

**OPINION 6**  
AMERICA'S  
BIG GAMBLE

**MONEY 10**  
RBI: YES BANK REVIVAL  
PROGRESSING AS PLANNED

**VIVICITY 13**  
SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE  
AND HELP OTHERS

Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR  
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA  
City Vol. 17 Issue 74  
\*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

BHOPAL, TUESDAY MARCH 17, 2020; PAGES 12-4 ₹1.50



DOUBTS GROW  
IN JAPAN OVER  
OLYMPICS  
16 SPORT

# the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

## Govt expands social distancing to curb corona

### Educational, social, cultural institutions closed as coronavirus cases rise to 114

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

From closure of abode of Gods like Siddhivinayak and Tuljabhavani temples and ASI-protected monuments and Central museums besides tourist hotspots Ajanta and Ellora Caves, sanctuaries and national parks to shutting down of malls, schools and colleges, both the States and the Centres have decided to expand the ambit of the social distancing in view of the threat from the rapidly spreading coronavirus (Covid-19).

The Union Health Ministry said four new coronavirus cases -- one each from Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Kerala, have been reported, taking the total number of cases to 114. The 'contact tracing activity' of these positive cases has led to identification of more than 5,200 contacts, who are kept under surveillance, it added. These cases include 10 discharged, three cured and two reported deaths.

On his part, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said there has been a coordinated response to the coronavirus outbreak and asserted that "no stone is being left unturned" to ensure people are healthy. Modi also hailed the contribution of doctors, nurses and healthcare workers in fighting the virus and said the country will always cherish their contribution.

"The Group of Ministers has proposed several preventive steps such as social distancing to contain COVID-19 in the



Indonesian tourists arrive for screening in the wake of deadly coronavirus at Hyderabad Gandhi Hospital on Monday PTI

country and will be in force till March 31st, 2020. The important measures include closure of all educational establishments (schools, universities etc), gyms, museums, cultural and social centres, swimming pools and theatres. Students should be advised to stay at home while online education to be promoted," Union Health Ministry Joint Secretary Lav Agarwal told reporters here on Monday after the Group of Ministers (GoM) meeting.

The GoM has also suggested people to avoid non-essential travel by buses, trains and aeroplanes to maximise social distancing in public transport besides ensuring reg-

ular and proper disinfection of surfaces.

The Government is encouraging private sector organisations/employers to allow their employees to work from home wherever feasible and hold interaction through video-conferencing.

Local authorities will have a dialogue with organisers of sporting events and competitions involving large gatherings and they may be advised to postpone such events, the Government has said.

The Government on Monday also prohibited entry of passengers from EU countries, Turkey and the UK from March 18 till March 31.

"No airline shall board a passenger from these nations to India with effect from 1200 GMT on March 18, 2020. The airline shall enforce this at the port of initial departure,"

### Siddhivinayak, Tuljabhavani temples shut

Mumbai/Aurangabad: The Siddhivinayak Temple, one of the most visited shrines in Mumbai, will remain closed for devotees till further notice in view of the coronavirus outbreak in Maharashtra, it was announced on Monday.

The Tuljabhavani Temple, another popular shrine in Maharashtra located in Osmanabad district, will remain shut for devotees from March 17 to 31, an official told. Detailed report on P6

Agarwal said.

Both these instructions are temporary measures and shall be in force till March 31, 2020 and will be reviewed subsequently, he said. As precautionary measures, all ASI-protected monuments and Central museums across the country will be shut till March 31, Union Culture Minister Prahlad Patal said on Monday.

On their parts, the States are already taking various steps on social distancing. While Andaman and Nicobar banned travellers entry in the island from March 16 to March 26, rural Maharashtra announced closure of schools and colleges and world famous Ajanta and Ellora Caves as a precautionary measures. The Siddhivinayak Temple, one of the most visited shrines in Mumbai and Tuljabhavani Temple in Maharashtra will remain closed for devotees till further notice. Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs), fully residential and co-educational schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and operated by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), an autonomous body under the HRD Ministry have advanced summer break to March 21 in view of the coronavirus outbreak.

### Harvard Medical School prescribes yoga to deal with corona anxiety

Washington: A leading medical school in the US has recommended yoga, meditation and controlled breathing to address anxiety issues related to the novel coronavirus that has now spread fast across America.

There are at least 3,485 cases of the novel coronavirus in the US, according to the State and local health agencies, Governments and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## All gatherings of over 50 people banned in Delhi

### Epidemics Act invoked; Kejriwal suggests people to put off wedding dates

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

With coronavirus cases in India multiplying fast, the Delhi Government has prohibited all the religious, cultural, social and political gatherings. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said that no religious, cultural and political gathering with more than 50 people shall be allowed in Delhi vicinity.

There is, however, no restriction on weddings but people are advised to postpone the dates, the CM said.

All auto-rickshaws and taxis will be disinfected for free to prevent the spread of the deadly disease, he said. Educating the masses about the scourge of deadly coronavirus, the AAP Government also announced that nightclubs, gyms and spas will remain closed till March 31.

Urging people to avoid large gatherings, Kejriwal also said that wedding programmes are excluded and has given instructions to all municipal corporation officials to set up mobile washbasins in public places on a large scale. Pertinently, seven cases of coronavirus have been confirmed in Delhi so far.

Soon after his video-conferencing with all the stakeholders — three municipal corporations health officials — he said his Government is taking all steps necessary to tackle the coronavirus crisis, and monitoring them at all times.



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal addresses the media as Health Minister Satyendra Jain looks on in New Delhi on Monday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

"Out of total seven corona cases to date, with the unfortunate demise of one of the patients, two patients have fully recovered and the remaining four are under treatment. The Delhi

Government is taking all precautionary measures to quarantine those who have been affected. We have sufficient resources. More than 500 beds are ready to be installed," said Kejriwal.

## Foreigners can visit Delhi gurdwaras only after 15-day stay in country

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) has decided to ban entry of foreigners who have not completed their 15-day stay in India in all Delhi gurdwaras with immediate effect to check the spread of coronavirus.

He said only foreigners who are staying in India for more than 15 days will be allowed to visit gurdwara premises as a matter of precaution and preventive measures.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Manjinder Singh Sirsa president, DSGMC said the com-

mittee is following all measures conveyed by the Government of India. "We are preparing langar (food served to devotees) in house only. In the wake of coronavirus, no outside items shall be cooked/prepared in kitchen," Sirsa said. "We have conveyed that all the devotees have been requested to take langar prasad from main langar halls only."

"All the gurdwara sevadar henceforth will start services in gurdwaras after sanitising them and washing their hands with soaps and take every possible precaution to check transmission of coronavirus," said SAD leader.

### CAPSULE

**4,800 MORE PG MEDICAL SEATS IN 2020-21 SESSION**  
New Delhi: The Medical Council of India's Board of Governors has approved increasing post graduate medical seats for MD and MS programmes by more than 4,800 to 36,192 for the next academic session.

**DELHI RIOTS: TAHIR SENT TO 4-DAY POLICE CUSTODY**  
New Delhi: A Delhi court sent suspended AAP councillor Tahir Hussain to 4-day police custody in connection with the killing of IB official Ankit Sharma during the Delhi riots.

**WPI INFLATION EASES TO 2.26% IN FEBRUARY**  
New Delhi: Wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation softened to 2.26 per cent in February on the back of cheaper food items and vegetables.

**GOVT OK'S RENAMING A VILLAGE IN HARYANA**  
New Delhi: The Centre has given approval for renaming of a village Amin to Abhimanyupur in Kurukshetra district.

## Virus-hit Sensex tanks 2,713 pts; ₹7.6L cr lost

### RBI withholds rate cuts, takes steps to boost liquidity

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Indian share market joined the global sell-off on Monday with the Sensex logging its second-biggest drop in a day even as the RBI hinted at a rate cut but stopped short of a decision, belying market expectations at a hurriedly called presser. The Central bank did announce some liquidity enhancing measures to contain the economic fallout from the coronavirus.

The market mayhem may not yet be over as the US indices tanked by nearly 10 per cent when it opened late in the evening despite the fact that the US Fed on Sunday made its



second emergency rate cut in less than two weeks, slashing the benchmark borrowing rate to a range of 0-0.25 per cent, where it was during the 2008 global financial crisis.

The 30-share BSE Sensex plunged 2,713.41 points or 7.96 per cent to finish at 31,390.07. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty gave up the 9,200 level, slumping 757.80 points or 7.61 per cent to end at 9,197.40.

It eroded ₹7.62 lakh crore of investors' money.

## Former CJI Ranjan Gogoi nominated to Rajya Sabha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Monday night issued a notification announcing former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi's nomination to the Rajya Sabha.

Ex-CJI Gogoi — who will be remembered for the Ayodhya verdict that gave Hindus the 2.77 acre disputed land for construction of Ram Temple — will be the first former CJI to be nominated to the Upper House.

Before him former CJI Ranganath Misra was also a Rajya Sabha member but he was elected on a Congress

party ticket. Gogoi also headed benches that pronounced several key judgments like the Rafale fighter jet deal and the entry of women in Sabarimala temple.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-clause (a) of clause (1) of article 80 of the Constitution of India, read with clause (3) of that article, the President is pleased to nominate Shri Ranjan Gogoi to the Council of States to fill the vacancy caused due to the retirement of one of the nominated members," the notification said.

## SC rejects Nirbhaya rapist's remedy plea; 3 convicts move ICJ

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In the 2012 Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case, the Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain the plea of Mukesh Singh, one of the four death-row convicts, seeking restoration of legal remedies alleging that his earlier counsel misled and forced him to sign the papers.

Meanwhile, as the day of hanging of the four death row convicts nears, three of them have moved the International Court of Justice at Hague seeking a stay on their "unlawful execution", alleging the probe leading to their conviction was "flawed" and they have been treated as "guinea pigs". A bench comprising Justices Arun Mishra and MR

Shah heard submissions of lawyer ML Sharma, appearing for Mukesh, and rejected the plea by terming it as "not maintainable" in view of the fact that both the review and the curative pleas in the case have been dismissed.

The apex court had on July 9, 2018 dismissed the review plea of Mukesh against its judgement; later, his curative and mercy pleas were rejected by the top court and President Ram Nath Kovind respectively.

On March 5, a trial court issued fresh warrants with March 20, 5.30 am, as the date for the execution of the convicts — Mukesh Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar Singh (31).

## SC to hear BJP plea today as MP defers floor test as 'virus reprieve'

### Nath claims majority, rules out confidence motion even as Guv orders floor test today

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The political drama surrounding the confidence test of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath on Monday reached the Supreme Court, which decided to hear on Tuesday the plea of the BJP to order floor test within 12 hours.

The BJP moved the SC after Speaker NP Prajapati ignored the direction of Governor Lalji Tandon to hold the floor test on Monday, and instead adjourned the House till March 26 in wake of the coronavirus epidemic.

Late on Monday, Nath met



Madhya Pradesh Governor Lalji Tandon, along with Chief Minister Kamal Nath, arrives at the Assembly in Bhopal on Monday PTI

the Governor after the latter issued a fresh direction to the CM to hold floor test on Tuesday. The CM later claimed his Government enjoys majority, and ruled out holding a floor test in the Assembly as

demand by the BJP. Nath also dared the Opposition party to table a no-confidence motion against his 15-month-old Congress Government if they wanted to test its strength in the House.

Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice Hemant Gupta will hear the BJP's plea filed former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. After parading the MLAs before the Governor, Chouhan told the media the State Government has lost majority and has no right to remain in power.

Earlier Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Govind Singh raised coronavirus threat to seek to defer the confidence motion. After finishing his customary address to the Assembly, Tandon left the House, asking the MLAs to "respect the House" and "follow the constitution".

## Floor test not held in MP, BJP files plea in SC



BJP National Vice President Shivraj Singh Chouhan, along with leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Gopal Bhargava and other party MLAs, meets Governor Lalji Tandon at Raj Bhawan in Bhopal on Monday Pioneer photo

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

While floor test was not conducted in Madhya Pradesh Assembly on Monday, the BJP filed a petition in the Supreme Court, seeking floor test within 12 hours. The apex court has scheduled the petition for hearing at sixth serial number.

The plea has been filed by former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and others against Speaker of the State assembly for holding floor test. Sources said that the matter would be heard by Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice Hemant Gupta.

After parading the MLAs before Governor Lalji Tandon, Chouhan told media persons that the government has lost majority and has no right to remain in power.

The ongoing political crisis

in Madhya Pradesh on Monday took a crucial turn after the Speaker NP Prajapati adjourned the House till March 26 in wake of the deadly novel coronavirus. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Govind Singh raised the issue of coronavirus threat in the country and also mentioned the Central government's advisory.

This was a big relief for the Kamal Nath-led Congress Government in the state which was asked to prove majority in the House by Governor Lalji Tandon after 22 of its MLAs resigned from the party.

As the proceedings began in the Assembly, Governor Tandon urged the legislators to follow the Constitutional traditions, maintain dignity of democracy and act peacefully in the current situation prevailing in the state. After finishing his customary address, Tandon left the

House within minutes, asking the MLAs to "respect the House" and "follow the constitution".

Tandon on Saturday had directed Chief Minister Kamal Nath to seek a trust vote in the House immediately after he delivers his customary address on the first day of the Budget session beginning Monday.

Nath, however, had told the Governor that the decision on a floor test will be taken by the Speaker.

Nath also told the Governor that his Government is ready for the floor test but the MLAs held "captive" should be released first. On Monday too, the Governor wrote to the Chief Minister asking to conduct floor test in the State Assembly on Tuesday.

He also expressed displeasure for not holding the floor test on Monday.

## Seminar held on Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP), India's apex body representing the rights and interests of persons with disabilities in association with Arushi, organised a state-level seminar on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD Act) 2016 here on March 16 and 17 at Courtyard by Marriott.

India legislated the RPWD Act in December 2016 and in doing so ensured its commitment to the international community to bring its domestic law in harmony with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which it ratified in October 2007. With the passage of this law, the Persons with Disabilities Act of 1995 stood repealed.

"It is crucial to create awareness about the provisions under the newly enacted law and the various developments that have taken place under it. State-level implementation of the RPWD Act

2016 is important as disability is considered a State subject. The Act acknowledges 21 categories of disabilities and looks at disabilities as a mainstream human rights issue. However unfortunately implementation of this Act varies across States," said Arman Ali, Executive Director, NCPEDP.

"The new RPWD Act is a game changer as it holds the private sector accountable as well. The responsibility of implementing the RPWD Act 2016 should not be solely on the Social Welfare Department and needs to include other departments like education, health as well," added Arman.

Krishna Gopal Tiwari, Director of Social Justice and Disabled Welfare Department, Madhya Pradesh Government at the seminar said, "The RPWD Act 2016 focuses on the all-round development of persons with disabilities and hence it becomes more important to have awareness on the same. While special schools are important much emphasis should be laid on inclusive education for children with

disabilities." Other speakers included Mohd. Kaleem Siddiqui, Asst professor, Digidarshika Institute, Bhopal, Sunil Sharma, Asst Director, Social Justice Department, Dr Ganesh Joshi, Composite Regional Centre, Bhopal and sector leaders such as Dr Rohit Trivedi, Executive Director, Arushi as well over 100 representatives from Disabled People's Organisations across different districts in MP and Chhattisgarh.

Sunil Sharma, Asst Director, Social Justice and Disabled Welfare Department highlighted the status of implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2016 in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

Sharma mentioned that District Level Committees have been formulated in 50 out of the 52 districts, however no persons with disabilities have been made a part of these committees. He further added that special judges and special courts have been notified in few of the districts. The Seminar was supported by Axis Bank.

## All cultural events called off due to Corona virus spread

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Sahitya Akademi has postponed events to be held in March 2020.

As per the Government orders, all the cultural events have been called off due to Corona virus spread.

"Kavita Bhopal" by Sahitya Akademi, Madhya Pradesh Culture Council, Bhopal, International Poetry Festival was from March 24 to 26, 2020.

The ceremony received the consent of foreign poets Iya Kiva-Ukraine, Nurdun Duman-Turkey, Fiona Bolger-Ireland, Nazwan Darwish-Palestine, Ivan Ivano-Bulgaria and Nicola-Macedonia. Poets of Indian languages and poets

of Hindi participated in this ceremony.

Besides, the conferences and workshops of the Pathak Manch Kendra Convenors Workshop organised by the Academy and the Yuva Sahitya Kendra established in the year 2019-20 are also being postponed.

Due to the safety measures of Corona virus issued by the Government of India and the Government of Madhya Pradesh, B.P.19, the above three events 'Kavita Bhopal' International Poetry Festival, Pathak Manch Workshop and Conference and Workshop of Yuva Sahitya Kendra are postponed till the next date. The upcoming dates of the event will be intimated separately.



Senior Congress leader Harish Rawat, with Ministers wearing face masks in wake of Coronavirus pandemic, arrives during Budget Session of the Madhya Pradesh State Assembly in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

## 28-year-old married woman murdered at agricultural farm

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 28-year-old married woman was found murdered at her agricultural farm at Godarmu under Gandhi Nagar police station area in the evening on Sunday.

The deceased, Ganga Bai, was found in an injured state in the evening and was declared dead when he was rushed to a hospital. Police were informed and a police team reached the spot and started investigation.

In the initial probe, it was found that the deceased had injury marks over the head. The husband of the deceased, Shaitan, is involved in agricultural work and owns land near his house.

Later, two deep injury marks were found in the deceased's head which could be due to sharp-edged weapons.

Police said that the husband of the deceased took her to hospital. However, he could be a suspect and would be questioned in the further investigation.

The deceased was killed by someone acquainted as there were no marks of struggle at the spot. After the preliminary investigation, the body was sent for the post-mortem. The police registered a case under section 302 of the IPC.

The main suspect is 27-year-old brother-in-law, Raghuvver, who went missing after the murder and is still absconding.

## FIITJEE's Curate Admission-cum-Scholarship Test on April 19, 2020

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Students preparing for JEE 2022, a special test FIITJEE's Curate is introduced by FIITJEE, Bhopal.

Admission-cum-Scholarship Test Curate is a gateway that will not only ensure the speedy preparation but also refine students' talent as per the requirement of JEE.

RL Trikha, Director, FIITJEE said, "Curate is apparently, an opportunity for the students of varying potential to tread the road of preparation to achieve their aspired goal. Students appeared for class X with fear of being late for JEE

preparation along with peer pressure lurking in their mind. It is also an opportunity to catch up in the race. The preparation needs to be fast paced with sustained effort directed at honing and refining their skills for JEE preparations. For students targeting IITs in 2022, CURATE is the right platform to accomplish their aspirations."

Notably, the test will help students know their current grasp on the fundamentals and check their conceptual knowledge.

Students can get to know their relative performance and their peers at the National

level. The test will also provide students with external evaluation of their IQs, specifically for JEE Advanced and JEE Main.

The results will emphasise upon the areas requiring special attention by apprising students of their strengths and weaknesses. Curate will test student's raw potential on the basis of which they may be selected to pursue studies at FIITJEE; get a chance to hone their skills and exploit their potential fully to succeed in JEE Advanced. FIITJEE's Curate Admission-cum-Scholarship Test has been scheduled on April 19, 2020 and the last date to register is April 18.

## Meeting of Scindia loyalists held at Utsav Vatika

PNS ■ GWALIOR

A meeting of the Jyotiraditya Scindia loyalists was held at the Utsav Vatika here to make arrangements for the visit of Scindia to the city on March 19.

At the meeting, it was discussed to felicitate the MLAs and leaders who resigned from the Congress party. The meeting was attended by former MLA Ramesh Agarwal, Ramvaran Singh and Keshav Pandey among others.

Though thousands from the Gwalior-Chambal area have resigned from the Congress

party along with the MLAs there are many Scindia loyalists who have not yet left the Congress party. Notable names include DCC President Devendra Sharma, senior Congress leader Chandra Mohan Nagori and Ashok Sharma. Currently the political situation in Gwalior is murky and only time will say how things pan out.

The Scindia family of Gwalior has always played a leading role in shaping the political destiny of Madhya Pradesh during its existence of sixty four years.

The current scenario in Madhya Pradesh has once again brought to the front the role of the Scindia family in determining the political future of the State.

The resignation of 20 Congress MLAs loyal to Scindia has thrown the Kama Nath ministry into a minority government. And once again a scion of the Scindia family has become the kingmaker in Madhya Pradesh. Like his predecessors Scindia too is a charismatic leader with a strong political influence in the State.



Women devotees offer prayers at Goddess Durga Temple on the occasion of Sheelta Saptami in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

## Places of worships and mgmts not far away from Corona effect

PNS ■ UJJAIN

The effect of Coronavirus is now seen at places of worships and managements. These places have taken precautionary steps in this context. In view of the increasing number of patients in the country, a major decision was taken on Monday at the world famous Mahakaleshwar temple located in Ujjain.

Temple entry for devotees, including the VIPs for Bhasma Aarti which is performed at 4 am every day of Baba Mahakal, has been closed till March 31.

Apart from these ban on processions, the general visits by devotees have also been closed in the sanctum sanctorum and only priests of the temple will be

present at the time of the Aarti. Taking necessary step due to the possibility of Corona infection, the Mahakal temple has been cleaned and sanitised and it is cleaned twice.

The barricades of the temple are also frequently cleaned. Apart from this, devotees are also being screened at Mangalnath, Harsiddhi, Kaalbhairav and Sandipani Ashrams in Ujjain. The measures are precautionary steps to contain spread of Corona virus which is spreading rapidly



## Depressed over father's death, 28-year-old youth hangs self

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Depressed over his father's death, a 28-year-old youth committed suicide by hanging from the ceiling at his house at Nehru Nagar under Kamla Nagar police station area on Sunday.

Police said that the deceased, identified as Aman Rathore alias Shaheen, is a resident of Nehru Nagar area. In the initial investigation, it was found that after his father's death, Aman used to remain depressed and took extreme step under depression.

On Sunday evening, family members spotted him hang-

ing and rushed him to a hospital where doctors declared him dead. After the death, police were informed. The police have not found any suicide note which could reveal reason behind the death.

The body was sent for the post mortem and a case under section 174 of CrPC has been registered. Police have started further investigation.

Meanwhile, a 20-year-old youth man died after he was mowed down by the truck at Golkhedhi on Sunday; Eitkhedi police have started investigation.

According to the police, the injured man was rushed to a

hospital. The deceased, identified as Sanjay. In the initial investigation, it was found that Sanjay was found in an injured State.

The body was sent for the post mortem after the preliminary investigation. The police registered a case under section 174 of the IPC and have started further investigation. Police said that if negligence is found case under section 304 A of the IPC would be registered and accused person would be nabbed.

The statements of the family members are yet to be recorded which could help in investigation.



Madhya Pradesh Governor Lalji Tandon being welcomed by Speaker of the State Assembly NP Prajapati and Chief Minister Kamal Nath on his arrival to address Budget session in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

## Saurabh Yadav wins bronze medal at 15th Youth International Boxing Tournament

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh player Saurabh Yadav brought laurels to the city by winning bronze medal at the 15th Youth International Boxing Tournament.

The tournament was held in Lithuania from March 8 to 15. Madhya Pradesh State Boxing Academy player Saurabh Yadav, represented the Indian team, brought the country a bronze medal.

Saurabh Yadav received this medal by performing in the 91 kg weight category. Saurabh Yadav, included in the ten-member Indian team, was the only player from Madhya Pradesh. In the tournament, Saurabh defeated the Lithuanian player to make it to the semi-finals. Saurabh Yadav had to be content with the bronze medal in the semi-final match with the Poland player.

After returning to Bhopal from Vilnius, Lithuania, Saurabh Yadav met KK Singh, Director

Sports and Youth Welfare. Director of Sports V. K. Singh expressed happiness over Saurabh Yadav winning the bronze medal at the Youth International Boxing Tournament and encouraged and congratulated Saurabh.

It is noteworthy that Saurav Yadav of middle class family of Bhopal is under training under the guidance of Roshan Lal, the chief instructor of Boxing Academy under the Day Boarding Scheme.

Meanwhile, the players of Madhya Pradesh State Equestrian Academy made 40 km for the first time. Presented one gold and one silver medal to Madhya Pradesh in Junior National Indoorines Championship (Junior National Horse Racing Competition).

The players earned these medals in Team event. The championship was played at Palanpur, Gujarat from 14-15 March 2020.

This is the first time academy players have won medals at

the Indoorines Championship. It is also worth mentioning here that three girl players trained under boarding scheme at Madhya Pradesh State Equestrian Academy are of Shelter Home (orphanage) run by Little Star Foundation of Kanchan Rajput, Kareena and Lakshmi Kewat Katni, which are awarded championship through Sports and Youth Welfare Department.

He got an opportunity to showcase his talent and he won gold and silver medals.

In the team event of Junior National Indoor Championships, academy players Kanchan Rajput and Anshpreet Singh earned gold and Lakshmi Kewat, Kareena, Aditya and Aman earned silver medals.

Director Sports and Youth Welfare V.K. Singh congratulated all the players. All these players are getting training in equestrian sport under the guidance of Captain Bhagirath, the chief instructor of the academy.

## 36-year-old woman stabbed to death over extra-marital affair

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Suspecting illicit relationship, a 36-year-old woman was stabbed to death by her husband at Damkheda in the morning on Monday. Kolar police arrested the accused

and recovered sharp-edged weapon used in murder.

The deceased, Shyama Bai, was stabbed multiple times by her husband Shobharam before she died at her house.

She was taken to Shree

Vinayak hospital where she was declared dead.

Locals informed the police and acting swiftly, the accused husband was nabbed. The deceased used to work as domestic help. This was her second marriage after her

first husband's death.

The accused husband works as labourer and from the initial days of marriage, he was suspicious over the activities of the deceased and had frequent fights with

her.

During the investigation in the night on Sunday, the two had a fight after the deceased returned late in the night and she was beaten brutally.

In the morning on

Monday accused again started fight while she was on her work and reached a house where she worked and when the accused stopped her she told accused to stop fight and went inside the house and following her accused went in

the house and stabbed her multiple times.

The house owner rushed for her help after the deceased alerted for help.

The police rushed to spot after the house owners informed police regarding

the attack.

The body was sent for the post-mortem after the preliminary investigation and the police have registered a case under section 302 of the IPC and started further investigation.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath with party MLAs during the Budget Session of the State Assembly in Bhopal on Monday (Left), BJP National Vice President Shivraj Singh Chouhan with party MLAs during the Budget Session of the State Assembly in Bhopal on Monday (Right)



Pioneer photo

## Candidatures of BJP Rajya Sabha candidates Scindia and Sumer Singh Solanki facing rejection

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

After the Congress party's objections, the candidature of BJP Rajya Sabha candidates Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sumer Singh Solanki is facing rejection.

Submitting their objections before the Returning Officer on Monday, the Congress party claimed that Scindia in his nomination form did not furnish information on a case pending against him with Economic Offences Wing (EOW).

The case was registered by the EOW against Scindia ahead of his submission of the nomination papers, claimed Congress adding the nomination form had no mention of this case.

The ruling party also

objected to BJP's second candidate Sumer Singh Solanki saying Solanki was still in Government service at the time of filing nomination and his resignation was accepted a day after he submitted his nomination papers with Returning Officer.

Monday was the last day of scrutiny of the nomination papers. March 26 is scheduled for polling for Rajya Sabha biennial election.

The Returning Officer for Rajya Sabha polls has decided to hear the matters of objections against the BJP candidates at 11 am on Tuesday.

The nominations of Congress candidates Digvijay Singh and Phool Singh Baraiya also were accepted by the Returning Officer.

Nomination form of BJP's third candidate Ranjana Baghel was also accepted.

Notably, a day after Scindia had joined the BJP, the EOW of MP Police had decided to re-open a land grab case lodged in 2014 against Scindia which was closed in 2018 for lack of evidences.

Solanki, the second candidate of the BJP for RS polls was an assistant professor at a government college in Barwani before he was nominated for Rajya Sabha.

Digvijay Singh filed objection against Scindia while Baraiya did the same against Solanki. The nominations of these two BJP candidates should be rejected, Congress leader JP Dhanopia demanded.

## Tahir Hussain sent to 4-day police custody

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Monday sent suspended Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) councillor Tahir Hussain to four-day police custody in connection with the alleged killing of 26-year-old Intelligence Bureau staffer Ankit Sharma during the recent communal violence in North-east Delhi. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Pawan Singh Rajawat sent Hussain for interrogation after police sought his custody for five days.

Earlier, the Delhi Police has arrested Tahir Hussain from a Delhi's Rouse Avenue court on March 5 in connection with the alleged killing of Intelligence Bureau official Ankit Sharma during the recent communal violence in North-east Delhi.

After being taken into custody from the Rouse Avenue court premises Hussain was taken to the Sunlight police station for further investigation.

Hussain was booked for his alleged role in the murder of the IB staffer during the communal riots that rocked the city last month.

## IN BRIEF

### ST STUDENTS GET COACHING UNDER AKANSHA YOJANA

**Bhopal:** Under the Akansha Yojana, coaching is being given to 715 students belonging to scheduled tribe category for admissions in reputed educational institutes of the State and country. The coaching arrangement has been made in Jabalpur, Indore, Bhopal and Gwalior. A provision of ₹11.50 crore has been made this year by the Tribal Welfare department. Presently, 365 students are getting coaching for JEE, 187 for NEET and 163 for CLAT.

Under the Akansha Yojana, there is a provision of free coaching for the preparation of the entrance examinations of JEE, NEET and CLAT etc. Free residential facilities in hostels run at these places have been made available to the students to facilitate them for coaching.

### 'WILL WORK WITH DEVOTION FOR SC'S WELFARE'

**Bhopal:** Newly appointed Chairman of Madhya Pradesh State Scheduled Caste Commission and former Member of Parliament of Sagar, Anand Ahirwar took charge on Monday. The newly appointed members of the commission, Pradeep Ahirwar of Hoshangabad and Gurucharan Khare of Chhindwara also assumed office. After taking the charge, Chairman Anand Ahirwar said that under the arrangements of the Commission, they will work with full devotion and dedication for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes in the State.

### PRINCIPAL SECY, NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, GETS ADDL CHARGE

**Bhopal:** The State Government has entrusted the additional charge of the Managing Director of Laghu Udyog Nigam to the Principal Secretary, New and Renewable Energy Manu Shrivastava, along with the current responsibilities. The Deputy Secretary of Public Works Anil Khare will also look after the work of the Executive Director of the Environment Planning and Coordination Organisation along with his current responsibilities. Orders to this effect have been issued by the General Administration department.

### EYES OF LATE RAM KUMAR DAMANI DONATED

**Bhopal:** Eyes of late Ram Kumar Damani, 34, have been donated to Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital by his uncle Kanhaiyalal Damani. Deceased Ramkumar was resident of Sant Hirdaram Nagar and died here on Sunday. With this donation two blind persons would now get eyesight. As many as 1,775 free cornea transplantations have so far been performed in Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital. Trustee LC Janiyani paid homage to the departed soul and expressed gratitude to the family members for this donation.

## MP Assembly adjourned till March 26

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Soon after the address of Governor Lalji Tandon here on Monday, Madhya Pradesh Assembly was adjourned till March 26.

The adjournment ensured that no trust vote is held in the House as directed by the Governor in a letter written to Chief Minister Kamal Nath couple of days ago.

Whatever correspondence has been made has been done with the Governor and not with the assembly speaker, Speaker NP Prajapati told the BJP MLAs as the Leader of Opposition demanded the floor test reading out the letter from the Governor.

Soon after the speaker adjourned the proceedings till March 26, the day when the

Rajya Sabha polls would take place. Parliamentary affairs minister Govind Singh had proposed adjournment of the House in the wake of Corona virus scare.

The Congress MLAs shouted slogans against BJP while moving out of the House while the BJP MLAs remained seated in the House. The BJP MLAs left the House after reports of their party moving the court on the political crisis in MP.

A large numbers of Congress MLAs were wearing masks on Monday while none of the BJP members were seen in the protective gear.

Earlier, the Governor while leaving the House had urged the members of the House to keep intact the democratic traditions and con-

stitutional rules and provisions amid ongoing scenario in Madhya Pradesh.

BJP MLA Narottam Mishra had questioned Governor's address saying it was a minority government and how come the Governor highlight its achievements. However the Governor went ahead with his brief address.

Massive security arrangements were made in and around the assembly on Monday. The visitor galleries were empty as no guests were allowed in the House.

Though Congress ministers and leaders had denied speculations of session getting postponed due to Corona scare in the run up to assembly session, there were rumours that it could actually happen.

## Cloudy conditions witnessed in Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chilling cold winds were witnessed in the early morning hours while day temperatures made the weather hot and humid during the day on Monday in the State capital.

The State Capital witnessed night 5 degree celsius below the normal temperature on Sunday night. Cloudy conditions were witnessed in the morning on Monday and later in the noon temperature soared with clear sky weather conditions.

The Met department told that the cold weather conditions in the late evening and early morning hours would prevail for the next 2-3 days and later temperatures would increase.

Step change would not be witnessed and gradual increase in day and night temperatures would be witnessed in the state.

The night dipped to 9 degree celsius in Raisen which was the lowest night temperature of the State.

The day temperatures were recorded at around 30 degree celsius while highest day temperature was recorded at 31 degree celsius on Monday.

Khandwa, Dhar and Hoshangabad recorded day temperature at 31 degree celsius which was the highest day temperature in the state on Monday.

remain at these levels for next two days.

In the State, night temperatures dipped significantly in Shahdol division while remaining divisions have not recorded any steep change.

The day temperature in the State Capital was recorded at

30.1 degree celsius and night temperature at 12.9 degree celsius.

Sagar, Shahdol, Bhopal and Gwalior divisions recorded dip in day temperatures in the past 24 hours and pattern would prevail in the next 24 hours.



Madhya Pradesh Governor Lalji Tandon addresses House during Budget Session of the Madhya Pradesh State Assembly in Bhopal on Monday. Speaker NP Prajapati was also present on the occasion

Pioneer photo

## Handloom and handicraft fair concludes

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The handloom and handicraft fair exhibited at Bhopal Haat concluded on Sunday. The 10-day long exhibition cum sale Fag Mela was an extravagant event for the shopaholics of the city.

The fashionistas had an opportunity to shop for the best of the stuff for the festive season. The exhibition cum sale had a satisfactory response on the concluding day.

During the exhibition-cum-sale, the shopping hub of the city was adorned with sparkling and fizzy shades of different States of the country. The exhibition cum sale display special items for this festival and provide opportunity to the people to buy traditional and unique items for their homes.

The shopaholics of the city were seen captivated towards the colourful and fizzy shades of the country, as the mela also showcased the most renowned

dress materials like jute, silk, chiffon, net and more, the huge collection of handloom materials made up of jute, paper-mache and much more.

The exhibition was all about handicraft and handloom material in which self help groups (SHGs) participated from across the State.

The fair was much exotic for the female buyers as a lot of stuff of home decoration was also available at the fair. Not only this, but, an amazing collection of imitation jewellery and colorful foot wears also attracted the female buyers.

The mela also shared a major collection of dress materials, enthralling the ladies. Dress materials embedded with zari zardozi, lucknowi chicken, mulberry silk and more could be explored at the mela. Printed materials beautifully embroidered with Batik Print, Dabu Print, Hand-Block Print and one of the most renowned and loved in all seasons, Bagh Print were also there.

## 'Fighting fit' screened at Shaurya Smarak

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

How the Indian Army and its different departments work was showcased in a film 'fighting fit'. The film was screened at Shaurya Smarak here on Monday.

The move is produced by Film Division of India and was directed by Arun Chaudhary. The film showcases about the daily work life of the army officers including food, recreation and more.

The primary mission of the Indian Army is to ensure national security and national unity, defending the nation from external aggression and internal threats, and maintaining peace and security within its borders.

It conducts humanitarian rescue operations during natural calamities and other disturbances, like Operation Surya

Hope, and can also be requisitioned by the government to cope with internal threats. It is a major component of national power alongside the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force.

The Indian armed forces have been engaged in a number of major military operations, including: the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1947, 1965 and 1971, the Portuguese-Indian War, the Sino-Indian War, the 1967 Chola incident, the 1987 Sino-Indian skirmish, the Kargil War, and the Siachen conflict among others. All the major incidents were depicted in the movie.

It is to be noted that the film featured about the brave hearts who protect the country from the borders.

The film features about the advanced technologies used by the army.

The working of different

Borrower Name	Veh. No.	Asset Details	Parking Yard
Pushpendrasingh Rai	MP15CB3939	FORD ENDEAVOUR	Vinayak Auto Link Pvt. Ltd. Indore

General Public is hereby informed that above mentioned Asset/s are in possession of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd** as per the clauses enshrined in its Loan Agreement and are available for Auction on "as is where is" basis. Individuals interested in Inspection of the Assets and submitting their Quotations for purchase of those may kindly contact Authorised Officer of the Bank at the Branch address as mentioned below in Publication on or before **23-March-2020**. Individuals willing to purchase the Asset/s are required to submit their Identity Proof along with the duly filled Quotation forms to Bank.

All the post auction charges shall be borne by the auction purchaser.  
**Contact Person/s - LCM: Mr. Abhinav Lal - 7798988481.**  
**Kotak Mahindra Bank, Nagpur**

**Can Fin Homes Ltd**  
 (Sponsor: CANARA BANK)

Branch: Plot No. 1, First Floor, Zone-II, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal-462011  
 Phone: 0755-257935, 2577939  
 E-mail: bhopal@canfinhomes.com

**POSSESSION NOTICE**

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Can Fin Homes Ltd. in exercise of the powers conferred under Sec 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 8 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notices calling upon the following Borrowers/Co-Borrowers/Guarantors to repay the amounts mentioned in the notices and interest upto the date of final payment, within 90 days from the date of receipt of the said notices.

The borrowers as well as the Guarantors have failed to repay the amount. Notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below, against each borrower, in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sec 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the following dates.

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the following properties and any dealings with these properties will be subject to the charge of Can Fin Homes Ltd., Bhopal Branch for the amounts mentioned against each property, which is payable with further interest thereon until payment in full.

Name of the borrower	Description of the property mortgaged	Demand notice Date	Amount outstanding
Shyam manohar pandey Arti pandey	Flat no. F-1, 1st floor block no. B, K.K. Apartment surya colony vill., Banjari kolar road ward no. 81 patwari halka no. 39, Teh. Huzur Dist Bhopal M.P.	13.08.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 14,65,648/- +intt. & other charges
Rajesh Gupta Mrs. Balesh Gupta	Flat no. G-01, plot no. 44/A & 45 khasra no. 291/1, 291/2, Shri homes, New Choksey Nagar Gram Lambakheda, Bhopal M.P.	14.11.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 16,66,974/- +intt. & other charges
Ram Ratan Rai/ Pushplata Rai	Singlex no. 232, the retreat located at village jhrianiya patwari Halka No. 01 Teh. Huzur Dist Bhopal M.P.	14.11.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 4,32,934/- +intt. & other charges
Rishi Jharbade	Plot no. 49, madhuvan hills colony situated at village, Pipaliya Gajju Mandideep Goharganj Dist Raisen M.P.	03.12.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 7,58,843/- +intt. & other charges
Basant singh Bais	Commercial shop no. G-2, G-5, G-7 Ground Floor ambar complex situated soumitra vihar colony, vill. Bawadiyakalan Teh. Huzur Dist Bhopal M.P.	14.11.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 12,10,032/- +intt. & other charges
Sukhdev Makhija	Flat no. G-1, ground floor block no. B, K.K. Apartment surya colony vill., Banjari kolar road ward no. 81 patwari halka no. 39, Teh. Huzur Dist Bhopal M.P.	13.08.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 4,57,884/- +intt. & other charges
Yogesh Batra Iswar Batra	Plot no. D-42, Uma dharm vill. Kharkhedhi Teh. Huzur Dist Bhopal M.P.	10.06.2019 13.03.2020	₹ 4,05,083 +intt. & other charges

Date: 17.03.2020  
 Place: Bhopal

Authorised Officer  
 Can Fin Homes Ltd.

**ओरियन्टल बैंक ऑफ कॉमर्स**  
**Oriental Bank of Commerce**

शाखा: भितरवार रोड, डबरा, जिला- ग्वालियर म.प्र.  
 फोन: 07524-224572, 224874

**खाद्यान की सार्वजनिक नीलामी की सूचना**

सार्वजनिक नीलामी दिनांक 24.03.2020, समय दोपहर 12:00 बजे  
 "जहां है, जैसी है, के आघार पर" "जैसी गोडाउन में रखी/ भंडारण है"

ऋणी का नाम: मैसर्स सुरेश कुमार एण्ड ब्रदर्स नीलामी दिनांक: 24.03.2020  
 नीलामी स्थान: ओरिएंटल बैंक ऑफ कॉमर्स

खाद्यान/ किस्म	CAR	WHR No.	बोरे ना	वजन मीटन अनुमानित	भंडारण वेयर हाउस	आरक्षित मूल्य मीटन	घरोहर राशि
PADDY	724262	1399	1080	64.800	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	30000	1944000
RICE	753129	1463	250	12.500	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	68000	850000
RICE	753130	1464	250	12.500	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	68000	850000
RICE	769361	1471	400	20.000	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	67000	1340000
RICE	788510	1475	450	22.500	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	1417500
RICE	788511	1476	450	22.500	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	1417500
RICE	792060	1480	400	20.000	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	1260000
RICE	792061	1481	400	20.000	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	1260000
RICE	794233	1484	300	15.000	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	945000
RICE	794294	1486	525	26.200	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	1650600
RICE	794295	1487	525	26.200	DABRA SIDDHIVINAYAK WAREHOUSE	63000	1650600

नीलामी के नियम व शर्तें: (1) नीलामी में भाग हेतु इच्छुक बोलीकर्ता को रु. 25000.00 राखा में नगर या डी.डी. के माध्यम से देव होने। डी.डी. ओरिएंटल बैंक ऑफ कॉमर्स, डबरा के पक्ष में देव होगा। (2) नीलामी में भाग लेने हेतु के.वाई.सी./आधार कार्ड, मोबाइल नंबर अनिवार्य रूप से देना होगा। (3) सकल बोलीकर्ता को 24 घंटे में बोली की राशि का 25% भनराशि जमा करनी होगी और शेष 75% भनराशि नीलामी दिनांक से 10 दिनों के अन्दर जमा करना होगा। अनपेक्ष पूर्व में जाम की गयी राशि जाम कर ली जायेगी। (4) असकल बोलीकर्ता को घरोहर राशि रु. 25,000/- बिना किसी ब्याज के वापस की जायेगी। (5) बैंक को यह अधिकार होगा कि नीलामी प्रक्रिया बिना किसी पूर्व सूचना के निरस्त, नीलामी दिनांक बढ़ा सकेगा एवं नीलामी में बैंक का निर्णय अंतिम व बंधनकारक होगा। नीलामी की नियम व शर्तें एवं प्रक्रिया को समझने के लिए बैंक शाखा-डबरा से संपर्क किया जा सकता है।

ऋणियों/जमानतदारों को सूचित किया जाता है कि दिनांक 23.03.2020 के पूर्व सम्पूर्ण वकालत राशि मय खर्च के जमा कर माल की सवृद्धी/प्रभार मुक्त प्राप्त करें।  
 स्थान: डबरा, दिनांक: 14.03.2020  
 प्राधिकृत अधिकारी, ओरियन्टल बैंक ऑफ कॉमर्स

# Capt Amarinder Govt completes three years

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Congress-led Punjab Government on Monday promised to do in the next two years of its term what it was trying to accomplish in the past three. Asking for "a chance" on the completion of three years of his government, the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh announced to give one lakh government jobs in the next two years.

Capt Amarinder gave his Government 75 marks out of 100 in a report card, presented by him and his ministers on Monday, with promises of a better performance in the subjects of employment generation, transport sector, illegal mining, corruption, affordable power, among others.

"Out of the total 424 poll promises, the government has implemented 225, while 96 have been partially implemented, and the remaining 103 would be implemented in the coming two years," said Capt Amarinder while addressing the media in the media conclave along with all the Cabinet Ministers, party MPs.

"We have taken action on more than 75 percent of our promises made to the people of Punjab...I am confident that in the next two years, we should be able to fulfil all our commitment," he said.

He said: "The Congress party works in a different way, and to ensure that all promises be implemented, the party high command has set up manifesto implementation committee and



Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh addressing a news conference on the completion of three years of the state government in Chandigarh on Monday. T. Sharma | Pioneer

we will implement the entire manifesto."

Even as he reiterated "one another time" his "commitment" to punish the guilty of sacrilege, bringing down power rates, de-monopolizing transport business, checking illegal mining, eliminating corruption, among other promises, the Chief Minister could not come up with clear answers on these burning issues riding high on which he came to power in 2017.

Contrary to the people's high expectations, the Chief Minister did not make any major announcements, except announcing one lakh government jobs, and providing new bus permits in an attempt to end monopolization in transport sector besides reducing road tax.

He also announced to put in place the corrective measures

to check illegal mining by Baisakhi, setting up 750 rural sports stadiums to promote sports and improve youngsters' health, implementing Lokpal Bill covering all from Chief Minister downwards, binging Anti Red Tape Legislation, Land Leasing and Tenancy Bill, besides the State Drug legislation to deal with drug related cases.

Making concluding remarks during the conclave, the Chief Minister announced that one lakh youth will be provided government jobs over the next two year in total 17 state government departments, primarily in health, education, police, and electricity board.

"These jobs will be filled up through a transparent and merit-based system of selection...We also aim to cross the target of 20 lakhs employment

facilitation by 2022 of which we have already achieved 12.17 lakh jobs as on today," he said.

Underlining that the Government has decided to rationalize the electricity tariff in a manner that reduces their burden making it more affordable to the common man, the Chief Minister said that the final details of the new power tariff could be given only after the approval of power regulator — Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission.

"Since the decision to regulate tariff is the jurisdiction of the power regulator, the state is submitting its proposal in this regard to the regulator," he said while refusing to give details of the proposed tariff reduction and how to counterbalance the loss to be suffered by the State by reducing the domestic tariff.

To ensure "no monopoly"

## QUOTE-UNQUOTE

**On monopoly of a single family on buses being operated from Delhi airports to Punjab:**  
"The Government is working to address the issue but the Delhi Government also has to be on board with any decision"

**On complaints of continued illegal sand mining:**  
"I have asked the Water Resources Minister to thoroughly review and make this system fully transparent"

**On affordable power for domestic consumers:**  
"While the final details will be shared only after the Regulator's approval, the Government has decided to rationalize electricity tariff in a manner that reduces the burden of the common man, making electricity more affordable"

**On protests by unemployed teachers:**  
"Gherao is not the solution and the Government is doing it best to address the problem. We will not give in to any pressure."

in the state transport sector, the Chief Minister announced that the State Government would soon provide 5,000 new permits for small or mini buses, and 2,000 new permits for stage carriage on commercially viable routes.

"After the Supreme Court has upheld the decision of the Punjab and Haryana High Court on illegal extension of routes, I have directed the Transport Department to cancel all such permits," he added.

Besides, he also announced to bring down the road tax and cess on ordinary buses from Rs 3.08 to Rs 2.96 as well as special one-time amnesty scheme for settling penal interest on non-payment of government dues by transporters, which the state

Finance Minister Manpreet Badal claimed that the state would be able to "absorb".

Facing criticism not only of the opposition but also his own party men over the issue of illegal mining, the Chief Minister said that the state was coming up with new guidelines "before Baisakhi".

"The Department would examine all aspects and suggest corrective measures within the next two-three weeks," said the Chief Minister.

He said: "The sand mafia will not be allowed...I have asked the Minister to thoroughly review and make this system fully transparent...our aim is to ensure steady supply of sand at affordable rate at the pithead with proper use of tech-

nology to check any illegal activity by the contractors or illegal miners."

On the promise of waiving off entire debt of the farmers, the Chief Minister said that the Government has waived off the farmers' debt "as per our capability".

"What Punjab has done, it is highest in the country...the maximum limit is Rs two lakh...we cannot go beyond that. And those, who have been left out due to some paper work, would be covered now. Besides, the government will start the debt loan waiver scheme for the farm landless labour as soon as the COVID-19 measures are over," he said. The Government will provide relief of Rs 520 crore to 2.85 lakh agricultural landless members if cooperative societies.

He also declared that the Government was soon to take further action in the sacrilege and subsequent police firing cases and would go to the bottom of the cases.

"Let me reiterate that all those persons, whether big or small, who are guilty of ordering firing upon innocent persons protesting the be-adi of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji will be brought to book, also those responsible for be-adi of our Guru cannot escape the punishment they deserve," he said.

Also declaring that the Government has adopted zero tolerance policy against organised crime, he said a Special Operations Group (SOG) has been set up as anti-terrorist

crack unit. "One village, one police officer scheme has also been launched to improve people-police interface," he added.

Declaring that he will not allow mining, liquor, drug and transport mafias, or goondas, gangsters and terrorists to disturb the state's peaceful environment, the Chief Minister said: "I will be absolutely harsh...As an ex-fauji, I know how to deal with them...Everyone will get a free chance to make the most of the opportunities in Transport and other sectors."

Vowing to completely eliminate all the mafias from the state, the Chief Minister said his government was working to end all this since taking over Punjab's reins, "but these things take time." "We have done our best, and we could not have done any better considering the situation," he said, complimenting his cabinet colleagues and officers for the excellent job done by them.

Claiming to work hard to break the back of the flourishing drug economy in Punjab, the Chief Minister said: "Let me clearly state that any person, irrespective of his position or political affiliation, if found involved in drug trade, will be taken to task. Drugs and drug peddlers have to go from Punjab whatever it takes," he said.

Apart from medical colleges at Mohali, Kapurthala and Hoshiarpur, two more medical colleges have been planned at Gurdaspur and Malerkotla, he also announced.

## CAPT GOVT COMPLETES 3 YEARS

# Have no differences with Sidhu, says Punjab CM

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Armed with the queries regarding cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu starting his new innning by starting a YouTube channel or directly approaching he party high command, Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Monday played down his differences with his party colleague saying that he has no issues with it.

Capt Amarinder maintained that anyone can start a channel or can even discuss any matter with anyone in the party.

Notably, the former Minister Sidhu, who has been at loggerheads with Capt Amarinder, was blamed for his "inept handling" of the Local Government Department for the party's "poor performance" in the urban areas during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

In June, the Chief Minister had divested Sidhu of the Local Government and Tourism and Cultural Affairs Departments, allocating him the Power and New and Renewable Energy portfolio after which he had resigned from the Punjab Cabinet.

When asked about the status of the Congress MLA in the

party, the Chief Minister on Monday said that he was a Congressman and "we will certainly consider all his wishes" in taking any decision.

Capt Amarinder said that he had known Sidhu since he was a two-year-old and had "no personal issues with him".

To a question about Sidhu meeting the central party leadership on Punjab issues instead of raising these with the state leadership, the Chief Minister said, "He is welcome to discuss any issue with anyone in the party...If he has anything, which he would like to discuss, he is welcome."

Sidhu, the previous month, had met Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Delhi and apprised them of a roadmap for the "revival" of the Congress-ruled state "to its pristine glory".

Commenting on Sidhu's YouTube channel, Capt Amarinder said: "That is up to anybody. If I want to run a channel who can stop me."

**"WILL DEFINITELY CONTEST NEXT POLLS, STILL YOUNG ENOUGH"**

Three years after he declared 2017 state assembly elections to be his last polls,

Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Monday asserted that he will be contesting the next assembly elections in the state. "I am still quite young. Do you think I'm too old to fight the polls," quipped Capt Amarinder.

In 2018, Capt Amarinder had said that he would not hang up his boots until the State was taken out of the "mess". In 2019, the scion of the erstwhile Patiala's royal family had said that he would not quit politics until Punjab's number one position was "restored", and he might fight the next assembly polls, if needed.

## DON'T GO BY KEJRIWAL'S DRAMA

Dismissing the power subsidy being given by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government in Delhi as a "drama" by Arvind Kejriwal, the Chief Minister said that there was "no comparison" between Punjab and the national capital as the latter had no farmers or police to take care of.

Kejriwal had reduced domestic tariff through cross subsidy, he said, pointing out that the Punjab Government was already giving much higher subsidy than Delhi.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Amidst coronavirus scare, Punjab Government on Monday decided to extend the services of the "retiring" doctors and paramedical staff, working with the State Government in the Health and Family Welfare Department even after their retirement, till September 30, 2020. The decision came days after the State Government announced to do away with the extension policy and bringing down the employees' retirement age from 60 to 58.

For the same, a resolution was passed at the meeting giving ex-post facto approval to the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh's decision on extending the services of the doctors and paramedical staff working with the Government in the Health and Family Welfare Department till September 30, 2020.

At the same time, the Cabinet also issued a strong appeal to the people not to panic in view of the coronavirus threat but to take all necessary precautions, while avoiding crowded places and mass gatherings.

Taking stock of the situation and the state's preparedness to deal with the COVID-19 outbreak, the Cabinet also reviewed the reports of seven-member Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted earlier by the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh under the chairmanship of Local Bodies Minister Brahm Mohindra to oversee the preventive measures undertaken to combat the threat. The GoM comprises Om Parkash Soni, Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Razia Sultana, Balbir Singh Sidhu, Vijay Inder Singla and Bharat Bhushan Ashu.

Though Punjab has, so far, reported only one confirmed case, no effort is being spared by the State Government to ensure stringent measures against the spread of the disease, which has been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Appreciating the efforts of all Departments of the Government of Punjab, the Cabinet appealed to the people to be fully prepared and take all precautions as advised by the Health and Family Welfare Department from time-to-time.

The Cabinet, in its resolution, further appealed to the people to avoid going to crowded places and mass gatherings, to maintain hand and respiratory hygiene, and to ensure the cleanliness of their surroundings. People are also advised to wash their hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizer and they should avoid touching their face.

The people have also been

advised to avoid non-essential travel, said the resolution, adding that the people who are having cough, sneezing and fever should immediately contact 104-Medical Helpline of the Health and Family Welfare Department or the Control Rooms of their respective district.

Following discussions at the meeting, the Cabinet also appealed to people to either defer wedding functions or ensure that no more than 50 people are present. It also appealed to religious and dera heads to limit the gatherings and educate their followers about the coronavirus dangers.

During the Cabinet meeting, the Chief Minister asked all the Ministers to closely monitor the situation and ensure the implementation of the curbs in their respective districts, in close coordination with the administrative and civic officials.

He urged them to hold regular meetings with the local administration to maintain visibility in their districts and boost the confidence of the people. Capt Amarinder directed the Health Department to ensure that ventilators are available in all district hospitals to deal with the exigency. He further ordered private and state-run buses to carry hand sanitizers for the use of passengers to ensure hygiene in the vehicles and secure the travelers.

Notably, all Government and private schools have already been closed till March 31 in the State. However, medical colleges (senior year students) have been kept open as a support system. The Cabinet decided that MBBS students, who were not employed, should be contacted and asked by the Department to stand by on a voluntary basis.

Detailed instructions have also been issued for closure of all cinema halls, gyms and swimming pools in the state from the midnight of March 14 till further orders. All large public gatherings including sports, conferences, cultural events, fairs and exhibitions, wedding functions, are also prohibited till further orders. The Cabinet has, however, left the decision on closure of malls and marriage palaces to the GoM.

The meeting was informed that the Deputy Commissioners were geared up to launch house-to-house awareness campaign involving all health workers, who are being trained for the purpose, from March 19 to 26.

Training of all the staff of all departments in districts will be completed by March 18, said the state Principal Secretary (Health and Family Welfare) Anurag Aggarwal during the meeting, adding that teams of two to

three officials, headed by Group A and B officials, will also be formed by March 18.

"These teams will be assigned villages, areas, locality, wards or colonies keeping in view the population, which will contact each and every household in their assigned areas to educate and inform every individual about the precautions and to inform about any person with symptoms. This will be completed by March 26," he said.

He informed the Cabinet that 100 samples had been sent for testing till date, of which only one was positive and 95 negative for COVID-19, while the results of four samples were still awaited.

"Medical teams with security personnel have been deputed at both the airports for the screening of the passengers. Mandatory screening of all passengers is being done and self-declaration form is being taken from each passenger to ascertain the travel history of any foreign country from March 13 onwards," he said.

Adequate stock of PPEs (Personal Protective Equipment), N95 Masks, Triple Layer masks and gloves were available with the Health and Family Welfare Department for COVID-19. Further, procurement of more PPE, N95 Masks and Triple layer masks was under process.

To maintain strict vigil over the situation 24X7, control rooms had been established at State and District level, and Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) had also been prepared and trained for surveillance and containment, both at the state and district levels.

The services of all Rural Medical Officers had been put at the disposal of Civil Surgeons of the districts and all the district teams had been trained for sample collection, transportation of suspected cases as per the protocol of ICMR, the meeting was informed.

Further, Virology labs at Government Medical College, Amritsar and Patiala, were now testing samples of COVID-19. Health teams in all districts were contacting the passengers coming to Punjab from different countries after being screened at Delhi or other airports. Passengers found asymptomatic are nevertheless being under surveillance as a precautionary measure.

Elaborating the Department's Containment Plan, Aggarwal said the SOPs (standard operation procedures) had been shared with all the DCs and mock drills had been conducted by all the districts to check preparedness for containment of COVID-19.

# Cabinet reviews preparedness

Appeals to people not to panic in view of coronavirus threat but to take all necessary precautions

- Services of "retiring" doctors, paramedical staff in Health Department extended till Sept 30
- Cabinet issues strong appeal to people not to panic, and take all necessary precautions, avoid crowded places and mass gatherings
- People asked to maintain hand and respiratory hygiene, ensure cleanliness of their surroundings
- People advised avoiding non-essential travel
- People having cough, sneezing and fever should immediately contact 104-Medical Helpline or district control rooms
- Govt appealed people to either defer wedding functions or ensure that no more than 50 persons are present
- Religious, Dera heads appealed to limit gatherings and educate their followers about coronavirus dangers
- Ministers asked to closely monitor the situation and ensure implementation of curbs in their respective districts in close coordination with administrative and civic officials
- Ministers asked to hold regular meetings with local administration
- Health Department asked to ensure availability of ventilators in all district hospitals
- Private and state-run buses ordered to carry hand sanitizers for use of passengers
- GoM to decide on closure of malls and marriage palaces
- DCs to launch house-to-house awareness campaign involving all health workers, being trained for the purpose, from March 19 to 26

Similarly, district, block and village level control rooms had been established. State and District Disaster Management Committees were reviewing the situation daily and inter-sectoral coordination is maintained for COVID-19 preparedness. Advisories had been issued to all the Departments and Districts for awareness of the general public and staff.

The Principal Secretary also informed the Cabinet that Punjab was the first state to notify COVID-19 under Epidemic Disease Act, 1897. Under these regulations, Deputy Commissioners are authorized to take any action for containment

and management of cases of COVID-19.

## HAND SANITISERS, THERMAL SCANNERS AT CM'S MEDIA INTERACTION

Hand sanitizers, and thermal scanners welcomed the media personnel at the Punjab Government's media conclave held on Monday on the completion of the Congress led Punjab Government's three years in power.

The conclave was organized at Punjab Bhawan, and the special staff was deputed to ensure that each and every person entering the venue should sanitize their hands, besides checking their temperature through thermal scanners.

# Khattar gives mantra of Integrity, Involvement, Innovation to officers

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday gave the mantra of 3-I's — Integrity, Involvement and Innovation to the newly appointed officers of Haryana Civil Service-2020 (HCS), saying they should work by keeping the welfare of people as their foremost concern.

Addressing the valedictory ceremony of First Joint Foundation Course of newly selected officers of HCS 2020 at Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) in Gurugram, Khattar said they should work with integrity i.e. honesty for the public and involvement i.e. work by involving the team.

By explaining the meaning of the team, the Chief Minister said that by making a list of the tasks of their offices, distribute them among the team and take the lead by yourself where weakness is spotted. This will increase confidence of the employees in their officer, he added. Giving the



third mantra of innovation, the Chief Minister said that new technologies are coming these days; for example IT, adopt innovation to serve the people in a better way.

Khattar said that while serving as an officer, they will come across many types of situations, but in those circumstances, they must keep control on themselves and don't be swayed by seeing others, they should work by rules and regulations. He said that the officers try to come up to the expectations of masses and deliver clean administration.

Earlier, HIPA Director General, Surina Rajan said that HIPA has prepared a program for the induction training to all newly recruited officers and refresher course after every three years. She said that on the directions of the Chief Secretary, a knowledge network will be started for capacity building of officials.

Haryana Chief Secretary Keshni Anand Arora joined the proceedings of the event through video conferencing from Chandigarh and other district officials from their respective districts.

# Jittega Punjab: YouTube sending copyright notices to fake channels

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Facing 'identification' crisis within a couple of days after the cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu launched his YouTube channel 'Jittega Punjab', its creators have now approached the global video-sharing platform to check the

mushrooming of fake channels by the same or similar names.

The video hosting services, YouTube, has started sending copyright strike notices to the illegally uploaded videos, besides sending impersonation notices to the fake channels.

# New law reduces road accident deaths by 10%

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

In the five months since the implementation of the amended Motor Vehicles Act, there has been a 10 per cent reduction in the number of deaths caused due to accidents in the country, Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari informed Rajya Sabha on Monday. He also informed the House the Government is committed to reduce the accident rate by 50 per cent in the next five years as India is a signatory to this affect at the World Safety Conference held recently in Sweden.

Giving this information while fielding questions pertaining to his Ministry, Gadkari said a total of 5 lakh accidents take place in the country and around 1.5 lakh people lose their lives in these accidents. Of

these, 65 per cent people die in the age group of 18 to 35 years, he said.

He said Tamil Nadu has made significant progress in reducing the number of deaths in road accidents in the country by 24 per cent in the last five months, the maximum anywhere in the country.

"There has been a 10 per cent reduction in the number of deaths due to accidents in the country in the last five months ever since the passage of the new Motor Vehicles Act by Parliament," Gadkari said adding "We have been able to save 10,000 lives."

Giving statistics state wise, he said Jammu and Kashmir and Chandigarh have shown 15 per cent reduction in the number of deaths due to accidents, Gujarat

14 per cent, Uttar Pradesh 13 per cent, Andhra Pradesh 7



per cent and Manipur reduced 4 per cent. However, Kerala has seen a rise of 4.9 per cent while Assam recorded 8 per cent rise, he told the House.

The minister also informed that among various steps being

taken to reduce accidents, the government proposes to open 1,000 driving schools in the country, of which 22 have already been opened. He said most accidents happened due to poor road engineering and

the government has identified 3,000 black spots to help reduce accidents in the country. He said a Rs 14,000 crore plan has been put in place whereby the World Bank and Asian Development Bank will

invest Rs 7,000 crore and the same amount will be spent by India towards education, enforcement and improving road engineering to help reduce accidents.

Gadkari also informed that the Motor Vehicles Act is in the Concurrent list and states are empowered to compound the offences and implement the provisions of the Act as per their requirements.

He said both his and a chief minister's vehicle have been challaned for traffic violations and no one is spared whatever the position one may occupy. The Minister informed that 73 per cent transactions are being handled currently by FASTag, electronic toll collection, and the plan is to have 98 per cent transactions through FASTag within the next one month to ensure seamless traffic.

# Yes Bank probe: ED summons Anil Ambani

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani was on Monday summoned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and asked to appear before it in connection with its money laundering probe against Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor and others.

However, Ambani has sought exemption from appearance on personal grounds and the agency has summoned him again later this week to appear before its Mumbai office to record his statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. The Yes Bank had an exposure of about ₹12,800 crore which has turned NPA, officials said.

Ambani has now been asked to appear on Thursday, they said, adding, the agency is probing if bribes were paid to the loans.

In a statement last week, the Reliance Group had said that its entire debt from Yes Bank was fully secured and was availed in the ordinary course of business.

Ambani's nine group companies are stated to have taken loans of about ₹12,800 crore from the bank.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had told a Press conference on March 6 that the Anil Ambani Group, Essel, ILFS, DHFL and Vodafone were among the stressed corporates Yes Bank had exposure to.

All the big companies who had taken large loans from the crisis-hit bank, which later turned bad or were in the red, are being summoned for questioning in the case to take the investigation forward. Promoter of Avantha Group Gautam Thapar, who has been named as an accused along with Rana, is also being summoned for ques-



tioning, they said. Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor, 62, is undergoing ED custody after he was arrested by the central probe agency early this month. A Mumbai court on Monday extended Kapoor's custody till March 20.

The ED has accused Kapoor, his family members and others of laundering "proceeds of crime" worth ₹4,300 crore by receiving alleged kickbacks in lieu of extending big loans through their bank that later allegedly turned non-performing asset (NPA).

As many as 44 companies belonging to 10 large business groups are reported to have accounted for NPA worth ₹34,000 crore of Yes Bank.

Other companies on the list of defaulters include Dewan Housing Finance Corporation, Jet Airways, Cox & Kings, and Bharat Infra and the promoters of these companies will also be questioned soon in connection with the ongoing money laundering case.

Kapil Wadhawan of DHFL has been summoned on Tuesday, Naresh Goyal of Jet Airways and Subhash Chandra of Zee have been asked to appear on Wednesday and Thapar has been asked to appear on March 21, sources said, clarifying that they are yet to be booked in a criminal case by any agency as accused till so far.

## INSHORT

### PUNJAB, HARYANA DON'T AGREE ON SYL ISSUE

New Delhi: Both Punjab and Haryana are not ready to find a middle path to resolve the SYL canal issue and the decision has been conveyed to the Supreme Court, the Centre on Monday informed Rajya Sabha. Replying to supplementaries during the Question Hour, Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said the SYL issue is pending before the Supreme Court and "we have written back to the SC".

### 14 MONUMENTS BEING USED FOR DEFENCE: GOVT

New Delhi: As many as 14 centrally protected monuments are being used for defence and other works, Union Minister of Culture Prahlad Singh Patel informed Lok Sabha on Monday. These monuments include Agra Fort in Uttar Pradesh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Fort at Phillaur in Punjab and six places in Tamil Nadu's Fort St. George/Fort Tondiarpet, Patel said in a written reply to a question in the House.

### COVID-19: VIPS PROVIDES ONLINE CLASSES

New Delhi: In view of suspension of classes to prevent the spreading of COVID-19, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies has taken initiatives like facilitating e-learning from home for students using e-resources and available online tools. "Study material in the form of Video Lectures, Audio Lectures, Power Point presentations and detailed notes are being shared with students," said Dalip Kumar, COO-cum-Registrar, VIPS.

### GOVT ADDRESSES ARMY'S PROMOTION DISPUTES

New Delhi: The Government is trying to minimise disputes pertaining to promotion, pension and service matters of armed forces with only 49 cases reaching the Supreme Court in 2019 as against 868 in 2014, Union Minister Sripad Yesso Naik said in Rajya Sabha on Monday. Replying to a query during Question Hour, Minister of State for Defence Naik said it is the endeavour of the Government to address disputes related to armed forces.

# Ask airlines, rail to forgo cancellation charges: RS elders to Govt

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The issue of coronavirus pandemic figured in the Rajya Sabha on Monday with some elders suggesting following preventive measures to fight the disease and urging the Government to instruct airlines and the Railways not to levy cancellation charges on tickets due to travel restrictions. Adjournment of the ongoing Budget Session of Parliament was also mooted to prevent large gathering.

Raising the matter of cancellation charges, Elamaram

Kareem(CPM) said several States have closed educational institutions and other places to check the spread of coronavirus. Besides, public gatherings have been cancelled.

He said a large number of people have changed their travel plans and forced to cancel their air and train tickets. In this backdrop, Kareem urged the Government to intervene and ask airlines and Indian railways to forgo cancellation charges.

As several other members agreed with Kareem, Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said it was a suggestion worth considering and asked the concerned min-



tries to have a look.

Mooting the adjournment of Parliament, S R Balasubramanian(AIADMK) said at any given time nearly 200 people were present in the Rajya Sabha, 500 or so in the Lok Sabha and 300 in the Central Hall. This was against the World Health Organisation(WHO) guidelines of preventing a gathering of more than 200 people, he

said and said the budget session should be curtailed.

While Ram Gopal Yadav (Samajwadi Party)favoured screening of visitors at various entry points of Parliament complex as people from all over the country came here, Derek O'Brien (Trinamool Congress)stressed on following basic hygiene practices like washing hands regularly, stay at

home and cover mouth while sneezing or coughing besides raising awareness at all levels in the society.

Sasmit Patra(BJD) called for sanitizing ATMs, social distancing and screening at domestic airports too. He also called for increasing the number of corona testing laboratories and said at present there were only 50 laboratories with a capacity of testing 4,500 cases.

Vikas Mahatme(BJP)drew the attention of the house to rumors about the pandemic and said rumors like consumption of chicken should be countered as it was not scientifically proven. He also urged people to refrain from visiting holy places in large numbers.

The Chairman also called for following good practices to counter the disease and asked the government to counter rumor mongering and high-light preventive steps.

# Andaman & Nicobar bars tourists travel till March 26

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Andaman & Nicobar administration has shut all travel and tourism related activities in the union territory starting Monday till March 26.

In an advisory issued on the COVID-19 outbreak, the health secretary of the Andaman & Nicobar administration wrote: "In order to prevent the outbreak of COVID-19 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands all tourists are advised to refrain from travelling to the islands from mid-night March 16 to March 26."

It has also decided to regulate the passenger occupancy in the vessels of Directorate of Shipping Services and private operators, with effect from March 16 to 26.

According to a statement, all the vessels of the Directorate of Shipping Services and private operators, operating in the Mainland Island, Inter Island, Foreshore and Harbour ferry sector, shall carry only Islander passengers up to 50 percent of



their carrying capacity.

"No tourists shall be allowed to travel by private/Government ferries. These measure have been initiated to avoid crowding in the vessels and to facilitate the passengers to maintain a safe distance with co passengers, so that the potential risk of spreading infection of coronavirus," it said.

In another statement, the Andaman & Nicobar administration has changed the office timings of departments in the island to avoid congestion in public transport.

# Par nod for three Central Sanskrit varsities

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Parliament on Monday approved The Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019 to upgrade three deemed Sanskrit universities into Central universities after some minor amendments. The Bill brought by HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank was passed by voice vote in the Rajya Sabha. It was passed by Lok Sabha in December last year and was introduced in Rajya Sabha on March 2 but could not be taken for discussion due to the logjam in the upper house.

The Bill seeks to upgrade three deemed to be universities in Sanskrit -- Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, and Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth Tirupati -- into central universities. Since Rajya

Sabha has passed the Bill with amendments, it would now go to Lok Sabha again. As per the proposed legislation, Sanskrit Central Universities will be set up by converting three deemed Sanskrit universities, presently functioning in the country.

Replying to the debate, Pokhriyal said the Modi government is committed to strengthen all Indian languages. Speaking about the spread of Sanskrit, he said that around five crore students were studying the language in the country itself. Besides, there were many countries across the world where the language was being taught, he added. "All languages are important for us. We are committed for the growth of all languages that are spoken in the country," the minister asserted.

Cutting across party lines, several members supported the

bill during the debate. Congress MP Jairam Ramesh, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy of AITC and Prashant Nanda of BJD spoke in Sanskrit. However, DMK members opposed the bill saying it was "against" classical languages like Tamil.

Initiating the debate, Jairam Ramesh said that though he supports the bill as it will help the cause of Sanskrit, which is a scientific language and part of cultural legacy, the government was neglecting other classical languages.

"Sanskrit has always been a monopoly of few and that is a matter of great sadness and tragedy for India. We have to make this monopoly into a treasure of many and that is what this bill hopes to accomplish," he said.

However, the government is ignoring other classical Indian languages such as Tamil, Telugu,

Kannada, Malayalam and Odia which are spoken by millions of people, while Sanskrit is spoken only by hardly 15,000 people in India, he added.

The Congress MP also suggested that Sanskrit universities be named after Sanskrit scholars such as Panini.

Supporting the Bill, Sukhendu Sekhar Ray of Trinamool Congress (AITC) spoke in Sanskrit and termed it as "mother language". Ram Gopal Yadav of SP suggested that there should be a provision for students union in the three universities rather than a student council, in which members were nominated by the faculty.

Prashant Nanda of BJD, who also spoke in Sanskrit, supported the bill said that the language has scientific importance. Kalkashan Perveen of JD(U) also backed the bill and said that

the government should also consider to upgrade the Sanskrit University in Darbhanga, Bihar, which was the second such varsity opened in India in 1961.

L.Lakshmi Kant Rao of TRS, K.K.Ragesh of CPI-M and Binoy Viswam of CPI also participated in the debate. Supporting the bill, V Vijayasai Reddy of YSRCP suggested the government ask MPs to adopt one village in their constituency to promote Sanskrit language.

However, M Shanmugam of DMK opposed the bill saying that it was against classical languages such as Tamil. Vaiko of DMK also opposed the bill saying: "If this bill is passed then not only South Indian languages but others like Punjabi and Odia will be in jeopardy. He also said that Sanskrit is a "dead language" and Tamil is the only alive ancient language.

# Rahul creates uproar over bad loans in LS

## Seeks list of 50 top wilful defaulters

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday raised in Lok Sabha the issue of bad loans and sought a list of 50 top wilful defaulters and "stealing of money by large number of people" even as his party staged a walkout protesting that its leader was not allowed to ask a second supplementary on the issue.

The Congress members wanted Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to respond to Rahul's question but Minister of state Anurag Thakur answered his query.

The House soon witnessed noisy scenes and a walkout by Congress members as Rahul was not allowed to ask a second supplementary related to wilful defaulters during the Question Hour.

The protests came after Speaker Om Birla announced the end of Question Hour at noon as the designated time for it is 11 am to noon.

While asking the first supplementary, Rahul said he wanted to know the list of 50 top wilful defaulters, including funds given and the amount written off by banks but did not get a proper answer in the writ-



ten reply.

"The Indian economy is going through a difficult period. Banking system is facing difficulties, banking is failing and many more banks are going to fail. One of the main reasons for the failure of banks is stealing of bank money by a large number of people."

"The prime minister had said those who have stolen the money will be brought back and punished. But I have not got the answer to my simple question," he said.

When Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur started replying to the question, Rahul and Congress leader in the House Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury protested, saying Sitharaman, who was present in the House, should reply.

However, the Speaker said

ment came and a number of steps were taken, including enactment of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, so that the guilty can be punished.

Referring to the recent Yes Bank crisis, Thakur said the union finance minister had already said banks are safe and the money deposited in Yes Bank is also safe.

He said there were many instances of irregularities during the UPA Government and that include forcing bankers to buy paintings at exorbitant price -- in an indirect reference to Rahul Gandhi's sister Priyanka Vadra selling a painting to the Yes Bank founder Rana Kapoor, who was recently arrested.

The Speaker then ended the Question Hour and moved to the next item of the agenda. With this, Rahul protested saying he should be given the opportunity to ask the second supplementary as is the norm. However, the Speaker ignored his request and continued with the business of the House.

Congress leader was immediately joined by Chowdhury and other members. At least a dozen Congress members rushed to the Well of the House and started sloganeering saying grave injustice has been done to Rahul. As the Speaker continued to ignore the protests, the Congress members staged a walk out.

Thakur said ₹4.8 lakh crore defaulting loans were recovered ever since the Modi govern-

# 'Govt working on comprehensive policy for elderly citizens'

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

As Opposition insisted that there were 282 deaths of sanitation workers engaged in manual scavenging and 70,000 children forced to beg by criminal network, the Union Minister Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawar Chand Gehlot highlighted measures taken by his Ministry to uplift Dalits, tribals, backward classes and differently-abled people and maintained that his Government is working on a comprehensive policy for elderly citizens.

Replying to a debate on the demand for grants of his ministry, which was later passed by the House, Gehlot said 'divyang', a term for people with disabilities, across the country will have a standard identity card through which they can avail of benefits meant for them anywhere.

As of now, he said, the certificate issued in one district is not accepted in another district.

The Indian cricket team for the physically challenged, he noted, has been winning the world cup cricket for the disabled for the last three times. Over one-third members of the Indian team have won medal in Paralympic Games, he said, lauding the efforts of divyang.



In the last five years some of key decisions taken by the Government was to accord constitutional status to the Other Backward Classes (OBC) Commission and giving reservation in educational institutions based on economic criteria.

He said that the Government has brought Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, which is being scrutinised by a standing committee, and it has provisions for day care centre and old age homes, which would be run with the help of NGOs.

While he asserted that allocations under various scholarships had increased by a big margin under the BJP-led NDA Government, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury took a dig at his claims, saying "zero increase" under several provisions and underutilisation or

reduction in budgets of various programmes were its "historic achievements".

The mandate of the Social Justice Ministry is very large, he said, attacking the Government for the deaths of 282 sanitation workers.

Over 60,000-70,000 children every year are forced to beg by criminals, he said.

"You have no numbers. What is your priority," Chowdhury said while also highlighting drug menace in parts of the country, including Punjab.

Responding to him, Gehlot said de-addiction camps have been set up in 28 districts of the states. Over Rs 137.72 crore was spent during 2009-14, when the Congress-led UPA was in power, while over Rs 242.55 cr was spent by the NDA government in 2014-19.

The issue of begging, he said, is a State subject, and the Centre issues advisories to states from time to time in this regard.

Gehlot said the ministry has become "active" in the last five years and has taken several historic decisions.

He said a high-level board was also constituted for nomadic tribes. For divyang, 132 camps were set up in 126 districts to give assistance, he said.

# Hirdesh Kumar appointed J&K chief electoral officer

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Election Commission on Monday appointed Hirdesh Kumar (47), a 1999 batch IAS officer, as the new Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Jammu & Kashmir. The EC issued a notification announcing the appointment of Kumar and asked the Jammu&Kashmir administration to ensure that the new CEO takes charge "immediately".

He originally belongs to Uttar Pradesh. He was the District Magistrate in the districts such as Chitrakoot, Ghazipur and Ghaziabad. Presently, he is posted as Secretary, School Education Department and Social Welfare Department. His name was selected from a panel of names sent by the J-K administration to the EC.

According to the EC, the delimitation process of J-K is expected to start within a month. Last delimitation was done in J&K in 1995-1996. Besides redefining the boundaries of the existing 83 Assembly seats and five Lok Sabha seats, the commission would almost bring the representative character of the Jammu region at par with that of the valley.

## The Corona diplomacy

With its humanitarian initiative on a shared strategy to contain the virus, the Modi Govt has kept SAARC relevant



**B**y pledging \$10 million to a pool of funds and offering to share expertise to combat the dreaded Coronavirus in South Asia, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not only seized the humanitarian initiative beyond the borders but has found a good enough reason to revive regional cooperation. With this move, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which was running aground because of India-Pakistan tension and anxieties among sub-continental nations over dependencies on China, may just become relevant. Skirting the discomfort of politics, there is at least an engagement over shared concerns that has broken the chill among contiguous neighbours. Every nation responded to India's call although Pakistan did indeed appear churlish and immature by using the platform to raise the lockdown in Kashmir yet again. But Pakistan's folly has worked to India's advantage as a benevolent first mover. Like the Kartarpur corridor, the Corona alliance demonstrates that people's lives are not held ransom to diplomatic concerns. Even Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, who has been unhappy about the way India was emulating SAARC by focussing on other regional groupings, joined the tele-conference although he had just had a kidney transplant. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani raised the issue of his nation's porous borders with Iran and said a united rapid response system based on telemedicine and physical teams could work to everybody's advantage. Undoubtedly, desperate times call for desperate measures. Although the combined virus cases of SAARC nations may still be on the lower end of the graph, there are fears of escalation given the densely-clustered population in the region. SAARC nations make for 20 per cent of the global population and a flaring spread here could be deeply problematic and accelerate the scare economy. So a coordinated and a uniform containment approach could prevent South Asia from just tipping over. Already, much politics has been claimed over the disease. First was China's "keep it under wraps" policy and economic heft in global businesses that prevented Coronavirus from being declared a global pandemic. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been accused of delaying the declaration and labelling Europe the second epicentre. Second, with most pandemic viruses assigned to Asian origins, India and its neighbours would have a greater stigma in the battle going forward, something which has devastating social and economic impacts. Besides, with Western countries crumbling under oversaturated health networks and melting economies, India has to evolve its own template of aggressive containment with resources particular to the region — a protocol which has been upticked by the WHO, too — and use it to battle the menace in this part of the world. Third, India has an experience in handling mass outbreaks, like Nipah, every season and should use it to strengthen its medical diplomacy. In fact, India has already moved fast on issues that will redefine global stakes of the future. Climate change was one, where India led the fight against developed economies and even steered the International Solar Alliance. And if it does manage to get ahead in disease control this time, it can claim an expertise in the region that is anyway bowing to Chinese dominance. SAARC could, therefore, become a platform for new diplomacy.

The resuscitation of SAARC couldn't have come at a better time. According to a World Bank report, South Asia is "one of the least integrated regions" in the world and given SAARC's history and existing grids, it could still be the connective tissue for protecting the region's resources and interests. It could work around political differences much like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) does, meeting regularly on health, pandemics and cultural activities. There was some momentum recently when 80 agricultural experts and senior officers from SAARC nations addressed climate change and presented their papers at a regional summit. Given the porosity of borders in South Asia, the SAARC module could work in a crisis such as this. Although the Modi Government has consistently amped up the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), it is largely seen as a strategic and security alliance. Besides, it has not quite yielded a free trade arrangement between Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. Expressly intended to sideline Pakistan in the garb of a counter-terrorist network, its joint military exercises have not attracted enough traction either. In effect, BIMSTEC works only as India's watchdog of growing Chinese interests in the littoral States. SAARC could then work as a sub-continental people-to-people platform that could be used as a humanist, soft tool.

## Taxing the driver

The excise hike in petroleum prices is understandable given the spread of Coronavirus but it has to be a temporary step



**T**he Coronavirus has spooked the stock markets — gains of the past 11 years following the global financial crisis have been wiped out in just over 20 trading sessions in India and the rest of the world. Some of this is undoubtedly due to the automated algorithms controlling trading but even as humans wrested control, there is a complete lack of confidence in the markets. That is because the lockdowns imposed by Governments across the world will have significant impacts on economic activity and sectors. Effects will likely be even more severe than those of the 2008 crisis as there will be thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands of dead people at the end of it, if at all the end can be in sight right now. Without economic activity, tax collection is likely to nosedive. In this environment, most Governments have cut taxes to encourage economic activity. Thus, raising taxes on mobile phones was not necessarily a move that can be defended. But the Government is justifying the increase in excise duties on fuel by saying some benefits of cheap crude have already been passed on to the consumer. While we know that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is railing against this, the fact is that the Government is taking advantage of the fall in global crude prices. Surely, people at the pump could have been given a break but the fact is there will be major costs to the Coronavirus outbreak in India, whether for quarantine centres or testing kits. And then there will be other costs as well — that of reviving and rebuilding economic activity when the crisis subsides. Aviation, travel and tourism sectors have already taken a massive hit. There will be companies who may not be able to survive the outbreak and reconstruction means money that's going to be in short supply. We must not expect things to get any easier over the weeks or months. Question is while even ₹1 excise duty hikes have inflated revenues before, will this one work in a low-consumption scenario?

However, this excise duty hike must be a temporary step only as this can start pinching customers when Saudi Arabia and Russia start playing nice with each other again. While taking advantage of the situation to raise some money in tough times is not a bad thing to do, this must just be a stopgap.

# America's big gamble

The US-Afghan peace deal has complicated matters. Russia and China have moved dexterously to protect their interests in the region. Both can leverage ties with Pakistan to contain the Taliban



SANDHYA JAIN

**A**fghanistan's peace process has stumbled as talks between the Government and the Taliban in Oslo, Norway, could not begin on March 10, as President Ashraf Ghani's rival, Abdullah Abdullah, held a parallel swearing-in ceremony on March 9, repudiating the results of the September 2019 election. Abdullah had challenged the 2014 verdict, too, but accepted a US-brokered deal, wherein he was to be made Prime Minister, but was instead given the designation of Chief Executive Officer. In Afghanistan, observers believe that Abdullah enjoys more support from major political parties and players.

On March 10, the UN Security Council unanimously recognised the Doha deal (February 29, 2020) between the US and the Taliban as part of "significant steps towards ending the war" in Afghanistan and to provide "sustained support" to achieve peace through negotiations. However, experts observed that the Doha deal contradicts US commitments to the internationally recognised Government headed by Ghani. The resolution was amended to allow Beijing to promote the Belt and Road Initiative for reconstruction of Afghanistan while Moscow inserted a paragraph regarding "the urgent need for all Afghan parties to counter the world drug problem with the goal of combating traffic in opiates originating from Afghanistan."

Washington's hurry to sign the deal with the Taliban without resolving the deadlock in Kabul does not bode well for the region. Many have questioned the bilateral pact as the Taliban did not renounce the Al Qaeda and made no commitments regarding the rights of Afghan women (the excuse for the 2001 invasion) or human rights of Afghans. The Taliban pledged to prevent the use of Afghanistan's territory for terrorist attacks on the US and "its allies" but was silent about its bases in Pakistan. Ayman al-Zawahiri, who escaped to Pakistan in 2001 with Osama bin Laden and Sirajuddin Haqqani.

Excluded from the deal, President Ashraf Ghani refused to release 5,000 Taliban prisoners in exchange for 1,000 Afghan Government prisoners but later offered to release 1,500 by the end of March and the remaining 3,500 in groups of 500 every fortnight after the intra-Afghan talks begin. Ghani is demanding reduction in violence as the Taliban continues attacks in rural areas though it has spared cities and district headquarters after Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar had a telephonic conversation with US President Donald Trump. Ghani also wants all released prisoners to give a written promise not to return to the battlefield. The Taliban insists that all the 5,000 prisoners must be released before talks begin.

The deal is contentious as it puts the fate of the new Kabul Government in peril as few expect the Taliban to settle for power-sharing. Reports from Washington suggest the US Government has "persuasive intelligence" that



the Taliban will renege on its promises; Trump admitted on March 6 that the Taliban could "possibly" overrun the Afghan Government after troops withdraw. Pointing out that at the pinnacle of the Taliban power in 2000, only Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had recognised the regime, Brookings scholar Bruce Riedel said President Trump's agreement "is strikingly reminiscent of Nixon administration's deal with North Vietnam in 1973, which excluded the South Vietnam Government."

Former director of National Intelligence, John Negroponte, observed that the deal lacked a meaningful enforcement mechanism and peace between the Afghan parties requires continued US support to the current Government and retaining at least some military capability in the event of large-scale conflict. He said the bilateral agreement opened the door to differing interpretations about what was agreed, as already evident in the prisoner exchange issue. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has admitted that the Taliban made over 70 attacks on the Afghan Government forces after signing the agreement and said the accord would not move forward if the Taliban reneged on its promises.

Some observers wonder if complete troop withdrawal is envisaged, as this would mean shutting nearly 400 US and coalition bases, including camps, forward operating bases and combat outposts. Given

“**INDIA CONTRIBUTED HANDSOMELY TO AFGHANISTAN'S RECONSTRUCTION IN THE POST-TALIBAN YEARS, ESPECIALLY TOWARDS THE REHABILITATION OF LANDMINE VICTIMS. WE HAVE MUCH TO OFFER A GOVERNMENT THAT DESIRES INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND EXTRACTION OF THE COUNTRY'S UNTAPPED MINERAL RESOURCES**”

Washington's renewed assertion vis-à-vis Moscow, Beijing and Tehran, it is unlikely that it would give up bases in Afghanistan, the heartland of the great game. The alleged secret annexures to the Doha deal possibly include retention of bases, with passive US military presence.

There are misgivings in Kabul. A day before the pact was signed, Afghan Vice President Amrullah Saleh recalled the horrors of the Taliban rule from 1996 and said people fear a return to that medieval wasteland, which Pakistan will use to spread its influence across Central Asia and against India. In the recent elections of 2019, a suicide squad attacked his office, killing around 30 people, including two of his nephews. Akram Gzibai, chairman of the World Hazara Council, said the deal is based on American war fatigue and Zalmay Khalilzad is an old associate of the Taliban from 1996, when the US Government held secret negotiations with the Taliban to build oil and gas pipelines through Afghanistan.

Currently, most analysts believe that Pakistan's intelligence services, particularly the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), could emerge stronger if the talks produce some kind of power-sharing between the Taliban and the Kabul Government. A stronger Taliban will quickly overwhelm the regime and increase Pakistani heft in the region, at least for some time. But this could also encourage groups like the

Tehrik-i-Taliban (Pakistani Taliban) to try to take control of the Pakistani State. Islamabad could, thus, find itself riding the proverbial tiger.

Clearly, Washington's initiative has complicated matters in Afghanistan, in both the short and the long term. Russia and China have moved dexterously to protect their interests in the region and both can leverage their ties with Pakistan to contain the Taliban, if necessary. Washington also needs Pakistan to stabilise the region; Islamabad will have to show smart diplomatic skills. Iran will lean on Russia and China.

New Delhi cannot use Islamabad's good offices to establish working relations with the Taliban, should it manage to seize power in Kabul. The IC-814 experience is fresh in many minds. India contributed handsomely to Afghanistan's reconstruction in the post-Taliban years, especially towards the rehabilitation of landmine victims.

We have much to offer a Government that desires infrastructure development, trade and extraction of the country's untapped mineral resources. The invitation to be present at Doha was not only recognition of India's positive contributions but also highlighted the failure of multilateral attempts at peace, such as the Heart of Asia process. India will have to watch how events unfold in Kabul.

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

## SOUNDBITE

The Governor has no work to do. A person who is the Governor of Kashmir usually drinks wine and plays golf. Governors of other States stay away from getting involved in any tussle.



Goa Governor —Satya Pal Malik

Trolls are people mostly without any real identity. They think they're of importance to a verified profile and getting a response on their cheap remark would validate their existence. But it's a myth.



Actor —Rakul Preet Singh

I was not allowed to ask a supplementary question in Lok Sabha; this takes away my right as MP. I am hurt as it was the Speaker's duty to protect my right to speak.



Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi

The winner-takes-it-all cannot be the Congress' way. Above all, the dignity and esteem of party persons need to be recognised at all times.



Congress leader —Ashwani Kumar

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Set priorities right

Sir — On March 9, Jyotiraditya Scindia tendered his resignation from the primary membership of the Congress, blaming the high command's negligence of his capabilities and contribution to the party, which, he said, helped it form the Government in his home State of Madhya Pradesh.

The writing, however, was on the wall long before the Scindia scion actually made his move. It was evident from the beginning that the Maharaja would not take the fact that he was kept away from power roles of the party lightly.

Unfortunately, this is a pattern and not an isolated incident for the Congress. It has already seen players like YSR Jaganmohan Reddy in the south to Himanta Biswa Sarma in the North-east, making a switch and being voted to power thereafter. The egotism of the party's high command seems to be its undoing.

The time is ripe for the Opposition to free itself from the clutches of a system that prioritises loyalists over young talent. But if the party chooses to put its dynastic ambition over the need

### Will BJP's gamble work among rank and file?

Jyotiraditya Scindia's determination to desert the Congress embodies the frustration of many a party stalwart. His forced hiatus from power has cast other leaders in an indecisive mould with regard to their future in the party. Does it mean that they, too, would be compelled to "move on" and that we would soon be seeing a flurry of resignations from the grand old party? If indeed this happens, it will be the saddest day for Indian politics. For, when it is observed that this "moving on" spree is strictly restricted to exodus from the Congress into the saffron fold, the irony of the entire situation cannot be brushed away.

No political leader, irrespective of party affiliations, would want to stay out of power for too long. In the present political scenario in the country, where the Modi ensemble is at the zenith of its all-conquering run, hitching on to the BJP bandwagon appears to be the only saving grace for other party leaders. They wouldn't want their flourishing political career come to an "inglorious" end. Moreover, when such leaders are extended a red carpet welcome for switching allegiances, saffronisation does appear to be a worthwhile "investment" for the turncoats. However, a chronicle of the royal family's long association with the saffron party cannot be proffered



as a justification for the "Scindia switch." As one of the most distinguished political dynasties in the country, the Scindias have been a family of varied political affiliations and ideologies. But with Jyotiraditya's exit, things appear to have come a full circle. Nevertheless, do these frequent "snares" of Congress leaders by the saffron party have the endorsement of the rank and file in the BJP? The bigger the catch, the higher the "sacrifice" the BJP high command has to make in accommodating the new entrants into its fold. How long can the party loyalists stay unaffected?

Pachu Menon Margao

### Lessons in defeat

Sir — The memory of India's loss at the hands of Australia in the T20 World Cup final will be hard for the team to forget. Alyssa Healy,

who made 75 runs, was dropped on the fifth ball of the innings by Shafali Verma off Deepti Sharma. Beth Mooney — she made an unbeaten 78 — was dropped on a caught-and-bowled opportunity by Rajeshwari Gayakwad in the

fourth over. Healy and Mooney went on to share 115 runs in 11.5 overs for the opening wicket to give Australia a flying start. When will our team learn that catches win matches?

India also got off to a dismal start, losing the in-form opener and tournament sensation, Shafali Verma, in the first over. The wickets kept on falling as Jemimah Rodrigues, Smriti Mandhana and the captain, Harmanpreet Kaur, who struggled with the bat throughout the tournament, departed in the first six "power play" overs. One hopes India will learn from this loss and bounce back at the next World Cup.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee Faridabad

### Welcome decision

Sir — The Sports Ministry has done well to issue an advisory to postpone sporting events. This bodes well because there is always a risk of the spread of Covid-19 in large gatherings.

Shashank Via email

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

**FIRST COLUMN**

## Prevention is better than cure

The Coronavirus is more dangerous for cancer patients as their immunity is low. Hence, they must prevent exposure at all cost



ADITI AGGARWAL

Ever since the Coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan, China became a global pandemic, it has dominated all discourses and platforms with information flowing in from all sources, be it newspapers, electronic or digital media. Amid the worldwide hue and cry, medical professionals are analysing how infective the Coronavirus is, how much damage it can cause in terms of casualties and who are the people most at risk.

It is quite evident from all available information from other countries that COVID-19 or SARS CoV-2 infection has a higher infectivity as compared to other SARS viruses, though lesser mortality. What has been clear so far is that the elderly and people with co-morbidities like diabetes, hypertension, cardiac and lung diseases are at a higher risk of infection and also mortality. To make matters worse, it is being discovered that smokers have a higher risk of infection as their lungs are already compromised due to smoking.

In India, with 113 confirmed cases and two deaths so far, we are yet to know how things would turn out in the next 15 to 20 days and whether those who came into contact with the patients would turn symptomatic or not. A pandemic spreads in four phases and the country is entering the second phase where person-to-person contact has already caused others to turn positive.

Oncologists encounter cancer patients who are either under treatment or on follow-up. What concerns doctors is whether this illness behaves the same way in cancer patients or differently from the normal population. Cancer patients under active treatment have a weaker immunity due to the disease as well as the treatment than cancer survivors or healthy people. This means they can catch an infection much more easily than others. Age and co-morbidities are other factors that increase the chances of the Coronavirus infection being fatal in this population.

A recent research published in a leading international journal says that data of Coronavirus patients collected in China showed that there was a higher proportion of cancer patients among those affected by it, with most of them being lung cancer patients. These were older patients and many had baseline computerised tomography (CT) scan abnormalities in their lungs. Figures from the research showed they had more intensive care unit (ICU) admissions. Mortality was also higher in cancer patients, lesser in cancer survivors and least in the rest of the population.

The medical profession demands healthcare professionals to be available for the care of their patients, especially during an outbreak, even if it adds to the occupational hazard of catching the infection themselves.

A breakthrough advancement grossly underutilised in medicine, which could prove to be a boon in the prevailing situation, is telemedicine. Most of the Government institutes like the Tata Memorial Hospital, PGI Chandigarh and AIIMS in various cities and many more, are well-connected through the NKN (National Knowledge Network) and this should be activated now as this is the need of the hour. In the current scenario, it appears to be an intelligent and resourceful way of allaying patients' apprehensions and attending to patients who are on follow-up and also those who are asymptomatic. Also it would help in basic care to be provided near their homes in coordination with the treating expert. This would eventually help limit the movement of patients and relatives and protect them from not just inadvertent exposure but also reduce the risk of exposure of doctors and other paramedical staff.

As the old adage goes, prevention is better than cure. It is best to avoid exposure to the virus, which essentially means avoiding non-essential travel or going to crowded places and observing non-essential measures of hand hygiene. Patients on active treatment and more so old patients and those with the mentioned co-morbidities need very strict implementation of these preventive measures and should be more cautious of signs and symptoms.

They should continue to take cancer treatment as per instructions from the treating oncologist along with preventive measures. Whether their treatment should be continued or can be delayed would depend on the diagnosis and has to be discussed with the treating oncologist in detail. Fear of catching the infection should not prevent them from approaching their doctor. Another important preventive step is for the patients to be accompanied by the minimum number of caretakers. Though everyone has to be aware and take preventive measures, it is more relevant for cancer patients undergoing active treatment and in cancer survivors as well.

(The writer is Consultant Radiation and Preventive Oncologist, Paras Hospital, Gurugram)

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT TRYING TO DEFEND THE BIG WILFUL BANK LOAN DEFAULTERS? WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT NOT NAMING THEM IN PARLIAMENT?  
 —CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



SOME PEOPLE (CONGRESS PARTY) WANT TO BLAME THE MODI GOVERNMENT FOR THE SINS THAT THEY HAVE COMMITTED.  
 —MoS FINANCE ANURAG THAKUR

# Caught in a cleft stick

Though Govt policy disallowed e-commerce platform owners from direct selling, the fine print permitted them to do so through a subsidiary or JV. And they have been doing so



UTTAM GUPTA

Any announcement of foreign direct investment (FDI) is normally welcome in view of its contribution to capital formation, accelerating economic growth and adding to the foreign exchange kitty. Deviating from this normal practice, last month, the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal was dismissive about the decision of the Amazon boss to bring a few billion dollars into India. He felt that Jeff Bezos was bringing money to make up for the huge loss the company was incurring in its operations in the country. Losses or gains are intrinsic to any business. So, what was so special about the terse observation by the Minister?

Amazon essentially operates the "market-place" model of e-commerce — a special dispensation carved out by the Narendra Modi Government under which 100 per cent FDI is permitted. The "market-place" is a platform where vendors sell their products to consumers even as its owner (say, Amazon) merely acts as a facilitator.

The market-place owner books orders, raises invoices, arranges deliveries, accepts payments, handles rejections, warehousing and so on but can't undertake "direct selling." Considering that the operator only provides services in lieu of a fee, there is absolutely no question of any loss (unless the infrastructure created by him remains idle which is clearly not the case). Yet, Amazon has been incurring huge loss. The money Bezos promised to bring is to plug this loss, instead of adding to the stock of capital, which is the *raison d'être* behind FDI. In this backdrop, the reprimand by Goyal was not unexpected.

The losses incurred by Amazon and others like Flipkart are due to huge discounts on the products sold on the platform as also expenses on promoting exclusive brands. But discount is normally given by the seller; this is also true of promotion. The service provider can't do it unless he is also masquerading as the seller. To unravel the mystery, let us look at the 2016 guidelines. The permission for 100 per cent FDI in the "market-place" is subject to two main riders viz, "The entity cannot permit more than 25 per cent of total sales on its platform from one vendor or its group companies. Further, it can't directly or indirectly influence the sale price." The devil lies in these very conditions.

Sans any specification as to "who the vendor is", a firm connected with the "market-place" (either its subsidiary or a joint venture (JV) with an Indian company) is eligible. In other words, each such entity could control up to 25 per cent of sales on the platform. So, you have companies like Cloudtail — an Amazon venture in partnership with a firm owned by Narayan Murthy — operating as lead seller on the platform.

Thus, contrary to the real intent of the policy which disallowed the e-commerce platform owners from direct selling to individual consumers, the fine print permitted them to do so, albeit through a subsidiary or JV. This is precisely what the e-commerce majors have been doing. They were operating as direct sellers, controlling inventory, giving discounts and so on. But, why should they be burning cash?

The answer lies in their attempt to capture a sizeable chunk of the market even if it means a couple of billion dollars going down the drain. No wonder, small traders and businesses, whom the e-commerce platform was intended to help (as reiterated by Goyal, time and again) have suffered heavily. This is because

“ THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SHUN THE 'MARKET-PLACE' MODEL AND ALLOW 100 PER CENT FDI IN RETAIL, BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE (AT PRESENT, 51 PER CENT FDI IS ALLOWED IN OFFLINE RETAIL BUT THAT IS SUBJECT TO TOO MANY RIDERS. THAT IS AS BAD AS BARRING FDI). THIS WILL FULLY LEGITIMISE THE OPERATIONS OF AMAZON ET AL WHO ARE ALREADY IN DIRECT SELLING AND PRESERVE INDIA'S GLOBAL IMAGE. AT THE SAME TIME, PERMITTING 100 PER CENT FDI IN OFFLINE WILL CREATE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR BRICK-AND-MORTAR RETAIL OUTLETS ”



the business that should have gone to the former was, in fact, appropriated by the latter i.e. the dominant seller owned by itself.

The All-India Online Vendors Association — an umbrella organisation of small traders — petitioned the Competition Commission of India (CCI) alleging abuse of market dominance against Flipkart India Private Limited, which is into wholesale trading/distribution of books, mobiles, computers and related accessories and e-commerce marketplace Flipkart Internet Private Limited. It is ironical that CCI saw nothing wrong in this practice.

The CCI ruled that looking at the present market construct and structure of online platforms in India, "It does not appear that any one player in the market is commanding any dominant position at this stage of the evolution of the market." This was bizarre. That a few players connected to the owner of "market-place" are dominating the platform is visible even to the common man, yet the regulator thought otherwise.

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has rightly quashed the CCI ruling and ordered a probe. In another complaint filed on January 13 by the traders' body Delhi Vyapar Mahasangh (DVM) alleging anti-competitive behaviour by Amazon Seller Services and Flipkart Internet, the CCI had ordered a probe. But the investigation has been stayed by the High Court of Karnataka for two months.

Meanwhile, in a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by the Retailers Association of India (RAI) in early 2018 alleging violation of norms for FDI in e-commerce, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had even informed the Delhi High Court (DHC) on October 31, 2018, that it was

investigating violation of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) against Amazon et al. But the proceedings are stuck due to the lackadaisical attitude of agencies and the court.

The judicial proceedings may take long to conclude. But *prima facie* e-commerce majors can't get away from the fact that they have violated the spirit behind the policy on FDI in the "market-place." They are also acting as dominant sellers on the platform and disingenuous bureaucrats have allowed them to do so by suitably crafting policy details.

A clarification issued on December 26, 2018 has not materially altered the position on ground zero. It says, "The owner of market-place or its subsidiary or its JV with Indian company can't have ownership of the seller. A seller/firm on the platform can't source more than 25 per cent of its inventory from a firm connected with the latter."

The "market-place" owner can get around both, first by having less than 50 per cent shareholding in the seller firm and arguing he has no control (albeit majority) over the latter and second with its wholesale arm continuing supplies to the seller but within the 25 per cent threshold. The current state of affairs is doing no good to any stakeholder, be it foreign investors, small traders or consumers. Even as small traders are losing heavily, Amazon et al have a Damocles' sword hanging over them for all time and the consumer, though a beneficiary currently, will pay heavily in the medium to long-term, as Indian retail gets increasingly cartelised by a few players. The very idea of attracting FDI vide the "market-place" is flawed. The Government wants to have the cake and eat it too. It wants foreign majors to invest heavily in infrastructure for procurement, handling, warehousing,

delivery and so on (only to help small traders) but not allow them to sell.

With no permission for "direct selling", no foreign entity would invest. Yet, if Amazon et al came, that is because they were allowed to sell albeit through the "back-door." But when there was backlash from small traders, the Commerce Minister was forced to talk of action against these foreign companies.

The Government is caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. If it doesn't take any decisive action against Amazon et al, the wrath of small traders will snowball and could cost it politically in the State elections. On the other hand, if it acts then, it will tantamount to "retrospective" change of policy (with reference to what is written in the fine print) and affect its image as a good investment destination. But allowing things to linger on will only worsen the situation. It should take a clear-cut stance.

The Government should shun the "market-place" model and allow 100 per cent FDI in retail, both online and offline (at present, 51 per cent FDI is allowed in offline retail but that is subject to too many riders. That is as bad as barring FDI). This will fully legitimise the operations of Amazon et al, who are already in direct selling and preserve India's global image. At the same time, permitting 100 per cent FDI in offline will create a level playing field for brick-and-mortar retail outlets.

It will help small traders by leading to all-round development of infrastructure and offering a wide range of choice for sourcing products. They can and will co-exist with foreign majors. It will be pro-consumer in the long-run with many players catering to their needs at competitive/affordable prices.

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

# Will superstar ideas deliver a superhit?

Rajinikanth plans to bring in a welcome change in Tamil Nadu politics and the idea he proposes looks encouraging and inspiring. But as the saying goes, the proof of the pudding is in the eating and the voters will be the litmus test of the thalaivaa's Utopian ideology



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

The bugle for the 2021 Tamil Nadu (TN) Assembly election was sounded on March 11 by none other than the superstar of Tamil movies Rajinikanth, who is being seen as a rallying point for all non-AIADMK Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and non-Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) parties in the State. Though Rajinikanth is yet to announce the name or programmes of his yet-to-be-launched political outfit, the promotional teaser he presented before fans and loyalists evoked a positive response

from his well-wishers and critics.

When he made his political ambition known on December 31, 2017, there were many who doubted whether the actor was serious. Spiritual politics was something beyond the comprehension of an average Tamilian, who grew up watching the *Dravida Maya* (the illusion of being part of a make-believe world of Dravidianism) propagated by EV Ramasamy Naicker and CN Annadurai whom the later day politicians described as *Thanthai Periyar* and *Perariyaar* (Tamil for great father and father).

TN is yet to recover from the shock of the demise of Jayalalithaa on December 5, 2016. The vacuum was further aggravated by the departure of M Karunanidhi, the DMK founder in August 2017. Jayalalithaa and Karunanidhi were the pillars of State politics and their exit has led to an irreparable loss to both the parties. The truth is that both the AIADMK and the DMK don't have leaders who could match the stature of *Amma* (Jayalalithaa's followers addressed her as mother) and *Dr Kalaignar* (ultimate

artist), as Karunanidhi wanted people to address him. It is at this juncture Rajinikanth is entering the arena. Though another star Kamal Haasan tested the political waters in the State, his Makkal Neethi Meiam party was submerged by the giant tidal waves of the two Dravidian parties in the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

"The problem with Kamal Haasan is that he is not clear in his ideology or programmes. One need not be a good orator but should have the capability to make his followers understand what he stands for," says Sam Rajappa, veteran journalist.

It is to this world of uncertainty that Rajinikanth made an entry with his brand of spiritual politics. He made it clear that professional politicians (numbering more than 50,000 each in the AIADMK and the DMK) would not have any place in his political system. "We will run the Government and the party with a minimum number of people. Party workers are needed only at the time of elections. Once we do away with thousands of party posts across the State, corruption will

die a natural death," says the actor while explaining his party's ideology. It is a strange coincidence that this has similarities to what was proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi (minimum government and maximum governance). Legal luminary Nani Palkhivala used to cite "too much government and too little governance" as the main reasons behind India's backwardness in his speeches and writings. For the first time in TN's history, a would-be politician has come out stating that the Chief Minister (CM) and Ministers should be from among the people. Rajinikanth declared that he would not be the CM because he is not cut out for the job. This is something which has gone down well with the people of TN who have seen politics as a dog-eat-dog world where friends turn foes and long-time rivals come together to consolidate power.

People will fall in line when Rajinikanth names the chief ministerial candidate and extend their support to the latter. The party head, who in all probability would be the actor himself, will be the *de-facto* Leader of

Opposition because a committee headed by the former would act as a watchdog to ensure transparency, simplicity and honesty of the Government and governance.

Cynics may say this won't work in India and will point to the Manmohan Singh-Sonia Gandhi arrangement during the 2004 to 2014 tenure of the UPA Government. Well, it functioned well. Sonia wanted a servile Prime Minister and Manmohan proved to be the right person for the job. But Rajinikanth is no Sonia and he would never opt for a Manmohan.

Rajinikanth also declared that 50 per cent of the party candidates would be people below the age of 50 with sound educational qualifications and the remaining seats would be allocated to professionals and retired bureaucrats. For some, this may sound like an Utopian concept but it is time for a change in the political ecosystem of TN which has been incapacitated by the stale Dravidian ideology.

While conventional politicians expressed their reservations about Rajinikanth's way of thinking, he

found support and encouragement from the most unlikely source. Subramanian Swamy, the BJP leader who has been a critic of the cinema and drama-based politics of TN was the first to extend a hand of cooperation to the actor. "Rajinikanth has come of age and has started thinking differently from conventional politicians. His spiritual politics has imbued energy from Indian heritage and culture and this will bring TN back to the national mainstream. The spiritual politics he speaks about is nothing but the Hindutva way of life and the State's future lies in this ideology," says Swamy who reveals that he does not know what awaits the BJP in the State.

Rajinikanth earned the goodwill of the people when he spoke against the Dravidian ideology of insulting Hindu gods and goddesses. While addressing the *Tughlaq* magazine's anniversary recently, he came down heavily on Ramasamy Naicker for garlanding pictures of Lord Rama and Sita with slippers. Naicker, who is portrayed as a revolutionary leader by the Dravidians, stood only for the rights

of the intermediate castes. There is no need to look further to find the root cause of the honour killings in TN despite more than 50 years of Dravidian rule. The AIADMK and the DMK share between them 60 per cent of the votes. The remaining 40 per cent is split between fringe groups, including the Congress and the BJP. The Congress which ruled the State till 1967 has become servile to the DMK and the BJP is yet to take root here. Though the Paattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), a political outfit launched by the Vanniyaar community, gave hope of a refreshing change with its out-of-the-box ideas, the party is yet to make major inroads. There is no dearth of fringe groups and leaders in TN but they are all riding on the shoulders of the DMK or the AIADMK. Well, Rajinikanth speaks of a welcome change and the idea he proposes looks encouraging and inspiring. But as the saying goes the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Over to the voters!

(The writer is Special Correspondent, The Pioneer)

# Ajanta-Ellora, Siddhivinayak shut

Mumbai: Authorities in Maharashtra, which has registered the highest number of coronavirus positive cases in India, have decided to close some prominent tourist and religious attractions as a precautionary measure. The world-famous Ajanta and Ellora caves near Aurangabad, the popular Siddhivinayak temple in Mumbai and the Tuljabhawani temple in Osmanabad district would remain closed in view of the coronavirus situation in the state, officials said. Entry restrictions to Mantralaya, the state secretariat in south Mumbai which sees thousands of visitors daily, will also be in force, Public Health Minister Rajesh Tope said.

The State Government, which had announced closure of urban schools and colleges, has now decided to extend the measure in rural areas also, the minister said. Schools and colleges in rural Maharashtra will remain closed till March-end due to coronavirus situation, Tope told reporters. Four new cases of novel coronavirus infection have been detected in Maharashtra, taking the State tally to 37 on Monday. Of the four cases, three were reported from Mumbai and one from Navi Mumbai, a State Government official said. "The total number of coronavirus positive cases increased to 37," he said. **PTI**

# Maha to stamp 100% home quarantine patients, positive case rise to 39

Allocates ₹45 cr as relief fund  
Postpones local body polls

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI: The Maharashtra Government on Monday scaled up measures to combat the spread of Coronavirus in the State by allocating ₹45 crore for six revenue divisions in the State and postponing the local body polls by three months, even as the total number of Covid-19 cases rose to 39 in the State. After reviewing the situation arising out of the spread of Coronavirus in the State with the divisional commissioners and collectors across the State through video-conferencing, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced that those who were under 100 per cent self quarantine at their

homes would be stamped on their left hands, so that they could be identified. The State Government's decision to tag the patients who have been put under 100 per cent quarantine at their homes came in the wake of seven patients with symptoms of Coronavirus fleeing from isolation wards in the Ahmednagar Civil Hospital and the Mayo Hospital in Nagpur over the weekend. The patients who had fled the hospitals have returned to the two hospitals. "In the wake of the two hospital fleeing incidents, the state government has taken steps to secure public quarantine facilities to prevent patients from leaving again. The local police will carry out

regular checks on patients who have been quarantined themselves at home," Uddhav said. Having invoked the Epidemics Disease Act, 1897, the state government is attempting to establish testing and quarantine in private hospitals if required, take punitive action against those who violate quarantine rules and restrict access to geographical areas to control the outbreak of Coronavirus. In Mumbai alone, there are more than 500 persons are in self-quarantine. The Chief Minister said that the State Government had made available television set, carom boards and food at public quarantine centres. With six more fresh positive cases, the total number of positive Covid-19 rose to 39 in the state. While Pune and the neighbouring Pimpri-Chinchwad accounted for a maximum of 16 cases, the

break-up of positive Coronavirus cases elsewhere in the state was: Mumbai-6, Nagpur-4, Yavatmal-3, Panvel-1, Kalyan-3, Navi Mumbai-3, Thane-1, Ahmednagar-1 and Aurangabad-1. Addressing a news conference in Mumbai, the chief minister announced a host of measures, including the closure of schools in the rural areas, restrictions religious and political events that contribute to crowds, postponement of local body polls by three months and made an allocation of ₹45 crore as disaster relief for five revenue divisions. The disaster relief allocation made comprised: ₹15 crore for Konkan, ₹10 for Pune revenue division, ₹5 crore each to the revenue divisions of Nagpur, Amravati, Aurangabad and Nashik. Making a fervent plea to the people in combating Coronavirus, Uddhav said: "Patients may have been affect-

ed by Covid 19, but they should not be treated as criminals. They will be treated with utmost empathy while taking into consideration their psychological needs. It is important to maintain a humane approach." The chief minister underscored the need for initiating measures aimed at the safety of the population. "It is essential for the district level officials need to communicate the same effectively and provide public sanitation facilities equipped with essentials like sanitizer, soap and water supply," he said. Uddhav said that as part of the effort to prevent large gatherings at religious places, the authorities were denying permissions to such events. "We have asked the officials at the district levels to prevent regular gatherings at religious institutions of all faiths. People can take part in large gatherings and festivals

once the threat has passed. Safeguarding human life is the topmost priority right now. This rule, however, does not apply to daily prayers at places of worship. However, we have requested that the places of religious worship restrict the presence of worshippers for some time," a news release put out by the chief minister's office said. Meanwhile, the Maharashtra Government announced that the Universities in the state had decided to postpone exams till 31 March. "After risk assessments, the Higher & Technical Ministry has decided to postpone all university exams, in its jurisdiction, to a date later than 31st March, 2020. All educational institutes must therefore observe a complete temporary closure till further notice," Maharashtra Minister Aditya Thackeray tweeted.



Medic officials use thermal screening devices on visually-impaired students to mitigate the coronavirus pandemic, at a blind school in Bikaner on Monday. **PTI**

## Foreign tourists hit hurdles in Kerala

Kottayam (Kerala): With Kerala on high alert for coronavirus, foreign tourists visiting God's Own Country are finding it difficult to get accommodation and move around, prompting the Government to disapprove of such acts and ask people not to see every foreigner as a COVID-19 carrier. With two people, including a UK national, testing positive for coronavirus on Sunday, the number of those affected in the state has risen to 21 as the Government began a "break the chain" initiative to prevent spread of the virus. It has also launched intensified medical check up at border areas for people entering the state by rail and road. Amid the stepped up preventive measures, several cases of foreigners being 'denied' travel in public transport systems and stay in hotels have been reported in the past few days from various parts of the state, a major attraction for travellers with its picturesque locales and enchanting backwaters. **PTI**

## Hotels closed in famous Patnitop resort in J&K

Jammu & Kashmir Government on Monday scaled up their efforts to contain the spread of coronavirus cases by shutting down hotels in famous tourist resort of Patnitop in Udhampur district. Large number of pilgrims/tourists visit the area after performing pooja in the cave shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi. According to the daily bulletin released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, so far three cases have tested positive, while as reports of six cases are awaited in Jammu & Kashmir. Meanwhile, the Jammu & Kashmir High Court Monday issued a circular restricting the functioning in both of its Jammu and Srinagar wings to urgent matters only. According to the circular, function-

ing in both the wings of the High Court from March 16, 2020 to March 31, 2020 shall be restricted to urgent matters. The Government had already ordered shutdown of shopping malls, multiplexes, restaurants, clubs, gyms, spas, educational institutions, and denied permission to various organisations to hold dharnas, run community kitchens, protest demonstrations to check assembly of large number of people at one place. On its part Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine board authorities had also issued an advisory to the NRIs/ foreigners and other visitors not to visit the Shrine for 28 days after landing in India as a precautionary measure against Coronavirus. The domestic visitors having symptoms like cough, heavy fever and breathing problems also advised to reschedule or postpone their visit to the Holy Shrine, the advisory said.

## Combination of two anti-HIV drugs proved crucial in treatment, says Raj official

Jaipur: A combination of two anti-HIV drugs has proved crucial in the treatment of coronavirus positive cases, a senior official of the Rajasthan Government said. Additional Chief Secretary (Medical and Health) Rohit Kumar Singh said the patients' condition improved after they were administered the anti-HIV drugs. Three of the four patients in the State have now been declared coronavirus-free. Singh said the first two patients tested positive for the virus were an Italian couple. "Their symptoms were flu-like so they were initially given

anti-malaria and anti-swine flu drugs," he said. "All this while, our doctors were in touch with the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Drug Controller General of India. Since the structure of coronavirus is similar to that of HIV to some extent, so they tried a combination of the two anti-HIV drugs," he added. "It appears it (combination of drugs) is working because three patients have recovered. Good thing is that all the three patients are elderly and the successful result of the drug on patients of such age is a big thing," he said. **PTI**

## WB: ₹200 cr fund to fight virus, 'corona leave' extended

SEC postpones civic polls  
SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as corona scare gripped Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday extended the corona leave—that many called CL—in all schools and colleges till April 15 besides announcing ₹200 crore fund to tackle any future outbreak that the State still had fortunately managed to evade. In sync with the Government decision the State Election Commission postponed the civic elections "perhaps till the first week of June." The Kolkata Municipal Corporation too followed suit closing down all the KMC

owned theatres and entertainment halls. The Chief Minister who had on Sunday announced a corona-propelled holiday till March 31 on Monday extended it by another 15 days "considering the gravity of the situation and the havoc it is creating in many European countries." All board and university examinations save the Higher Secondary (Class XII) exams which has already started a couple of days ago have been postponed till further notice. "We are creating a ₹200 crore fund to tackle this crisis," Ms Banerjee said citing how

"around 3.24 lakh people have been screened in Bengal and we are keeping a close watch on 5,590 of them." Till now there have been no positive cases in the state, she added saying the State was acting as per World Health Organisation and Central Government guidelines. Border management—including the one with Bangladesh and other States—was being done with utmost sincerity she said. "Bengal has border not only with Bangladesh which is taken care of by the Border forces but also other States and the North East... and even China is two hours from Bengal so we are extremely cautious about this and want to take no



A deserted market near a beach in the wake of coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Kanyakumari on Monday. **PTI**

## TN step up fight against virus, outfits call off march

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Government is leaving no stones unturned to fortify the State from the COVID-19 virus, responsible for the spread of corona virus. The Government issued a special notification late Sunday authorising the district collectors and superintendents of police in the districts sharing borders with the neighboring States to check, regulate and control the intra-State and inter-State travel by people. The office order named

monitoring the border check points, railway stations, air ports and other entry spots to the State," said Dr Vijayabaskar while addressing a specially convened Press briefing at Chennai on Monday. The minister said everything was under control and there was no need to panic. The COVID-19 Preventive Strategies empower State Government officials to forcibly hospitalize or isolate those who had travelled to any country or area, where COVID-19 has been reported in the last 28 days and those who had a history of coming in

contact with anyone suspected or confirmed to be carrying COVID-19. The order empowers the officials to hospitalize such persons for a period of 14 days or till the lab test results. Colleges and Private Universities in Tamil Nadu have started rescheduling their summer holidays in view of the Corona Virus threat, SRM Institute of technology and Velore Institute of technology were the first institutions to declare holidays ahead of the summer vacation. Meanwhile, a section of the Islamic organizations which

were on an agitation against the Citizenship Amendment Act brought in by the Centre declared on Monday that they were calling off all the rallies, sit-ins and demonstrations demanding the withdrawal of the Act. But Tamil Nadu Thowheed Jamaath, declared that it would go ahead with its agitations as scheduled. P. Abdul Rahman, vice president, Tamil Nadu Thowheed Jamaath, told that his organization was in the forefront of the agitation against CAA and continued to be so irrespective of the Corona virus threat. "From March 18,

## Agra: Woman who fled hospital tests positive

PTI ■ AGRA (UP)

A 25-year-old woman, whose husband in Bengaluru is hospitalised with coronavirus, has tested positive for COVID-19 here, three days after she fled from a hospital without informing authorities, officials said on Monday. So far, there have been seven positive cases in the Taj city and five of the patients have recovered from the novel virus while two, including this woman, are under treatment, the Health Department officials

said. Around 20 people related to these two patients have been quarantined for observation and in order to check the spread of the virus, they added. According to the officials, this woman and her husband returned from their honeymoon in Europe earlier this month and landed in Mumbai. From there they went to Bengaluru, where her husband, who works for an IT company, tested positive for coronavirus and was hospitalised.

TENDER NOTICE						
SR. NO.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK/NOTICE/TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) in Rupees	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER
1	PWD B&R AMBALA	CONST. OF ADR CENTRE IN MINI SECT., COMPLEX YAMUNA NAGAR DISTT. (P&E) + 1 OTHER WORKS	17.03.2020 31.03.2020	34.05 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	0171-2630877 pwd-eecd-ambala@hry.nic.in
2	PWD B&R CHANDGARH	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 NOS. SHAKTI SMARK GATAMAH AT KALKA IN PANCHKULA DISTT. + 10 OTHER WORKS	13.03.2020 30.03.2020	617.28 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	0172-2793574 pwd-eecd-chandigarh@hry.nic.in
3	PWD B&R ROHTAK	CONSTRUCTION OF (1) MAIN ENTRANCE GATE TO THE UHS CAMPUS (NEAR MEDICAL MOR) AND (2) ENTRANCE GATE AND PARKING IN VICE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE. PT. BD SHARMA IN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, ROHTAK.	13.03.2020 03.04.2020	112.97 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	01262-282671 pwd-eecd-rohtak@hry.nic.in
4	PWD B&R FARIDABAD	SPECIAL REPAIR BY PROVIDING CONSTRUCTION OF COLLECTION DRAIN AND SUMP WELL IN THE CAMPUS OF NEW JUDICIAL BLOCK IN SECTOR-12, FARIDABAD. + 2 OTHER WORKS	11.03.2020 25.03.2020	55.01 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	0129-2288167 pwd-eecd1-faridabad@hry.nic.in
5	PWD B&R JIND	RESTORATION OF PATIALA CHOWK TO HARI KRISHAN MANDIR ROAD FROM RD 0.00 TO 1.050 IN JIND DISTT. (RE-INVITED) + 2 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 02.04.2020	186.04 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	01681-249416 pwd-eecd-jind@hry.nic.in
6	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, DELHI	WATCH & WARD, OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF CANALS/SERBUIDINGS ETC. FALLING IN THE JURISDICTION OF DELHI WATER SERVICES DIVISION, DELHI.	CLOSING DATE 30.03.2020	300 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	9958257609 xen-wsdelir@gov.in
7	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, AMBALA	REPAIR OF QUARTER NO. S-8 IN CANAL COLONY AMBALA + 3 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 20.03.2020	EMD 34480	http://etenders.hry.nic.in	0171-2973270 xensylambal@gmail.com
8	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING (REWARI)	PINGORE GP. OF 2 NO. QUALITY AFFECTED VILLAGES BY MEANS OF P AND F AND INSTALL. OF TAVELL AT AGRA CANAL. AUG. W/S SCHEME VILLAGES PINGORE DISTT. FARIDABAD.	11.03.2020 18.03.2020	6.03 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO 2020_HRY_123654_1	01274-260344 egwiewar@pheedharyana.gov.in
9	SKILL DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRIAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT GURUGRAM	SUPPLY OF MACHINERY AT GITI GURUGRAM (AS PER ANNEXURE-A)	CLOSING DATE 26.03.2020	18.68 LACS	http://etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO 2020_HRY_123474_1	9416359243 gurugram.giti@gmail.com
10	SKILL DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRIAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT, HARYANA PANCHKULA	TOOLS EQUIPMENTS 2019-20 /435	13.03.2020 19.03.2020	20000	www.etenders.hry.nic.in TENDER NO 2020_HRY_123654_1	01274-260344 maicapvau@hry.nic.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

RO NO. 80399

## Bihar Govt to bear treatment expenses of patients: Nitish

Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday announced that the State Government will bear all expenses of the treatment of any patient who tests positive for coronavirus in the State. Making a statement to the effect on the floor of the Assembly, Kumar said the treatment cost will be provided from the Chief Minister's relief fund. He also said that in the event of any death caused by the disease in the state, the next of kin of each deceased will get ₹4 lakh as compensation. The chief minister also spoke about the measures being taken to prevent the spread of the pandemic in the state, where nobody has so far tested positive for the virus. These included closure of educational institutions, cine-

## Four lock up couple under self-quarantine in flat, held

Thrissur: Four people have been arrested for allegedly locking up a couple, who were in self-quarantine following the COVID-19 scare, in their flat in an apartment complex here, police said on Monday. The elderly couple, who had returned from Saudi Arabia on Sunday, had undergone screening at the airport and did not have any symptoms of coronavirus, they said. "The couple found their door locked up from outside and informed the police. The residents association members took the extreme step of confining the couple to the flat and pasting a sticker related to coronavirus on their door. That is not the right way. We have registered a case," police said. **PTI**

mas and public parks till March 31. He said Group C and Group D personnel of all government departments have been asked to report for duty on alternate days in order to prevent crowding on office premises. Speaking on the last day of the Budget session, which was scheduled to end on March 31 but was cut short in view of the pandemic, Kumar said "intensive screening" of people was being carried out at transit points. "Those with symptoms are being quarantined at government expenses for the stipulated period of time. Medical infrastructure is also being strengthened to facilitate early detection and hospitals are being equipped with additional ventilators and isolation wards," he added. **PTI**

# Cooperate with Govt on CAA: RSS to parties

**Bengaluru:** Accusing parties opposing CAA of trying to convert it into a political issue to create confusion among the public, the RSS said on Monday it was the duty of the ruling party and the Government to clear the air.

RSS General Secretary Suresh Joshi said repeated appeals by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to political parties to "understand" the Citizenship Amendment Act had not yielded a positive response.

He called on the political parties to come together on issues of national interest. "Unfortunately the national issue has become political. Any country in their national interest- to take care of its citizens, prepare the list of its citizens, and no outsiders should be allowed to stay after a certain period, there are limitations... But unfortunately on

the national issues- for political reasons- leaders of political parties are trying to create confusion in society," Joshi said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said the Prime Minister and Home minister have appealed to political parties to understand the CAA, but those who want to create confusion and chaos in the country were "misguiding" the people.

He said all political parties should honestly think about it and cooperate with the government and also try to clear their confusion.

"...Everyone has the right to oppose (if) something is not correct for the nation and say it should not be implemented. But whatever is in the interest of the nation everybody should try to understand and support it," he added.

Joshi addressed the press in the backdrop of the Akhila Bharatiya Karyakari Mandali baitak held here on

March 14.

RSS highest decision making body, the Akhila Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha (ABPS), was scheduled to meet from March 15- 17 here, but was called off due to COVID-19 concerns.

Asked if RSS would directly involve itself against the propaganda opposing CAA and NRC, Joshi said the Sangh directly is not involved in it, but there are several organisations that support the movement in its favour and naturally its swayam-sevaks are supporting them.

Saying that the forces supporting CAA are huge, he said all political parties should come together for a dialogue regarding this. "BJP as a ruling party has to take some initiative to initiate a dialogue.... The Home Minister and Prime Minister have appealed to the political parties to come and try to understand, but I don't think there is a positive response," he added. **PTI**

# Aliagarh: Shops open as tensions over anti-CAA protester's death calms

**Aliagarh (UP):** With tensions after the death of a youth injured in a protest over the amended citizenship law appear to be subsiding, shops and other business establishments opened in the old city areas here on Monday.

Shops and business establishments in Upperkot, Babri Mandi and Turkman Gate areas had remained closed for the past two days following the death of Mohammad Tariq Munawwar (22), who had suffered gunshot injuries during the violent protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) on February 23.

Security at sensitive spots in the old city here was beefed up after the youth died on Friday night at Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College and Hospital in Aliagarh Muslim University (AMU).

Aliagarh Zone DIG Preetendra Singh on Monday said security arrangements will

continue as a precautionary measure and praised the role played by Tariq's family in defusing the tensions.

He said they received full cooperation from the family in defusing the tensions, which were palpable after Tariq's death.

On Friday night, the district authorities, along with the AMU authorities, had made special arrangements for the youth's funeral at the AMU's private cemetery.

Tariq's funeral took place early on Saturday morning.

DIG Preetendra Singh said Sub-Inspector Kapil Kumar, posted at Babri Mandi, has been suspended for negligence in connection with incidents of violence on February 23.

The DIG said the video evidence of the entire sequence of events is being collected by the special investigation team and no guilty person will be spared. **PTI**

# IAF OFFICER'S KILLING CASE — Court frames charges against Yasin Malik, six others

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

**Yasin Malik, is also facing trial for the kidnapping of Rubaiyya Sayeed, daughter of then Union Home Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed in December 1989**

After a treacherous wait of more than 30 long years, a special TADA (Terrorists and Disruptive Activities Act) Court in Jammu on Monday framed charges against Yasin Malik, a Kashmiri separatist and Chief of banned Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and six others allegedly involved in 'gruesome' killing of four IAF personnel in Srinagar on January 25, 1990.

Squadron Leader Ravi Khanna along with three other IAF personnel were allegedly killed by JKLF terrorists lead by Yasin Malik in Rawalpora area of Srinagar.

Out of the seven accused in the case, five of them were produced in person in the TADA court while Yasin Malik and another accused Showkat Bakshi appeared via video-conferencing from their respective jails in Tihar and Ambedkar Nagar.

The charges were framed under section 302, 307 RPC, section 3 (3) and section 4(1) of TADA Act, 1987 and section 7/27 of Arms Act 1959, section 120-B of RPC.

The court room in Jammu also witnessed some chaos while charges were being read out to the accused. Yasin Malik and all others, waiting since morning, pleaded not guilty and sought trial. The next date of hearing in the case has been fixed on March 30.

Earlier on Saturday, decks were cleared to frame charges

against the seven accused when special Judge in its order had observed there was enough prima-facie evidence for prosecuting Malik for involvement in the killing of the IAF officials.

Yasin Malik, currently lodged in Tihar jail, is also facing trial for the kidnapping of Rubaiyya Sayeed, daughter of then Union Home Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed in December 1989.

69 year old Shalini Khanna, fighting for justice for last three decades on behalf of her martyred husband, Squadron Leader Ravi Khanna, is keenly awaiting outcome of the case.

When the trial in the case began after a long gap in September 2019, she had told reporters at her residence in Jammu, "I had taken a pledge to fight this battle till my last breath. Now I leave it to the wisdom of Judges to punish the killers of my husband as per law of the land".

Referring to the reopening of murder case against Yasin Malik, responsible for killing her husband and three other IAF personnel on January 25, 1990, Shalini Khanna had told reporters, "if the government has decided to reopen the case I think they are going to deliver justice".

# 3 days after charred body of woman found in Tripura, Min assures justice

**Agartala:** The Tripura Government on Monday promised all help to the parents of a woman, whose charred body was found in a paddy field three days ago.

State Education Minister and Cabinet spokesperson Ratan Lal Nath, who visited the parents at their residence in Rangacherra village of the district on Sunday, also said justice would be meted out in the case at the earliest.

"We would take all measures to ensure that the culprit does not go unpunished. We want exemplary punishment for the perpetrator..." the BJP MLA told reporters on Monday.

The charred body of a 23-year-old woman was found at a paddy field in West Tripura district on Friday, with the victim's father alleging that a neighbour, a driver by profession, raped and burnt his daughter to death.

Based on a complaint filed by the family, the accused was arrested and presented before a local court, which remanded him in police custody on Sunday. Meanwhile, Opposition CPI(M) on Monday sought a judicial inquiry into the incident, claiming that attempts were being made to hush up the matter.

"This is a ghastly killing, but there is this strange attempt to suppress the crime. Investigation is going on at a snail's pace.... We demand a judicial inquiry into the incident," Gautam Das, the state secretary **PTI**

## FROM SUPREME COURT

### Raj Govt moves apex court challenging CAA validity

**New Delhi:** The Congress-ruled Rajasthan Government moved the Supreme Court on Monday challenging the validity of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, saying it was violative of "basic structure principle of secularism" and fundamental rights of equality and life.

It became the second State after Kerala to move the top court invoking Article 131 of the Constitution under which a state is empowered to directly move the top court in case of a dispute with the Centre.

The newly amended law seeks to grant citizenship to non-Muslim migrants belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian, Jain and Parsi communities who came to the country from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014. "Pass a judgement and decree that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 is violative of Article 14 (right to equality) and Article 21 (right to life) of the Constitution of India as well as violative of basic structure principle of secularism. Thus Act 47 of 2019 (CAA) be declared as void under Article 13 of the Constitution," said the plea filed through lawyer DK Devesh.

Article 13 of the Constitution, under which the CAA is sought to be held as unconstitutional, says any law "inconsistent with or in derogation of the fundamental rights" can be held unconsti-



tutional to the extent of its contravention of fundamental rights.

The plea said the CAA be declared "ultra vires" to the provisions of the Constitution of India.

Besides, the plea has stated that the Passport (Entry to India) Amendment Rules, 2015 and Foreigners (Amendment) Order are ultra vires the Constitution and be declared void.

It said the CAA, the amended Passport Rules and Foreign Order are class legislations harping on the religious identity of an individual, thereby contravening the principles of secularism, which has been recognised by the court as a basic structure of the Constitution.

Earlier, the CPI(M)-led Kerala had become the first state to challenge the CAA in the Supreme Court. The Kerala Assembly was also the first in the country to pass a resolution against the Act. **PTI**

### Coronavirus: Top court takes suo moto cognisance of overcrowding of prisons

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday took suo moto cognisance of overcrowding and infrastructure of prisons across the country in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

A bench of Chief Justice S A Bobde and LN Rao issued a notice to the Director General, Prison, and chief secretary of all states and union territories seeking their response by March 20 on steps taken for prevention of COVID-19.

The court also asked all states and union territories to depute an officer on March 23 who could assist the court in the matter.

The bench also took suo moto cognisance of conditions in remand homes where juveniles in conflict with law are lodged.

It observed that some states have taken steps for the pandemic but there are some states which have not taken appropriate measures.

The court also cautioned that mass gathering is a big problem and it can become a centre for the spread of coronavirus.

The court also said it will issue reasons on why it has taken suo moto cognisance of

### Bhima Koregaon case: SC refuses anticipatory bail to Navlakha, Teltumbde

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday rejected anticipatory bail pleas of civil rights activists Gautam Navlakha and Anand Teltumbde in connection with the Bhima Koregaon violence case, saying it cannot be said that no prima facie case is made out.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and MR Shah while dismissing the anticipatory bail pleas of Navlakha and Teltumbde said their petitions cannot be maintained in view of the bar contained in 43D(4) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967.

Section 43D(4) of the UAPA bars grant of anticipatory bail to a person accused of having committed an offence punishable under this Act. "The special leave petitions are, accordingly, dismissed. However, since the protection has been enjoyed by the petitioners approximately for one-and-a-half years, three weeks time from today is granted to them to surrender. The petitioners shall surrender their passport forthwith with the investigation agency/officer," the bench said.

During the hearing, senior advocate Kabil Sibal, appearing for Teltumbde, said that the

offence under section 120B of IPC is not laid down in the FIR and contended that some documents which the Maharashtra Police recovered was from another person's computer.

He said that these documents are not even emails so as to justify their credibility.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Navlakha, said that UAPA charges were added in the second FIR in June 2018 and his client has not been named or any role assigned to him in the second FIR. **PTI**

### 15-year-old girl gang-raped in UP's Banda

**Banda:** A girl was allegedly raped by three men in a village in Chilla area of Uttar Pradesh's Banda district, police said on Monday.

Circle officer (Banda Sadar) Raghendra Singh said the girl, aged 15, was allegedly gang-raped on Sunday afternoon. The girl had gone to draw water from a handpump when a man forcibly took her to a lonely house, where he and his two accomplices allegedly raped her.

The girl narrated the incident to her family members after reaching home, the CO said. Based on the complaint lodged by the girl, a case has been registered against the three men under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, police said.

Singh said the three accused are absconding and efforts are on to nab them. **PTI**

### More PG medical seats in next academic session: Paul

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

In a move that would result into better health resources in the country, the Medical Council of India's Board of Governors has approved increasing post graduate medical seats for MD and MS programmes by more than 4,800 to 36,192 for the next academic session, a top official said on Monday.

BoG Chairman and Niti Aayog member VK Paul said the increase is more than the total number of additional seats created in the past five years.

"So, as a result, in the new academic session counselling, 36,192 PG medical seats (MD/MS, broad speciality) will be available," Paul said.

Paul also said the capacity expansion would improve tertiary care in the country.

### 15-year-old girl gang-raped in UP's Banda

**Banda:** A girl was allegedly raped by three men in a village in Chilla area of Uttar Pradesh's Banda district, police said on Monday.

Circle officer (Banda Sadar) Raghendra Singh said the girl, aged 15, was allegedly gang-raped on Sunday afternoon. The girl had gone to draw water from a handpump when a man forcibly took her to a lonely house, where he and his two accomplices allegedly raped her.

The girl narrated the incident to her family members after reaching home, the CO said. Based on the complaint lodged by the girl, a case has been registered against the three men under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, police said.

Singh said the three accused are absconding and efforts are on to nab them. **PTI**

### More PG medical seats in next academic session: Paul

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

In a move that would result into better health resources in the country, the Medical Council of India's Board of Governors has approved increasing post graduate medical seats for MD and MS programmes by more than 4,800 to 36,192 for the next academic session, a top official said on Monday.

BoG Chairman and Niti Aayog member VK Paul said the increase is more than the total number of additional seats created in the past five years.

"So, as a result, in the new academic session counselling, 36,192 PG medical seats (MD/MS, broad speciality) will be available," Paul said.

Paul also said the capacity expansion would improve tertiary care in the country.

### UP got its prestige back in 3 years of BJP rule: Yogi

**PTI ■ LUCKNOW**

The CM said the state was in "pitiable condition" during past regimes. Development was hampered and the law and order situation was worse, he claimed, adding that people were forced to migrate from UP.

"Our government has established the rule of law and crime has declined due to which investment is coming in a big way," he claimed.

On anti-CAA protests, he said, "Those involved in arson and damaged properties will be dealt with strictly. In a democracy, there is freedom to protest but there should be no violence."

UP got its prestige back in three years of BJP rule, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath claimed here on Monday.

"UP has regained its lost prestige in the past three years. Our Government has successfully implemented schemes launched by the Narendra Modi Government at the Centre and the State is benefited by them," the CM said addressing a programme organised by a news channel here.

### SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a girl named **Anjali**, D/o Asha Ram, R/o H no. 39-A Vikash Vihar, Nihal Vihar, Delhi is missing since 29.02.2020 from the area of Police Station Nihal Vihar, Delhi. In this regard, **DD No. 40-A dated 04.03.2020 has been registered at P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing girl is as under: **Name:** Anjali, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** 18 years, **Height:** 5'2", **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Long, **Wearing:** blue colour kurta, green colour salwar and slippers in her feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing girl, kindly inform SHO/NihalVihar, Delhi.

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

SHO  
P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi  
DP/62/OD/2020

### UJVN LIMITED

The office of Executive Engineer (Gen.), Dharasu Power House, Chinyalsaur (Uttarakashi) invites sealed tenders from interested firms for following work/supply:

**NIT No-21/EE (Gen./MB-II/19-20: Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for smoke Detection & Fire Alarm System for One Year For MB-II Chinyalsaur.**

**NIT No - 22/EE (Gen./MB-II/19-20: Servicing, overhauling, alignment and testing of 220kV isolators at Switchyard of MB-II Dharasu Power House.**

Estimated Cost : ₹ 3,20,000/- + GST Extra  
Earnest Money : ₹ 12,800/-, ₹ 18,000/- Only Respectively  
Tender document Fee : ₹ 295/-, ₹ 590/- Only Respectively  
Last date of downloading the tender - 07.04.2020  
Last date of submitting the tender - 07.04.2020 up to 15:30 Hrs.  
Due date for opening the tender - 09.04.2020 at 11:00 Hrs.

For eligibility criteria and fuller & further details kindly visit our website **"www.uttarakhandjalvidyut.com"** Bidders are advised to regularly visit our website for further details, subsequent addendum/corrigendum/cancellation etc.

पत्रांक सं 149 / रिजि/ 16.03.2020 Executive Engineer  
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

### STATE INFRASTRUCTURE & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.

**NIT No :27 /SIIDCUL/2020.**

**Tender Notice**

SIIDCUL invites online bids from OEM or authorized dealer of OEM or "A" Class Electrical contractor registered in any department of Uttarakhand Government or CPWD for Supply & Fixing of Street Light Pole Junction Boxes (as per bid document). Detailed bid document can be downloaded from website of SIIDCUL [www.siidcul.com](http://www.siidcul.com) or [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in). Bids can be submitted on [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) on/before 18.04.2020 time:- 02.00 PM.

**Managing Director**

### STATE INFRASTRUCTURE & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.

**NIT No :28 /SIIDCUL/2020.**

**Request For Proposal**

Proposal for undertaking the operation and maintenance of 12 seater Tipri Madan Negi 984.00 Meter Ropeway, Tehri Garhwal for three years are invited by MD, SIIDCUL from eligible Agencies as per RFP document which can be downloaded from website of SIIDCUL [www.siidcul.com](http://www.siidcul.com) or [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in). Proposal can be submitted on [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) on/before 18-04-2020 time:-02.00PM.

**Managing Director**

### EAST DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer Central Store  
B-2, Block, Near 212 Bus Terminal, Nand Nagri Delhi-110093  
NIT No. EE(Central Store)/TC/19-20/11 Dated : 13.03.2020

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Executive Engineer (Central Store) EDMC on behalf of Commissioner, EDMC invites Online open tenders from approved and eligible contractors and will be received as per time table :-

S. No.	Name of work	Head of A/C	Tender Cost	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Time of compl.	Tender No.
1.	Development of Infrastructure of 1 TPD Aerobic Drum Compost Plant at Vishwas Nagar, Delhi	XL-VIII-V (MPLADS)	500/-	51950/-	03 Months	318651
2.	Development of Infrastructure of TPD Aerobic Drum Compost Plant at Mayur Vihar Ph-1, Delhi	XL-VIII-V (MPLADS)	500/-	51950/-	03 Months	318652
3.	Development of Infrastructure of 1 TPD Aerobic Drum Compost Plant at New Ashok Nagar, Delhi	XL-VIII-V (MPLADS)	500/-	51950/-	03 Months	318653

**Tender Amount :** Item Rates  
Detailed NIT can be seen from the following website or from the office of the undersigned. <http://mcdtenders.com>, [www.mcdonline.gov.in](http://www.mcdonline.gov.in)  
**RO NO - 147/DPVEAST/2019-20 Executive Engineer (Central Store)**  
EDMC's Citizens Helpline No. 153303

### PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

**See Section 82 Cr. P.C.**

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused namely **Aakash S/o Subhash R/o E-18, Jai Vihar, Najafgarh, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence of FIR No. 618/19, U/s 392/411/34 IPC, P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the accused **Aakash**, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Aakash** have absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Processing U/s 82 Cr. P.C. has been initiated in the case. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Aakash**, FIR No. 618/19, U/s 392/411/34 IPC, P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi is required to appear in this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 22.04.2020.

**By Order**  
**Sh. Pankaj Arora,**  
Metropolitan Magistrate, Room No. 292,  
2nd Floor, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/75/OD/2020-(Court Matter)

**INDIAN RAILWAY CATERING AND TOURISM CORPORATION LTD.**  
(A Government of India Enterprise - Mini Ratna)  
CIN : L74999DL19990101707

**Notice Inviting E-Tenders**

1) Open E-Tender No. 2020/IRCTC/INGET/ADC-WAF-SLB/1 (Two Packet System) for Procurement of Application Delivery Controller, Server Load Balancer and Web Application Firewall for IRCTC Next Generation E-Ticketing (NGE) System. Last Date: 30.04.2020 up to 1500 Hrs.

2) Open E-Tender No. 2020/IRCTC/INGET/ICT-Network/1 (Two Packet System) for Procurement of Network Equipments for IRCTC Next Generation E-Ticketing (NGE) System. Last Date: 30.04.2020 up to 1600 Hrs.

Last date of acceptance of Pre-bid queries sent through e-mail to [itprocurement@irctc.co.in](mailto:itprocurement@irctc.co.in) is 26.03.2020 up to 1700 Hrs. Pre bid Meeting for both 1) & 2) on 07.04.2020 at 1500 Hrs.

For more information, downloading & participation visit [www.tenderwizd.com/IRCTC](http://www.tenderwizd.com/IRCTC). Corrigendum/addendum if any, will be published on [www.irctc.com](http://www.irctc.com) & [www.tenderwizd.com/IRCTC](http://www.tenderwizd.com/IRCTC).

Office Address: IRCTC Ltd, 11th Floor, Statesman House, B-148, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Palace, New Delhi - 110 001

**WESTERN RAILWAY**

**E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No.S/08/2020 Date 16/03/2020**

S.N.	Short Description of Item	Quantity	T.O.D.
155	Defective Wagons checking Register	157 Nos.	19.03.2020
156	Application for passes	299920 Nos.	19.03.2020
157	Application for Advance form	139779 Nos.	19.03.2020
158	Detention Register	260 Nos.	20.03.2020
159	Duty Register	189 Nos.	20.03.2020
160	Record of time of Wagon handed over	332 Nos.	20.03.2020
161	Printing & installation of 50 slogans	50 Nos.	20.03.2020
162	Register for lost property	423 Nos.	23.03.2020
163	Overtime Voucher	166430 Nos.	23.03.2020
164	Night duty allowance statement	218934 Nos.	23.03.2020
165	Printing of Merit Certificate	500 Nos.	23.03.2020
166	Syringe Pump	2 Items	30.03.2020
167	Set of Components of hand brake arrangement for bogie mounted brake system	100 Sets	03.04.2020
168	Primary total Hip Replacement set	4 Sets	07.04.2020
169	Bipola HIP replacement set containing 3 items	4 Sets	07.04.2020
170	Hydrophobic Acrylic Monofocal three piece IOL	84 Nos.	07.04.2020
171	UV Blocking Hydrophobic Acrylic single piece, Posterior chamber Aspheric Optic, A constant 118.8 . IOL Assorted Power.	92 Nos.	07.04.2020
172	Ni-CD Battery	220 Nos.	07.04.2020
173	Child parts of AC-AC-tracto control system for HHP Locomotives	2 Items.	07.04.2020
174	Synthetic Thermoplastic Polymer Water Hose	3206 Mtrs.	08.04.2020
175	Battery operated LED Based hand signal lamp	2853 Nos.	08.04.2020
176	EP brake unit with Safety valve	23 Nos.	09.04.2020
177	Pressure Switch	94 Nos.	10.04.2020
178	Set of Single Duct leather bellows	55 Sets.	11.04.2020
179	Tapered Roller Bearing	272 Nos.	13.04.2020
180	Current Sensor	15 Nos.	13.04.2020
181	Transformer Main 5400kVA for WAP-4/WAG-7 locomotives	1 No.	13.04.2020
182	Set of Axle Box complete without Roller Bearing	8 Sets	16.04.2020

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and [www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.wr.indianrailways.gov.in).

**For Principal Chief Materials Manager.**

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

# RBI: Yes Bank revival progressing as planned

## Moratorium to be on lifted March 18

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday assured that crippled Yes Bank has enough funds to meet any requirements and promised that the central bank will step in with additional liquidity support if needed.

The assurance comes at a time when there is a worry that once the moratorium is lifted on March 18 evening, there can be a run on the bank, putting more liquidity pressure.

"I would like to mention that Yes Bank has enough liquidity to meet any requirement. If there is a requirement, the RBI will provide necessary liquidity support" Das told reporters and also announced that after 6 pm on March 18, depositors can take their money out without any restrictions. The bank's deposit base eroded by ₹72,000 crore to ₹1.37 lakh crore as of March 5,



RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das addresses a Press conference, at RBI headquarters in Mumbai on Monday

2020 as against Rs 2.09 lakh crore as of December 31, 2019, according to data shared by the bank last Friday while announcing the Q3 earnings.

Under the reconstruction scheme, which the governor said is progressing as planned, the private lender has received over ₹10,000 crore from eight financial institutions, including ₹6,050 crore from SBI.

ICICI Bank and HDFC (₹1,000 crore each) Axis Bank (₹600 crore), Kotak Mahindra Bank (Rs 500 crore), Bandhan Bank, Federal Bank (₹300 crore each) and IDFC First (₹250 crore) also joined the SBI-led

# Das hints at rate cut; RBI presser turns a whimper

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The RBI on Monday hinted at a rate cut but stopped short of a decision, belying market expectations at a hurriedly called presser even as it announced some liquidity enhancing measures to contain the economic fallout from the coronavirus.

But Governor Shaktikanta Das was quick to assure that the Reserve Bank has "enough policy tools and stands ready to take any measures" needed to help the economy tide over the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

To a question why the rates were left unchanged at 5.15 per cent, Das said, "according to the prevailing law, the rate cut call has to be taken through the monetary policy committee, but I don't rule out anything. Depending on the evolving situation, we will decide on the timing of our action."

In two liquidity enhancing measures, Das announced another round of \$2 billion dollar-rupee swap on March 23, and in another measure he said the RBI will continue to conduct the long-term repo operations (LTROs) of up to ₹1 lakh

crore as and when the market needs it.

On March 16, the RBI conducted the first dollar-swap for \$2 billion under which the central bank buys rupee from the market by selling the dollars.

On the LTROs, it has already conducted four rounds worth Rs 1 lakh crore operations since February 14, after announcing it at the February 6 policy review.

Given the short notice for the press meet amidst the continuing mayhem in the market and the rising call for rates cuts to the tune of 65 bps by June including a pre-term cut of 25 bps by some analysts, the meeting spawned too much expectation of a rate cut.

Had he announced a rate cut, it would have been the first inter-meeting rate reduction since the monetary policy committee was instituted in February 2016.

The hurriedly called presser comes amidst widespread call for an inter-meeting rate cut following similar steps by the world's leading central banks like the US Fed which in a span of 10 days has cut the policy rates to near zero levels.

# ₹ plunges 50 paise to 74.25 against \$ amid virus uncertainty

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Indian rupee continued its downward spiral and plunged 50 paise to 74.25 against the US dollar on Monday as concern over the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic outweighed the US Fed's emergency interest rate cut and the RBI's liquidity enhancing measures.

Forex traders said the fall in the domestic unit was in line with other Asian peers amid mounting fears of a coronavirus-led economic slowdown.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 74.10. During the day, it saw a high of 74.09 and a low of 74.35 against the American currency.

The domestic unit finally settled at 74.25 against the greenback, down 50 paise over its previous close.

The local unit had settled at 73.75 against the greenback on Friday.

The US Fed on Sunday made its second emergency rate cut in less than two weeks, slashing the benchmark borrowing rate to a range of 0-0.25 per cent, where it was during the 2008 global financial crisis.

# BUSINESS CORNER

**KAANCHAN AZAD GETS 'BEST PRO OF DELHI' HONOUR**  
New Delhi: Kaanchan Azad, Dy Director (PR), Govt of NCT of Delhi, has been awarded Best Public Relations Officer (PRO) in a function of Oscar of Media 14th Media Excellence Awards 2020, organised by Media Federation of India in Pearey Lal Bhawan today in the evening. Azad has been chosen as the Best PRO of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Azad is presently working as a PRO in Delhi Legislative Assembly and he earlier served as an Press Secretary to Former CM of Delhi, Late Smt. Sheila Dikshit. He also worked in two national dailies as a crime reporter. Various other personalities from respective fields of Journalism including Aaj Tak, Zee News, Rajya Sabha TV, Asian News, etc. were awarded in the function as well. The function also included dance performances from colleges of Delhi University including Daulat Ram College, Ramjas College, etc.

**NHPC'S LTHPL AWARDS CIVIL WORKS PACKAGE (LOT-II)**  
New Delhi: Lanco Teesta Hydro Power Limited (LTHPL), which is a wholly owned Subsidiary of NHPC Limited, has awarded the Lot-II package of Construction of Balance Civil Works Package of 500 MW Teesta-VI HE Project, Sikkim to M/s. Gammon Engineers and Contractors Private Limited on 15.03.2020 for a contract price of ₹1248.44 crore. This Package includes works for underground Power House & Transformer Cavern, Part of HRT-I & HRT-II, Surge Shafts, Pressure Shafts & Adits, TRT and other associated structures etc. The work has been awarded in record time well before the scheduled date. NHPC provided the consultancy works for the same including invitation of bids, tendering and evaluation etc.



**NTPC CROWNED 'CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS'**  
New Delhi: NTPC, India's largest power generating company bagged 28 awards at Corporate Communication Excellence Awards 2020 and was conferred with the 'Champion of Champions Title' in a grand ceremony organised during the 14th Global Communication Conclave by Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) at Bengaluru recently. Saptarshi Roy, Director (HR), NTPC received the PRCI Chanakya Award for Best Communicator and Shri KM Prashanth, AGM (Corporate Communications) was also honoured and inducted to the PRCI Hall of Fame for the year 2019.

# HDFC to hold 7.97% stake in Yes Bank for ₹1K cr infusion

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mortgage lender HDFC will pick up 7.97 per cent stake in Yes Bank for a ₹1,000 crore capital infusion in the cash-strapped lender. On March 14, Yes Bank allotted 100 crore shares of face value of ₹2 each to the Corporation aggregating to 7.97 per cent of the post issue equity share capital of Yes Bank, HDFC said in a regulatory filing on Monday.

The allotment of shares comes "after giving effect to the allotment of shares to State Bank of India, the Corporation, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Federal Bank, Bandhan Bank and IDFC First Bank," it said.

On Friday, HDFC said it is investing in 100 crore equity shares of ₹2 each in Yes Bank for a consideration of ₹10 per share (including ₹8 premium) for an aggregate consideration of ₹1,000 crore. As per the scheme of reconstruction of Yes Bank, 75 per cent of the total investment by the Corporation would be locked in for 3 years, HDFC had said.

SBI has invested Rs 6,050 crore in crisis-ridden Yes Bank. ICICI Bank, Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC), Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bandhan Bank, Federal Bank and IDFC First Bank have also joined the SBI-led consortium and invested in Yes Bank.

# LS passes Appropriation Bill, completing two-thirds of Budget exercise

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed the Appropriation Bill 2020-21, authorising the government to draw over Rs 110 lakh crore from the Consolidated Fund of India for its working as well as implementation of its programs and schemes.

This completes two-thirds of the exercise for approval of the Budget for 2020-21.

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha had debated on Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's second Budget in the first half of the current session and in the second part, the lower house of Parliament passed the Appropriation Bill. In the third stage, the Finance Bill, which details the tax proposals, will be discussed and approved.

The house passed the Appropriation Bill, envisaging spending of Rs 110.4 lakh crore during the financial year 2020-21 after Speaker Om Birla applied 'guillotine' on demands of grants for various ministries.

With Parliament having very limited time for scrutinising the expenditure demands of all the ministries, it takes up

discussion on spending or demands for grants for a few ministries during a pre-decided period of time. Once this is over, a guillotine is applied.

Once the speaker applies the guillotine, all the outstanding demands for grants, whether discussed or not, are put to vote at once and passed. After this, Appropriation Bill was taken into consideration and passed.

This year, the Lok Sabha discussed demands for grants of ministries of tourism, railways and social justice and empowerment.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman moved the Appropriation Bill, which was passed by voice vote.

The Lok Sabha will now discuss the Finance Bill, which essentially contains the government's tax proposals.

Once the Finance Bill is passed, the budget exercise is complete. Both appropriation and finance bills are classified as money bills which do not require the explicit consent of the Rajya Sabha. Rajya Sabha only discusses them and returns the bills.

# SBI Cards make weak debut at bourses; plunges over 10%

New Delhi: Shares of SBI Cards and Payment Services made a weak debut at the bourses on Monday plunging over 10 per cent against its issue price of ₹755 as coronavirus fears continued to hurt investor sentiment.

The scrip listed at ₹658, dropped 12.84 per cent from its issue price on the BSE. During the day, it touched high of ₹755 and a low of ₹658. Later, it

plunged 9.50 per cent to close at ₹683.20.

On the NSE, the scrip tanked 10.19 per cent to close at ₹678. The company's market valuation stood at ₹64,149.53 crore at close of trade on the BSE.

The drop in the company's scrip was in-line with a weak broader market, where the BSE benchmark plummeted over 2,700 points.

# Stocks nosedive on Wall Street, triggering trading halt

New York: Stocks dropped 8 per cent in the first minutes of trading Monday on Wall Street and triggered another temporary halt to trading as huge swaths of the economy come closer to shutting down, from airlines to restaurants.

Emergency actions taken by the Federal Reserve late Sunday to prop up the economy and get financial markets running smoothly again may have raised fears even further, some investors said.

The selling was just as aggressive in markets around the world. European stocks and crude oil were both down close

to 10%. The world's brightest spot may have been Japan, where the central bank announced more stimulus for the economy, and stocks still lost 2.5 per cent. The spreading coronavirus is causing businesses around the world to shut their doors, which is draining away revenue.

That has economists slashing their expectations for upcoming months, and JPMorgan Chase says the US economy may shrink at a 2 per cent annual rate this quarter and 3 per cent in the April-through-June quarter. To many investors, that meets the definition of a recession. AP

# IMF calls for coordinated action to provide stability to global economy

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The IMF on Monday called for increased coordinated action to boost confidence and provide stability to the global economy, amidst fast spread of coronavirus that has killed over 6,500 people worldwide and resulted in lockdown-like situations in several countries.

"Many governments have already taken significant steps, with major measures being announced on a daily basis - including yesterday's bold, coordinated moves on monetary policy," International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said in a blog post.

"But clearly, even more needs to be done. As the virus spreads, increased coordinated action will be key to boosting confidence and providing stability to the global economy," she wrote.

Asserting that the case for a coordinated and synchronized global fiscal stimulus is becoming stronger by the hour, she said that during the Global Financial Crisis, for example, fiscal stimulus by the G-20 amounted to about 2 per cent of GDP, or over USD 900 bil-

# WPI inflation eases to 2.26% in Feb as food articles, vegetables become cheaper

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation softened to 2.26 per cent in February on the back of cheaper food items and vegetables, the government data showed on Monday.

In January, the WPI inflation stood at 3.1 per cent and in the year-ago same period it was at 2.93 per cent, as per the data from the commerce and industry ministry.

The WPI inflation for food articles for February 2020 came in at 7.79 per cent as against 11.51 per cent in the previous month. The rate of price rise for onion and potato too came down to 162.30 per cent and 60.73 per cent, respectively as against 293.37 per cent and 87.84 per cent in January 2020.

Build up inflation rate in the current financial year so far was 1.92 per cent compared to a build up rate of 2.75 per cent in the year-ago period, it added.

In the fuel and power category, wholesale inflation during the month eased to 3.38 per cent while for non-food articles it slowed to 6.82 per cent.

# Corona: McDonald's, Domino's introduce contactless delivery

New Delhi: McDonald's and Domino's Pizza have introduced contactless delivery, with state governments taking measures to avoid gathering of people in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

Westlife Development, owner and operator of McDonald's restaurants in west and southern India, on Monday said it has launched contactless delivery to ensure food reaches customers without being touched by bare hands and delivered safe with adequate social distancing measures.

Similarly, Jubilant FoodWorks Ltd (JFL), the licensee for Domino's Pizza in India said it has introduced zero-contact delivery all 1,325 restaurants of Domino's Pizza in India. PTI

**OUTSOURCING OF SPECIALIST SERVICES AT AIR FORCE STATION, NEW DELHI FOR FY 2020-21**

1. Air Officer Commanding, Air Force Station New Delhi, Race Course, New Delhi-110003, invites application for outsourcing of part time specialist services as per given below:-

Sl No	Service/post	Qualification	Place of Work	Working Hours	Payment
01.	Dietician	Degree in Dietics/ Health and Nutrition	Station Medicare Centre, Race Course, New Delhi - 03	Thrice a week for 3 hours duration per visit	Rs. 1000/- per visit Rs. 12,000/- per month

2. Weightage will be given to Ex-servicemen and experience of working in Armed Forces Hospitals/Clinics. Candidates residing in Delhi will be given preference.

3. Interested candidates fulfilling the qualification may apply on plain paper along with photocopy of qualification & experience certificates, bio-data, contact number, two recent passport size photographs addressed to Senior Medical Officer, SMC, Air Force Station, Race Course, New Delhi-110003, by hand/post within **fifteen days** of publication of advertisement.

Davp/10802/11/0073/1920

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON**

**See Section 82 Cr.P.C.**

Whereas complaint has been made before me that an accused person **Kaptan, S/o: Sheikh Sadik, R/o: H. No. 11, Guru Nanak Nagar, Bhalswa Dairy, Gali No. 1, Delhi** has committed (or suspected to have committed) the offence in case **E-FIR No. 89/18 U/s 379/41/34 IPC has been registered at P.S. Nangloi, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Kaptan** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Kaptan** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Kaptan** accused of E-FIR No. 89/18 U/s 379/41/34 IPC has been registered at **P.S. Nangloi, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **12.05.2020**

By Order  
Sh. Abhinav Pandey  
Metropolitan Magistrate-04, (West)

DP/74/OD/2020 Room No. 268, 2nd floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a woman namely **Gora, W/o: Unknown, R/o: Apna Ghar Asham, Bhudhpur, Delhi** was missing from his house. In this regard **DD No. 42A, dated 01.02.2020** has been registered at P.S. Alipur, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing female but no clue has come to light so far. The description of missing woman is as under:

**Name: Gora, Age: About 35 Years, Height: 146 cms, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Normal, Face: Round, Wearing: Blue Color Kurta-Pajama, Multi Color Jersey and Black Color Shoes.**

If anyone have any information about this missing woman please inform P.S. Alipur, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639

SHO  
Police Station, Alipur, Delhi  
Ph: 011-27202265, 7065036325

DP/22/ON/2020

**SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE**

General public is hereby informed that this female namely **Preeti D/o Ramesh Tiwari R/o Jhuggi F-410, Maharana Pratap Chowk, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi** Age : 14½ years, Height : 5', Face : Round, Complexion : Sallow, Build : Slim, wearing pink colour suit-salwar and black colour dupatta, has been missing since 26.01.2020 from her house. In this regard FIR No. 52/20 dated 01.02.2020 has been registered at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing female may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>  
Fax: 24368639, SHO : P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi  
Tel.: 24368638/24368641 Ph. : 011-2782207, 27821047

DP/60/OD/2020

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General Public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Lakhan S/o Jitender R/o B-28, Ambika Enclave, Nihal Vihar, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 26.02.2020 from the area of P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi. In this regard a case vides **DD No. 41-A dated 28.02.2020** has been registered at P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi. The description of missing/kidnapped boy is as under : **Name : Lakhan, Father's Name : Jitender, Age : 19 years, Height : 5'2", Face : Round, Complexion : Fair, Wearing : White Shirt-Blue, Jeans and Black shoes in feet.**

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>  
e-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Fax : 011-24368639  
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO  
P.S., Nihal Vihar, Delhi  
Ph.: 011-25946700  
25946710

DP/53/OD/2020

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General public is hereby informed that one person namely **Kulvinder @ Rohit S/o Sh. Deen Dayal R/o H.No. 34/1128, DDA Flats, Madangir, Delhi**, has been missing/kidnapped from the area of P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi since 31.12.2019. In this regard, a vide **FIR No. 51/2020 U/S 365 IPC has been registered at P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi**. The description of the missing person is as under.

**Age: 26 Years, Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 6'2", Face: Oval, Wearing: Gray Colour Cap Jacket Blue Colour Jeans pent and brown Colour shoes in feet.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing person then please inform P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi at following Tel No. / e-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No. 011-24368639

Sd/- S.H.O.  
P.S. Ambedkar Nagar, Delhi  
Ph: 011-29052304

DP/22/SD/2020

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is here by informed that this girl (depicted in the photo) namely: **Shalu D/o Lt. Nago Yadav R/o H. No. B-05, Kh. No. 27/201, 3rd Floor Uday Vihar, Nilothi Extn., Nangloi, Delhi**, has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of P.S. Nihal Vihar since 26.02.2020. In this regard FIR No. 150/20 U/s dated 02.03.2020 has been registered at **P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Her physical description is as under-  
**Sex: Female, Age: 17 years, Height: 5'0" ft., Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Wearing: Yellow T-Shirt-Black Jeans and Chapple in feet.**

Any person is having information or clue about this missing/ kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO  
P.S. Nihal Vihar, Delhi  
E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) Ph. No.: 011-25946710, 25946700  
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob. No.: 7065036129  
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/60/OD/2020

GLOBE TROTTER

**WON'T TOLERATE ATTACKS ON AMERICANS: US TO IRAQ**  
 Washington: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned Iraq on Monday the US would retaliate "as necessary" against any new assaults on Americans after a slew of rocket attacks.

**UK DOUBLES FUND TO PROTECT WORSHIP PLACES**  
 London: The UK Government has doubled the security funding available to places of worship in their fight against hate crime, with 3.2 million pounds earmarked for 2020-2021. The Places of Worship Protective Security Funding scheme, now running for around four years, provides funding for measures such as CCTV, fencing, gates, alarms and lighting, to places of worship and associated faith community centres that are vulnerable to hate crime.

**US SUPREME COURT HALTS HEARINGS**  
 Washington: The US Supreme Court said it will postpone oral arguments scheduled between March 23 and April 1. The US Supreme Court announced its first halt to hearings in over a century due to the coronavirus pandemic, putting off a key case on whether President Donald Trump can continue to hide his tax returns.

# EU SET FOR VIRUS TALKS TODAY

AP ■ BRUSSELS

The European Union (EU)'s top official on Monday called for more coordination and insisted on the need to keep the 27-nation bloc's internal borders open as much as possible as member states implement measures to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.

After the surge of COVID-19 cases in Europe led the Italian Government to put the country on lockdown, other member states have implemented drastic measures and travel restrictions, including partially closing their borders.

"Our measures to contain the Coronavirus outbreak will be effective only if we coordinate on the European level," European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said. "We have to take exceptional measures to protect the health of our citizens. But let's make sure goods and essential services continue to flow in our internal market. This is the only way to prevent shortages of medical equipment or food."

EU leaders are set to hold a summit via video-conference on Tuesday on efforts to contain the spread of the virus, which has now infected more



**EU CHIEF PROPOSES BAN ON 'NON-ESSENTIAL' TRAVEL INTO BLOC**  
 EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen on Monday proposed that the bloc close its borders to non-essential travel, as Europe scrambles to fight the spread of the coronavirus disease. "The less travel, the more we can contain the virus. Therefore... I propose to the heads of state and governments to introduce temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the European Union," she said.

than 50,000 people across Europe, and claimed more than 2,000 lives.

With Italy reporting the most virus cases and deaths anywhere in the world except China, neighbouring countries including Austria and Slovenia have moved to slow traffic. But other EU nations, including Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Cyprus have also introduced restrictions that could damage the bloc's economy and slow down the circulation of medical equipment.

Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania and Germany plus non-member Switzerland have notified

the commission that they have taken immediate steps under the EU's border rule book allowing member states in exceptional circumstances to reintroduce border checks for a limited period.

The EU's borders code stipulates that the initial period of 10 days can be renewed for up to two months. The different approaches in different countries are raising concerns that vital medical equipment may be blocked. The EU is urging its members to put common health screening procedures in place at their borders to limit the spread of the virus, but not to block the transport of important medical

equipment. In a series of guidelines for border management measures, the commission urged member states to facilitate the circulation of workers, to ensure an efficient movement of goods and to impose restrictions only when they are "duly motivated" and science-based. "Member States should preserve the free circulation of all goods. In particular, they should guarantee the supply chain of essential products such as medicines, medical equipment, essential and perishable food products and livestock," the commission said. Jon Worth, a visiting lecturer

at the College of Europe in Bruges, said he was not surprised that member states decided to restrict the movement of people at their borders given that health care is a matter of national responsibility in the EU.

"But the single market is definitely the EU's responsibility and they have to make sure the chain of supply does not break down," he told *The Associated Press* on Monday. "That will be the short-term challenge to come."

European Council President Charles Michel, who chairs summits of prime ministers and presidents from the 27 EU nations, announced the video conference in a tweet, calling what will be the second meeting of its kind within two weeks.

"Containing the spread of the virus, providing sufficient medical equipment, boosting research and limiting the economic fallout is key," Michel said.

Michel called the summit shortly after he held talks with French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. Macron's office said their conversation allowed them to make decisions about measures to take at the external



## TEST EVERY SUSPECTED CASE, SAYS WHO

The World Health Organization called on Monday for countries to test every suspected case of COVID-19, as the rest of the world registered more cases and deaths in the pandemic than China. "You cannot fight a fire blindfolded," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters in Geneva, saying the WHO recommended that countries "Test, test, test. Test every suspected case." "In the past week, we have seen a rapid escalation of cases of COVID-19," he said, describing the pandemic as "the defining global health crisis of our time." More cases and deaths have now been reported in the rest of the world than in China, where the new coronavirus first surfaced in December, he added. *AFP*

borders of the EU which will be announced in the coming hours. No details were provided. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control figures released Monday show that 51,771 coronavirus cases have been reported in Europe, most in Italy, Spain, France and Germany. A total of 2,316 people have died, the overwhelming majority in Italy. For most people, the virus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

## Lockdowns erupt as world infections surpass those in China

AP ■ MADRID

Monday marked another milestone in the global battle to outwit the new coronavirus, as reported infections in the rest of the world overtook those in China. Millions of people in Europe and the United States began haling up at home amid rapid-fire border closures announced by one nation after the other.

Spain officially became the fourth-most infected country in the world, surpassing South Korea as its arc of contagion curved higher. Only China, Italy and Iran have more confirmed cases of COVID-19 than Spain, where the number of infections increased overnight by roughly 20% to 9,191 and the number of fatalities rose to 309, according to the Spanish Health Ministry. The actual figure was presumed to be even higher, because Spain switched to a new system of reporting.

Spain's interior minister said European Union nations on Monday would discuss possibly closing the country's borders. "It is a real possibility to fight against the expansion of the virus and to guarantee the

health of European citizens," said minister Fernando Grande Marlaska.

Portugal and Spain have already halted tourism across their 1,200-kilometer (750-mile) shared border. Goods and workers will still be allowed to cross. Spain has also already deployed the army to the streets, ordered its 46 million people to stay home and taken control of private hospitals. Marlaska said a total lockdown could be the next step. Nearly 500 people are under intensive care in Spanish hospitals for the virus, 70% of them in Madrid, the capital.

The measures echoed those already in place in Italy and now being rolled out in other parts of Europe and the United States. Serbia called out the army to help enforce the virus restrictions. Among the most drastic measures, the Swiss city-state of Geneva banned gatherings of more than five people, though exceptions were made for business meetings that followed public health rules.

"What we don't want is people having picnics" with friends or relatives, said Geneva official Henri Della Casa.

### ITALIAN NEWSPAPER PRINTS 10 PAGES OF OBITUARIES

A newspaper in a coronavirus-hit Italian town went from having one and a half pages of obituaries to printing 10 now in just a month, a media report said.

### WHITE HOUSE MOVES TO PROTECT TRUMP, STAFF

The White House put in place new measures on Monday to protect President Donald Trump and his staff during the coronavirus outbreak, including taking the temperature of anyone who enters the complex, including visitors and members of the press corps.

### BELARUSIAN LEADER PROPOSES 'TRACTOR' THERAPY FOR VIRUS

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on Monday encouraged citizens to work in the countryside and drive tractors as a way to overcome the coronavirus epidemic.

### UN 'REMAINS OPEN FOR BUSINESS': UN CHIEF

The United Nations has stepped up measures to safeguard staff and all those using its offices around the world to combat the continuing spread of the coronavirus, and at the same time will ensure critical work of the organisation continues to deliver on key mandates, and provide lifesaving support to those in need.

### VIRUS HAS NOT IMPACTED KIDS MUCH: MEDICAL EXPERT

The coronavirus has not caused much harm to children including infants, according to a top Chinese medical specialist treating patients in Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak that has turned pandemic. Studies about coronavirus, which is spreading all over the world like wildfire after surfacing in Wuhan in December last year, show it affected mostly aged and people with various health complications like Diabetes and Hypertension but not much is known about its impact on children so far.

### TRUMP URGES COUNTRYMEN AGAINST HOARDING OF ESSENTIAL ITEMS

US President Donald Trump has advised his countrymen against hoarding of essential items as reports of grocery stores being swept by panic buying due to the coronavirus crisis emerged, saying supply chains in the country are the most powerful in the world and there is no shortage of daily goods. The US mainstream media, including newspapers and channels, on Sunday showed pictures and visuals of empty shelves in grocery stores in the country.

### ITALY REPORTS 349 NEW VIRUS DEATHS, TAKING TOTAL TO OVER 2,000



essentials in case of a prolonged lockdown.

### SOUTH AFRICA REVOKES 10,000 VISAS TO CHINA, IRAN

South Africa will revoke nearly 10,000 visas issued this year to people from China and Iran, and visas will now be required for other high-risk countries that had been visa-free, including Italy and the United States.

### AUSSIE RESEARCHERS CLAIM TO HAVE FOUND 2 DRUGS

Australian researchers on Monday claimed to have found two drugs — an HIV and an anti-malaria medicines — to treat novel coronavirus which has claimed five lives and infected over 350 others in the country.

### US AIRLINES SLASH FLIGHTS OVER VIRUS CRISIS

US airlines have announced drastic reductions in flights after President Donald Trump's administration banned foreign travelers arriving from Europe. United Airlines said it would announce a cut in capacity of around 50 percent for April and May, as the United States ramps up restrictions to try and contain the spread of the coronavirus.

## Virus toll in Iran climbs as lockdowns deepen across Mideast

TEHRAN: Iran reported another 129 fatalities from the new coronavirus on Monday, the largest one-day rise in deaths since it began battling the Middle East's worst outbreak, which has claimed more than 850 lives and infected a number of senior officials in the country.

Businesses in Iran's capital remained open, however, even as other countries in the region moved toward full lockdowns, with Lebanon largely shutting down and Iraqis racing to prepare for a curfew set to begin later this week. The divergent approaches adopted by local authorities reflect continued uncertainty over how to slow the spread of a virus that has infected around 170,000 people worldwide and caused more than 6,500 deaths.

Some have opted for an even more aggressive response, Israel, where the number of confirmed cases has more than doubled to around 250 in recent days, has authorised the use of phone-snooping technology long used against Palestinian militants to track coronavirus patients. Such practices will spark renewed debate over privacy issues as countries around the world confront the pandemic. *AP*

## China to withdraw thousands of medical staff

Beijing: China announced plans for an orderly withdrawal of thousands of medical staff deployed in the worst-hit Wuhan city as a top medical expert said the coronavirus outbreak has "almost seen its end" in the country but a final judgement would be made after a month.

A leading Chinese official group, headed by Premier Li Keqiang, suggested orderly withdrawal of the medical staff supporting virus-hit Hubei province for which Wuhan is the capital, where the virus first emerged in December last year.

China deployed over 30,000 medical personnel, including staff from the military, and built 14 makeshift hospitals at the height of the coronavirus outbreak in January. The makeshift hospitals have been dismantled. The leading group asked officials to ensure high-level treatment of severe COVID-19 patients in Wuhan while withdrawing the supporting medical teams, state-run *China Daily* reported.

Timely and full payment of subsidies should be guaranteed for frontline personnel in epidemic prevention and control, including medical staff, community workers, police and volunteers, leading group said. *PTI*

**MODERN COACH FACTORY, RAEBARELI**  
 Open tender based on Single packet system Tender Notice No.-MCF/RBL/Tender/Shell assembly activity Jg-II/2020-21/C173 Dt. 13.03.2020 is invited by Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Shell, MCF/RBL through IREPS portal www.ireps.gov.in for and on behalf of President of India for the following work:-

Description of work	Approx. Value (₹)	EMD (₹)
Shell assembly activities on Jig II for LWFAC, LFCWAC & LWSZAC coaches as per scope of work.	1,45,49,505.80	2,22,800.00

Cost of Tender document: ₹ 5,000.00 only  
 Quantity of work: 500 Shell  
 Completion period of work: 12 months or earlier

• Period of submission of tender document- From 23.03.2020 to 06.04.2020.  
 • Date and Time of closing of Tender- 06.04.2020 at 11:45 hrs.  
 • Date and Time of opening of Tender- 06.04.2020 at 12:00 hrs.  
 • Detailed Tender Notice, Eligibility criteria, Terms & conditions are available at IREPS website: www.ireps.gov.in in tender document.  
 Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Shell

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

**CAPACIOUS TRADEx PRIVATE LIMITED**  
 Corporate Identity Number: U67120UP2010PTD052729  
 Registered Office: 38/2/32 Site-4 Sahibabad Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010  
 E mail: cocapacioustadex@gmail.com; Phone: +91-9910422299  
 Form No. INC-26

In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013, Section 13(4) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 30(5)(a) of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 Before the Central Government, Regional Director Northern Region, New Delhi And

In the matter of Capacious Tradex Private Limited having its registered office at 38/2/32 Site-4 Sahibabad Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201010, .....The Petitioner

**NOTICE**  
 Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 to enable the Company to change its Registered office from "State of Uttar Pradesh" to "State of Delhi" within the jurisdiction of Registrar of Companies Delhi & Haryana".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the Company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director, Northern Region, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003, within Fourteen days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned above.

For and on behalf of the Board  
**Capacious Tradex Private Limited**  
 Sd/-  
**Manish Bhola**  
 Director  
 Dated: 14-03-2020  
 Place: Ghaziabad  
 DIN- 07449830

**ICICI Bank**  
 Regd. Office: ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakki Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodara 390 007  
 Corporate Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra- Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai 400 051  
 Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bag, Delhi-110055

**PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET**  
 [See proviso to rule 8(G)]  
 Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is what is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder.

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Bijender Kumar (Borrower), Sunita (Co-Borrower) LBSNP00002385175	LIG Flat no 16, 3rd Floor, Sec G-2, Pocket -2, Block A-5 Narela, Delhi-110040 Area- 344 Sq.Ft.	Rs. 16,13,519 (as on February 25, 2020)	Rs. 13,10,000/- Rs. 1,31,000/-	April 03, 2020 From 12:00 Noon to 01:00PM	April 23, 2020 From 11:00AM to Onwards

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link - "https://eauctions.samil.in") of our auction agency **ShriramAutomall India Ltd.** The Mortgagee/noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **April 22, 2020, before 5:00 P.M.** else these secured assets will be sold as per schedule. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit their offer along with the earnest money deposit (refer column E) in a sealed envelope that mentions "Offer for purchase of property" to **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bag, Delhi-110055** or to our marketing agent **ShriramAutomall India Ltd at 2nd Floor, Best Sky Tower, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitampura, New Delhi - 110034** on or before **April 22, 2020 before 5:00 P.M.** The marketing agency has also been engaged as auctioneer for proper conduct of auction. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of **"ICICI Bank Limited"** payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 7304904154** or **ShriramAutomall India Ltd on 9910453434**. Tenders which are acknowledged by the Bank/e-auction vendor official and registered before the cut-off time with complete details shall only be considered for auction.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any and all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit **www.icicibank.com/n4p4s**

Date: March 17, 2020  
 Place: Delhi/NCR  
 Sd/-  
**Authorised Officer, ICICI Bank Limited.**

**Govt. of Bihar**  
**Industry Department**  
 Reference for proposal for selection of Security Agency/Company for providing Manpower and Ancillary Services Personnel at BSKVIB, Patna

**Khadi Mall (Bihar State Khadi and Village Industries Board), Patna (A Govt. of Bihar Undertaking)**  
 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Khadi Mall Building, Gandhi Maidan, Patna-800004  
 Phone No. 9771427746, Email id: kvibpatna@gmail.com  
 Website: www.industries.bih.nic.in, www.kvibbihar.com

**Tender Notice No. 113**  
 Sealed and separate tenders are invited from eligible applicant for 'Selection of Manpower Agency for providing Manpower and Ancillary Services Personnel in Khadi Mall, East Gandhi Maidan, Patna, Bihar'.

EMD	Cost of Tender Document	Last Date of Receiving bid	Date of opening of bid
Rs. 1,00,000.00	Rs.2,000.00	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2020 Before 2 PM	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2020 at 4 PM

The tender document can be obtained from the above mentioned Bihar State Khadi & Village Industries Board, Patna office of the undersigned, during office hours on any working day from date by paying the cost of tender document through cash or bank draft in favour of Bihar State Khadi & Village Industries Board, Patna.

The tender document can also be downloaded from "Tenders" on the website of the Department of Industries (www.Industries.bih.nic.in) and www.kvibbihar.com. If the document is downloaded from the above mentioned websites, the demand draft for the amount payable towards the cost of the document should be enclosed with the technical bid of the tender document. Any subsequent notification, changes and amendments shall be posted only on the aforesaid websites.

The bidding will be conducted in accordance with Single Stage and Two Envelop Bidding Procedure, based on the evaluation and qualification criteria as per details mentioned in the RFP.

Bidder shall submit one large envelope containing two separate sealed envelopes.

**Part - I Technical Bid** containing prequalification details scribed as "Technical Bid" with Tender Notice No. on the envelope, along with EMD.

The cost of Tender and EMD shall be in the form of Demand Draft drawn in favour of "Bihar State Khadi & Village Industries Board, Patna and

**Part - II Financial Bid** (in separate envelope) containing only the rates related to tender documents, scribed as "Financial Bid" with Tender Notice No. on the Envelope.

The tender shall be received at Bihar State Khadi & Village Industries Board, Patna up to 15<sup>th</sup> April 2020 Before 2 PM at Khadi Mall. The technical bid of the tender shall be opened on same day. The date of opening of financial bid shall be communicated after scrutiny of technical bids. The financial bid of only those bidders who qualify in technical bid shall be opened.

For any further clarification regarding the submission of tender, contact the undersigned at the above mentioned telephone number. The undersigned reserves all the rights to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Bihar State Khadi & Village Industries Board, Patna.**  
 PR. 17496 (Industry) 2019-20  
**आओ मिलकर बढ़ाएँ कदम, देहेज न लेंगे, टान लें हम।**

# Returning SA check in for Kolkata stopover

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Quinton de Kock-led South African team on Monday checked into a city hotel near the airport as Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) took all precautions for their safe return home amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

After their three-match ODI series was called off due to the virus outbreak, the South African players and the support staff stayed put in Lucknow where the second match was slated.

They had the option to fly out from Delhi but they preferred the 'safest city' Kolkata as the Eastern metropolis was yet to record a single positive case for COVID-19.

"We have made full arrangements so that the South African players return home safe. We have a three-member medical team looking into their arrangements. We are taking adequate precautions," medical committee chairman Pradip Dey told reporters at the city hotel on Rajarhat.

Maintaining social distancing, the team was received at the airport by Cricket Association of



South Africa cricketers arrive at NSCBI Airport in Kolkata on Monday



Thermal screening of South African cricketers for COVID-19 after they arrive at a city hotel

Bengal (CAB) president Avishek Dalmiya, secretary Snehasish Ganguly and joint-secretary Debabrata Das.

"Everything is fine. Their rooms are all sanitised. Our liaison manager, medical team are also there in two rooms. They are all equipped with special masks, sanitiser. We have spoken to the players, they are fine," Avishek said.

The visiting team is flying out to their respective destinations in South Africa on Tuesday morning via Dubai.

## CSA suspend all forms of cricket for two months

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

With the COVID-19 pandemic creating a global upheaval, Cricket South Africa (CSA) has taken the decision to immediately terminate all forms of cricket in the country for the next two months.

After South Africa president Cyril Ramaphosa on Sunday declared a state of disaster, CSA

also decided to suspend all cricket activities in the country to contain the spread of the virus.

"Cricket South Africa (CSA) has taken the decision to immediately terminate all forms of cricket in the country, for the next 60 days, namely: First-class cricket; List A cricket (Momentum Cup); All semi-professional and provincial cricket; as well as All

Junior and Amateur cricket," CSA said in a statement.

The two-month suspension means the ongoing franchise one-day cup competitions semi-finals and final will not take place.

In South Africa, the Premier Soccer League, Super Rugby and the Two Oceans Marathon were also suspended.

# BCCI tell employees to work from home

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced India's biggest sports body BCCI to virtually shut down its headquarter in Mumbai from Tuesday with its employees being advised to work from home.

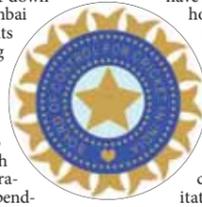
It has been learnt that the employees have been asked to "work from home" with all the cricketing operations already being suspended till further notice.

"The BCCI employees were today

(on Monday) notified that the headquarters at the Wankhede Stadium will be as good as closed in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. All the staffers have been advised to work from home," a top source from the Board said.

"However, if someone still wants to come, they can," he added.

It has been learnt that the National Cricket Academy (NCA) has also stopped its various zonal camps even though rehabilitation programmes at the Bengaluru centre was still on as on Monday.



## No headway at IPL owners' tele-conference

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

No headway was made during Monday's tele-conference by the eight IPL franchise owners as the situation in the past 48 hours has not changed much in the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic in the country as well globally.

The start of the 13th IPL has been suspended from March 29 to April 15 with India currently registering 114 positive cases and two deaths for COVID-19.

All foreign visas have been put on hold till April 15 while BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has hinted that a "truncated IPL" could be a possibility with a minimum 17 days already lost.

"Nothing concrete was discussed in today's meeting (con-call). It was just a follow up meeting. The situation has not changed in 48 hours, so talking about hosting the IPL is still pre-mature," an IPL franchise owner said.

"We have to wait and watch. We will keep doing these con calls on a weekly basis to take stock of the situation," he said.

Among the six to seven options that are there in case the situation improves by April 15, one is dividing the teams into two groups with top four qualifying for the knock-outs.

Also there are suggestions of increasing the number of double headers in a curtailed time or having matches at three or four centres in order to limit travel.

The possibility of having the matches in empty stands also remains open for the BCCI.



Royal Challengers Bangalore tweet

# IPL franchises call off camps

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The eight Indian Premier League (IPL) franchises have called off their respective pre-tournament camps till further notice, three days after the COVID-19 pandemic forced a suspension of the cash-rich event from March 29 to April 15.

Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday deferred their training camp, which was scheduled to begin on March 21, due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the country.

Three-time champions Mumbai Indians,

Chennai Super Kings as well as Kolkata Knight Riders have already cancelled their camps.

"Keeping in mind the health and safety of everyone involved, the RCB Training Camp scheduled to start on the 21st of March has been deferred until further notice. We request everyone to follow the guidelines provided by the Health Ministry and stay safe," RCB tweeted.

The RCB outfit is led by Indian cricket team skipper Virat Kohli.

The BCCI last Friday suspended the IPL following government-imposed travel restrictions and refusal by three states to host any

matches owing to the that has so far claimed more than 6,000 lives globally while infecting over 1,60,000 people.

India has so reported 114 positive cases for COVID-19 with two deaths.

Three-time winners Chennai Super Kings had suspended their camp on Saturday, after which their talisman Mahendra Singh Dhoni left the city.

The franchise owners are hoping that in case the IPL starts on April 15, the state governments, which have denied permission for matches, will be ready to give the green light should the situation improves.

# B'desh Pak tour postponed indefinitely

**KARACHI:** The Pakistan and Bangladesh cricket boards on Monday decided to postpone the upcoming One-Day International and Test in Karachi indefinitely amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bangladesh were due to arrive in Karachi on March 29 to play an ODI on April 1 and the second ICC World Test C'ship Test from April 9-5.

"The two boards will now work together to identify a future opportunity to complete the ICC World Test Championship commitment," the PCB said in a statement.

The first Test of the series was played in Rawalpindi from February 7-10, which Pakistan



won by an innings and 44 runs. The PCB has also indefinitely postponed the Pakistan Cup one-day tournament, which was scheduled to start from March 24. The Sindh province, where Karachi is located, has reported the highest number of coron-

avirus cases in Pakistan — around 75.

The PCB has already been forced to revise the Pakistan Super League schedule and reduce its duration.

The decision to hold remaining matches behind closed doors in Karachi and Lahore after several foreign players left for home because of the travel issues due to the pandemic.

On Monday the PCB announced that Chris Lynn and David Wiese — and Sri Lankan leg-spinner, Seekkuge Prasanna had left for home.

The semi-finals of PSL will be held in Lahore in an empty Gaddafi stadium on Tuesday while the final is on Sunday. PTI

# Sharath relieved to be back in India after win

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's most decorated table tennis player Sharath Kamal won his first international title in 10 years on Sunday but midway into the competition, the 37-year-old was forced to wonder if he made the mistake of his life by travelling to Oman amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Monday the PCB announced that Chris Lynn and David Wiese — and Sri Lankan leg-spinner, Seekkuge Prasanna had left for home.

The Polish Open happening around the same time was suspended and the world body announced suspension of all activities until the end of April.

In these extraordinary times, confusion and chaos in the minds of the players was bound to follow. Sharath was in Muscat with other Indian players including singles number three Harmeet Desai.

"When I heard about the Polish Open being suspended, I thought I made a big, big mistake by coming here," Sharath, who was relieved to be back to his wife and kids in Chennai in the wee hours of Monday said.

As a precautionary measure, he has gone into self-quarantine at home though the screening at the Chennai Airport showed his body temperature was normal.

"In times like these, you obviously think about your family and they are worried about you. But when it was confirmed that the tournament would go on, I had to focus on the job," said the world number 38, who beat Portugal's Marcos Freitas in the final,

an opponent ranked 12 places higher than him.

It was a four-hour flight but Sharath said it felt much longer with a handful of people on the plane. "It was almost empty. It is really good to be back," he heaved a sigh of relief.

The Indian, whose previous title came in Egypt in 2010, battled past Freitas 4-2 in the final with the deciding game stretching to 17-15. It was his first win over his Portuguese opponent on the ITTF tour, having lost to him in German Bundesliga way back in 2010. Sharath was pushed to the limit in the semifinals also before pipping Russia's Kirill Skachkov in a seven-game contest.

"This tournament was my build up to the Olympics qualifiers but now that everything is suspended, I don't know how to feel. I won a tournament after a long time, my game is coming along nicely but there are no tournaments at least for the next one and a half months.

"Having said that, it is satisfying to come home with a title. Both final and semifinal was tough. Whenever I train with Freitas, I am losing most of the points but in the match, I was able to outguess him.

"He knew that forehand is my biggest weapon, so, he focussed on my back hand which worked beautifully last night. I had to go for my shots and they came off," he said.

Sharath's victory is a reminder that age is just a number and he doesn't understand the fuss over it.

"In India, we tend to focus on age a lot. In my view, it is a non-issue as long as the results are coming and you are feeling good about body," he added.

## Indian shooters take part in Olympic trials

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

It was business as usual for India's top shooters on Monday as they competed in the Olympic team selection trials at a time when a pandemic has brought daily life to a grinding halt around much of the world.

As the world around them battled the COVID-19 affliction, the sound of shots fired from their guns, rifles and their pistols reverberated across the

Karni Singh Shooting Range, tucked away in one corner of the national capital.

The likes of Manu Bhaker, Chinki Yadav, Apurvi Chandela, Mehuli Ghosh and Elavelin Valarivan, among others, participated in the trials for their respective pistol and rifle events.

India had last month pulled out of the Nicosia Shotgun World Cup and later the March 15-26 ISSF World Cup in Delhi was postponed to May — all

due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

"Due to India pulling out of the Nicosia Shotgun World Cup earlier this month and the postponement of the New Delhi combined World Cup due to the global COVID-19 outbreak, final trials are being conducted for those selected in the Indian squads for the above two mentioned World Cups, so that they can register their final remaining scores, before the Olympic team is announced."

## Chinese football teams rush home again to avoid virus



AFP ■ BEIJING

Most Chinese Super League (CSL) clubs fled abroad when the deadly coronavirus hit the country but they are now rushing back again as it takes hold elsewhere.

The national side is still training in Dubai — where many CSL teams also went in recent weeks — but they too are now making hasty arrangements to get home as soon as possible.

Wuhan Zall, from the city at the epicentre of the outbreak, had been training in Spain since late January but left at the weekend because of the

worsening situation in Europe, now the focal point of the pandemic.

Wuhan will reportedly continue their chaotic pre-season preparations in Shenzhen. Wuhan itself is still in lockdown, despite virus numbers in China reducing.

The CSL season was supposed to begin on February 22 but was indefinitely postponed. It could start behind closed doors in May, according to reports.

Leo Baptista, Wuhan's Brazilian attacker, told Chinese media before departing Spain that the situation "has flipped".

"We are more in danger (here). It now appears... better to leave," he said.

Fabio Cannavaro's CSL champions Guangzhou Evergrande, who were in Dubai, and runners-up Beijing Guoan are among the clubs that have recently returned to China.

Guangzhou R&F, coached by former Arsenal and Barcelona star Giovanni van Bronckhorst, on Monday became the latest club to say they were cutting short their Dubai training camp.

However, getting back to China is not straightforward because of flight disruptions and strict quarantine rules when coming home.

Wuhan Zall were stranded in Frankfurt, Germany on Sunday, according to Chinese media, and their current location was not immediately available.

The Beijing News reported that Li Tie's national team were curtailing their stint in Dubai and had planned to fly back to the Chinese capital from Dubai.

## Finch, Warner raise concerns over Aus COVID-19 measures



**MELBOURNE:** Australian white-ball captain Aaron Finch and opener David Warner have raised concerns over the effectiveness of the self-isolation policy of the government to tackle COVID-19 pandemic.

The Australian government had announced that anyone arriving in the

country from overseas will be forced to self-isolate for 14 days starting Sunday midnight (March 15) in a bid to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

However, a lot of citizens are confused regarding working of precaution.

An Australian sports journalist Veronica

Eggleton tweeted: "Genuine question — how does the government know if new arrivals are actually self-isolating?"

Finch re-tweeted Eggleton's tweet adding "Have been wondering the same thing!!"

Finch's remarks prompted a response from teammate Warner, who wrote "Or, what about the uber/taxi/bus/train they catch from the airport to their place?"

Players all over the world are self-isolating. On Monday, Kiwi pacer Mitchell McClenaghan, who was among several foreign players who left the ongoing PSL amid concerns over the affliction, posted a picture of himself self isolating.

"Straight home into isolation, get home to this note from my legendary wife who's gone to stay with her parents for a few weeks. See you guys in 14 days," he tweeted.

## HI postpone all jr, sub-jr national c'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hockey India on Monday postponed all its junior and sub-junior national championships, which were scheduled to start from April 10, in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, hoping to resume by the end of next month should the situation improve.

The decision was taken by the Hockey India Executive Board following growing concerns around COVID-19 situation in India.

"Keeping in mind the safety of the

players, Hockey India has taken a decision to postpone the annual National Championships for Junior, Sub-Junior Men and Women categories," Hockey India President Mohd Mushtaq Ahmad said in a statement.

The tournaments suspended add up to eight.

"Although we have announced the new dates for these National Championships, Hockey India will continue to monitor and evaluate the COVID-19 situation in India and we will be prepared for any scenario," he added.

around the same time was suspended and the world body announced suspension of all activities until the end of April.

In these extraordinary times, confusion and chaos in the minds of the players was bound to follow. Sharath was in Muscat with other Indian players including singles number three Harmeet Desai.

"When I heard about the Polish Open being suspended, I thought I made a big, big mistake by coming here," Sharath, who was relieved to be back to his wife and kids in Chennai in the wee hours of Monday said.

As a precautionary measure, he has gone into self-quarantine at home though the screening at the Chennai Airport showed his body temperature was normal.

"In times like these, you obviously think about your family and they are worried about you. But when it was confirmed that the tournament would go on, I had to focus on the job," said the world number 38, who beat Portugal's Marcos Freitas in the final,

an opponent ranked 12 places higher than him.

It was a four-hour flight but Sharath said it felt much longer with a handful of people on the plane. "It was almost empty. It is really good to be back," he heaved a sigh of relief.

The Indian, whose previous title came in Egypt in 2010, battled past Freitas 4-2 in the final with the deciding game stretching to 17-15. It was his first win over his Portuguese opponent on the ITTF tour, having lost to him in German Bundesliga way back in 2010. Sharath was pushed to the limit in the semifinals also before pipping Russia's Kirill Skachkov in a seven-game contest.

"This tournament was my build up to the Olympics qualifiers but now that everything is suspended, I don't know how to feel. I won a tournament after a long time, my game is coming along nicely but there are no tournaments at least for the next one and a half months.

"Having said that, it is satisfying to come home with a title. Both final and semifinal was tough. Whenever I train with Freitas, I am losing most of the points but in the match, I was able to outguess him.

"He knew that forehand is my biggest weapon, so, he focussed on my back hand which worked beautifully last night. I had to go for my shots and they came off," he said.

Sharath's victory is a reminder that age is just a number and he doesn't understand the fuss over it.

"In India, we tend to focus on age a lot. In my view, it is a non-issue as long as the results are coming and you are feeling good about body," he added.

Wuhan Zall were stranded in Frankfurt, Germany on Sunday, according to Chinese media, and their current location was not immediately available.

The Beijing News reported that Li Tie's national team were curtailing their stint in Dubai and had planned to fly back to the Chinese capital from Dubai.

The Beijing News reported that Li Tie's national team were curtailing their stint in Dubai and had planned to fly back to the Chinese capital from Dubai.

around the same time was suspended and the world body announced suspension of all activities until the end of April.

In these extraordinary times, confusion and chaos in the minds of the players was bound to follow. Sharath was in Muscat with other Indian players including singles number three Harmeet Desai.

"When I heard about the Polish Open being suspended, I thought I made a big, big mistake by coming here," Sharath, who was relieved to be back to his wife and kids in Chennai in the wee hours of Monday said.

As a precautionary measure, he has gone into self-quarantine at home though the screening at the Chennai Airport showed his body temperature was normal.

"In times like these, you obviously think about your family and they are worried about you. But when it was confirmed that the tournament would go on, I had to focus on the job," said the world number 38, who beat Portugal's Marcos Freitas in the final,

an opponent ranked 12 places higher than him.

It was a four-hour flight but Sharath said it felt much longer with a handful of people on the plane. "It was almost empty. It is really good to be back," he heaved a sigh of relief.

The Indian, whose previous title came in Egypt in 2010, battled past Freitas 4-2 in the final with the deciding game stretching to 17-15. It was his first win over his Portuguese opponent on the ITTF tour, having lost to him in German Bundesliga way back in 2010. Sharath was pushed to the limit in the semifinals also before pipping Russia's Kirill Skachkov in a seven-game contest.

"This tournament was my build up to the Olympics qualifiers but now that everything is suspended, I don't know how to feel. I won a tournament after a long time, my game is coming along nicely but there are no tournaments at least for the next one and a half months.

"Having said that, it is satisfying to come home with a title. Both final and semifinal was tough. Whenever I train with Freitas, I am losing most of the points but in the match, I was able to outguess him.

"He knew that forehand is my biggest weapon, so, he focussed on my back hand which worked beautifully last night. I had to go for my shots and they came off," he said.

Sharath's victory is a reminder that age is just a number and he doesn't understand the fuss over it.

"In India, we tend to focus on age a lot. In my view, it is a non-issue as long as the results are coming and you are feeling good about body," he added.

Wuhan Zall were stranded in Frankfurt, Germany on Sunday, according to Chinese media, and their current location was not immediately available.

The Beijing News reported that Li Tie's national team were curtailing their stint in Dubai and had planned to fly back to the Chinese capital from Dubai.

The Beijing News reported that Li Tie's national team were curtailing their stint in Dubai and had planned to fly back to the Chinese capital from Dubai.

# vivacity

VIN DIESEL TO  
MAKE A MUSIC  
DEBUT

-P 14



## SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND HELP OTHERS

Time is valuable and most people understand that. When you take time out of your day to help a friend, they remember it. I try and do a guest webinar every couple of weeks for contacts so they know I'm willing to take time out of my day to share my experience with the community. Even if it's not something as public as a webinar or podcast, set aside some time to help a contact. It could be as simple as helping them move to a new home, writes **TEAM VIVA**

One of the easiest ways to help others is to simply share your knowledge. You don't have to be in front of a classroom to teach. Every day there is an opportunity to educate someone about your area of expertise. The key is to keep educating yourself so you can stay ahead of the curve.

The number one rule of helping people should be to find out what's actually valuable to someone. You may spend time and effort helping someone with something that they didn't even want help with. Make an effort to ask them where they need help, and keep that in mind when you see an opportunity.

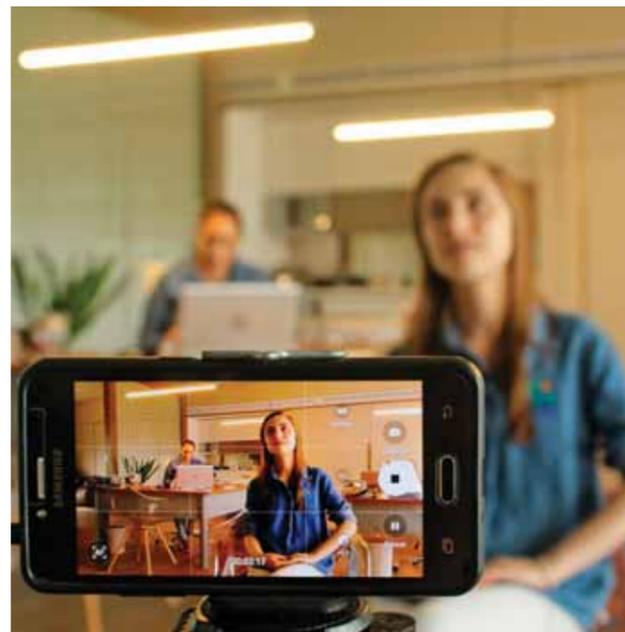
Think about the resources you've invested in and be mindful of whether they can help someone else. Maybe a developer on your team has some extra time and one of your contacts needed some help on a quick job.

It's important to keep an eye out for opportunities. It could be good press, a potential partner, or a general business opportunity. Once you see an opportunity, think about who could benefit from knowing about it.

Transparent feedback can be tough because some people don't take constructive criticism well. There is a difference between telling someone that they suck and giving them good examples of how they can improve. Some people won't take it well but, in the long run, you will help the people that you want to work with and improve the efficiency and success of your company as well. Without a doubt, the fastest way to achieve success is to first help others succeed. Yet, there seems to be a belief in the business world that the only way to get ahead is to only watch out for 'number one'.

Time is valuable and most people understand that. When you take time out of your day to help a friend, they remember it. I try and do a guest webinar every couple of weeks for contacts so they know I'm willing to take time out of my day to share my experience with the community. Even if it's not something as public as a webinar or podcast, set aside some time to help a contact. It could be as simple as helping them move to a new home.

Giving honest feedback in a respectful and constructive



way is one of the most difficult things for people to learn to do well. Many people don't like confronting issues and would rather dance around them, while those who do like confrontation often aren't respectful or constructive in the way they give it. But those who can learn the skill of giving honest and open feedback in a constructive and uplifting way can have a tremendous impact on improving the lives of others.

Be willing to introduce people to others you know who can help advance or forward their goals. When you have a networking event to attend, invite people to come with you that could benefit from expanding their network as well. The more you open up your network to others, the more you will find your own network expanding, and you might just be amazed at the incredible contacts you end up receiving from the most unlikely people.

There are a variety of ways to give someone recognition. You can include them in an article that you've written or mention them in a speech or presentation. An easy way to recognise someone is to nominate them for an award. There are countless awards out there that could really help out your network. It will mean a lot to the nominee that you thought of them and wanted to recognise them.

Gifts can be tricky because you don't want to "buy" peoples' favour. You want to get them a gift that makes sense and will help them. When Hurricane Sandy hit, we sent care packages with items that survivors could use as they recovered from the devastation. People tend to remember who helped them when they were in need, so it's important to make an extra effort during these times.

When someone has a failing strategy, it is often difficult for the person to even see it let alone know how to change it. You can be helpful at bringing people to reality. Do this in a kind way following the Golden Rule,

**Be willing to introduce people to others you know who can help advance or forward their goals. When you have a networking event to attend, invite people to come with you that could benefit from expanding their network as well. The more you open up your network to others, the more you will find your own network expanding, and you might just be amazed at the incredible contacts you end up receiving from the most unlikely people**

and you will rarely go wrong. If you avoid getting involved with failing people, you are just letting them drift along with their suboptimal condition, which wastes their precious time and hurts the organisation.

Taking time out of your day to coach other people adds perspective and helps prevent burnout. Thinking positive thoughts about what someone could become with the right development is a welcome break from the pressure cooker of critical decisions and time commitments. You will find yourself looking forward to your "people development time" once you get in the habit.

When you make the effort to remember the important details of others' lives, such as their spouse's name, their children, their hobbies, etc. your ability to be a positive impact in their life increases tremendously. It lets the other person know how

important they are to you. It lets them know that you truly care about their life. The more a person knows that you genuinely care about them, the more they will in turn move heaven and earth to help you with the things you want. And with the contact tracking tools available on our electronic devices today, it is incredibly simple to make quick notes about people so your memory can always be fresh.

Helping others isn't always easy. It can sometimes derail your schedule and cost you time, money and other resources. It can even be interpreted the wrong way. However, keep these tips in mind for some easy ways to show your connections that they truly matter to you.

Inherently, we know we have been designed to live for something greater than ourselves. Our contribution to this world has to be measured by something more meaningful than the size of our house or the neighborhood where it is located. And our lives are going to find lasting significance in how we choose to live them and how we enable others to live theirs.



Trend Blazer

Sara attends Ganga aarti despite Corona

Netizens were shocked to see actress SARA ALI KHAN attending the Ganga aarti and walking in the crowded streets of Varanasi despite the coronavirus pandemic.

Sara took to Instagram and posted a video in which she is seen giving a short tour of one of the crowded streets of Varanasi.

"Namaste Darshako. Banaras ki galliyo se... oh what a lovely day. So much fun, such little you pay. If only in Varanasi one could stay," she captioned the video.

Seeing Sara's videos, netizens asked her to take precautionary measures due to coronavirus. "Please wear mask Sara," a user commented.



I am blessed to work with Farhan Akhtar. I learnt a lot from him...it feels good to work with such a fantastic actor at the initial stage of your career. I really enjoyed watching Bhaag Milkha Bhaag. The amount of hard work he had gone through, be it physically, was impeccable... and he did the same for Toofaan. He really inspires me.

—Mrunal Thakur

Megastar AMITABH BACHCHAN's Marathi film *Ab Anni Cd*, which was released last week, is not running in the theatres anymore due to the Coronavirus outbreak. The film will now release later.

The decision was taken after the shutdown of cinema halls in several regions, including Delhi, Kerala and Maharashtra.

He said, "We've pushed the release date for our film knowingly as we need to concentrate on safety. It should be the priority. The response we received till now has been overwhelming."

Diesel confirms his debut as musician

High octane action star VIN DIESEL aims to conquer the pop charts by releasing his first album.

The *Fast and Furious* actor has previously shown off his musical skills as a performer at the 2017 Billboard Latin Music Awards, while he also treated fans to a remix of singer Selena Gomez's collaboration with Kygo, *It Ain't Me*.

Confirming the project is in development during an appearance on America's *The Late Late Show with James Corden*, the actor said: "I am honest with you... my kids love when I sing, it's kind of JRR Talkien."



# HOW FAR CAN WE TAKE LOVE?

Actor TILLOTAMA SHOME asks this all-important question through her new film on social conflicts in human relationships, *Is Love Enough? Sir*. By CHAHAK MITTAL

Marriage is a highly regulated institution in Indian society, even when it is a result of a love match. Suddenly, it becomes a matter of a social contract, where the whole caste, class and education dynamic comes into play. We may claim urban aspirations and refinements but class differences in love and relationships aren't typical of Jane Austen's England. They exist just as overtly and not so overtly even today.

Actor Tillotama Shome's forthcoming feature film, directed by Rohena Gera, *Is Love Enough? Sir*, revolves around the relationship between a rich man (played by Vivek Gumber) and a housemaid (played by Tillotama). The latter struggles to acknowledge her feelings for Vivek, keeping in mind the restrictions and prejudices of society, something she doesn't want to be defined by. The film comments on the deep-rooted class differences in India and how a relationship between two people from different strata is looked at only in an exploitative set-up and never part of a normal discourse. The interesting bit about this film is that the housemaid is as much aware and doesn't want to cross the line for her own sake rather than giving in to the comforts of a rich life.

How difficult was it internalising this conflict? Says Tillotama, "Love, they say, is blind. But I think there are a lot of factors — social, propriety, status, a person's background — which matter more. Marriage is a social contract and all these things are properly scanned before marriages get fixed. So I think, love is not so blind at all. It's actually quite harshly determined. Like any other contract, there is a lot of scrutiny even here. It is not only about love but about a lot of things other than the pure emotion it is meant to be. We will never choose to fall in love across the class barrier. Which is why the film questions — is love enough for two people to be together?"

Throughout her career graph, Tillotama has embodied characters from the lower strata of society, the last being *Nayantara's Necklace*. Why did she say yes to *Sir*? "When I was offered the

role, I felt the story was about the very thing that we would criticise if it happened in reality or even feel guilty about. We live in a society where we judge people who work for us or belong to the lower strata and we cannot imagine falling in love with them. I felt that this is the reality of the world I live in. No matter how progressive and liberal I think I am, ultimately, I have this prejudice that breathes and grows inside me. Even after watching so many great films or reading books, I myself would not choose to have feelings for someone who works at my home. I can watch *Parasite* and be blown away by it but I can't pretend that I don't have biases in my own head. It would never allow me to fall in love with such a person because of the work s/he does," she tells us.

Certainly. But that leaves us with another question — how far can we take it even if we do fall in love with our house-help? Tillotama feels that it completely depends on a person's choice. She says, "It depends on how much can I transgress? How much am I willing to loiter or take on society's judgement? How much courage and strengths do I have to battle the prejudices and comments that society's going to throw at me for the rest of my life? It's because I have done something that doesn't fit into people's idea of propriety. Hence, it comes down to a deeply personal choice."

At the same time, the *Hindi Medium* actor feels that one can-



not be prescriptive about it. "We are not talking about making inter-class relationships mandatory. It is not some moral science lesson. It is a choice that each one of us needs to reconcile with deep within ourselves and accordingly decide whether we can live with it. Decisions happen when you challenge your own mentality. So we cannot be prescriptive about it ki 'karna hi chahiye'," she adds.

Films like *Bobby* (1973), *Raja Hindustani* (1996), *Laadla* (1994) and more have been examples of the class divide though all of them were done in a masala entertainer format. What stands out in *Sir* is the process of realisation and actualisation of the choice in the real world. Says Tillotama, "In *Sir*, the explanation is more from the point of time when they acknowledge their feelings for each other. It is about acknowledging each other and becoming suddenly aware of their desires and acting upon them. In a typical love story, girl and boy meet and realise that 'oh, there's something between them,' kiss and follow it up with a 'happily ever after' phase. But here, only the acknowledgment of their desire is more important for them because this isn't something they had planned or expected. They certainly don't know how to articulate it or do anything about it. It's a helpless situation and it's almost

becoming a prisoner of your own desires because the expression of it is not something that the society would embrace happily or even have any taste for."

She adds that such an affair is only something that can be accepted in the world of pornography in India. "If you search or talk about such stories, the only thing that comes up is pornography. I realised that the only situation in which we can imagine a home servant and the owner together is in the most exploitative context of pornography," she says.

Be it *Nayantara's Necklace*, where Tillotama's character is a social wannabe who faces a moral question in the end or *Qissa: The Tale of a Lonely Ghost*, where her character's life is disrupted and shaped by India's brutal Partition, Tillotama's roles have always pushed the frontiers of societal gaze. How does she select her roles? "If I get to learn a new accent, dialogue, language or some kind of action/physical activity, I would definitely go for it. I like to constantly add something new to my skill set. The other major factor is the script. It has to be the hero. If it's not a hero on the pages, it can't be that on the screen. These are two primarily important things that I look for. But yes, at the same time, I don't want to be the flag-bearer of independent, serious cinema. I am an actor and don't want to take myself too seriously. I am very much open to do all kinds of works," she tells us.

Well, her recent role in web series, *Mentalhood*, of a loud-mouthed Punjabi woman proves that. She says, "She may be loud and crass but she is still a human." And she is a humane artiste.

(The film releases on March 20.)

## B-town shines despite the Big C

Zee Cine Awards, though a closed door event, was a star-studded gala



Global health guidelines may have warned against large gatherings and public events owing to the Coronavirus pandemic but can that ever dampen Bollywood's mood to celebrate, especially when the event in question is about scooping up awards and enjoying live performances by the superstars?

If you were at the Zee Cine Awards, pandemic would probably be the last word in your mind. It was a star-studded gala where Hrithik Roshan, Ranveer Singh and Sara Ali Khan's dance performances had them asking for more. Of course, for the sake of caution, the general public was not allowed entry and there was no red carpet either.

Among B-Town A-listers spotted keeping the shutterbugs busy with their style quotient and posing were Ayushmann Khurrana, Kartik Aaryan, Ananya Panday, Taapsee Pannu, Kriti Sanon, Nora Fatehi, Rakul Preet Singh, Tara Sutaria and Urvashi Rautela. Govinda came with wife Sunita, while fashion

designer Manish Malhotra was spotted giving photo-ops.

Ranveer Singh lived up to his image of being an outrageous dresser, flaunting shock value in fashion as always in a shiny black coat that had gaudy, multi-coloured motifs all over. He insisted on keeping his deep-tinted Harry Potter shades on even when he was sitting inside the dimly-lit venue.

If you do keep track of who won what, Ranveer won the Best Actor (Male) in a Leading Role award for his performance in *Gully Boy* while actress Taapsee Pannu won the Best Actress award for her role in *Badla*. Posting a photo with the trophy on social media, Taapsee wrote, "The first one for 'Naina Sethi'."

Ranveer returned on stage to collect the Best Onscreen Pair trophy along with Siddhant Chaturvedi for *Gully Boy*, while Siddhant was also declared Best Male Debutant for the same film. Ananya Panday won Best Female Debutant for *Student Of The Year 2*. "Blessings on Blessings," wrote Ranveer alongside an image in which he is



seen flaunting his trophies. Ayushmann Khurrana was declared "Best Entertainer of the Year" while Kartik Aaryan won the Best Comic Performance award for his role in *Pati Patni Aur Woh*.

The Best Music award winners were Sachet-Parampara for *Kabir Singh* while Parvez Shaikh, Paul Jennings, Oh Sea Young and Franz Spilhaus shared the Best Action trophy for *War*. The Best Choreography award went to Bosco-Caesar for the number *Jai Jai Shiv Shankar* in *War*, and the film also won Best Visual Effects.

The awards will air on Zee TV and Zee Cinema on March 28.

—ANS



## Facing life without entertainment has people thinking how they'd fill the extra time in home quarantine

Overheard as the entertainment world stalled in response to the coronavirus outbreak: "What are we going to do now, read books?" That's exactly what Pamela Milam will be doing, and lots of them.

Milam is a selection reader for the Women's National Book Association, a nonprofit established in 1917 to support, well, reading. She and her colleagues began a marathon this month to make it through as many as 100 books each as they help develop the organisation's annual Great Group Reads list for National Reading Group Month in October.

She's also an avid theatre-goer. She lives in the heart of Times Square and goes to the theatre about once a week, but when Broadway and many other entertainments canceled, cut back seating or postponed performances last week, Milam knew exactly how she'd fill the extra time.

"I'm happy snug on my couch. I'll do my best to make the most of that," she said. Many concert tours, awards shows, festivals, museums, sporting events and more have shut down to help "flatten the curve" as the virus spreads around the globe. Bans on big and medium-size gatherings are proliferating, prompting more people to hunker down at home.

"We're catching up on our reading. I just started *Love in the Time of Cholera*. It seemed appropriate," said Beverly Pfeiffer in Silver Spring, Maryland, of the Gabriel Garcia Marquez classic that, spoiler alert, doesn't actually involve cholera.

Other people are working more, especially now that they're doing it from home. Some have upped their kitchen game by taking on fussy recipes and baking projects. One company that offers online courses has seen a huge jump in business, as has another that sells digital photo scanning services.

Interior designer Genevieve Gorder, co-host of the Netflix series *Stay Here*, asked followers on Instagram to share home improvement goals that had been lingering at the bottom of to-do lists. Cleaning blinds, a basement sort-out and deck repairs are now on front

burners.

Devotees of opera and art are being treated to special live streams and virtual tours. Museums have joined a social media movement started by the Museum of the City of New York to offer art and other imagery using the hashtag #MuseumMomentofZen.

While a few are heading outdoors, some folks who are shunning or shut out of their exercise classes are working out new routines at home.

Cynthia Shaw in Brooklyn is a classical pianist and piano teacher who regularly gathers with students and friends who play for each other. Since many in their group of eight or so are older, including some in their 80s, they're giving up their monthly home gatherings for now, but played Sunday using a video conferencing platform instead. "Some of the older members had a hard time figuring it out, but they did," she said. "I had my computer set up next to the piano. I played the first movement of a Beethoven sonata. People played Chopin. There was some Gershwin. I think we'll do it again."

Elsewhere, the TV binge is definitely on with some new gems on offer. The Walt Disney Co will release *Frozen 2* on Disney+ over several months early to give families cooped up by the coronavirus a welcome distraction, and give its streaming service a boost. For documentary lovers, Netflix is rolling out new features and series from acclaimed creators, including *The Innocence Files*, *Jeffrey Epstein: Filthy Rich* and *David Attenborough: A Life on Our Planet*.

Psychotherapist Jeff Larsen in San Diego has a plan, for himself and his clients. "It's all about slowing down," he said. "So absolutely pick up that book that's been gathering dust, watch that movie or binge-watch that TV show that you haven't had time to watch. Most importantly, it's the mindset that we, as humans, need to have going into this time period. It's always a good thing when we can slow down and simplify our lives."

—AP

# KHAN BABA FOREVER

Ustad BISMILLAH KHAN was the most simple, humble and divine artiste, says DR KAVITA ARYA as she pens a memoir on his 104th birth anniversary

As an admirer and a resident of Ustad Bismillah Khan's city, Varanasi, I enjoyed the privilege of visiting him at his residence several times. He was very affectionate to me and treated me as his granddaughter. Nai Sadak, Beniyabaugh that time was one of the dirtiest, narrow and poverty-stricken lanes of Varanasi. I would wonder how a legend like Khan had the humility to bloom in its deepest recesses. But Bismillah *sa'ab* himself described it as "*Banaa*" and "*ras*", a place with the essence of delight. That's why he has become a metaphor of the city itself.

The title of Bharat Ratna had not been conferred on him back then but he had already carved his place in my heart. I remembered the day I went to his house. Finally, we were in front of an unassuming door, which had a modest nameplate bearing his name. With nobody to guard, none to stop or ask any question, it was open and led straight to an inner verandah. The cemented floor was dotted with repaired patches here and there; the walls, too, had not been white-washed for a long time and wore an old look. A few family members were there, engaged casually in the daily core. Habituated to see unknown visitors, they gave us a cursory look and without asking any question a teen-aged girl pointed towards the staircase. Everything seemed so informal, natural and homely that we began feeling as if we were in our own home.

No one accompanied us but as indicated, we reached straight to the second floor room in which Ustad lived. The room and the adjacent terrace served as his usual place to meet visitors who often included national and international celebrities and dignitaries. The room, like the rest of the household, had nothing to boast of, without any pomp and show that one



might expect in the house of a great artist. It had a tin shade without any false sealing and a simple table fan kept in one corner.

Surrounded by nearly a dozen people, he was sitting on a simple cot knitted with packthread. Talking to everyone with his characteristic affection, he saw us hesitating at the door and called us in. I looked around for a vacant chair; there was none. Without waiting or asking anyone, Ustadji himself went

**You have to put your soul into the song. Then only the sur shall arrive some day. It has visited me just twice or thrice in my whole life, the rest that I play is just a feeble remembrance of those rare moments**  
—USTAD BISMILLAH KHAN

out and brought two plastic chairs. It is difficult for me to believe that the great old man of Indian music himself brought a chair for me, a college student. With the conversations going on in the room, I came to know that the visitors were family members of

Daler Mehndi, the renowned singer. Baba, as I started calling him from that very day, did not know who Daler Mehndi was. That lack of curiosity was not unusual considering he did not worry about his self-image at all. That day, too, he was wearing

a simple *lungi* and a multi-holed vest. His unconsciousness about appearances was no less remarkable than his music. Within seconds I was oblivious of the filth and stink outside and his great stature. But I can never forget the eternal gleam on his face and his blissful eyes. It seemed as if he survived only by the nectar and rhythm of music.

In later years of my life, I met a number of artists and well-known people but none was so simple, humble and heavenly. When I touched his feet, he blessed me with an affectionate smile, asking me which class I was studying in and if I could sing. I sang a film's song, "*Kabhi khwab mein ya khayaal mein...*" He appreciated my immature singing and repeatedly blessed me with many words in such a way that visitors became curious about me. Baba said, "Everyone should sing. It is necessary. Keep singing, whether you are cooking or washing clothes or taking a stroll, just keep singing." He loved cold drinks and offered it to everyone. When he got Bharat Ratna, people suggested he should buy a ceiling fan and give a facelift to his house. His reply was again characteristic, "Has the Bharat Ratna changed the colour of my blood or has it changed my face?" He could have asked anyone to improve his lane; the authorities would have done so without making any fuss but the thought of seeking any such favour never crossed his mind.

I used to visit him every now and then but couldn't go for a long time when I was busy with my research work. Later I went to seek his blessings after my marriage to Rishi. Baba blessed me profusely and complained in the same breath, "Your husband? Blessings to both of you. Where were you all these years? Don't you think you should see your Baba? As atonement, you will have to cook my meal today." And then he jokingly added, "Don't

be afraid, my granddaughters will help you... And you gentleman, you have got the best of them as your life partner. She is a gem. She sings so well. You also sing?" Rishi, a regular singer, sang two songs but Baba was not impressed and said: "No, not up to mark. You have to put your soul into it. Then only the *sur* shall arrive some day. It has visited me just twice or thrice in my whole life, the rest that I play is just a feeble remembrance of those rare moments."

While talking or listening to someone, Baba would suddenly start punctuating the song with his immortal voice. Those sporadic punctuations formed the most precious and memorable moments for the gathering. Coming out of his lane, I asked Rishi, "You have always been a better singer than me but why could you not give your best today?" He replied, "Ignorance is bliss. You are ignorant of his stature; to you, he is simply your Baba. I know how great he is. It was the consciousness of his greatness that kept hovering upon me as long as I was sitting in his presence."

But Baba himself was never conscious of his own presence. It was only the music that mattered. In his own words, it was *ibaadat*. I find no parallel for this word in any other language. Any place where he could sit and sing was *ibaadat* for him. Often, it used to be the Hanuman temple at Manikarnika Ghat. Baba had a great reverence for Kashi Vishwanath and swore in typical *Banarasi Boli* when terrorists attacked the Sankat Mochan. He used to say, those who spread hate are neither Muslim nor Hindu.

Sometimes I miss him and want to ask, "Baba, don't you think you should come and see your granddaughter?" But then I wonder, had he been alive, how much pained he might have felt in the atmosphere prevailing today.

(The writer is an assistant professor, department of English, MGK Vidyapith, Varanasi.)



## Met Opera, orchestras cancel performances

The Metropolitan Opera canceled performances and rehearsals through March 31 due to fears of the coronavirus spreading, leaving singers scrambling to get home and costing the financially-challenged company millions of dollars.

The move was announced Thursday, one day after US President Donald Trump announced a suspension of travel to the US from Europe for 30 days starting Friday. Met General Manager Peter Gelb said it was too early to determine whether the company will resume for any part of the remainder of its season, which runs through May 9. "With health authorities urging social distancing with greater emphasis, it is simply untenable for us to continue to perform, as it puts our artists, staff and audience at risk," Gelb said.

Among the 21 canceled Met Opera performances were this Saturday's matinee of a new staging of Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer* (*The Flying Dutchman*) that was to have been televised to film theaters around the world. Also canceled was a March 29 recital by Soprano Diana Damrau with Royal Opera music director Antonio Pappano at the piano. "We do not have business interruption insurance. In fact, I don't believe any of the performing arts companies, or at least none of the others I've been talking to, have it," Gelb said in a telephone interview. "There are many ticket buyers who we hope might consider gifting us the tickets they've already purchased rather than asking for refunds."

Gelb said the orchestra, chorus and other full-time union members will be kept on payroll at least through the end of March. Many of the Met's singers and conductors travel regularly from Europe.

Soprano Anna Netrebko posted on Instagram that she would not be traveling to New York for performances of Puccini's *Tosca* that had been scheduled to start March 26. Gelb said if the season resumes, it would be more difficult to pull together productions that have not yet been on stage this season. "Our casting is totally compromised because many of the artists who were scheduled for these performances can't even get to this country," he said. "And those who were in this country would like to get out."

Carnegie Hall also announced it was closing its doors at midnight Thursday for all public events through the end of March, canceling performances from The Philadelphia Orchestra, Angélique Kidjo, the Castalian String Quartet and Musical Armenia. The New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony and Los Angeles Philharmonic also announced plans to close.

The Philadelphia Orchestra and music director Yannick Nézet-Séguin went ahead with Thursday night's world premiere of Iman Habibi's *Jeder Baum spricht* (*Every tree speaks*) at an empty Verizon Hall and streamed the performance on its website.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organisation, people with mild illness recover in two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. —AP

## Animal farm

Known as the most prestigious practitioner of Gond art, Bhajju Shyam's work has a rare uniqueness that embodies the entire range of human emotions through folk imagery. By UMA NAIR

Gond artist Bhajju Shyam has carved a space for himself in India's art landscape by combining tradition and simple beliefs with acquired techniques of expression. And he uses folk motifs as urban metaphors. For example, he had once pictured an airport as a gobbling bird. So there is a rootedness that informs his works, some of which are on display at the Ojas Art Gallery.

Among 50 artworks of different genres of folk and indigenous arts of the country, the work of Padma Shri Bhajju Shyam stands tall. There is not just compositional control but a felicity and fluidity with contours and colour tones. Known as the most prestigious practitioner of Gond art, Shyam's work has a rare uniqueness that embodies the entire range of human emotions through animal

imagery. In an interview to me last year he had said, "I'm constantly finding new subjects and metaphors from the stories of the Gond tradition. That comes from the cradle, we are born with it and I cannot deviate from my being. My inspiration is my uncle Jangarh Singh Shyam. Whenever I mixed colours for him in his palette, he would share stories and thoughts with me. They stayed on and I draw on them for my interpretations."

### Nau Rupī Macchli

The piece de resistance among the artist's works is *Naur Rupī Macchli*, which translates as a fish-shaped boat. You have to admire the intricate details of Gond art and the thoughts behind the creation in this beautifully-painted work of two large fish, a bird and smaller fish around them. Characteristic of Gond art are Bhajju's teeming decorative patterns that fill the images. In order to highlight these patterns — which each artist develops for her/himself as a unique signature it — are their neatness and accuracy. Bhajju's versatility stands out for his perfection in the geometric patterns that he creates. That expertise comes from helping his mother with digna or the geometric pattern before he apprenticed under the masters of Jangarh. The colours are both neon-tinted and flat, yet he weaves in a robust balance of darkness and light to create a surreal syntax.



### Pawan

In another work titled *Pawan*, we see an idyllic simplicity. Worms and reptilian species dot the "tree of life" canvas but what stands is the continuity of tradition through antiquity that seems as just as relevant to modern contexts. Bhajju has a distinct approach and understanding; we see the way he fills in the details even as he plays with the beauty of concentric and geometric circles. There is a strong sense of symbolism in the manner in which he uses juxtaposition. While this varies from modern sensibility, it becomes a delicious blend of indigenous and contemporary explorations.

It also draws attention to the symbiotic relationship between nature and the individual. So when we see the work, there is a holistic pattern and aura of indigenous wisdom.

What has been your guiding force that made you achieve so many accolades at such a young age?

It's strongly and purely my parents' motivation and strength which has encouraged me to work day and night. My *amma* (mother) has always stood with me, right from my studies to various dance practices and performances. Even my Guru Dr Jayaprabha Menon has always remained my greatest inspiration. Every new class or a lesson taught by her is a great learning.

What made you choose Mohiniyattam as your specialisation?

I have been learning dance under prominent gurus since I was five years old. Mohiniyattam is the classical solo dance form of Kerala and has always inspired me with its *Abhinaya* (expressions) as it directly and easily connects with people. Its delicate body movements and subtle facial expressions brings a flow in your body. The other most important and beautiful factor is its grace which is very difficult to bring out.

How do you think classical Indian art forms have evolved over the years?

The classical Indian art forms have evolved overtime in terms of the facial expressions, footwork, hand movements, synchronisation and many other such factors.

## The right chord

Mohiniyattam dancer SRUTHI R KRISHNA says that the dance form has inspired her for its *Abhinaya* (expressions) as it directly and easily connects with the audience



How do you see your peers following classical art forms since youth are more inclined towards pop culture?

Even though pop culture is known and liked by many I feel that even now classical art forms, be it dance, music or anything else, is highly appreciated and valued by many, even youngsters. I have partic-

ipated in various competitions held by Delhi University. There I have always seen a rise in the number of participants for classical programmes every year. In fact, other state and district level competitions are conducted in and around Delhi for youngsters and kids who focus on classical art forms to inspire students.

### Amidst and beyond, a solo art exhibition

A series of paintings presented by Sadhna Jain, organised and curated by Jitendra Padam Jain, is influenced by a celebrated poet of the 20th century, Sumitra Nandan Pant. Pant's work highlights the beauty of nature and Sadhna reflects the same ideology in her artworks. WHEN: Till March 30 TIME: 10 am to 8 pm WHERE: Gallery Sree Arts, Sushant Lok, Gurugram.



Artist Sujith SN's solo show, *Seer-Seen* is a series of landscapes engulfed by the temporality of loitering and purpose, of documentation and discourse, of perspectives and views. WHEN: Till March 27 TIME: 10 am to 6 pm WHERE: Vadehra Art Gallery, D-53, Defence Colony.

Art Indus presents French artist Michel Testard's new exhibition — *Reminiscence of India, past and present* — which builds upon and expands on his lasting fascination for India. WHEN: Till March 31 WHEN: 6 pm onwards WHERE: Art Indus, Race Course Road, Chanakypuri.



Gallery 1000A presents *Miscellaneous and the mute*, a solo art show by JOSH PS. Josh's works speak the language of exploitation and resistance, of non-violence and bondage and the righteous desire for freedom. WHEN: Till March 31 TIME: 11 am to 7 pm WHERE: Gallery 1000A, old MB Road, Lado Sarai.



Art Life Gallery presents an exhibition of exquisite Akhovar and Sohrai folk paintings, the oldest form of wall paintings, from Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, made by tribal women artists. WHEN: Till March 21 WHERE: Art Life Gallery, C-97, Sector 44, Noida.

## WATCH OUT

# Euro 2020 fate to be determined today

AFP ■ LONDON

A decision over whether to postpone football's Euro 2020 by up to a year, with all the sporting and financial consequences that would entail, is set to be made when UEFA holds a crisis meeting on Tuesday as Europe battles the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

European football's governing body will hold a videoconference with representatives from all 55 member associations as well as from clubs and players bodies. UEFA will then hold an executive committee meeting at 1400 (1300 GMT) at their Swiss headquarters.

The future of the European Championship, due to take place for the first time in 12 different cities spread across the continent from June 12 to July 12, is up in the air along with those of the Champions League and Europa League.

The "dark scenarios" that UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin warned against envisaging when he spoke at the organisation's congress in Amsterdam just two weeks ago now have to be considered.

All of Europe's leading domestic leagues ground to a halt last week, while UEFA suspended all Champions League and Europa League games due to be played this week. Both tournaments are still in the last-16 stage.

Europe has become the epicentre of the coronavirus pandemic, with Italy and Spain on lockdown, France gradually following suit, and other countries closing borders to halt the spread of the outbreak. More than 1,800 people have died in Italy, which is supposed to host the opening game of Euro 2020 in Rome.

## POSTPONED FOR A YEAR?

The head of the Italian football federation, Gabriele Gravina, has already proposed that the Euro be postponed, with Italy coach Roberto Mancini calling for it to be pushed back 12 months.

"We would have won the European Championship this summer, we can also win it in 2021," Mancini told television station Rai Sport.

It is a position that many around the



From left, Portugal coach Fernando Santos, Germany coach Joachim Loew and France coach Didier Deschamps after being drawn in group F in the Euro 2020 Finals Draw in Bucharest, Romania, on November 30, 2019. UEFA/Twitter

continent are coming round to amid much uncertainty as to when club football can resume.

"UEFA has no choice. They have to postpone the Euro and the Champions League," one senior figure in the world game said, although finding agreement across the board may not be easy.

"There are people who want to play, and others who don't," French football federation president Noel Le Graet told broadcaster TF1 on Sunday.

German broadcaster ZDF reported that two possible options are on the table for the European Championship.

One is to push it back to 2021, although that is not as simple as it might appear, as it would need FIFA president

Gianni Infantino to agree to halting the inaugural edition of his highly lucrative Club World Cup, due to take place in June and July next year in China with some of Europe's top club sides involved.

FIFA offered "no comment" on Monday on the matter.

There is also the issue of the women's European Championship, scheduled to run from July 7 to August 1 next year in England, with the final at Wembley. The London venue is also supposed to hold the semi-finals and final of Euro 2020.

The alternative option, according to ZDF, is to maintain a Euro 2020 by playing it towards the end of the year.

That supposes that the crisis will have calmed down by then, and there is also the

issue of all the other football that has been suspended.

Le Graet said "it is probable" that all friendly matches scheduled to be played at the end of this month will be postponed. Play-off matches to decide the last four berths at Euro 2020 can be expected to go the same way.

In any case, world governing body FIFA has already moved to say that clubs no longer need to release players for the scheduled international dates.

They may come to a decision to try to complete the Champions League and Europa League by curtailing the competitions, meaning ties up to the semi-finals could be decided in one-off matches.

From a financial viewpoint, UEFA

## CL could be concluded with 4-day finals

FIANS ■ LONDON

In the wake of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Champions League can see both semi-finals and the final played over a four-day period in Istanbul.

According to a report in telegraph.co.uk, this idea is among a series of proposals to be put forward during emergency Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) video conference meetings on Tuesday.

If the idea is agreed, the same would apply to the Europa League where the final is due to take place in the Polish city of Gdansk.

Another idea which would be considered during Tuesday's meet is to condense all the games, including the quarter-finals and semi-finals, which would normally be over two-legs, home and away, into one-off matches to crammed into one week.

The UEFA plan would see the remaining last-16 ties being played as normal once football is allowed to return. During the meeting, they could also look at postponing Euro 2020 for an year.

would undoubtedly prefer postponing their flagship tournaments to cancelling them altogether, or playing matches behind closed doors.

In any case, the European Leagues grouping of almost a thousand clubs in 29 countries across the continent warned that "cooperation, coordination and flexibility are going to be essential".

## 'Football can wait'

Azzurri coach Mancini ready to play Euros in 2021

AFP ■ ROME

Italy coach Roberto Mancini said on Sunday he was ready for the European Championship to be postponed until 2021 amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"We would have won the European Championship this summer, we can also win it in 2021," Mancini told Italian television station Rai Sport.

"Let's wait to see what UEFA decides, but I adapt to everything, right now the priority is to save lives."

Italy are set to host the opening match in Rome on June 12, in a tournament which will be played in 12 countries across the continent.

"The fact is that the problems we are having now other nations will have shortly," continued the former Manchester City and Inter Milan coach.

"First of all we need to protect people's health, we have to wait for the peak, then when this situation begins to ease off we could start talking and decide everything later."

"When we return to our normal life, to football, we will be happier, we'll find freedom, be able to go back to matches at the stadium, have fun," added the 55-year-old.

"These dramatic situations can make you become better. I hope so."

Italy won all 10 of their Euro 2020 qualifying matches as they roared back under Mancini's guidance having failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

The approach Euro 2020 searching for just their second European title after winning in 1968.



## Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu has set its foot in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Being home to 130+ Crore people and many martial art forms, it's hard to believe that almost no one has heard about Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) and it has only recently started to take off in India and produced its First Black Belt.

Arun Sharma, Founder and Head Instructor of BJJ India and Jeet Kune Do Athletic Club India, recently earned his BJJ black belt after 13 years of training in the Art, from multiple times world champion and a 4th Degree Black Belt Rodrigo Teixeira from Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is a form of martial art that was developed by the Gracie family in the early 1910s. It is also known as The Gentle Art of Self Defense as it teaches its students to defend themselves without hurting the assailant by relying on techniques that are based on leverage and principles of physics, which also gives the smaller person to defend themselves against a bigger attacker without relying on speed and strength.

BJJ is also the fastest growing sport around the Globe. It is already a mainstream sport in the American and European countries and India is catching up with the rest of the world rapidly.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu can be practised as an art of self-defence, a sport or as a part of fitness regime. Some people also do it as an activity to socialise as worldwide BJJ community is known for being welcoming and friendly.

In the past 13 years, Arun has taught more than 150 free seminars in the rural areas of the country. His vision is to spread the art of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in India and he plans on doing it by making 1000 instructors which will allow people to see it as a viable career path as well.

Arun's journey in martial arts started at the age of 12 after he witnessed two of his friends getting killed with a knife. He started with Shaolin kung fu, Jeet Kune do (JKD) and Filipino Kali before ultimately finding that his true self and passion lied within Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

There weren't any Jiu-Jitsu Instructors in India when he started training. In 2004, the internet was not readily available in India so he used his father's work computer to watch videos of BJJ. That changed when Rodrigo Teixeira started visiting India from Brazil to give Arun private training without charging any fees.

Arun has been training the Indian special forces and NSG along with various other Military and Law Enforcement Agencies since he was 18 years old.

"Jiu-Jitsu for me is self-improvement every day and exorcising the demons within. Jiu-Jitsu has made me calmer, it has given me the skill of understanding that you can defend yourself without hurting the aggressor. It has taught me that you can be anywhere in the world and still help people by spreading the art. "I was an introvert and shy kid in school and it has really helped me out to bring out my personality, of helping people out and of making my passion, my career" said Arun.

Arun's Martial arts academy BJJ India, located in Malviya Nagar, Delhi, has now over 200 students enrolled with them. His students have participated in numerous tournaments and have accumulated over 15 Gold medals so far in the Nationals and International tournaments and now he hopes and envisions to spread the art in the upcoming times in India.



# Doubts grow in Japan over Olympics

AFP ■ TOKYO

Doubts are growing in Japan about the Tokyo Olympics, with growing opposition to holding them as scheduled and some urging officials not to risk lives by pressing ahead during the coronavirus emergency.

Officials like Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and International Olympic Committee chief Thomas Bach have repeatedly insisted preparations should continue to light the Olympic flame on July 24.

But with events from the Premier League to NBA basketball scrapped, and Japanese sport also at a standstill, even US President Donald Trump has suggested putting the Olympics on hold.

Japan has seen relatively few cases, with 814 testing positive and 24 dead. But some people on the streets of Tokyo voiced concern for the fans that would pour in from abroad.

Koki Miura, a 27-year-old employee at an internet company, said: "To be honest, even if Japan overcomes this crisis, we wouldn't receive visitors from the world. I think we'd better not hold it."

"We cannot sacrifice people's lives for it," added Miura, who said the Games should be postponed — if not cancelled outright.

Public opinion in Japan appears to be moving against the Games. A poll for public broadcaster NHK taken on March 6-9 suggested 45 percent were opposed to going ahead as

planned, with 40 percent in favour.

And a new poll of more than 1,000 people released Monday by Japan's Kyodo news agency showed 69.9 percent of respondents believe Tokyo will not be able to hold the Games as scheduled.

Tokyo governor Yuriko Koike has said it is "unthinkable" to cancel the Olympics but the decision rests with the IOC, which is planning emergency talks with international sports federations on Tuesday, according to an IOC source.

Bach has stressed the IOC will follow World Health Organization recommendations regarding a possible postponement. But he has also acknowledged that the cancellation of qualifying events was posing "serious problems".

At the beginning of March, Bach said the IOC would show "flexibility" regarding qualifications for the Tokyo, and encouraged "all athletes to continue to prepare" for the Games.

## 'LOOK AT THE PANIC'

Masao Sugawara, a 90-year-old pensioner, said: "Personally, I think it would be safer to postpone the Olympics for a year, just as President Trump said. Look at the panic."

"Of course it would be disappointing, though," he admitted.

M a n f r e d Otto, 45, a half-Japanese, half-German lawyer, said he was "worried" about the Games and stressed: "We really need to be careful."

"If the outbreak

## No deadline for decision on Olympics: IOC official

AP ■ SYDNEY

The leader of the IOC's co-ordination commission for the Tokyo Olympics said there is no May deadline to cancel the games and he remains confident the event will go ahead despite sports coming to a virtual standstill globally.

John Coates, who will have to go into government-mandated self-isolation when he returns to Australia this week from Olympic business in Europe, told the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper: "It's all proceeding to start on the 24th of July."

Dick Pound, a former IOC vice president, said in an interview with the Associated Press last month that the end of May loomed as a possible deadline for the IOC to make a call on the Tokyo Olympics.

But Coates, an IOC vice president



John Coates, the leader of IOC's coordination commission for Tokyo Olympics. AP/File Picture and head of the Australian Olympic Committee, told the paper in a telephone interview from Switzerland that the IOC didn't recognize the deadline and he thought Pound had backed away from it, too.

"It's never been the IOC's position. It was Dick's idea. There is four months to go," Coates told the newspaper on Monday.

does not get controlled by June or July, I think we should postpone it," said Otto.

The betting odds are increasingly shifting towards the opening ceremony not taking place on July 24. Bookmaker Paddy Power is offering 4-1 against the Games opening on time.

This comes as the virus — which has killed 6,400 people worldwide — shreds the international sporting calendar, with almost no elite sporting action taking place last weekend.

Preparations for the Games have already been affected, with qualifiers cancelled, test events scaled back and the Olympic torch arrival and relay altered.

Plans have been scrapped to involve hundreds of children in the torch's arrival

ceremony, while an exhibition and three events to display the flame have also been axed.

Cancelling the Olympics would be a heartbreaking decision for Tokyo residents who rushed to buy tickets, and authorities whose preparations have won widespread praise — with the majority of venues ready well ahead of schedule.

Hisaya Suzuki, 47, said he had tickets to see baseball, Japan's most popular sport.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, so I really wanted to take my son," he said, but added: "If there will be negative consequences, it may be wiser to pause it (the Games)."

Sugawara said the magnitude of the

## Oly flame handover ceremony in Athens behind closed doors

ATHENS (FIANS): Spectators will not be allowed inside the historic Panathenaic stadium on Thursday during the Olympic flame handover ceremony for Tokyo 2020, the Greek Olympic Committee said on Monday.

The ceremony will take place in the presence of Greece President Katerina Sakellariopoulou and a small delegation of the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, said the Hellenic Olympic Committee. "The Panathenaic Stadium will be closed to the public," it said.

"Tokyo 2020 has been informed that the Greek leg of the Olympic Torch Relay has been cancelled. However, we have been also informed that the Hellenic Olympic Committee has agreed to carry out the handover ceremony as planned on March 19, although there will be no public in attendance," the organising committee of the Olympics said in a statement.



coronavirus trumped sporting considerations.

"I am 90 years old. Except for wartime, I have never felt so worried."

## Don't lose spirit, keep focussing on training: Rijiju to athletes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With the coronavirus outbreak bringing all sports activities to a halt in the country, Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday urged the athletes to not lose spirit and keep working hard to stay battle ready for competitions.

"Due to coronavirus, sporting events and competitions are postponed temporarily but I appeal all our athletes not to lose the spirit, keep practicing and focus on your training," Rijiju wrote on his Twitter handle.

The government last

week imposed travel restrictions to control the spread of the virus, while the Sports Ministry also urged all national federations to follow the Health Ministry's advisory and avoid large gatherings in sports events.

Following the directives, the three-match ODI series against South Africa was called off, while the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL), which was due to start on March 29, was suspended till April 15.

The shooting World Cup and Indian Open Golf was postponed, while badminton's India Open was also deferred after Badminton World Federation (BWF) suspended all World Tour and sanctioned events, owing to the outbreak of the deadly disease.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The first two competitions of the Indian Grand Prix (IGP) series will be held without any spectators due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Competition Committee of Athletics Federation of India (AFI) said on Monday.

The second competition of the Indian Grand Prix series was scheduled to be held at Sangrur but it will now be held at NIS Patiala.

"IGP-1 will be held on 20th March 2020 and IGP-2 will be held on 25th March 2020 as per schedule. The venue of both the competition will be SAI NS-NIS Patiala," AFI said.

"Spectators will not be allowed inside the competition venue."

Given the health hazard, the AFI made it clear that "personal coaches, support staff or family members/friends of athletes

# No fans for IGP series

who are not part of the National Coaching Camp will not be allowed inside the competition venue."

The AFI also said that all the athletes coming from outside will be allowed to enter the NS-NIS campus only after a medical check-up by AFI/SAI medical team at the SAI NS-NIS gate.

The governing body also said that "all the athletes will be provided with an accreditation card" and they have to "leave the venue soon after completion of their event without waiting to witness other events."

As part of its many precautionary measures, the AFI also decided to strictly restrict the movement of competitors from NS-NIS entry gate to the athletics track and back.

"Those who are not part of



Muhammed Anas Yahya in file picture. PTI

the National Coaching Camps are not allowed to go to the residential hostels/guesthouses," it said.

The AFI Competition Committee also revised the events list for both the first and second competitions.

The events in the first competition include: Men's — 200m, 400m, 800m, 5000m, 400m Hurdles, Long Jump, Triple Jump, Shot Put & Javelin Throw; Women's — 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 5000m, Long Jump, Triple Jump, Shot Put, Javelin Throw.

And the events in the second competition are: Men's — 200m, 400m, 1500m, 5000m, 400m Hurdles, Long Jump, Triple Jump, Shot Put & Javelin Throw; Women's — 100m, 400m, 800m, 5000m, Long Jump, Triple Jump, Shot Put, Javelin Throw.