VN ALOK

executive orders. In fact, the subject "disaster management" is not specifically mentioned in all the three lists of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. Therefore, the Parliament exercised its power to enact a law on the subject.

Other entries like "Public Order" and "Public Health" were included in the State List when the Constitution was framed. Further, consequent upon the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution in 1993, "Public Health" found place in the 11th and 12th Schedules. As a result, panchayats and municipalities have been assigned civic powers to render "public health" to citizens in their respective jurisdictions.

Rightly so, as democratic and cooperative organisations at the local level are arguably the best to render preventive and prophylactic measures like inoculation and vaccination. The

main function of these local self-governments is to make the people understand what change or innovation benefits them, why it does so and how it can be introduced. It is for the community to participate in all the activities which lead to such change or innovation.

Panchayats and municipalities were brought into the statute book to promote better living for the community with the active participation of the community. Here, the word "community" means a local society in a geographical rural or urban area, cutting across caste, religious and economic differences.

Ironically, these key institutions have not found their rightful place in the DM Act. A passing reference is made to "local authorities" under Section 41 of the DM Act. As per the section, these panchayats, municipalities and cantonment boards are

mandated to carry out "relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities" only under the "directions of the District Authority." The DM Act stipulates, under Section 25, the setting up of a "District Disaster Management Authority" under the stewardship of a District Collector/Magistrate, who is assisted by the chairperson of the district council in the capacity of co-chairperson of the district authority.

Further, Section 31 of the DM Act provides for a "plan" by the district authority in consultation with local authorities subject to approval by the State. The provision is akin to Article 243 ZD, a mandatory constitutional provision, which envisages a district planning committee (DPC) for spatial planning, infrastructure development and environmental conservation.

States have given the provision of DPC in their respective Acts but seem to be reluctant to make them

operational. As a result, the process of decentralised planning is hampered and associated capacity-development is completely denied.

On the other hand, the DM Act is unambiguous in assigning powers to Union and State Governments. Section 62 of the Act stipulates extraordinary powers to the Centre by which any authority in Union Ministries, statutory bodies and State Governments is bound to take direction from the nodal Central Ministry. In addition, a national plan is drawn up under Section 11.

At the State level, under Section 14, a State Disaster Management Authority is required under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister of the State. This authority is assisted by a State Executive Committee headed by the Chief Secretary of the State. The committee prepares the State Disaster Management Plan after following the

guidelines of the National Authority and a select consultation with the district and local authorities.

Penal provisions in Chapter 10 of the DM Act pave the way for security personnel to take coercive measures against offenders. However, medical professionals are not covered under this provision. Recent incidents of stone pelting and misbehaviour with doctors and nurses compelled the Government to introduce penal provisions protecting healthcare personnel and their property against violence. For the purpose, an Ordinance was promulgated on April 22 to amend the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 in the light of the current pandemic. This could be a permanent provision to maintain the morale of the healthcare professional and discipline miscreants.

It may be observed that the pandemic till date is being controlled through centralised institutional

arrangements with remarkable cooperation of all State Governments and public servants and security forces have been enforcing the lockdown effectively. The lockdown exit plan will gradually give way to decentralised responsibilities to panchayats and municipalities. The sooner this shift takes place the better it will be.

The Government has prominently pronounced the role of local self-governments to combat COVID-19, which can only be prevented by changing human attitudes and behaviours. Local governments and the community are best placed to bring this change and inculcate social distancing on a sustainable basis. Hence, the role of local governments must be prominent, at least, in the DM Act.

(The writer is faculty, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal)

# Thousands gather across country to remember Floyd

**Washington:** Thousands of Americans carrying placards reading "black lives matter" and raising slogans such as "no justice, no peace" took to the streets in many US cities, demonstrating peacefully against the killing of unarmed African-American George Floyd by a white police officer in Minneapolis on May 25.

The 46-year-old victim, a native of Houston, was handcuffed and pinned to the ground on May 25 by a white police officer who knelt on his neck as he gasped for breath.

Floyd's death has triggered nationwide violent protests with a section of the protesters resorting to looting and rioting across the country, leaving behind a trail of destruction.

Mourners gathered in huge numbers across the country on Thursday night to remember Floyd after a private memorial service in Minneapolis.

Seeking justice for Floyd, they are demanding urgent reforms in the police and criminal justice system.

Several cities including New York, Washington DC,



AP Demonstrators protest near the White House in Washington over the death of George Floyd

Chicago and Los Angeles have reported large-scale violence and looting in the last few days.

More than 10,000 Americans have been arrested across the country for violent protests.

Protesters chant slogans as they march, with music and drum beats blaring in the back-

ground in Los Angeles. Cars were seen moving slowly along with the marchers, with many drivers and passengers holding protest signs or raising fists out of their windows to show support.

In New York, city Mayor Bill de Blasio was booed at an event.

"It will not be about words in this city. It will be about a change," he said.

Reverend Al Sharpton, who delivered the eulogy, said that the reason "why we're marching all over the world is because we were like George, we couldn't breathe. It's time for us to stand up in George's

name and say get your knee off our necks".

He also asked mourners to stand in silence for eight minutes and 46 seconds, the length of time Floyd lay pinned to the pavement by the police officer.

"At the end of the day, my brother's gone, but the Floyd name lives on. I thank god for you all," his brother Terrence Floyd told another massive gathering in Brooklyn.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi described this as a day of great sadness.

"They are having the first service for George Floyd. It is a national day of mourning, I see, for George Floyd, and we pray for his family and pray for healing for our country," she told reporters at the US Capitol.

With placards reading "black lives matter", protesters chanted "no justice, no peace."

Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison on Thursday announced to elevate charges against the former Minneapolis police officer who killed Floyd while adding the charges of aiding and abetting murder against the other three officers at the scene. **PTI**

## Floyd case restokes anger over French custody death

**Paris:** Churning US protests over the death of George Floyd have revived anger in France over police violence, systemic racism and the complicated case of Adama Traore, a black Frenchman who died in police custody in July 2016.

For Traore's family, the Floyd protests have also revived their hopes for change.

"During the coronavirus, people had a pause in their lives. They filmed scenes of police violence and they realized they

were living in a country where there is violence every day against people of color," his sister, Assa Traore, said.

Over 20,000 people flouted a police ban and protested vociferously Tuesday in Paris to call for justice for both Traore and Floyd, and similar protests are planned around France this weekend. "As long as police aren't convicted, we will keep coming out in the streets," Traore's sister told The Associated Press. **AP**

## California mayor resigns over police killings

**Temecula (US):** The mayor of a Southern California city resigned following an email in which he stated he didn't "believe there's ever been a good person of color killed by a police officer" locally.

Temecula Mayor James Stewart had apologised Thursday for the email, saying he never meant to use the word "good." He had said he is dyslexic and so used voice text to send his late-night Tuesday message but failed to notice the added word.

"Unfortunately I did not take the time to proofread what was recorded. I absolutely did not say that," Stewart told the Riverside Press-Enterprise on Thursday.

"What I said is and I don't believe there has ever been a person of color murdered by police, on context to Temecula or Riverside County. I absolutely did not say 'good.' I have no idea how that popped up."

Stewart said he was replying to someone "concerned about our police officers and their sensitivity training." **AP**

## TWITTER DISABLES TRUMP CAMPAIGN'S GEORGE FLOYD VIDEO TRIBUTE

**Washington:** Twitter has blocked a Trump campaign video tribute to George Floyd over a copyright claim, in a move that adds to tensions between the social media platform and the US president, one of its most widely followed users.

The company put a label on a video posted by the @TeamTrump account that said, "This media has been disabled in response to a claim by the copyright owner."

The video was still up on President Donald Trump's YouTube channel and includes pictures of Floyd, whose death

sparked widespread protests, at the start.

"Per our copyright policy, we respond to valid copyright complaints sent to us by a copyright owner or their authorized representatives," Twitter said in a statement. It did not say who made the complaint.

The three minute and 45 second clip is a montage of photos and videos of peaceful marches and police officers hugging protesters interspersed with some scenes of burning buildings and vandalism, set to gentle piano music and Trump speaking. **AP**

## US airstrikes hit Taliban; 10 Afghan cops killed in ambush

**Kabul:** US forces carried out two sets of airstrikes against the Taliban, in western and southern Afghanistan, a US Military spokesman said on Friday.

Elsewhere in the south, the Taliban set off a roadside bomb and ambushed a police convoy, killing 10 Afghan policemen.

The US strikes against the Taliban were the first following a brief cease-fire declared by the insurgents for a major Muslim holiday last month.

A US military spokesman, Colonel Sonny Leggett, said one of airstrikes took place on Friday afternoon in western Farah province, targeting 25 Taliban fighters who were attacking Afghan forces.

Hours earlier, on Thursday night, the US air forces struck an unknown number of Taliban in southern Kandahar province, he said. There was no

immediate comment from the Taliban.

Since the signing of the US-Taliban peace agreement at the end of February, US forces have only once before announced a strike against the Taliban, in defence of Afghan forces. Leggett did not elaborate on the latest airstrikes or their targets.

However, an Afghan government official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to talk to the media, said three senior Taliban commanders and at least 13 other fighters were killed in the Farah airstrikes.

Meanwhile, Afghan officials in southern Zabul province said the Taliban there ambushed an Afghan police convoy after setting off a roadside bomb on Friday, killing 10 policemen. **AP**

## White House calls on China to honour Tiananmen Square massacre victims

**Washington:** The White House has called on China to provide a full accounting of those who were killed, detained or remain missing in connection with events surrounding the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

"The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) slaughter of unarmed Chinese civilians was a tragedy that will not be forgotten," White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said in a statement on Thursday, joining the global condemnation of the massacre.

The American people reflect on the courage and optimism of the hundreds of thousands of Chinese citizens who gathered peacefully 31 years ago in Beijing and throughout China to protest widespread official corruption and demand a greater say in the governance of their country, she said. **PTI**

## German bomb experts to defuse WWII-era bomb in Frankfurt

**Frankfurt:** German police and firefighters are clearing a section of Frankfurt around the convention center to defuse a World War II-era bomb that was discovered during recent construction work.

Authorities say some 2,700 people are being asked to leave their homes as they cordon off the area as a precaution to defuse the 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) bomb. Buses and trains through the area were also shut down and bomb experts were expected to get to work on the bomb about noon Friday.

They say they hope the work will be finished by around dinnertime. Even 75 years after the end of the war, such finds are still relatively common in Germany. **AP**

## Gunmen Kill 21 in fresh Northwest Nigeria Attacks, say police

**AFP ■ KANO, NIGERIA**

Armed gangs have killed 21 people in the latest bloody assaults on villages in restive northwest Nigeria, police said.

Assailants trying to steal cattle shot dead 15 people in clashes with local residents in six remote communities of Zamfara state on Tuesday, regional police spokesman Mohammed Shehu.

The gunmen — dubbed "bandits" by the authorities — returned the next day and shot dead six mourners at funerals for the earlier victims, the statement released Thursday said.

Nigeria's northeast has been wracked by years of violence, involving clashes between rival communities over land, attacks by heavily armed gangs and retaliation strikes from vigilante groups.

## EU, UK still at loggerheads in post-Brexit negotiations

**AP ■ BRUSSELS**

Another round of trade discussions between the European Union and the UK ended Friday — and once again there were no signs of real progress ahead of a looming deadline on whether a transition arrangement can be extended.

Following four days of video discussions because of the coronavirus pandemic, the two sides remained at loggerheads on a number of issues, including on regulations for businesses. Their positions on fisheries also remain distant, with the UK adamantly

opposed to EU demands for long-term access to British waters.

"The truth is there was no significant progress this week," the EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier said during a press conference.

The UK left the political institutions of the EU on January 31 but remains inside the EU's tariff-free economic zone until the end of the year. That so-called transition period can be extended by two years but a request to do so has to be made by July 1. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has repeatedly said he won't ask for an extension.

## Around the Globe

**Kathmandu:** Nepal reported 278 new COVID-19 cases on Friday, taking the total number of infections in the country to 2,912. The coronavirus has spread to 68 of the 77 districts in the country, the ministry of health and population said.

**Berlin:** German authorities say a Catholic priest who came into contact with many people during church services in several cities has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. The dpa news agency reported Friday that health authorities in the state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania said the priest was involved in services in Demmin, Stralsund and Grimmen, among other places.

**London:** British Airways is considering legal action against the U.K. Government's plans to force anyone arriving into the country to quarantine themselves for 14 days in order to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

**London:** Britain's official human rights watchdog is to mount an inquiry into the racial inequalities exposed by the coronavirus pandemic. The Equality and Human Rights Commission said it was a "once in a generation" opportunity to tackle deep-seated inequalities and create a fairer country.

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General Public is hereby informed that one female **Namely: Rehana Khatun, D/o Mohd. Rabbani, R/o:** H.No. 3098, Street Sushila, Turkman Gate, Delhi has been missing/ kidnapped from her house since **31.05.2020** at 3:00 pm. from her house from the area of P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi In this regard a case vide **DD No. 25A, dated 01.06.2020** has been registered at P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi. The description of the missing/ kidnapped female is as under: **Age:** 23 years, **Height:** 4'5", **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Fair, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** Black colour suit-salwar, black-white colour dupatta and grey colour shoes in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the female but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this female kindly inform to the following. **Website:** <http://cbi.nic.in> **E-mail id -** [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) **Ph.:** 011-24368638, 24368641 **SHO DP/141/CD/2020 Ph.:** 011- 23279338, 8750870423

## Pak reports record 4,896 new cases, tally reaches 89,249

**Islamabad:** Pakistan on Friday registered a record spike of 4,896 new coronavirus cases, taking the total tally to 89,249, even as Prime Minister Imran Khan asserted that over 175,000 volunteers have helped to enforce the official guidelines to contain the spread of the deadly virus in the country.

The Ministry of National Health Service said 68 coronavirus patients died in the last 24 hours, taking the death toll to 1,838. Friday was the third consecutive day when a record number of COVID-19 cases were reported in Pakistan after the Eid holidays and easing of lockdown restrictions at the end of May.

With 4,896 new infections, the total coronavirus tally in Pakistan now stands at 89,249, the health ministry said. **PTI**

Sindh province reported 33,536 infections, Punjab 33,144, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 11,890, Balochistan 5,582, Islamabad 3,946, Gilgit-Baltistan 852 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 299.

Addressing the Corona Relief Tiger Force via a special television briefing, Prime Minister Khan said over 175,000 members of the force have helped to enforce the official guidelines to contain the spread of the coronavirus in the country. A record one million volunteers have registered for the force. "They have played an important role after the lockdown was eased. More than 1,75,000 were active in Ramadan who went to different mosques to ensure compliance with the safety guidelines," he said. **PTI**

## 3 million jobs loss expected in Pak due to virus outbreak

**Islamabad:** Cash-strapped Pakistan is expected to record around 3 million jobs losses due to the coronavirus outbreak, the finance ministry told the country's Senate on Friday.

In response to Senator Mushtaq Ahmed's question on estimated damage to the economy due to the pandemic, the finance ministry said the industrial sector is likely to lose 1 million jobs and the remaining 2 million will be lost in the service sector. **PTI**

## EU hopes to free borders of virus restrictions by June-end

**AP ■ BRUSSELS**

Europe could have its free travel zone up and running again by the end of the month, but travellers from further afield will not be allowed in before July, European Union Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said Friday after talks among the bloc's interior ministers.

Panicked by the coronavirus outbreak in Italy in February, countries in the 26-nation Schengen area — where people and goods move freely without checks — imposed border restrictions without consulting their neighbours to try to keep the disease out. The moves caused traffic jams and blocked medical equipment.

Free movement is a jewel in Europe's crown which helps

business flourish, and many European officials feared that the very future of the Schengen area was at threat from the restrictions. These added to pressures already caused by the arrival in Europe of well over 1 million migrants in 2015.

"I personally believe that we will return to a full functioning of the Schengen area and freedom of movement of citizens no later than the end of the month of June," Johansson told reporters after the video-conference meeting.

She said Europe's Centre for Disease Prevention and Control believes that confinement and other health measures are working. The center says that more than 168,000 people have been killed by the coronavirus in Europe, mostly in Britain, Italy, France and Spain.

**NOTICE**

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that **Dr. Attam's Nursing Home** situated at 19 Bhera Enclave, New Delhi-110087 is going to destroy its Medical admission records from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017, as per record destruction rule. If any body is interested in obtaining the records of this period, Please contact the Nursing Home within 7 days of appearance of this notice. After that administration will not be responsible for the records.

Thanks **Hospital Manager**

**INDIAN RAILWAYS**

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)  
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (RAIL MANTRALAYA)  
(RAILWAY BOARD)

No. 2020RS11741TC New Delhi, dated 01.06.2020

**E-TENDER NO. 2020RS1174TC**

Executive Director, Railway Stores (Steel), Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), Government of India, invites e-Tender for procurement of **36,000 Nos.** Upgraded High Tensile CBC Freight Stock for Indian Railways to RDSO specification No. WD-70-BD-10/Rev.02) with latest revision, if any.

2.0 The interested suppliers are advised to visit the website <http://ireps.gov.in> for details of the tender and submission of their e-bids.

3.0 No manual offers will be accepted against e-tender.

5.0 Tender will be closed at 15:00 hours on 15.07.2020.

Director, Railway Stores (Wagon), Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India

1230A/2020

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**ZONAL CONTRACT FOR ZONE 8**

Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Metro Rail Bhavan, 33/1, J. L. Nehru Road, Kolkata - 700071 for and on behalf of the President of India invites Tender Notice for e-tendering for the following work:

**Name of work :** Zone No. 8, i.e., Zonal Contract for arresting seepage on track bed, treatment of expansion/construction joints of RTS Box/Elevated Structures/Circular Tunnel/Stations/Ventilation Shaft, box walls, floors, mezzanine & ceilings by grouting with cement admixed with non-shrinkable water proofing compound and with cementitious grout on both UP & DN track including pit lines and ballastless track from Noapara Car Depot Complex (In.) to Kavi Subhas Car Depot Complex (In.) i.e., upto Km. 25/11 of Metro Railway, Kolkata **Tender Value :** ₹ 4,19,98,030.90 (approx.). **Cost of Tender Document :** ₹ 10,000/- **Earnest Money :** ₹ 3,60,000/- **Completion Period :** The contract shall be in force for a period of two years starting from 01.07.2020. **Date of Closing :** 26.06.2020 at 12.00 hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://ireps.gov.in). The bidding for the tender is to be submitted only through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer, if received, shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected.

**Abridged e-Tender Notice No.:** Civil-2329-2020-Recall (Open)

**FASTER SAFER SMOOTHER CLEANER**

## Beijing further relaxes curbs, Wuhan clears all patients

**Beijing/Wuhan:** Beijing on Friday decided to lower its COVID-19 emergency response, marking the return of normalcy in China's capital following the coronavirus outbreak, while the central city of Wuhan, the origin point of the pandemic, cleared all its confirmed cases.

Wuhan recorded zero cases of the virus following testing of 10 million people.

Beijing city will lower its emergency response to the novel coronavirus epidemic from the second level to the third level starting Saturday, a local official announced on Friday.

On May 17, the Beijing Centre for Disease Prevention and Control said it was not necessary to wear masks. **PTI**

## B'deshi courts freeing child suspects due to virus risk

**AP ■ DHAKA**

Authorities in Bangladesh have been releasing hundreds of children suspected of committing mostly petty crimes as they try to keep the coronavirus from spreading in overcrowded detention centers, officials said Friday.

The orders for their release on bail came from virtual courts set up by the country's Supreme Court with the help of UNICEF, officials said.

About 400 children have been granted bail in recent weeks and more than 300 of them have already been reunited with their families, said Natalie McCauley, chief of child protection at UNICEF in Bangladesh. She said the decision came as public health experts said children living in the country's detention centers

face a higher risk of getting infected, mainly because of overcrowding and poor conditions.

Bangladesh has a protracted system of delivering justice, with some cases for petty crimes taking years to conclude. According to UNICEF, some 23,000 cases involving children under 18 are currently pending with courts across the country.

Saifur Rahman, a special officer of the Supreme Court and additional district judge who is involved with the release program, said the program was crucial as with inadequate staff and utilities in detention centers, it was extremely difficult to minimize the risk of infection from COVID-19.

"In all fairness, maintaining social and physical dis-

tancing is next to impossible in such a situation," he said. Mohammed Rakib, 15, was accused of beating a man in Dhaka nearly two months ago. A judge from a regular court denied him bail and he was eventually sent to an overcrowded detention center just outside Dhaka that UNICEF says houses nearly 700 children even though it has the capacity for about 300.

Late last month he was finally granted bail through the new virtual court.

"It feels great to be freed and get united with my parents," Rakib told The Associated Press on Friday. "I am very happy. I have suffered in the jail a lot. That's a bad place." The reunion was special for Rakib and his family as they were able to celebrate the end of Ramadan together.

## Switzerland to lift travel limits on EU, UK

**AP ■ BERLIN**

Switzerland says it plans to lift restrictions on travel from European Union countries and Britain on June 15.

The Swiss government previously had announced that it would completely reopen the country's borders with three of its neighbours — Austria, Germany and France — in mid-June.

On Friday, a government statement said "in view of the current epidemiological situation" it can now expand that to all countries in the EU and the European Free Trade Association, as well as Britain.

Switzerland is not a member of the EU but is part of Europe's usually passport check-free Schengen travel area.

**Institute of Horticulture Technology, Guwahati Mandira, Kamrup-781127**  
Expression of Interest

The administrative officer of Institute of Horticulture Technology invites Expression of Interest in Seal cover from interested companies, organisations.

Establishment of integrated Turmeric Post harvest processing system production capacity 1 ton per hour. Including all machines, equipments, material, as per the document our work plan.

Companies having expertise in turmeric should only apply Total duration of completion of project is in 12 weeks, from date of order, the sealed Expression of interest should be submitted to this institute on or before 21 days from the date of publishing of this EO. The technical bid will be open at the same date at 11:00 am, and financial bid next day at 11:00 am in the office of Institute of Horticulture Technology Mandira, Kamrup-781127.

Project from DBT Ministry of science and Technology, Government of India New Delhi The sealed envelopes technical and commercial bid separately and 2% EMD and 5% security of project cost [after work award], in technical bid envelope should be mentioned EO for "Establishment of integrated turmeric production post harvest processing system"

**Administrative officer**  
Institute of Horticulture Technology Mandira, Assam, Pin code - 781127  
Email Id: [enquiry@iht.edu.in](mailto:enquiry@iht.edu.in)

# Markets resume rally as bank stocks spurt

LOG WEEKLY GAINS  
PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity indices resumed their upward march on Friday as investors piled into banking and infrastructure stocks amid robust foreign fund inflows and a firm trend in global markets.



Reversing the previous session's decline, the BSE Sensex zoomed 306.54 points or 0.90 per cent to end at a three-month high of 34,287.24. The broader NSE Nifty rose 113.05 points or 1.13 per cent to 10,142.15. State Bank of India (SBI) was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging 7.90 per cent, after the country's largest lender reported an over four-fold jump in standalone net profit for the March quarter at ₹3,580.81 crore.

making streak, the company announced sale of 1.85 per cent stake in its digital unit Jio Platforms to Abu Dhabi-based sovereign investor Mubadala for ₹9,093.60 crore. During the week, Sensex surged 1,863.14 points or 5.74 per cent, while Nifty advanced 561.85 points or 5.86 per cent. According to traders, besides stock-specific action, persistent foreign fund inflows and positive cues from global markets led to bullish sentiment here. On a net basis, foreign portfolio investors bought equities worth ₹2,905.04 crore on Thursday, provisional exchange data showed. "The current week has been a good one for

# SBI records historic profit in FY20 on stake sale in subsidiaries

Q4 net jumps over 4-fold  
PTI ■ MUMBAI

State Bank of India on Friday registered its highest ever yearly profit in 2019-20 and logged a four-fold rise in March quarter profit at ₹3,581 crore as one-time gains from stake sale in subsidiaries and decline in bad loans bolstered the country's largest lender.

The bank reported a stand-alone profit after tax of ₹838 crore in January-March, 2019-20, according to a regulatory filing. For 2019-20, the bank reported its highest ever yearly profit of ₹14,488 crore as against ₹862 crore in the previous year. SBI said exceptional items during 2019-20 included net profit of ₹3,484.30 crore on sale of certain portion of investment in subsidiary SBI Life Insurance in the second quarter and net profit of ₹2,731.34 crore on sale of some stake in SBI Cards and Payment Services in March quarter. "Despite not so easy circumstances even before COVID-19, the bank has declared a record profit of ₹14,488 crore in FY20, which is the highest ever profit for SBI in its history. We have consistently been able to improve our

asset quality as well as the provision coverage ratio quarter after quarter," bank's chairman Rajnish Kumar told reporters. Close to 21 per cent of the bank's retail borrowers have availed the three-month moratorium announced by the RBI. Kumar said in spite of the bank extending the moratorium to all its customers, nearly 82 per cent have paid two or more instalments and about 92 per cent have paid one or more instalments during March to May. The central bank had initially allowed banks to offer moratorium on repayment of term loans till May 31 but later extended it for another three months. "The three-month period has just started but my feeling is that our numbers would not be significantly different than what they were in the first three months. It may even improve (in June-August period) as we exit the lockdown," Kumar said. He said the bank has extended the standstill benefit, in terms of asset classification, to accounts with an outstanding loan of ₹6,200 crore. It has made a provision of 15% aggregating ₹938 crore on these loans. Domestic net interest margin (NIM) stood at 2.94 per cent in January-March, 2019-20 as compared to 3.02% in the year-ago period.

# Freeze Govt employees' salaries to cut public debt: IMF to Pak

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The IMF has asked cash-strapped Pakistan to freeze salaries of Government employees and adhere to the fiscal consolidation path by showing a nominal primary deficit in the new budget due to the unsustainable public debt that is set to hit 90 per cent of the total value of the national economy. Pakistan is finding it hard to concede to the two demands but the IMF is insisting that the country should continue to follow the fiscal consolidation path due to the high and unsustainable public debt, the Express Tribune reported on Friday.

Owing to the prevailing tight fiscal situation, growing public debt and Pakistan's decision to seek debt relief from G-20 countries. The International Monetary Fund has asked Islamabad to freeze salaries of Government employees, the daily reported, citing sources in the Ministry of Finance. However, the Government is resisting the demand due to high inflation that has eroded people's real income. Nonetheless, it is inclined to abolish over 67,000 posts that have remained vacant for over one year and is also ready to further squeeze current expenditures including a ban on purchase of vehicles. The IMF's key demand, which was also the reason for seeking to freeze the salaries, was that the government should announce a primary budget deficit target - total deficit excluding interest payments - of only ₹184 billion or 0.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Pakistan has its own reasons for resisting the IMF's demands as it does not see a significant jump in revenue collection in the next fiscal year due to the prevailing economic conditions. The Government is also inclined to give a raise in salaries due to high inflation that has eroded the real income of people, the daily reported.

# India's forex reserves surge to all-time high of \$493.48 billion

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The country's foreign exchange reserves surged \$3.43 billion to a fresh all-time high of \$493.48 billion for the week ended May 29 on a handsome accretion of the core currency assets, the RBI said. The reserves, which are counted as a key strength as the country faces the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, had risen by \$3 billion to an all-time high of USD 490.044 billion in the previous week. During the week ended May 29, foreign currency assets, a major component of the overall reserves, increased by \$3.50 billion to \$455.21 billion, data from the RBI showed.

# US unemployment drops unexpectedly to a still-high 13.3%

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US unemployment dropped unexpectedly in May to 13.3 per cent as reopened businesses began recalling millions of workers faster than economists had predicted, triggering a rally on Friday on Wall Street and giving President Donald Trump something to boast about amid his reelection bid. The jobless rate is still on par with what the nation witnessed during the Great Depression. And for the second straight month, the Labor Department acknowledged making errors in counting the unemployed during the coronavirus outbreak, saying the real figure is even worse than the numbers indicate. Still, after weeks of dire predictions by economists that unemployment in May could hit 20% or more, the news that the economy added a surprising 2.5 million jobs last month was seen as evidence that the collapse may have bottomed out in April at 14.7% and that a recovery is well underway as states loosen their lockdowns and let stores, restaurants, gyms and other businesses reopen. "We are witnessing the easiest phase of growth as people come off temporary layoffs and come back to their employers," said Harvard University economist Jason Furman, who led the White House Council of Economic Advisers during the Obama presidency. "And once employers are done recalling people, the much harder, longer work of recovery will have to proceed." Most economists had

expected rehiring to kick in as shutdowns were increasingly lifted and people gradually resumed shopping and eating out. "The surprising thing here is the timing and that it happened as quickly as it did," said Adam Kamins, senior regional economist at Moody's Analytics. On Wall Street, the S&P 500 was up 2.6% around midday on the news. An exultant Trump seized on the report as evidence that the economy is going to come back from the coronavirus crisis like a "rocket ship." "This shows that what we've been doing is right," said the president, who has pushed governors aggressively to reopen their economies amid warnings from public health officials that the country is risking a second wave of infections on top of the one that has killed over 100,000 Americans. Still, the job market is in such a deep hole that it could take years to dig out, economists say. Most are forecasting unemployment in the high single-digits or low double-digits by the end of this year. Economists had expected the government to report that employers shed 8.5 million more jobs in May on top of the 21.4 million loss in March and April. Instead, nearly all industries added jobs, a sharp reversal from April, when almost all cut them. Hotels and restaurants added 1.2 million jobs in May, after shedding 7.5 million. Retailers gained 368,000, after losing nearly 2.3 million in the previous month.

# World stock markets rise on US jobs data

Washington: Global markets rose on Friday and Wall Street futures as investors awaited the US jobs report for May, which is expected to show another surge in unemployment in the world's largest economy. Germany's DAX gained 1.7 per cent to 12,643 and the CAC 40 in Paris added 1.9 per cent to 5,108. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 1.3 per cent to 6,421. Futures for the Dow were up 1.3 per cent while those for the S&P 500 were 0.8 per cent higher. Economists expect the Labor Department's monthly jobs report for May to show employers slashed 8.5 million jobs last month, down from 20.5 million in April. That would push the unemployment rate to nearly 20 per cent from about 15 per cent. AP

# GST Council to meet on June 12

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The GST Council is scheduled to meet on June 12 and likely to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tax revenues, sources said. The 40th meeting of the GST Council, headed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising state counterparts, will be held via video conferencing. The meeting would discuss the impact of the pandemic on revenues of the Centre and states and ways to bridge the revenue gap, sources said. Faced with dismal collection and extended deadline for filing returns, the Government has refrained from releasing the monthly GST revenue collection figures for the months of April and May.

# Discoms' debt to hit ₹4.5 lakh crore by FY21: CRISIL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Power distribution utilities' debt will hit an all-time high of ₹4.5 lakh crore by the end of the ongoing financial year, CRISIL Ratings said on Friday. The liquidity package of ₹90,000 crore announced by the Government last month offers a breather, but structural reforms have become critical to sustainability of discoms, the rating agency said in a statement. The package will help state power distribution companies (discoms) settle a significant portion of their overdue bills to generating companies, it said. However, it noted that with power demand weak and cash losses high amid the COVID-19 pandemic, discoms would end up owing lenders a staggering ₹4.5 lakh crore by the end of 2020-21, or 30 per cent more than that in the last fiscal. Such a material increase in debt would deteriorate the credit profiles of discoms and make structural reforms critical to their sustainability, a study of 34 State discoms (from 15 states), which account for over 80% of India's power demand, shows, CRISIL stated. According to it, presently, only one in five discoms is capable of servicing debt through own cash flows and budgeted subsidies. The scenario would worsen this fiscal because of weak demand for power.

# Reliance strikes 6th deal Sells 1.85% in Jio Platforms for ₹9,093.60 crore to Abu Dhabi's Mubadala

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Atlantic picked up 1.34 per cent stake in Jio Platforms for ₹6,598.38 crore. This was followed by US private equity giant KKR buying 2.32 per cent for ₹11,367 crore. Jio Platforms, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd, is a next-generation technology company. Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd, with 388 million mobile subscribers, will continue to be a wholly-owned subsidiary of Jio Platforms. Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries, said Mubadala is one of the most astute and transformational global growth investors. "Through my longstanding ties with Abu Dhabi, I have personally seen the impact of Mubadala's work in diversifying and globally connecting the UAE's knowledge-based economy. We look forward to benefiting from Mubadala's experience and insights from supporting growth journeys across the world," he said. Khaldoon Al Mubarak, Managing Director and Group CEO, Mubadala Investment Company, said: "We are committed to investing in, and actively working with, high growth companies which are pioneering technologies to address critical challenges and unlock new opportunities."

Reliance Industries on Friday announced the sale of 1.85 per cent stake in its digital unit to Abu Dhabi-based sovereign investor Mubadala for ₹9,093.60 crore, the sixth deal in as many weeks that will inject a combined ₹87,655.35 crore in the oil-to-telecom conglomerate to help it pare debt. "Mubadala Investment Company (Mubadala), will invest ₹9,093.60 crore in Jio Platforms at an equity value of ₹4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of ₹15.16 lakh crore," the company said in a statement. With this investment, Jio Platforms has raised ₹87,655.35 crore from leading global technology and growth investors including Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic, KKR and Mubadala in less than six weeks. Facebook picked up 9.99 per cent stake in the firm that houses India's youngest but largest telecom firm on April 22 for ₹43,574 crore. Within days of that deal, Silver Lake — the world's largest tech investor — bought a 1.15 per cent stake in Jio Platforms for ₹5,665.75 crore. On May 8, US-based Vista Equity Partners bought 2.32 per cent stake in Jio Platforms for ₹11,367 crore. On May 17, global equity firm General

**SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY**  
E-PROCUREMENT (IREPS) TENDER NOTICE NO. 03/UL/2020 OF 29.05.2020

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India invites E-tenders for the following works:

Sr. No.	Name of Works	Approx. Value
1	Annual Repairs Contract for Walkie Talkie sets and VHF 25 Watt base stations of Kenwood make over Hubballi Division. (for a period of two years).	Rs. 4,42,314/-
2	Annual Repairs Contract for Walkie Talkie sets and VHF 25 Watt base stations of Motorola make over Hubballi Division. (for a period of two years).	Rs. 5,53,788/-
3	Sub Work-1: Londa - Vasco Da Gama & Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed rebuilding of Bridge No. 47 at Km 618/500-600. Sub Work-2: Londa - Vasco Da Gama & Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed rebuilding of Bridge No. 75 at Km 625/400-500. Sub Work-3: Londa - Vasco Da Gama & Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed rebuilding of Bridge No. 122 at Km 38/200-300. Sub Work-4: Londa - Vasco Da Gama & Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed rebuilding of Bridge No. 188 at Km 59/300-400. Sub Work-5: Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed construction of LHS in lieu of LC No. 411 at Km 639/900-900 between Suladhali - Pachhapur stations. Sub Work-6: Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed construction of LHS in lieu of LC No. 458 at Km 734/400-500. Sub Work-7: Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed construction of LHS in lieu of LC No. 451 at Km 725/200-300 (Telecom Portion). Sub Work-8: Londa - Miraj Section - Proposed construction of LHS in lieu of LC No. 441 at Km 702/3-4 between Raybag - Chinchli stations (Telecom Portion).	Rs. 48,39,786/-
4	Sub Work-1: Shifting of Signal cable in connection with "Rebuilding of bridge No. 55 at Km 620/400-500 between Sambre - Sulehavi section. Sub Work-2: Proposed rebuilding of bridge by insertion of new precast RCC boxes (2x2 m) by cut and cover method for Br. No. 58 at Km 621/200-300 between Sambre - Sulehavi stations. Sub Work-3: Proposed rebuilding of bridge by insertion of new precast RCC boxes (2x1.8 m) by cut and cover method for Br. No. 93 at Km 635/400-500 between Sambre - Suladhali station. (Telecom portion). Sub Work-4: Shifting of Signal cable in connection with "Rebuilding of bridge No. 104 at Km 645/600-700 between Pachchapur - Suladhali section". Sub Work-5: Proposed rebuilding of bridge by insertion of new precast RCC boxes (3x2 m) by cut and cover method for Br. No. 228 at Km 80/00-100 between Chancar - Madgaon stations.	Rs. 8,93,687/-
5	Annual Maintenance Contract for Diesel Generator sets of different capacities of acoustic type of Mrs. Eicher Make (12 Nos of DG set for 02 Years and 08 Nos of DG sets for 1 1/2 years (Total-20 Nos).	Rs. 7,26,839/-

Last Date of submission of bids: Up to 11:00 hrs of 29.06.2020  
For details log on: [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)  
Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecommunication), Hubballi  
PUB/63/AAAL/PRB/SWR/2020-21

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

Dy Chief Engineer (Construction) I, Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vadodara - 390 004, invites E-tenders as per the details given below:-

Sr. No.	E-Tender No.	Name of the work	Approximately cost work (₹)	Earnest Money to be deposited (₹)	Availability of online Tender for bidding
1	Dy.CE/CI/ BRC/CTD-Dhar/109R	Construction of Subway at Motilsadali & Padaliya Station in connection with CTD-DHAR New Line project	9756829.36	637800.00	From 26.05.2020 at 15.00 hrs to 09.06.2020 upto 15.00 Hrs
2	Dy.CE/CI/ BRC/CTD-Dhar/112	Maintenance of Broad gauge track laid with 60/52 kg rails on PSC sleepers including points and crossing between Alirajpur to Khandala Stations (including yard) in connection with new line project between Chhotaudepur to Dhar	1641416.16	32900.00	04.06.2020 at 15.00 Hrs to 18.06.2020 upto 15.00 Hrs
3	Dy.CE/CI/ BRC/CTD-KEW/33	Fabrication & Fixing of 60/52 kg. in situ gullied joints on Gauge Conversation, New line & Railway Electrification Project of Vadodara Division of Western Railway under jurisdiction of Dy.CE(C)/BRC's unit	27390890.58	287000.00	From 03.06.2020 at 15.00 Hrs to 17.06.2020 upto 15.00 Hrs

Note:- 1) Regarding detailed notice containing cost of tender document (non refundable), EMD, eligibility criteria, Similarly Nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in); 2) Opening of price Bid will be advised later on, after Technical suitability of the Bidders Manual offers will not be considered.

Like us on: [facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly) Follow us on: [twitter.com/WesternRly](https://twitter.com/WesternRly)

# Chittaranjan Locomotive Works observes World Environment Day

New Delhi: The World Environment Day was observed in Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW). In view of prevailing Covid-19 situation, e-posters & e-presentation on "Celebrate Biodiversity" theme are prepared for raising awareness amongst the CLW employees and family members. No gathering, community programmes are organised. CLW employees and their family members are informed to save our mother earth and join in large numbers to build it back for a better tomorrow through electronic and social media.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY**  
Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India  
NIFT Campus, Karwar, Jodhpur - 342037, Rajasthan, India Ph. 0291-2659520

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
NIFT, Jodhpur invites E-tenders for under mentioned various services at campus at Karwar, Jodhpur:-

1. Housekeeping Services	2. Manpower Service
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Detailed information such as E-Tender forms, pre-bid meeting, submission of tender, opening of Technical Bids & Financial Bids etc will be available in NIFT Jodhpur website [www.nift.ac.in/jodhpur](http://www.nift.ac.in/jodhpur) & <https://nifttenders.eproc.in> The date of issue /receipt of E-tenders etc. will be valid as per the tender uploaded on website. In future any information regarding corrigendum/addendum, extension of time etc. of above tenders would be uploaded in above mentioned website only.

Purchase Officer

# NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM/ADDENDUM

In Tender No. 558-Sig/16M/Tender/1342 which is scheduled to be opened on 17.06.2020, following changes are made:

S.No.	Item No.	Description	As per NIT drawn	To be read as
01	02	Unit	Day	Per Km.

All other terms and condition will remain unchanged.  
Tender No. 558-Sig/16M/Tender/1342 Dated 05.06.2020 1281/20

# SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

# Metro Railway, Kolkata Kolkata's Pride

**ZONAL CONTRACT FOR ZONE 1**  
Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Metro Rail Bhavan, 33/1, J. L. Nehru Road, Kolkata - 700071 for and on behalf of the President of India invites Tender Notice for e-tendering for the following work: **Name of work** : Zone No. 1, i.e., UP-keep of track at Noapara Car Depot Yard from Km. (-) 01/3-4 including ballastless track upto KNPAP station, upto and including Dakshineswar Station and link line from Noapara Car Depot Yard to Belghoria Station of Eastern Railway of Metro Railway, Kolkata, Up-keep of track and track bed of both UP & DN line from Km. (-) 1/3-4 to Km. 7/14 between KNPAP (Ex.) to KCEN (In.) including "Y" siding at KDMI & KGPK Stations of Metro Railway, Kolkata and Up-keep of track and track bed of both UP & DN line from Salt Lake Sector V (In.) to Phool Bagan Station (In.) including Central Park Depot and Yard of East West Metro Corridor of Metro Railway, Kolkata. **Tender Value** : ₹ 7,79,01,877.41 (approx.). **Cost of Tender Document** : ₹ 10,000/- **Earnest Money** : ₹ 5,39,600/- **Completion Period** : The contract shall be in force for a period of two years starting from 01.07.2020. **Date of Closing** : 26.06.2020 at 12.00 hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer, if received, shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected.

**Abridged e-Tender Notice No.:** Civil-2330-2020-Recall (Open)  
FASTER SAFER SMOOTHER CLEANER

**मुख्यमंत्री नित्युक्त दवा योजना**  
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
Government of Rajasthan

"Mukhyamantri Nishulk Dava Yojana"  
Gandhi Block, Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur-302005, India  
Phone No: 0141-2228066, 2228064 Website: <http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in>  
CIN:U24232RJ2011SGC035067 E-mail: [edprmsc@gmail.com](mailto:edprmsc@gmail.com)

**INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) & NOTICE INVITING BID (NIB)**  
NIT F.02(75)/RMSCLPROC./N-95 Mask/NIB-07/202082 Dated:-05.06.2020

Name & Address of the Procuring Entity: • Name: Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation (RMSCL) • Address: Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur-302005 (Rajasthan)

Officer Incharge: • ED(Procurement) • Address:RMSCL Swasthya bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur-302005 (Rajasthan) • Email: [edprocurement@gmail.com](mailto:edprocurement@gmail.com)

Subject Matter of Procurement: N-95 mask

Bid Procedure: Single-stage: two part (envelop) open competitive eBid procedure at <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>

Bid Evaluation Criteria (Selection Method): [Least Cost Based Selection (LCBS)-L1

Websites for downloading Bidding Document: • <http://www.rmscl.health.gov.in> • Bidding document fee: Rs. 2000 (Rupees One Thousand only) in Demand Draft in favour of "Managing Director, RMSCL" payable at "Jaipur". • RILS Processing Fee: Rs. 1000 (Rupees One Thousand only) in Demand Draft in favour of "Managing Director, RILS" payable at "Jaipur".

Estimated Procurement Cost: Rs 500 Lacs

Bid Security and Mode of Payment: • Amount (INR): 0.2% of the estimated procurement cost (Rs.10.00 lacs) or 0.5%, for MSME of Rajasthan or 1% for Sick Industries, other than MSME, whose cases are pending with Board of Industrial & Financial Reconstruction. • Mode of Payment: Banker's Cheque or Demand Draft of a Scheduled Bank in favour of "Managing Director, RMSCL" payable at "Jaipur".

Date/Time/Place of Pre-bid Meeting: • Date/Time: 10.06.2020 at 11:00AM • Place: Meeting Hall, RMSCL, Swasthya Bhawan, Jaipur

Manner, Start/ End Date for the submission of Bids: • Manner: Online at eProc website (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>) • Start Date: 08.06.2020 upto 09:00 AM • End Date: 16.06.2020 at 03:00 PM

Submission of Banker's Cheque/ Demand Draft for Tender Fee, Bid Security, and Processing Fee\*: 16.06.2020 at 03:00 PM

Date/Time/Place of Technical Bid Opening: • Date: 16.06.2020 • Time: 04:00 PM • Place: RMSCL

Raj. Samwadi/C/20/734 Executive Director (Procurement)

SHORT CIRCUITS

AMITABH BACHCHAN

The prosthetic make-up is always an issue during hot weather. It tends to melt away the sticking glue and destroy the prosthetic. Adequate care on the sets of *Gulabo Sitabo* was taken to keep the face cool. It's a requirement. If you want to be an actor, it's important get on with it and stop complaining.



TAHIRA KASHYAP

Seeing the current situation and the world we are living in right now, it's pretty much the reflection of the causes that we have created. From not littering the streets to not destroying plants and doing some gardening and adapting glass and wood for our necessities, everyone should follow some tips in their lives to keep nature beautiful.



ANURAG KASHYAP

Casting the role of Sarita for *Choked: Paisa Bolta Hai* was a big challenge for me. It's a unique role that has to be delivered in a very organic way. She is a young housewife and mother who aspires for more than what her current basic life can provide. And her need for money alters the trajectory of her life and that of her family.



KIRTI KULHARI

Respecting nature is to know when to stop. We as humankind have been exploiting nature, this lockdown has definitely taught us that we need very minimum resources to live and I hope we all now have understood its importance. It is like a default setting in all of us. There is a lot for us to learn and to change in ourselves.

ANGELINA JOLIE

Rights don't belong to any one group to give to another. Discrimination and impunity cannot be tolerated, explained away or justified. I hope we can come together as Americans to address the deep structural wrongs in our society.



CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

PREMIERE FLASHBACK

Conceptualised and directed by SUJOY PROSAD CHATTERJEE, an inter-disciplinary artist and actor, the docu-film *Spotlight* aims to highlight the lost charm of commercial Bengali theatre and how its revival can create a conduit for empathy and a community of support, says CHAHAK MITTAL



On a typical Sunday evening of 1990s in the then Calcutta, the streets of Hatibagan were spilling with people and there was no place to park the car. The reason was not far to be sought. The seven theatre houses surrounding the street were holding their public premieres, the tickets of which sold out quickly. The auditoriums were decorated with flower garlands and some playhouses even distributed sweets. Sujoy Prosad Chatterjee had gone to watch *Bhaalo Kharap Meye* that starred the much-acclaimed Aparna Sen in the lead. His father, "a typical South Calcutta man," always found it difficult to park his car in the rather congested theatre alley. His mother walked out of the car to speak to the box-office person and she managed to get the tickets. "How did you do that?" asked Sujoy with a surprised look. Well, she said, "Look, I am a North Calcutta-bred girl. I may not speak like your father but I do carry an artsy smile!" The three burst into a hearty laugh and together walked into the Biswarupa theatre.

Cut to today, when one takes a walk through the area, the erstwhile 'Theatre Para' or the 'Broadway of Bengal,' one is only met by the dilapidated abandoned playhouses that line the streets of North Kolkata. From the 1970s till the late 1990s, these theatres were very popular. These cultural spaces thrived on making a difference, yet held on to a unique tradition. However, their decline came by soon. Actors would be greeted by empty halls, producers started facing great losses, the funds saw crunches, the TV era had hugely set in. Later, in early 2000s, while Rangmahal (a theatre house in then Calcutta) was converted into a wedding hall, mysterious fires gutted halls like Star Theatre and consumed the remains of Biswarupa. Perhaps, the fires, ironically, meant the decline of this once-famed culture of the city.

Sujoy's docu-film *Spotlight* reflects on how moving from the big stage to the little screen, it is now more important than ever to realise the power of theatre and how it can create a conduit for empathy, be nudged towards compassion for the downtrodden, and be constituted as a community of support.



EXCERPTS:

How did you conceptualise the film?

My Montreal-based friends Abhishek Ghosh and Shyamosree Ghosh and I have been hugely interested in cultural archiving and we have been thinking of many ideas to approach this.

Meanwhile, I had also been reading *The Firebird* by Saikat Majumdar and found it quite intriguing. The book, told through the perspective of a 10-year-old boy named Ori, looks at the heydays of the commercial Bengali theatre and its subsequent death. What's interesting is that the narrative touches upon the heritage through the eyes of a boy whose mother was a part of it. I think this was primarily the muse of *Spotlight*, the docu-narrative that I have conceptualised.

What was the research work involved? How long did it take for you to complete the film?

The research and the build-up has been done by a young theatricalian, Rudrarup Mukhopadhyay. I, too, contribute often and it's been a month that we are trying to collate as much as we can. A very important part of this research is the posters, advertisements, lobby cards of the plays, which have been provided by Sounak Chacraverti, an acclaimed art curator and archivist. I am also speaking to a lot of insiders and audience for the

documentation.

What do you think was the cause of Broadway of Bengal's decline and how have you reflected that in your film?

The main cause of the decline is the paradigm shift in the pattern of entertainment. Going to the theatre for a Sunday matinee and catching the evening train back was an important practice for the audience who lived in the hinterland. People were willing to pay to watch a Sabitri Chatterjee or a Soumitra Chatterjee play within the social distance of the proscenium. The idiot box or the television began showcasing these actors with regular viewing in soaps and, of course, the whole experience of going to a playhouse became secondary, gradually.

The crunch for funds became a pertinent reason too. Theatre producers never had an organised cartel and what spelled the doom finally was the rise of multiplexes. I think the government also did nothing absolutely to preserve or support this very important part of our cultural history. Can I say that theatre was also not a "social responsibility" for corporates?

In the film, what we have reflected through the interview of contemporary theatre practitioner Sohag Sen, is the birth of an alternative theatre movement that drove the audience to the Academy of Fine Arts.

The documentary features many known thespians and actors with whom the youngsters would connect better. Do you think this will help them know the Bengali theatre's essence in a more nuanced way?

Well, I'd say, yes and no, both. Heritage doesn't require celebrity endorsements. I had requested actor Neeraj Kabi to read from *The Firebird* in the film because of his artistry and not just his stint in the reel world. But yes, if today a millennial watches the film and buys a copy of the book after hearing Neeraj, no harm is done.

Another interesting aspect is that we have the legendary Soumitra Chatterjee and theatre actress Poulami Bose reading the play, *Neelkantho*, that ran to packed houses in Rangmahal.

We also have Ratna Ghoshal reading from *Nohobot*, which ran for 1,600 nights in Tapan Theatre. She had essayed the central character Keya, in the play, directed by the veteran Satya Bandopadhyay.

I think today's generation of young actors can also look forward to thespian Bratya Basu, who has done the prologue for the film. We have actually used a clipping from his popular play, *Awdoyo Shesh Rajani*, based on the life and times of Ashim Chakraborty. His play, *Barbodhu* is a pivotal point in the history of the Broadway of Bengal. Daminee Benny Basu also sings the closing song from the play.

Given today's scenario, what do you think is the future of theatres since social distancing and self-quarantine are here to stay for some time now?

I have been myself a part of an online play, *Lockdown Diaries*, directed by Souptic Chakraborty and will soon be acting in its sequel called *Unlocked Diaries*, which will be streamed online on June 14.

The first edition turned out to be hugely successful and that's why the sequel was planned. Yes, we have to think of digital productions keeping in mind the pandemic but the struggle for the other people in theatre fraternity still remains unsorted.

Many light designers have resorted to selling vegetables and casual workers are looking for alternative professions to earn their livelihood. The future looks bleak unless we move into the intimate

format completely with select audience.

How do you think theatre will be able to fight the current pandemic because such places might be shut for a long time?

I sincerely pray and hope that theatres open, maintaining the safety protocol and the sanitisation. It's too early to say that the future belongs to the digital space completely. Yes, it can be explored as an interim option but how can one experience the illusions of darkness and light on the stage on the internet? The third bell pumps up an actor's adrenaline and the applause from a live audience is a moment that can never be replaced by 2,000 likes and 100 comments.

Many world theatres have now brought the stage home for people through online shows. Do you think Broadway of Bengal might have the chance to revive itself digitally now?

The Broadway cannot be enlivened digitally. One can talk about it and even share videos of legends. I would like to mention here that Theatre Sansriti, led by Debesh Chattopadhyay, is doing some phenomenal archive work by sharing documentaries on Bengali theatre legends like Ramaprasad Banik, Tripti Mitra, Utpal Dutta, Asit Mukhopadhyay and the likes, who were essentially a part of the alternative theatre movement that the intelligentsia adhered to. There's practically nothing on the Broadway.

You had earlier mentioned that you have experienced a large part of this Broadway and have a trove of memories. Could you share some of your personal anecdotes associated with the theatres in Bengal?

Oh yes! My maternal home was in the northern fringes of Calcutta, precisely Beadon Street. This was very close to the theatre district. I remember the huge cut-outs of characters from plays like *Asleel*, *Bibor*, *Kone Bibhrat* and many others right at the junction of the street. My maternal grandmother had a deep interest in plays and she used to organise complimentary passes for us to watch the premieres.

(The film will release on Youtube by the channel, GhoshCompany.)

STUDIO CHAT 30 MINUTES

Believable moments

Actors BRANDON ROUTH and KATE BOSWORTH share their experiences from the sets of *Superman Returns*.  
By TEAM VIVA



you put on the harness, the body suit and the costume over that, you feel restricted in a lot of ways. But when you're hooked up and actually doing those flying scenes, it's all so worth it.

Did you research as to how the character has been portrayed in the past?

Kate: I actually made a very conscious decision not to watch past performances before I played her. I had seen the 1978 version when I was six or seven, so it was years ago. I remember the magic of that, the essence of Lois but the character was so different in the scripts given to me. That was Bryan's vision and I thought that it was interesting. I really wanted the audience to feel that she's changed.

How was your experience working with Brandon?

Kate: Brandon is one of the kindest and loveliest people you will ever meet. He does have the quality of being a Superman. He has that pure look in his eyes and carries the kindness in his heart. People might underestimate his ability but I think it's one of the hardest roles to play because it can be so easily overdone. He played it with much confidence and subtlety.  
(Watch the film on June 7 at 9 pm on Sony PIX.)

What was it playing Lois Lane?

Kate Bosworth: My favourite thing about her was that she appears to be such a modern-day woman, no matter which era she's been depicted in. I love that she is respected by so many different people and is attractive to men because of her intelligence. She is feisty and passionate. What I enjoyed the most about playing this role was that she does seem so different than the past performances. Lois has a son and a fiancé. Her heart is broken by Superman, so she has got more battle wounds. She feels a little more grown up now.

What was it like being rigged up to fly?

Kate: Initially, it was a pretty awkward experience. To be honest I'm kind of claustrophobic. So when

What was it like working with Bryan Singer? How is he as a director?

Brandon: He is great personality. Bryan has an amazing ability to be creative on the spot. He is open to changing the shot or a line, if he feels it is not working. There were some discrepancies because it was a huge script and

sometimes things didn't quite translate well, so we were able to change those. It was great of him for communicating that with me. He was so passionate about the characters in the script and knew he had an opinion. He could give me his views and I had mine so it helped.

What was the best thing about your character in *Superman Returns*?

Brandon Routh: The best thing was that I get to play 'Superman'. It was fun to portray this character, who has so much history. The character had many layers to it. Sometimes when I meet kids or even grownups for that matter, who have seen me in the suit, they seem nervous while shaking hands. Kids barely can look at you because, you are The Superman, who saves the world from falling apart. It feels amazing to be people's favourite.

How did you manage to bring out the differences between Superman and Clark Kent?

Brandon: Well, as you know, they're the same person but they serve different purpose. We first made a difference between the two physically. We had Superman move very gracefully, kingly and have a great presence. And as for Clark, some people would describe him bumbling. He is just very excited to be around and talk to Lois because this is the only way Superman talks to anybody, through Clark. He is the social face for Superman. So that's the difference I guess, one is calm and other one is very excited. And playing two characters in a single film

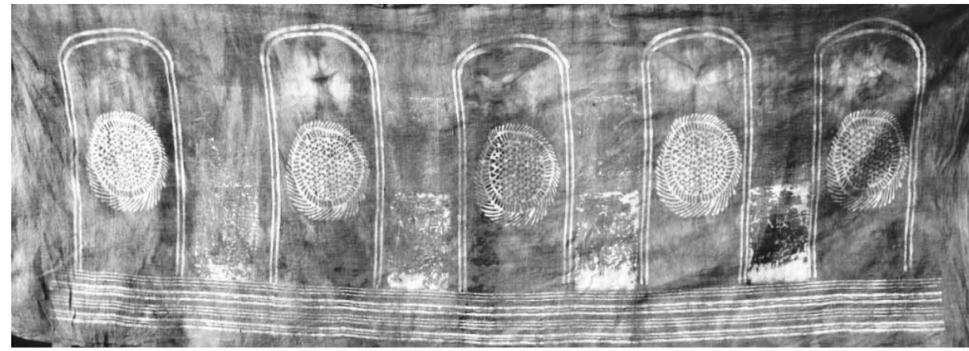
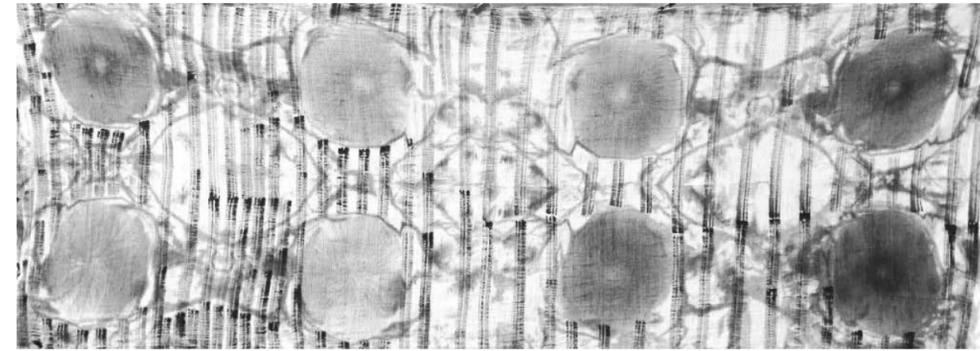
How did you prepare for the role?

Brandon: We did a lot of preparation including physical weight training and putting on muscles. I worked with a movement coach, moving the two characters differently and how to make flying look cool. We also indulged in a lot of conversation with Bryan about the story, plot points, the motions involved in the film, imag-

was a similar experience as playing two different characters in two films.

What was it like working with

**ARTS&CULTURE 45 MINUTES**



# PAST GLORY OFFERS HOPE

Artist, poet and filmmaker SANGEETA GUPTA creates a massive painting, *Adiyogi Shiva: A Journey in Cosmic Indigo*, to send out a positive message about sustainable living, clothing, textile art and our age-old natural dyes and colours. By TEAM VIVA



my lifeline. Both bring pure joy to me.

◆**What does *A Journey in Cosmic Indigo* signify? Did you blend the native Indigo with some modern techniques?**

We have to return to the basics if we want to survive in peace. Handmade fabric, natural colour and dye are environment-friendly and chemical-free. I have created this abstract, conceptual, mini-

malist painting through organic ways to promote sustainable living and natural indigo as this aims at its revival. I want to encourage this cash crop as a mass movement to make it a commercially

viable venture for farmers, dyers and craftsmen.

◆**How was it possible to create a 606 feet masterpiece joining 71 khaddar paintings in mere eight days?**

We are on this planet to experience life in its entirety. Each one of us has our own share of struggles and challenges and it wasn't different for me. But I faced it with grit and determination.

I was secretive about the whole process as it was pretty much about my endurance too. It was a challenge to my physical limitations because I had met with an accident in March last year when I smashed my right wrist. Though, I could paint and do all that was required but making a 100 metre painting at a stretch was my ultimate test. I was not competing with anyone or for any world record but was challenging myself to explore the physical and mental boundaries that I had.

It seemed that Shiv and the whole universe was on my side because to my surprise I found that I intended to paint 100 metres but went on to finish 185 metres. That just happened by accident. I kept on asking my workers about the measurements of the fabric. The same day I checked the world records and was amused to realise that I had created a new one by making the longest painting. That is the power of one's spirit.

◆**The painting depicts the various aspects of Shiv Shakti in a nuanced way. Did you do any research for it?**

I have always been a spiritually inclined person but with maturity, my interest in the eternal cosmic entity — Shiv — became deeper. He is omnipresent, both inside and outside us. We are all connected and originate from one source, god.

It all started during my early child-

hood. My grandfather had a great influence on my spiritual upbringing. Kashmir reiterated my faith in the universal principle of *Shivohum*, while I was posted there for two years. I realised that the whole universe is Shiv, there is no beginning, no end. I believe in oneness of the whole, *Ekam*.

When an artist is at peace with herself, subject and medium merge. If you are experiencing love, compassion and bliss, the medium doesn't bother you. If you are connected with the universe, every thing unfolds before you. I just had to train my hands a bit to use *dabu* as a medium on fabric. When artists work they are in solitude, preoccupied with their creativity.

◆**There is a growing concern that our ancient crafts are dying. What has been your experience?**

Yes, it is a serious concern. Artisans and craftsmen need not only the support of the government but people too. Their creative ventures need to become commercially viable. This is one of the reasons why I took it upon myself to revive the age old techniques by making it contemporary and innovative.

◆**Since there will be a rise in Indian brands in the post-pandemic world, do you think it will bring out more age-old techniques?**

Yes, hopefully it should, provided, we make all the right moves and sincerely work for it. It will be a great revival of our rich heritage and the restoration of our creative labour too. Handmade art and craft is so intrinsic to our culture and abundantly available in our country. The intent to promote it in a big way has been lacking so far. However, I am optimistic and enthusiastic about it and shall do what I can for its survival and revival, both.

## Ayushmann urges water conservation

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana is widely regarded as the socially-conscious star who stands up to raise his voice on issues that affect him deeply. The star is now urging people to be judicious in terms of water consumption and battling for preserving the resource at a time when water scarcity is plaguing people across the globe.



The actor has come forward to support actress Bhumi Pednekar's initiative Climate Warrior that is trying to raise awareness on several important issues plaguing our climate through a campaign called *One Wish For The Earth*. Bhumi's campaign will see Bollywood's thought leaders come forward to

discuss climate justice. The platform will see the stars urge citizens to take climate change seriously and, along with them, also do their bit to protect the planet.

"These are exceptional times that we have seen in the last few months. It's time to wake up, take notice and participate," he says, adding, "This environment day my one wish for the earth is or rather request for all of us to use water wisely. It is a scarce resource and right now we are even more dependent on it to wash our hands at regular intervals to battle this pandemic."

He asks citizens to be conscious that they need to preserve water because it impacts many. He urges for unity in protecting people's right for water. The star says, "In the endeavour to keep ourselves safe, we should not forget about the bigger goal. We need to use water wisely so that our future generations have it enough and more. It's my humble request to all of you to become climate warriors and work towards a clean and a green future."

Several series on Natural History have shown us the world the way that we could've never imagine. While these moments captured on camera take us on a roller-coaster of emotions, the biggest question that perplexes everyone is, "How did they even shoot that?" The latest anthology, *Stories Behind Stories*, covers the making of the most celebrated shows of all times — each revolutionary in its own way. Filmed over years, each series reveals an unseen side of nature and wildlife. It includes the 'making of' of some of the landmark series — *Seven Worlds, One Planet*, *Dynasties*, *The Hunt*, *Planet Earth II*, uncovering the action on the other side of the camera, the dedicated crew who risk their life while filming, the kind of research and preparation that goes into capturing every small shot, the life-risking challenges they face, the cutting-edge technology that's developed, especially for the shows and even the fun anecdotes.

◆**Why did you choose Asia for shooting?**

It is the largest continent on earth, covering one third of the world's surface. It presents a lovely but massive challenge when it comes to finding stories. Right from the jungles of Indonesia to the high Arctic in Russia, you've got absolutely everything to choose from. What we wanted to focus on was how the animals coped with living in such vast landscapes. Asia's geological history is also a key part of the story. Around 30 million years ago, India crashed into the rest of Asia, forming the Himalayas which changed the landscape entirely. As a result, Asia, today, is a world of extremes. It has the hottest deserts, the highest mountains and all of it stems from its geology. We made a real effort to look at those different environments and most importantly, to find stories that have never been done before. In addition, we wanted to show the impact that people are having on the environment and the wildlife living there today because that are a really important part of every continent's story.

◆**What was it like filming the golden snub-nosed monkeys in central China?**

The high mountain ranges in central China are remote and have been largely inaccessible to film crews. Yet for hundreds of years, stories of the 'Abominable Snowman' have emanated from this region. This is where the story of the Yeti (strange, scary-looking people that nobody knew anything about) comes

## CAUSE 30 MINUTES

# A world of extremes

The producer of Asian and Australian episodes of *Stories Behind Stories*, EMMA NAPPER, elaborates on the research and preparation that go into capturing every small shot, the life-risking challenges while shooting wildlife and much more. By TEAM VIVA



from. Actually, Yeti is a golden, snub-nosed monkey. They're absolutely incredible because they walk upright like we do and the males have got ginormous feet. They like little people and they've got phenomenal colours on them. The monkeys are a little bit of a holy grail for sir David. It's something that he had heard described in scientific papers in the early 60s but has never had the opportunity to see. So it was really cool to be able to come back and show him that footage because he was just blown away by how they looked and survived. They have these big, shaggy coats and cuddle to stay warm. The families are bonded and reliant on each other as without somebody to cuddle, the babies would die very quickly in the winter there. They were a joy to be able to film and a joy to be able to show David.



◆**What did you find out about the Sumatran Rhino Serenade?**

For me, the most important thing about making these films is where you see something in the natural world, and you just can't believe it's true. That's where the joy comes from. One real highlight was our story about the Sumatran Rhino. The jungles of Indonesia are rich and dense, which means the animals there have a real problem finding each other. I've been to lots of jungles before, but here, while I was looking at the way animals talk to each other, I came across this sound, which sounded like a whale. I played it to the team and made everyone guess what it was. Nobody guessed it correctly. It turned out to be a Sumatran Rhino. We filmed them mostly because of their way of communicating but also because they are one of the rarest species on earth. The rhino we filmed was born in 2000. They used to be widespread across Southern Asia and now, there are only 300 left. The upper estimate is 70. The lower estimate is 30. The decline in the number is a combination of poaching and loss of habitat to timber and palm oil production.

We filmed them in a protected area, which is the only place you can possibly see them. All I had heard of the singing rhino was an old bit of sound footage that

was recorded at a zoo in America. There's almost nothing known about why they do it or the meaning of their vocalisations, other than that the females and the males use the song as part of their way of meeting up. So I wasn't sure what we were going to experience when we went in the field but almost as soon as we got there, we could hear the female singing. It was quite loud.

◆**What do you have to say about Australia?**

Australia's story across time is that it used to be attached to Antarctica. Then it split from Antarctica and it has been moving north. When it split, a raft of animals — marsupials, reptiles, birds — were separated off and marooned. As a result, most of the animals in Australia are found nowhere else. It's a continent of weirdos, beautiful animals, things you haven't seen in other places. What I loved at the beginning of this process is you ask a lot of people what lives in Australia and they'll say kangaroos and koalas... and then they get stuck. Yet there's this amazing array of animals that have been stranded there for millions and millions of years. Australia over time has been getting hotter and hotter. When it separated from Antarctica, it was basically all forest. Now it's almost all desert. That's quite a story to tell in itself.

◆**Can you tell us more about cassowaries?**

The cassowary is Australia's ostrich. It's the world's deadliest bird and it lives in the deep jungle in the north of Australia, which is the oldest jungle on earth. That jungle was walked by dinosaurs and basically when dinosaurs became extinct, cassowaries took their place. We filmed a cassowary, but they are incredibly secretive and very hard to spot. You don't see them until you've stood next to them and then they get cross. You wouldn't accidentally walk up to a lion but you might accidentally walk up to a cassowary. The females stand about six feet tall, the males more like five feet. But they rear up above head height and they have claws on their feet that are longer than velociraptors. They can run up to 30 mph, jump five feet in the air and can swim too. So if you surprise them, you're done for. That's why they're the world's deadliest bird. Two of our Australian cameramen staked out the forest for a long time until we worked out where this male cassowary was going to be. We had to put out camera traps and do our own fieldwork, but we managed to film this male looking after his chicks in this forest. I've wanted to film them for several years and that forest is just quite a magical place for me. The audience would be literally looking at what dinosaurs would have seen.

◆**How did drone technology help you make *Seven Worlds, One Planet*?**

On Planet Earth II, we were using drones, but even three or four years ago, they were quite heavy-duty things. Now the technology is so much better that we're able to use the drones with almost all of the animals that we've filmed. It can make a big difference in the behaviour you can see. In the Australia episode, for example, we filmed a shark aggregation which only happens every 15 years. It's sharks on a bait ball off the West coast of Australia on Ingle, and if you were filming that from the sea on about, you would just see a hell of a lot of splashing around and some fins. Get a drone up in the air and suddenly you can see the shark's tactics, what they are doing and not just that, you can see the bait ball at one point got up to something like 15 kilometres. We have shots of thousands of sharks all at once coming together. For me, that's the magic of drones.

(Tune in to *Stories Behind Stories* on June 8 at 9 pm on Sony BBC Earth.)

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Premier League leaders Liverpool could claim a first title for 30 years at Anfield after the initial batch of fixtures of the restart was announced on Friday.

Jürgen Klopp's men, with a commanding 25-point lead at the top of the table, were just two wins away from clinching the title before coronavirus forced the suspension of football in March.

Liverpool's first match back is against Everton on June 21. The Merseyside derby is due to take place at Goodison Park, less than a mile from Anfield, but a venue has not been confirmed by the Premier League. Crystal Palace will then visit Anfield three days later.

Wins in both of those matches would guarantee Liverpool's first English top-flight title since 1990.

But if Manchester City lose at home to Arsenal on June 17, the Reds would be champions if they beat Everton.

Liverpool City Council's safety advisory group will meet next week to make a decision on whether the game can go ahead at Goodison or should be moved to a neutral venue.

All remaining 92 Premier League games this season will be played behind closed doors, but there are fears that hosting the game in Liverpool could encourage supporters to congregate around stadiums.

Palace's trip to Anfield will kick off at 2015 local time (1915 GMT).



## LIVERPOOL COULD WIN TITLE AT ANFIELD

Premier League announce schedule for first three match days

The only other match that could be moved to a neutral venue from the first three rounds of fixtures is Liverpool's visit to City on July 2.

The mayor of Liverpool, Joe Anderson, voiced fears that "there would be many thousands of people who would

turn up outside Anfield" on the day Liverpool's long wait for a league title was ended.

That has been disputed by the club, who said they have engaged with supporters' groups to make sure social-distancing guidelines are followed. Aston Villa will host

Sheffield United in the first match of *Project Restart*, followed by Arsenal's trip to City on June 17.

Manchester United's visit to Tottenham will spearhead the first full round of matches spread over four days from June 19 to 22.

Premier League chief executive Richard Masters said: "We know it won't be the same without our loyal supporters in stadiums but, together with our broadcast partners, we are able to ensure fans can watch or listen to each match live from home."

"I am delighted we are able to take another positive step towards the season returning in just under two weeks' time," he added.

## Werner close to Chelsea move



AFP ■ LONDON

Chelsea are closing in on a deal to sign striker Timo Werner from RB Leipzig, British media reported on Thursday.

The 24-year-old had been thought to be attracting interest from Premier League champions-elect Liverpool but it appears Chelsea have in fact met the German's reported release clause of some £53 million (\$67 million).

Were Chelsea to bring Werner to Stamford Bridge it would be a major feather in the cap of the west London club.

For the past year there has been speculation linking Werner with a move to Anfield but time appears to be running out for the Reds, with the forward's release clause expiring on June 15 — two days before the Premier League is set to restart.

The Germany international has scored 31 goals for Leipzig in all competitions.

Chelsea have already agreed a deal to sign Ajax winger Hakim Ziyech.

## Barca confident Messi can face Mallorca

AFP ■ BARCELONA

Lionel Messi has sustained a "minor" thigh injury, but Barcelona remain confident he will be fit for the team's first game back against Mallorca on June 13, the club said on Friday.

Messi has not trained with the rest of the squad since Tuesday after working separately in the gym on both Wednesday and Friday, while on Thursday all the players were given the day off.

Barcelona said Messi should return to training "in a few days' time", but his absence raises doubts over his fitness ahead of the trip to Mallorca.

Like all La Liga teams, Barca will have had only 10 days to train together when competitive matches resume on June 11, following the



essential risks with just eight days remaining before Barca finally get back to playing matches, a club statement read.

"He should be able to rejoin his team-mates in a few days' time."

Messi has endured an injury-interrupted season. The 32-year-old was out for six weeks between August and September with a calf injury and then at the end of September missed another week with a problem in his left thigh.

Barca added the team will train on the pitch at Camp Nou on Saturday as coach Quique Setien "works to get his players ready for the return to football, but with games being played behind closed doors."

three-month break due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Leo Messi has a minor right quadriceps injury and trained in isolation, doing specific exercises to avoid unnec-

## Barty wary of US Open return

SYDNEY: World number one Ashleigh Barty voiced caution on Friday about resuming tennis too soon, saying she needed more information before committing to the US Open in August.

The Australian, who surged to the top of the rankings last year and has stayed there since, said it was not just her but her entire team she must consider in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. "It's exciting that tennis is being talked about again and things are moving in the right direction for us to start competing," she told the *Sydney Morning Herald*. "But I'd need to understand all of the information and advice from the WTA and the USTA before making a decision on the US events."

Barty said she is concerned about travel exemptions for her support staff. While players could be exempt from a 14-day quarantine period, it remains unclear whether that also applies to their teams. "It's not just me, it's my team I have to consider," she said.

## Paes wants to complete 100 Slam appearances

NEW DELHI (PTI): Leander Paes is just three shy of completing a century of Grand Slam appearances but is now unsure whether uncertainty caused by Covid-19 pandemic will allow him to complete the coveted milestone or for that matter compete at the next year's Tokyo Olympics.

Paes had announced that 2020 would be his last season as a professional player but his plan to bid adieu on a high with a record eight appearance at the Olympics, was stalled by the pandemic, which has wrecked the sporting calendar.

"Olympics is still far away. As of now, I find it difficult to believe that sports will start by July or August. Would it start October or November, who knows. But my team and I are very well prepared that when the lockdown opens up, we will reevaluate then and look at *One Last Roar* as season whether we should look at 2021 or not," Paes told table tennis player Mudit Dani on his chat show *Sportlight*.



Further talking about his plans, Paes said there one piece of statistics he would like to get.

"I have played 97 Grand Slams so far and if I play 3 more, it will be 100 so that moves me. Also getting to the eighth Olympics to make sure India is forever on the top as the most number of Olympics played by a tennis player. That is the benchmark I would like to push. But even if I don't get there, still I'm happy with what I've done and the career I have," he said.

## India to host 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Asian Football Confederation has awarded the hosting rights of the 2022 Women's Asian Cup to India for the first time since 1979.

In a letter to the All India Football Federation, Dato Windsor John, General Secretary, AFC wrote: "The Committee awarded the hosting rights of the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 Finals to the All India Football Federation."

The tournament will likely be held in the second half of the year. In the 1979 edition, India had finished as runners-up.

"I need to thank the Asian Football Confederation for finding us suitable to host the AFC Women's Asian Cup in 2022," AIF President, Prafull Patel said. "The tournament will galvanise the aspiring women players and bring in a holistic social revolution as far as women's football in the country is concerned," he added.

The tournament will feature 12 teams, expanded from the previous slot of eight teams. India qualify directly as hosts. The event will also serve as the final qualification tournament for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

## AIFF invites bids for new I-League clubs

NEW DELHI: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Friday invited bids for new clubs who would take part in the Hero I-League from 2020-21.

The bids have been invited from non-Hero I-League cities and includes names of several cities like New Delhi, Ranchi, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bhopal, Lucknow and Ahmedabad, amongst others, according to an AIFF media release.

Prospective owners will be able to purchase the invitation to tender from the Football House in Delhi between June 10 and June 20 upon payment of ₹4 lakh.

The previous season of the I-League saw 11 clubs, including AIFF's developmental outfit Indian Arrows, take part in the competition.

However, champions Mohun Bagan are set to merge with ATK and will play in the Indian Super League (ISL) next season.

Women's World Cup.

The tournament comes as the latest boost to AIF as India are slated to host the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup next year.

India had also hosted the AFC U-16 C'ships in 2016 and the FIFA U-17 WC in 2017.

## Coppa Italia semis on June 12-13

MILAN: Italian football will resume with the second legs of the Italian Cup semifinals on June 12 and 13.

Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora announced on Thursday that the competition can resume one day earlier than previously scheduled.

While league officials had not yet officially released the schedule, Juventus is expected to host AC Milan on June 12 followed by Napoli vs Inter Milan a day later.



Juventus and Milan drew 1-1 in the first leg while Napoli beat Inter 1-0. The final is scheduled for June 17.

## ICC should wait for a 'suitable time' to host T20 WC: Akram

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan pace legend Wasim Akram cannot visualise a T20 World Cup happening behind closed doors and believes the ICC should wait for a "suitable time" to host the big-ticket event after the Covid-19 pandemic subsides.

"Personally, I don't think it's a good idea. I mean, how could you have a cricket World Cup without spectators," Akram told *The News* on Thursday.

"A World Cup is all about big crowds, spectators coming from all parts of the globe to support their teams. It's all about atmosphere and you cannot get it behind closed doors," he said.

"So I believe that they (ICC) should wait for a more suitable time and once this pandemic subsides and restrictions are eased then we can have a proper World Cup," he said.



## PCB to seek Govt clearance for prep camp

PTI ■ KARACHI

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will seek Government clearance before setting up a training camp for its players to prepare for the tour of England in July amid the rising threat of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Top PCB officials are busy formulating a plan to make the training camp possible at a time when the cases and deaths from Covid-19 are on the rise in Pakistan.

"Different plans are being looked at but the most important thing is that the board will have to get the final nod from the Government before it goes ahead with the tour to England or even the training camp," an official in the board said.

The High Performance Centre in Lahore where the board is planning to keep the players and officials does not have the capacity to house 20 players at one time and this is causing a big



problem for the officials.

"Head coach and chief selector, Misbah-ul-Haq understandably wants at least 25 players in the training camp

and a list is being finalised but before it is announced the board wants to create a proper bio-secure environment at the high performance centre so that everyone is safe from Covid-19," the official said.

The players and officials, once they move into the high performance centre, will not be allowed to go out or meet anyone including their family members because of the bio-security measures.

A reliable source in the board said some players had told Misbah that they would prefer to have a short training camp in Lahore.

"Some players are reluctant to stay away for a three-week period in Lahore and then again for more than two months in the UK," the source said.

The board has said that it has left it on the players to decide whether they want to tour England or not and if anyone makes himself unavailable, there will not be any disciplinary action.

## SA 'not far away' from a WC win: Phehlukwayo

IAN S ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa cricketer Andile Phehlukwayo believes Proteas aren't too far away from ending their World Cup drought despite their woeful performance in the showpiece event in England and Wales last year.

South Africa managed to win just three matches out of nine and crashed out in the league stage itself with just seven points.

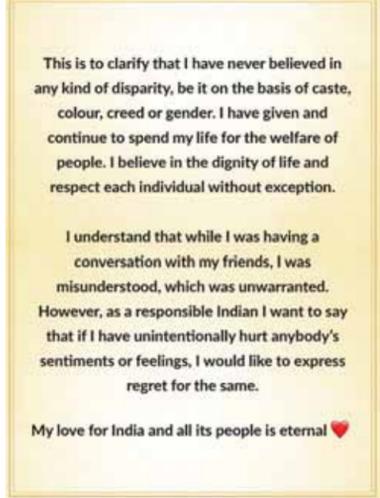
Phehlukwayo, who was part of the South Africa World Cup squad in 2019, feels the younger generation is hungry to perform on the biggest stage and that might turn their fortunes around at the multi-national ICC events in the future.

"I really believe it will happen. Maybe it didn't look like it at the 2019 World Cup, where we really didn't look after situations that on normal occasions we would take care of, but if you look at the current generation, it's a lot of new players who are really hungry to perform," Phehlukwayo was quoted as saying by *ESPNcricinfo*.

"Even in our current rebuilding phase, we have managed to beat strong teams who already have their formula set. It's all about the mindset. Our brand is work in progress but we all know where we want to be. We are fully committed."

The 24-year considers himself to be an all-rounder, despite him doing better with the ball in recent times. In 58 ODIs, he has managed to score just 563 runs while he has scalped 69 wickets. In 27 T20Is, he has scored just 92 runs but picked 35 wickets.

"I believe I'm a genuine all-rounder because I can win games with bat or ball, but I understand that those arguments about the kind of player someone is would look at the stats," Phehlukwayo said.



Former India star Yuvraj Singh on Friday apologised for making a casteist remark against Yuzvendra Chahal during an *Instagram* chat, saying he "unintentionally" hurt public sentiments. It was during one of the *Instagram Live* sessions with Indian vice-captain Rohit Sharma that Yuvraj made the offensive comment about Chahal while talking about his regular social media posts. In fact, an advocate from Hissar filed a police complaint against India's twin World Cup hero, who was forced to issue an apology on his *Twitter* page. The veteran of 304 ODIs, 58 T20Is and 40 Tests also clarified that he has "never believed" in any kind of discrimination.

## Burns expecting 'stiff test' against WI

LONDON: England is bracing up for a "stiff test" in the three-match series against the West Indies next month, according to opener Rory Burns who is wary of the visiting team's potent pace attack.

"They've got a lot of good cricketers there and it's going to be a stiff test no matter who comes," Burns said on the *Sky Sports* podcast *The Cricket Show*. West Indies



had handed Joe Root's men a 2-1 defeat when England travelled to the Caribbean last year. "The last time we played each other, they won, so they're no slouches certainly," Burns said.

"Their bowling attack caused us a lot of problems. They're very skilful; they've got some pace. I remember walking around on the pitch of the first Test and seeing their bowlers going and thought, 'this is going to be quite tasty!'"

## Mortaza hurt by 'rush to push' him out



the game was offered to him. "Secondly, they were prepared to spend BDT (Bangladesh Taka) 2 crore for that match. From an ethical point of view it is not right considering our first-class cricket players are not getting paid enough," he added.

The 36-year-old, one of the most popular captains in Bangladesh cricket history, had a horrible 2019 World Cup where he got only one wicket in the entire tournament.

Recently coach Russell Domingo had said that Mortaza is not in his plans going forward. "All of a sudden there was this rush to push me (out). All I know is that I have given my life to cricket even though I was torn apart and bleeding inside," Mortaza said.

"I have played cricket by giving my life and maybe I could not become such a great player. But at least I expect some kind of respect."

He didn't want to divulge the details but Mortaza admitted that he thought of hanging up his boots after Bangladesh's last World Cup game against Pakistan at the Lord's.

"I wanted to retire after the last game in the World Cup but it did not happen. I don't want to go into the details of why I didn't do it there but I had put forward my intention (of retiring) in England."

## Cricket is nothing without diversity: ICC

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council on Friday said "cricket is nothing without diversity" as racism remained a topic of global debate following the death of African-American George Floyd in Minneapolis.

The ICC on Friday posted a 90-second video clip of the final moments of England's 2019 World Cup victory with Barbados-born Jofra Archer bowling the thrilling Super Over against New Zealand.

"Without diversity, cricket is nothing. Without diversity, you don't get the full picture," read ICC's message on *Twitter*.

The England team that won the ODI World Cup had an Irishman captain (Eoin Morgan) at the helm. The best performer was a New Zealand born all-rounder (Ben Stokes), spinners were of Pakistani origin (Moeen Ali & Adil Rashid) and the innings got a headstart from an opener of South African heritage (Jason Roy).

In fact, Morgan after World Cup triumph spoke about how the team found unity in diversity which became the secret of its success.

"It actually epitomises our team. Quite diverse backgrounds and cultures and guys grow up in different countries and to actually find

humour in the situation we were in at times was pretty cool," Morgan had said back then, referring to the Super Over bowled by Archer.

World's leading cricketers including West Indians Chris Gayle and two-time World T20 winning skipper Darren Sammy have spoken about racism in the game.

Sammy had even urged the ICC to come out in support of the black cricketers. "Right now, if the cricket world not standing against the injustice against people of color after seeing that last video of that foot down the next of my brother you are also part of the problem," Sammy had said on Tuesday.



## Tokyo to skip one-year Olympic countdown

TOKYO: Tokyo will scrap events marking a year to go until the postponed 2020 Olympic Games, organisers said on Friday, citing the "current economic situation" caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Games have been pushed back until July 23, 2021 because of the disease outbreak, though it remains unclear whether even that delay will be sufficient.

Last year, the city and organisers held a series of events to mark the one-year countdown, including unveiling the newly designed medals.

But given the global crisis, organisers ruled out a similar celebration. "In view of the current economic situation, Tokyo 2020 will not be holding any events to mark the new year to go milestone for the Games," the organisers said.

"But we will consider what we can do to show our solidarity with the people."

The confirmation came after reports in the Japanese media that organisers would scrap the event, fearing it was inappropriate given the global pandemic and the ongoing risk of infection inside Japan.