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LAST-HOUR PROFIT BOOKING**AVENUES 10**
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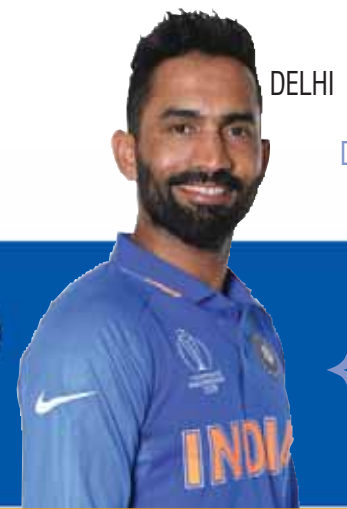
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KEY IS NOT TO
GET ATTACHED:
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12 SPORT

India's 2nd biggest evacuation

2L stuck abroad to be brought home; fee ₹50K from Europe, ₹1L from US

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As many as two lakh Indians stranded abroad amid coronavirus crisis and lockdown will be brought back by air and sea route from Thursday. The national carrier Air India will operate 64 flights between May 7 and 13 to bring back Indians stranded abroad. Those taking the special flights will be charged around ₹50,000 from Europe and ₹1 lakh from the USA.

Military transport planes and naval warships will also set out for Indians stuck in West Asia and the Maldives. This could be biggest ever exercise since Air India flew back 1,70,000 during the first Gulf War.

In the first phase, Air India will conduct all evacuation flights but as the numbers grow, private airlines will also be allowed to conduct such flights.

Sharing more information through video-conferencing, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said, Air India will operate 64 flights from May 7 to May 13 to bring back around 15,000 Indian nationals stranded abroad amid the Covid-19-induced lockdown.

"A passenger on a London-Delhi flight will be charged ₹50,000 and on a Dhaka-Delhi flight ₹12,000," the Minister said. "A comprehensive plan has been drawn out for distressed citizens stranded in foreign countries. These



include people whose visas have run out or they are deported or they went to (foreign) countries just before the lockdown. This is a special mission," the Minister said.

These 64 flights would be conducted by Air India and its subsidiary Air India Express to repatriate Indians from 12 countries such as the UAE, the UK, the US, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman.

India will conduct 10 flights to the UAE, seven flights each to the US and the UK, five flights to Saudi Arabia, five flights to Singapore and two flights to Qatar to repatriate Indian nationals between May 7 and May 13, the Minister said. During this time period,

India will also conduct seven flights each to Malaysia and Bangladesh, five flights each to Kuwait and Philippines, two flights each to Oman and Bahrain, Puri said.

According to Puri, the Government has received interest from about 1,90,000 people who are willing to come back to the country. But the numbers would be much higher at around 4,00,000.

The Minister said that the money charged from passengers would be lower than the cost of carrying these passengers. He added that the Air India is already receiving Government subsidies to stay afloat, and hence it would strain the national carrier further if these passengers are subsidised by the Government.



The Indian Navy has launched Operation Samudra Setu as part of the national effort to repatriate Indian citizens from overseas. Indian Naval Ships Jalashwa and Magar are presently en route to the port of Malé, Republic of Maldives to commence evacuation operations from May 8

PTI

"I have to go to Finance Minister every month to seek ₹500-600 crore of financial package for Air India," the Minister said. Puri said these flights are conducted on the basis of requests received from potential passengers who are willing to pay. If these evacuation flights are kept free, then people who can afford to pay will also unintentionally benefit.

On the first day of evacuation on May 7, 10 flights will bring back 2,300 Indians stranded because of airspace closures by various countries to slow the spread of coronavirus. Depending on the aircraft, each flight will have between 200 and 300 passengers to ensure social distancing.

The three ships deployed by the Navy are INS Shardul, INS Magar and INS Jalashwa. The INS Jalashwa, based in Visakhapatnam, has steamed into the Arabian Sea for the

mission.

The Indian Air Force has prepared about 30 aircraft, including Boeing Co's C-17 Globemaster and Lockheed Martin Corp's C-130J Super Hercules, for the mission.

Over 10K Indians tested positive, 84 died in Gulf nations so far

New Delhi: More than 10,000 Indians have tested positive in the Gulf countries, with 84 deaths recorded till now, news agency ANI quoted sources as saying. The figures came a few days before India starts evacuating its stranded citizens from several countries, including UAE that is home to a large diaspora.

India joins 'big 5' in daily Covid spike

In just 10 days, its numbers may surpass China's corona numbers

NAVIN UPADHYAY ■ NEW DELHI

Going by the total number of infections, India is the 15th worst affected country, but measured by the quantum of daily spike in absolute terms, India is now in the league of big 5 after the US, the UK, Russia and Brazil. In percentage terms — calculated on the basis of total positive cases — the volume of its daily rise leaves it only behind Russia among the top five nations.

On Monday, India recorded 3,900 positive cases, less than the rise registered by the US 24,663 cases, Russia 10,581, the UK 3,985 and Brazil 7,119 in the same 24 hours. Apart from these four nations, and Peru which is giving a hot chase, India has left all other countries far behind in contributing in absolute daily terms. With this speed, India will take just 10 days to beat China's count.

There is another noticeable factor that should worry Indian policy makers: In terms of overall count, India has far less positive cases compared to any of these top four or five countries.



Medics wave at a Covid-19 patient (unseen) who was being discharged as the last patient recovered at Kozhikode Medical College in Kozhikode on Tuesday

PTI

Take the case of the United Kingdom. It recorded 3,985 new cases from a base of 1,90,584 cases. India matched the UK's number from a 4.5 half time lower base, signifying the speed with which the virus is spreading across the country.

Making similar comparison with the US, Russia and Brazil, it shows that India is also adding far more cases in percentage terms compared to them.

Take the case of the US which has 12,12,785 cases. In percentage term the addition of 24,663 cases are around two per cent. The UK's rise is also nearly 2 per cent only. But India's daily spike will stand around 6-7 per cent, which is extraordinarily high on the global scale.

Such huge daily spike from a relatively lower base places the country on an alarming trajectory because of its lower testing and huge population size.

This was not a one-off day when cases in India shot up in a big way due to Maharashtra recording nearly 1,600 new cases. India was the sixth largest daily contributors on daily basis on May 3 also when it logged 2,687 cases, the US 27,248, the UK 4,339 cases, Russia 10,633 cases, Brazil 4,588 and Peru 3,394 cases.

Other than these countries, India is clocking far bigger numbers than some of the other nations — China, Spain, Italy, the UK, Turkey, Iran, Canada and Belgium, to name a few.

Continued on Page 2

6K cases in 2 days, but 'no community spread'

India's corona total inches to 50K; 13,738 recoveries

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the second day of easing of restrictions of the lockdown on Tuesday, India woke up to be greeted by the news of a massive spike in new Covid-19 cases during the last 24 hours. The country saw 3,900 new cases and 195 deaths between two briefings on Monday and Tuesday even as the Centre insisted that India has so far been able to stave off community transmission of the viral infection.

There were 42,505 cases on Monday morning, which shot up to 46,400 cases by Tuesday morning. By Tuesday evening, the country had added 2,000 more cases, taking the total to 48,382 and 1,657 deaths, and 13,738 recoveries.

Alarming, at least eleven



States have crossed 1,000 marks with Maharashtra topping the list. Tamil Nadu recorded its highest single-day spike till date, with an addition of 527 cases, which took its tally to 3,550, while Delhi and Gujarat added more than 300 cases each.

In its daily briefing, the Union Health Ministry noted the "highest increase in both new infections and deaths" and called the States and Union Territories for effectively implement contact tracing, active case search and clinical man-

agement of cases.

Ministry spokesperson Lav Agarwal said the country has seen 3,900 new cases since Monday and 195 new deaths. Corresponding cases for a single day on Monday were 2,573 and deaths were 83.

Cases have increased nearly by 40 per cent and mortality has more than doubled over the past 24 hours. The Central Government attributed sudden surge to previously data-cagey States beginning to report cases and deaths.

Continued on Page 2

Liquor price hike fails to deter tipplers

Boozers jostle in long queues to get to shops for 2nd consecutive day

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Despite the Delhi Government announcing a 70 per cent "special corona fee" on alcohol late on Monday, hundreds of people on Tuesday lined up outside liquor shops in the national Capital, for the second consecutive day as they sought to lay their hands on a bottle of their favourite tippie.

The crowd was seen jostling restlessly with each other without following social distancing norms across the national Capital on a day when the Delhi Government also withdrew lifting of curbs in the areas which witnessed violation of social distancing norms on Monday.

Following violation of the social distancing norms, the police also used lathi to control the crowd on Tuesday.

Long queues were formed outside liquor vends in Krishna Nagar and Vishwas Nagar and a large number of policemen stood outside to manage the crowd and ensure social distancing.

At some places, like the Gole Market in Central Delhi, although the liquor shops were



People violate social distancing norms as they queue up to buy alcohol in East Delhi on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

shut, baton-wielding paramilitary personnel were deployed to keep the crowd at bay.

There were several people who had lined up at liquor outlets since 4 am. "We had arrived here at the liquor shop around 7 am but before us there were

several others who had already formed a kilometre long queue," said Suraj, who went to buy liquor at Laxmi Nagar.

"The shop opened at around 9 am and it took me more than two hours to buy three bottles of liquor," he said.

When asked about the 70 per cent increase in liquor rates as corona fee was imposed, Suraj said it doesn't affect and who are willing to buy liquor will buy at higher rates too.

Continued on Page 2

24 in-patients at Army's R&R Hospital +ve

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In one of the biggest spikes in number of coronavirus cases in the Army, at least 24 people tested Covid-19 positive in one of its most prestigious hospitals known as Research and Referral Centre. The positive cases were immediately shifted to the Base Hospital, Delhi Cantonment and the necessary treatment protocol was now underway. Prior to this, the 13-lakh-strong force had 14 cases, including three doctors. Nearly of them were now fit and ready to join duty.

Confirming the latest cases, army sources said here on Tuesday all the affected persons, including 20 serving soldiers, had been undergoing treatment in the oncology (cancer) department of the hospital and undergoing treatment. They included serving and retired personnel besides dependents.

Officials said no medical staff was among the affected.

In all, the armed forces have so far have nearly 70 odd corona positive cases. Most of them are from the Army and the Navy.

Govt hikes excise duty on petrol by ₹10/L, diesel ₹13/L

Besides, Delhi raises diesel VAT by ₹7.10/L, petrol ₹1.67/L

PTI/STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Government on Tuesday night hiked the excise duty on petrol by steep ₹10 per litre and that on diesel by ₹13 a litre.

The hike in duty has taken away gains from falling global crude oil prices.

Last month, benchmark Brent crude oil dropped to as low as \$18.10 per barrel - the lowest since 1999, as coronavirus wiped away demand, creating large surpluses around the globe. Prices have since rebounded to around \$28 a barrel.

Earlier in the day, the Delhi Government raised the value-added tax (VAT) on petrol to 30 per cent from 27 per cent and doubled it from 16.75 per cent to 30 per cent for diesel, effecting a rise of ₹1.67 per litre for petrol and ₹7.10 per litre for diesel. Petrol in Delhi now costs ₹71.26 a litre. Diesel price has been hiked to ₹69.39 per litre from ₹62.29.

Continued on Page 2

45 ITBP men test +ve, 170 quarantined

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has reported 45 Covid-19 positive cases in its ranks and has placed around 170 under quarantine.

Amid the spiralling number of patients of the viral infection, the ITBP has operationalised its 200-bed referral hospital at Greater Noida to treat such patients from other paramilitary forces.

As many as 43 Covid-19 positive personnel are from a unit at Tigri Camp here. The unit was deployed for internal security duties. While patients are undergoing treatment at Safdarjung Hospital, the 41 others are admitted to the CAPF Referral Hospital, Greater Noida.

Continued on Page 2

Shastri Bhavan floor sealed as Law Ministry officer tests +ve

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A senior Law Ministry official has tested positive for Covid-19 after which a floor of the Shastri Bhavan was partially sealed on Tuesday. This would impact the functioning of several important ministries located in the building.

An officer of the Law Ministry, housed at the fourth floor of the Shastri Bhavan, has tested positive for Covid-19. As per protocol, contact tracing has been initiated and once the list is prepared such people will be subjected to quarantine and tests for Covid-19.

Certain gates and lifts will also remain closed till Wednesday for subjecting the premises to the disinfection exercise, officials said.

JEE-Mains from July 18 to 23, NEET on July 26

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday cleared the air on several academic and entrance tests related issues amidst the corona pandemic lockdown. HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank also announced the dates of pending entrance examinations, including the Joint Engineering Entrance (JEE) for admissions in IITs and the NEET.

As per the schedules made available, NEET will be held on July 26 while JEE MAIN on 18th, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd July, 2020 followed by JEE(Advance) likely to be held in August. The dates of UGC NET 2020 and CBSE 12th Board examinations will be announced soon, according to a HRD Ministry statement.

Continued on Page 2

AP levies 'corona cess' on liquor, several States may follow suit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid coronavirus induced lockdown and loss of millions of jobs, the State Governments battling with the revenue constraints are increasing taxes on liquor, petrol and diesel to fill their treasury. After the Delhi Government, the Andhra Pradesh Government has also increased taxes on liquor by 50 per cent to 75 per cent. More States are expected to follow Delhi and Andhra Pradesh's special corona fee on liquor.

Top sources said that several States are considering imposing special corona levy on liquor and hike in petrol and diesel prices to fill their coffers amid the disruption on account of the lockdown.

Continued on Page 2

BJP raps Rahul for hailing Pulitzer winners who call Kashmir 'disputed area'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Pulitzer Prize for three photojournalists from Jammu & Kashmir on Tuesday ignited a political controversy as Congress leader Rahul Gandhi congratulated them and the BJP hit back at him asking whether his party considers Kashmir valley an integral part of the country or not as the photojournalists won the awards for calling Kashmir "contested territory".

The US award was given to the three journalists for their "striking images" clicked when the erstwhile State of J&K was in the lockdown state in August 2019 following abrogation of the Article 370.

"Congratulations to Indian photojournalists Dar Yasin,

Mukhtar Khan and Channi Anand for winning a Pulitzer Prize for their powerful images of life in J&K. You make us all proud," Rahul said on Twitter.

Dar Yasin, Mukhtar Khan and Channi Anand work with news agency AP. While Yasin and Khan are from Kashmir, Anand is from Jammu.

Continued on Page 2

Bihar receives most returnees, WB least

New Delhi: Bihar has received the maximum number of migrant labourers through special trains so far and West Bengal the least, data accessed by the PTI shows, with officials indicating that the latter was "stalling" the movement of its workers stranded in other states.

TMC MP and leader of the party in Rajya Sabha, Derek O'Brien, however, said the West Bengal government was doing "all it takes" to fight the coronavirus pandemic, and accused the Centre of playing politics.

The data shows that most migrant labourers have moved from Gujarat to their home states in about 35 Shramik Special trains so far, followed by Kerala from where 13 such trains have left.

Among the receiving states, Bihar has accepted 13 trains, with 11 more currently on the journey and six in the pipeline, the data shows.

Neighbouring Uttar Pradesh has received 10 such trains and five more are on their way, with 12 in the pipeline, the data shows.

The West Bengal government has, however, given clearance to only two trains -- one each from Rajasthan and

Kerala -- and they are on their journeys to the state, the data shows.

A senior official said, "While other states which have their migrant workers in other parts of the country are accepting their labourers, West Bengal is stalling (the process). Two trains — from Thane to Shalimar and another from Bangalore to Howrah — which were supposed to run today, did not get clearance from the West Bengal despite both the originating state governments pushing for it."

"Rajasthan has also been slow in accepting migrants with just three trains ferrying its workers back to the state, which are currently on their way," the official said.

Derek O'Brien accused the Centre of playing politics over the issue.

"States, including Bengal, are going all out -- fighting corona. Unfortunately, the Central government is going all out -- fighting and bad-mouthing non-BJP states using its different ministries.

"States are the implementing authorities. We are all doing all it takes. This is not the time for politics. Or we too can ask: why was a 21-day lock-

down announced with four hours notice?" he said.

According to figures from 2011 census, West Bengal ranks fourth among the states from where people migrate for work and employment.

Between 2001 and 2011, nearly 5.8 lakh people migrated from the state for work, which is fewer only than Uttar Pradesh (37.3 lakh), Bihar (22.6 lakh) and Rajasthan (6.6 lakh).

The railway data shows that Jharkhand accepted four trains, while five trains are on their way to the state. Two more Shramik Special trains are in the pipeline.

Odisha received seven trains and five are on their way to the state with one more in the pipeline, the data shows.

The Railways on Tuesday said that since May 1, when Shramik Special trains started operations, it has run 76 of them, carrying more than 70,000 stranded migrant labourers.

Till May 4, the Railways had run 55 trains.

On May 5, it ran 12 trains in the morning and nine in the evening, taking the tally to 76. It said that zonal railways were planning to run 12 more by the end of the day. **PTI**

Govt may extend anti-dumping duty on Chinese chemical

New Delhi: The anti-dumping duty on a Chinese chemical, used in food and pharma industry, may be extended as the commerce ministry has recommended continuing the safeguards to protect domestic players from cheap imports.

The revenue department in May 2015 had imposed the anti-dumping duty on imports of the chemical, sodium citrate, from China for five years. The duty period ends on May 19, 2020.

The application for continuation of the duty on imports of sodium citrate from China was filed by Posy Pharmachem Pvt Ltd. It was supported by Adani Pharmachem, Alpine Labs, India Phosphate and Sunil Chemicals.

In a notification, the commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has said there is a "positive" evidence of likelihood of dumping of the chemical and injury to the domestic industry if the existing anti-dumping duty would be removed.

"The designated authority considers it appropriate to recommend continuation of definitive anti-dumping duty" on the chemical, it has said. The directorate has recommended two

duties USD 96.05 per tonne and USD 152.78 per tonne. The finance ministry takes the final decision to impose this duty.

In its probe, the directorate has concluded there is continued dumping of the product from China and "the imports are likely to enter the Indian market at dumped prices in the event of expiry of duty". The applicant, it said, has requested for initiation of sunset review investigation concerning imports of Sodium Citrate coming from China, alleging likelihood of continuation or recurrence of dumping and consequent injury to the domestic industry in case of cessation of existing anti-dumping duties. In international trade parlance, dumping happens when a country or a firm exports an item at a price lower than the price of that product in its domestic market.

Dumping impacts the price of that product in the importing country, hitting margins and profits of manufacturing firms.

According to global trade norms, a country is allowed to impose tariffs on such dumped products to provide a level-playing field to domestic manufacturers. The duty is imposed only after a thorough investigation by a quasi-judicial body, such as DGTR, in India. **PTI**

Detention of Mehbooba, two leaders extended by 3 months

Srinagar: The detention of former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti under the stringent Public Safety Act was extended by three months, hours before it was due to expire.

In a similar move, the detention of former minister and senior National Conference leader Ali Mohammed Sagar, and senior PDP leader and uncle of Mufti, Sartaj Madani, was also extended by another three months, officials said.

In a brief order by the Home Department of the Jammu & Kashmir administration, the extension of PSA

was made under the public order provisions of the act.

While Mufti is at present lodged at her official residence 'Fair View', which has been converted into a subsidiary jail, Sagar and Madani are in a government accommodation at Gupkar road.

Mufti was initially detained on August 5 last year when the Centre abrogated special status of the erstwhile state and bifurcated it into two union territories -- Ladakh, and Jammu and Kashmir.

Later, her six-month preventive custody was extended by invoking PSA on February

5 this year along with her political rival and former chief minister Omar Abdullah.

Having spent over eight months in detention at two government facilities that were designated as sub-jails, Mufti was shifted to her home on April 7, a move seen as a partial relief to her.

Earlier, Mufti was lodged a government guesthouse in Chashma Shahi and a bungalow on Maulana Azad Road near Lal Chowk. Mufti heads the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) which was in power in Jammu & Kashmir in alliance with the BJP till June 2018. **PTI**

India joins...

From Page 1

The speed with which cases are rising in India, it should take just 10 more days when the country will overtake China (82,881 cases), the progenitor of coronavirus. China's highly disputed numbers are rising in a single digit for the last several days. The global trend shows that many of the countries went through a phase of consolidation after reaching a threshold and then their numbers shot up alarmingly. For example, Russia is now registering more than 10,000 plus numbers after remaining below a total of 1,000 on April 8 and then consolidating for days. The situation looks alarming for India also because it has carried out far less tests than other countries making it near impossible to know the extent of the spread of the disease. India has so far carried out only 864 tests per million population, which is a dismal figure when compared to even neighboring Pakistan, which has carried out 1007 tests per million.

Among the worst affected 15 nations, India's test count of 864 cases per million population is far below the USA (22,454 tests 1m PoP), Spain (41,332 tests 1 m PoP) and Italy (36, 244 test 1m PoP), the UK (19,026 tests 1m PoP), France (16,856 tests 1m PoP) and Germany (30,400 test 1m PoP).

45 ITBP men test -ve, 170...

From Page 1

Besides the 43 positive cases, 76 personnel of this unit have been quarantined at ITBP Chhawla Quarantine Facility, ITBP spokesperson Vivek Pandey said. Two personnel of a company deployed along with the Delhi Police were earlier tested positive and admitted to AIIMS, Jhajjar, Haryana. "Contact tracing is being done. 91 personnel of this company are placed under quarantine at ITBP Quarantine Facility, Chhawla, New Delhi. Samples of these quarantined personnel have been collected and reports are awaited," the spokesperson said. ITBP has started treating the corona positive personnel at 200-bedded CAPF Referral Hospital based in Greater Noida. This Hospital is now dedicated to corona patients only. Personnel from all Central Armed Police Forces have also been admitted in

this Hospital. Currently, 52 patients have been admitted from the ITBP and BSF (44 from ITBP and 8 from BSF) at the Referral Hospital. Likewise, the number of positive cases in the Border Security Force (BSF) has jumped to 67. Of this, two patients have recovered and 65 personnel continue to be active with the viral infection. Two floors of the BSF Headquarters at the CGO Complex here were closed after a Head Constable was tested to be positive for novel corona virus. The entire premises was subjected to disinfection process. Five BSF personnel who were traced to be in primary contact with the infected Head Constable have been quarantined. Eleven BSF personnel, who were secondary contacts, have been identified and are being quarantined. Covid-19 tests in respect of these contacts would be conducted as per doctor's advice, the official said. A total of 69 BSF personnel contracted the infection during the course of operational duty despite following the SOPs and protocols to contain the pandemic.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid coronavirus-induced lockdown and loss of millions of jobs, the State Governments battling with the revenue constraints are increasing taxes on liquor and petrol and diesel to fill their treasury. After the Delhi Government, the Andhra Pradesh Government has also increased taxes on liquor by 50 per cent to 75 per cent. More States are expected to follow

Delhi and Andhra Pradesh's special corona fee on liquor.

Top sources said that several States are considering imposing special corona levy on liquor and hike in petrol and diesel prices to fill their coffers amid the disruption on account of the lockdown. The spike in diesel and petrol will lead to inflation in all commodities including food items. During the nationwide lockdown since March 24, prices of food items are staple and under control

except pulse prices which increased up to ₹40 per kg in several parts across India.

According to officials, the entire liquor business in AP is controlled by the State Government through its own retail outlets, numbering 3,468. For instance, a liquor bottle with a maximum retail price of ₹1,000 earlier, will now cost ₹1,750 in the city.

Earlier, Rajasthan Government increased the taxes on liquor and beer by 10 percentage. The maximum tax on liquor in Rajasthan is 45 percent.

Sources said that several states are considering imposing 'special corona tax', on liquor to fill their coffers amid the disruption on account of the lockdown. Liquor contributes a considerable amount to the exchequers of all states and Union Territories except Gujarat and Bihar, both of which have enforced prohibition.

According to RBI report, during 2019-20, the 29 States and the UTs of Delhi and Puducherry had budgeted a combined ₹1,75,501.42 crore from state excise on liquor. This was 16 per cent higher

than the ₹1,50,657.95 crore they had collected during 2018-19.

Experts say revenue from taxes on liquor accounts for 15-25 percent of States' own tax revenue. Prices of food items including vegetables and fruits is all set to increase after the big hike in petrol and diesel.

In case of Delhi, the State expects to mop up ₹6,300 crore from taxes on liquor out of its estimated own tax revenue of ₹44,100 crore in 2020-21. In the previous year, Delhi is likely to have collected ₹5,500 crore from liquor alone.



कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)
ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट (द्वितीय) निविदा सूचना



क्र. 3063/न.पा.नि. जो.02/स्व.साक्ष/2020-21

दिनांक 04/05/2020

एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत फर्म/कम्पनी/समिति/एन.जी.ओ. से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु दिनांक 21.05.2020 समय 17.30 PM तक ऑनलाईन (Online) द्वितीय निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

| सिस्टम टेंडर नं. | कार्य का विवरण | अनुमानित लागत (रु. लाख में) | धरोहर राशि |
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| 63547 | SUPPLY OF 108 LABOUR (SANITARY WORKS) FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT UNDER N.P.N. BILASPUR (ZONE-02) WARD NO.-05,06,07,08,09,10,11,12 | 147.36 | 1,10,516.00 |

उपरोक्त निविदा की समाप्ति शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापन, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट वेबसाइट <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> से दिनांक 05/05/2020 से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।

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| उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना | |
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| मंडल रेल प्रबंधक, इंजीनियरिंग, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधापुर द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिये एवं उनकी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रचलित निम्नों के अनुरंगत निर्धारित प्रपत्रों में निविदा निम्न कार्यों" के लिए क्रमानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है- ई- ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 42, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-1: Residential building under ADEN/ Jaisalmer for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 1,71,67,724.71, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,35,800.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 43, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-2: Residential Buildings under ADEN/ Jaisalmer for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs.1,84,04,134.12, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,42,000.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 44, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-3: Service Buildings under ADEN/ Jaisalmer for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 1,32,73,784.80, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,16,400.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 45, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-1: Residential buildings in N.P., D.S., Traffic, GRP, PWI, RKB & Workshop Colony, Officers Bungalows and out house under ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 3,32,36,106.00, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 3,16,200.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 46, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-2: Service Buildings RKB Station, Parcel Office, HRD Training Centre, Rly. institute, PRS, ORH, SRH, Sr. SRH, MS Office, PWI Office, Loco Office, DRM Office, AOTA Office, BRI Office, water supply complex and other service building at JU under ADEN/HQ/JU for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 2,84,08,426.30, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,92,100.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 47, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-3: Service Building Rly. Hospital, Subordinates Offices, RPF Barracks, Rly. Club, Rly. Stadium, Diesel Shed, Mal Godown, BGKT station building etc. under ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 2,05,59,944.20, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,53,000.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 48, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-4: Residential Building, BGKT Medical, RPF & New Medical Colony, Officers Bungalows at Jodhpur under ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 2,83,23,074.13, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,91,600.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 49, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-5: Service Building Loco Shed, Washing Line area at Jodhpur & other service Building at Jodhpur under ADEN/ HQ/JU for Year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 2,45,75,972.00, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,72,900.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 50, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-6: Residential Building Old & New Loco Colony, Water Supply zonal work for residential staff Quarters & Bungalows at JU under ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur for Year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 2,17,99,282.60, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,59,000.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 51, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-7: Replacement and repairs including laying of water pipe line for Residential buildings and Service buildings under ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur for Year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये:Rs. 1,99,70,748.00, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,49,900.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 52, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-8:- Repairs to Road works in all colonies and service buildings in the section of ADEN/HQ/JU for Year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 1,29,62,050.40, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,14,800.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 53, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-XI:- All Service Buildings within the Premises of Diesel shed/BGKT in the Section of ADEN/HQ/ Jodhpur for year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 2,18,67,078.40, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs.2,59,300.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 54, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-XII:- Zone work for Horticulture, Water tank Cleaning & Sewer Chamber Cleaning of Service buildings & Residential Buildings in the section of ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur for Year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 1,61,99,083.90, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs.2,31,000.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 55, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-1:- Residential buildings under ADEN/LINE/Jodhpur for the year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs.1,75,72,296.80, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,37,900.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 56, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-2:- Residential buildings under ADEN/INE/Jodhpur for the year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs.1,20,34,840.50, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,10,200.00, ई-निविदा सूचना सं. 2020-21: 57, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone-3:- Service buildings under ADEN/INE/Jodhpur for the year 2020 to 2022.. अनुमानित लागत रुपये: Rs. 1,36,51,208.50, बयाने की राशि रुपये: Rs. 2,18,300.00, निविदा सूचना संख्या 2020-21/ 42 to 57 तक निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि 27-05-2020 को 15.00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट का विवरण यहां पर ई-निविदा देखी व सरी जा सकती है: www.ireps.gov.in | |
| हमें fci/NWRailways पर फॉलो करें 441-SR/20 | |

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Petrol price up by ₹1.67/L, diesel ₹7.10/L

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Tuesday hiked local sales tax or value-added tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel.

According to Government's order, petrol price in Delhi was hiked by ₹1.67 a litre and diesel by a steep ₹7.10 per litre.

This follows Delhi Government's decision to raise VAT on petrol to 30 per cent from 27 per cent, previously. In case of diesel, VAT has been almost doubled to 30 per cent from 16.75 per cent.

After these announcements Delhi Deputy Chief Minister And Finance Minister Manish Sisodia



A worker at a petrol pump refuels petrol in a scooter during ongoing Covid-19 lockdown in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

tweeted, "Life isn't all about rainbows and sunshine. Tough times need Tough solutions" - my learning as Finance Minister.

While AAP Government in Delhi is facing tough time due to revenue shortage, the move to hike fuel prices is expected to boost the Government revenue, which has been hit hard due to the coronavirus lockdown.

The Delhi Government had on Monday night decided to impose a 70 per cent 'Special Corona Fee' on liquor.

In a late night notification, Sisodia said, "70 per cent of the maximum retail price (will be levied) on all categories of liquor sold through retail licensees for consumption".

Cong terms move anti-people

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Terming the decision to raise VAT on fuel "anti-people", Delhi Congress has demanded immediate rollback of the hike in fuel prices and accused the Delhi Government of being profiteer from the "misery" of the common man.

Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president Chaudhary Anil Kumar alleged that the arbitrary and authoritarian decision by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, without consulting even the 'Resident Welfare Association' (RWAs) to partially lift the Covid-19 lockdown and without any planning has resulted in chaos and confusion in Delhi.

The decision of the Delhi Government to lift restrictions will certainly lead to spike in the Corona cases in the Capital that already burdened by the ever-rising graph of the Covid-19 pandemic, he said.

Addressing a digital press conference, Kumar said that the Delhi Government has woefully failed in



combating the virus in the Capital. "Neither any roadmap was charted out for the Disaster Management Authority in case such an eventuality occurred," he said.

Kumar demanded that the increased VAT on diesel and petrol should be rolled back forthwith, liquor sales should be regulated by rolling back the 70 per cent cess and cigarette/tobacco shops should be shut immediately. He said that the people of Delhi, already burdened by joblessness and no source of livelihood, have been inflicted another blow by increasing the VAT on diesel and petrol by ₹7.10 and ₹1.67 respectively.

Highlighting that hoarding

and black marketeering of essential goods have also broken the back of the poor and common people, he said that people of Delhi, who lived without liquor, cigarettes and tobacco for the past 45 days, are now being made to pay more.

Accusing the Government of not drawing up any road map for the transportation of migrant labour to help them reaching their homes, he said the Congress party came forward to help them to help them back home.

He wondered whether the move to open liquor outlets was taken under pressure from the liquor cartel. "The Kejriwal Government has not announced any relief for the people through measures like waiving off of water and power charges and school fees," he added.

Kumar said that due to the mismanagement by the Government, the common people, small shop keepers, daily wage earners, low-salaried and MSME people are in deep distress and desperation.

Withdraw hike: BJP to AAP Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Delhi on Tuesday said that AAP's decision to hike VAT on diesel and petrol will negatively impact people, especially poor and farmers, already facing problems due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

Delhi BJP president Manoj Tiwari demanded Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to withdraw the VAT (value-added tax) hike, saying it will lead to rise in the prices of essential items.

It's pure injustice by the Kejriwal Government. The Delhi BJP demands him to withdraw the hike because things like foodgrains, vegetables and other items of daily consumption will become costlier due to it," Tiwari said

Gautam Gambhir, the Member of Parliament (MP) from East Delhi constituency tweeted, "Delhiites, what say? Elections in next 2 months. Everything including diesel & petrol will become free & delivered to your homes! I can vouch for it!! CM saab, any thoughts?"



Cops quiz juvenile over lewd Instagram group

Bois Locker Room Group shouldn't be spared: DCW

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A juvenile was apprehended and quizzed by police on Tuesday, a day after the Delhi Commission For Women (DCW) issued notices to cops and Instagram over a group on the social networking site being used to share "objectionable posts about minor girls".

According to a senior police official, during social media monitoring, it was noticed that one Instagram group by the name "Bois Locker Room" was being used by the participants to share obscene messages and morphed pictures.

"On this, a First Information Report (FIR) under relevant sections of IT Act and Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered on May 4 at Special Cell police station and investigation has been

taken up by Cyber Crime Unit (CyPAD)," said the senior police official.

"The concerned platform (Instagram) has been asked to provide the details of the alleged accounts involved in the group. The details are awaited. As of now, about 10 members of the group have been identified. The identified members who are major, are being examined. The minor members of the group are being dealt with as per the provisions of Juvenile Justice Act," he said.

"The devices used to engage in the offensive, vulgar communication have been seized from the identified group members. Further action will be taken on the basis of material evidence that is gathered in course of investigation," the senior police official added.

Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) chief Swati

Maliwal on Tuesday said those who were part of an Instagram group where objectionable things were being discussed about minor girls should not be spared. "These were the same people who were making plans to gang rape girls and were making objectionable comments about them.

"Such persons, irrespective of where they are and whether the lockdown is in place or not, should not be spared," the DCW chief said.

She also appealed to people that they should exit such groups if they are a part of them and report about them to the panel.

Maliwal also appreciated those girls who had reported about the group on social media and called them "brave".

"If they are facing any issues, they can approach the DCW and we will help them. I appeal to society to support such girls," she added.

Delhi Airport unveils plan for post-lockdown operations

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi airport on Tuesday released operational preparedness plan for post lockdown operations.

To ensure social distancing during operations, the airport authority have made several arrangements from web check-in, CUSS before entering terminal, contactless terminal entry system, temperature screening with thermal cameras by CISF staff, Acrylic glass shields on check in counters to separate the airport personnel and the PAX few mentioned in the blue print of the programme.

Hazmat suits will be provided to the security personnel involved in the passenger screening, frequent sanitization and disinfection of the trays, DFMDs, HHMDs and the Monitors and social distancing markers to be installed at the security screening lanes to ensure strict adherence to social distancing guidelines.

According to airport officials, travellers are encouraged to use of self check-in and SBD machines to minimise any possibility of contact and reduce

waiting time in queues.

At security check point, the airport authority has arranged frequent sanitisation and disinfection of the trays, DFMDs, HHMDs and the Monitors while social distancing markers to be installed at the security screening lanes to ensure strict adherence to social distancing guidelines

At security area, social distances marking throughout the premises Implementation of dedicated waste bins to dispose off the used PPEs like HAZMAT suits, face masks and gloves, will be ensured. Social Distancing will be implemented in all the lounges including Plaza Premium Lounge. There will be restrictions of the number of passengers into the buggies and the same will be frequently sanitized" airport official said.

At the boarding and bussing gate frequent fumigation and disinfection of the seats, aerobridges and boarding gates after every departure, Implementation of social distancing markers at the boarding gates and In case of remote bays, the number of passengers in being boarded onto the

buses will be restricted and sanitisation of the boarding area counters ensured.

At arrival piers, Delhi airport has installed thermal scanner while thermal screening to be done on all the arriving passengers using non contact temperature screeners and thermal screening cameras

"Capture self declaration forms which have a record of the passengers travel history, health status and the contact details, Provision of dedicated areas for the passengers to fill in the self declaration forms and there will be a dedicated waiting room has been provided for the APHO personnel if a passenger is found symptomatic and further screening is required," said official.

There are designated areas of bus entry, baggage reclaim and thermal screening areas have been put in place for arrivals from countries with community transmission

At baggage reclaim area, frequent sanitisation of the trolleys and trays to be done using the automated tunnel disinfection system have been ordered, they added.

Body of woman cop found in car, fugitive husband under lens

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A dead body of a Delhi Police woman constable was found from a car in south Delhi's Lodhi Colony area on Tuesday morning. Police suspect her husband, who is also with Delhi Police, behind the killing.

The deceased has been identified as a woman constable of Delhi Police who was posted in Outer North district.

According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, the body of a woman was found in a car with a visible injury on her head.

"However, the nature of injury will be confirmed only after the postmortem. Her husband, who is also posted in Delhi Police is absconding and search is on nab him," said the DCP.

"Prima facie, it appears to be a fallout of marital discord. The body has been sent to AIIMS for postmortem," said the DCP.

"A case of murder has been registered at Lodhi Colony police station. Police teams are also scanning CCTV cameras in the area to ascertain the crime sequence and nab the culprit. Further investigation is underway," said the DCP.

Cop kills neighbour over altercation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old man was killed in a firing incident in North-east Delhi where a Delhi Police constable allegedly opened fire from his service revolver.

The deceased has been identified as Suraj. He died on Monday.

On Monday evening around 8 pm, a constable had allegedly opened fire from his service revolver following an altercation with his neighbours in Meet Nagar area of northeast Delhi. The constable was posted in Seelampur police station.

"In total, five people sustained injuries. While three of them sustained gun shot injuries, two, including the policeman sustained blunt injuries," police said.

According to a senior police official, an altercation took place between the policeman and the neighbours. "The policeman's relative had a quarrel with the other party who was their neighbour. The matter escalated and turned ugly following which he fired a couple of rounds from his service pistol. A case had been registered and further investigation is underway," he said. The constable, along with four other people, had already been detained in connection with the incident.

Head Constable thrashed by cops cries for justice

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

A police head constable, posted at Gurugram Police Commissioner's office, was beaten up and abused by other policemen of the Rewari police at Rewari-Kapriwas police checkpoint on April 29 while crossing the Gurugram-Rewari border. The incident took place when he was returning to his home in Rewari's Tatarpur Khalsa village.

Pradeep Kumar filed a complaint through his widowed mother Nagin Devi at the Haryana Chief Minister's office

and Haryana Human Right Commission on May 1 and demand strict action against the accused policemen and medical staff.

Kumar stated in the complaint that he left for his home after duty. When he reached the Rewari-Kapriwas checkpoint police personnel deployed there signalled him to move his car on to the service road. "When I entered the service road, inspector Ajit deployed at the checkpoint signalled me to stop. I immediately stopped my car and showed my police identity card.

The inspector was in so much anger that when I stepped out of my car he slapped me several times and abused me without any reason," Pradeep said.

Kumar also alleged that after seeing this the other five policemen including a SI, head constable Dadbir started beating him with sticks.

"They even snatched my mobile and car key. The policemen misused their power and also there were no restrictions imposed by the State Government on April 29 that no policemen will go to his home district," he stated.

27 migrant workers escape from Tilak Nagar shelter home

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Around 27 migrant workers, who were staying at a shelter home in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar area, have escaped, said police on Tuesday.

According to police, on Monday, 56 migrant workers were shifted from a government school in Punjabi Bagh to newly created shelter home at Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya, Chand Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Delhi.

"One of the migrants Kallu misguidedly them and they started creating nuisance in the premises. Thereafter, 57 people escaped from the shelter home by jumping the wall of school and breaking the lock of main gate," said a senior police official.

"Seventeen were nabbed by police and shelter home staff and were sent back to the school. Out of the 40, 13 migrant people intercepted by police and sent back to shelter home," said the senior police official.

"A case was registered on the complaint of incharge of shelter home Musraq at Tilak Nagar police station," said police.



Migrant workers, along with their family members, walk along the Delhi-UP border road during the ongoing Covid-19 nationwide lockdown in East Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

Teen dies after falling from 11th floor in G'gram

Gurugram: A 17-year-old student of Class 12th died after falling off the 11th-floor balcony of his house in an upscale residential society in DLF Phase 5 on Monday night.

The deceased, identified as Manav, a resident of DLF Carlton Estate in DLF Phase 5 was living with his parents. The victim was a student of a leading private school (Heritage School).

The teenager and his parents were at home since the lockdown was announced in March. Police said he did not leave behind any suicide note.

The teenager and his family were living in a rented house, his father was in a private job and for the past few months, he was at home. Mother is a housewife.

The boy was in the balcony in late-night, while his parents

were in their room when he accidentally fell from the balcony. However, it is still not clear how he fell from the balcony.

The security guard first found the teenager in a pool of blood. He immediately informed the security supervisor and parents of the deceased. The teenager was rushed to a private hospital where he was declared dead by the doctors.

"An autopsy of the body has been conducted. According to the police, the investigation is being carried out under Section 174 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

"We are investigating the matter and will also get more inputs from the deceased parents. As per the initial investigation, it seems like a suicide," said police spokesperson Subhash Boken. **SR**

No movement passes required from 7 am to 7 pm in G'gram

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram district administration has issued an order to relax lockdown norms in the district. As per the order, people in the district can move anywhere within the district from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm.

After 7 pm and up to 7 am the following morning, nobody will be allowed to move, even with a pass, except for medical and essential services.

Also, the people of the Containment zones will not be allowed to come out. The Gurugram district now has 24 containment zones.

"As the district falls under the orange zone but people have to behave responsibly. After 7 pm, no one can travel except for medical emergencies. The orders can be reversed if COVID-19 cases increase. People must apply a face mask and follow social distancing and other rules completely," V



S Kundu, Additional Chief Secretary of Haryana and CEO, Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) said.

He further said that movement of people is prohibited under Section 144 of the Crpc.

The barricades placed in various areas across the city will continue to remain. Vehicles are not allowed to travel over a speed of 30km per hour.

Apart from this Gurugram reported three new cases on Tuesday, taking the district's tally to 87. It now has the highest number of cases in Haryana.

Out of 87 cases, 36 are active while 51 patients have been discharged after recovery.

However, the district reported 11 Covid-19 cases on Monday with a majority of them having Delhi connection.

Officials said that nine of the cases were linked to Delhi's Azadpur sabzi mandi and the Khandas mandi in Gurugram.

Officials said the Khandas Mandi has been closed for four days, from May 5 till May 8. The health department said it will disinfect all mandis in the district to curb the spread of the virus.

"We have started a fresh door to door thermal screening. Houses, parks and public places will be also sanitized under the de-containment zones. The status of the containment zones will be reviewed after five days," said Dr Jaswant Singh Punia, chief medical officer (CMO), Gurugram.

Navy's Op Samudra Setu to bring Indians back

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Government announced that Indians will be evacuated from foreign countries from May 7 onwards in view of the coronavirus pandemic, the Navy on Tuesday dispatched two warships to bring back citizens from Maldives. They will commence evacuation operation named "Samudra Setu(Sea Bridge)" from May 8.

The two ships including the landing platform dock(LPDs) or amphibious ships INS Jalashwa(weighing 17,000ton) and INS Magar(weighing 6,000 ton) are capable of accommodating more than 1,500 people and the evacuated will be brought to Kochi, Kerala and entrusted to the care of the State authorities, officials said here on Tuesday. Incidentally, the Navy has carried out similar rescue efforts in 2006 and 2015. They were named Operations "Sukoon" and "Rahat" respectively.

Meanwhile, the deployment of the warships for evacuation now is part of the national effort to bring back those Indians desirous of returning from the middle-east and other countries. There are more than eight million Indians working in the Gulf countries and many of them expressed their intention to come back due to the pandemic and job losses in the wake of sharp drop in oil prices.

Apart from the Navy, which is also likely to send two more warships to the Gulf region in the second phase of the evacuation operation, the Air India has also been to



directed to be on standby. Moreover, the transport planes of the IAF including C-178, IL-76 and C-130J may also be pressed into service, sources said. Incidentally, the IAF had brought back Indians from Wuhan when the pandemic broke out. Also, the civil aviation sector is prime for the effort with more than 500 aircraft at its disposal.

As regards the Navy, officials said the Government is closely monitoring the situation with respect to effect of COVID-19 pandemic on our citizens abroad and the force directed to make suitable preparations for their evacuation by sea.

The Indian mission in Republic of Maldives is preparing a list of Indian nationals to be evacuated by naval ships and will facilitate their embarkation after requisite medical screening.

A total of 1,000 people are planned to be evacuated during the first trip, catering for COVID-related social distancing norms vis-a-vis the carry-

ing capacity and medical facilities available onboard.

The ships have been suitably provisioned for the evacuation operation. The evacuated personnel would be provided the basic amenities and medical facilities during the sea-passage. In view of the unique challenges associated with COVID-19 stringent protocols have also been stipulated.

The evacuated personnel will be disembarked at Kochi, Kerala and entrusted to the care of state authorities. This operation is being progressed in close coordination with ministries of defence, external affairs, home affairs, health and various other agencies of the central and state governments.

On the past rescue operations, the Navy ships brought out nearly 3,000 Indians in 2006 as part of Operation "Sukoon" from war torn Lebanon while nearly the same number were evacuated as part of Operation "Rahat" from Yemen.

Nobel laureate Abhijeet Banerjee's advice

Pump money into people's hand to kickstart eco

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nobel laureate Abhijeet Banerjee on Tuesday advised India to pump money into people's hands during the economic lockdown due to corona pandemic.

In a conversation with former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, the Nobel prize winner in economics said that bottom 60 percent of the population of India should be directly given money to boost demand and kickstart the economy.

Banerjee also suggested that the Government could help MSMEs, which employs a larger chunk of the people, by cancelling debt payments for the quarter, instead of a moratorium.

"India needs a bigger stimulus package and money should be put in the hands of people to revive demand," Banerjee said in a video interaction with Rahul Gandhi on the economic fallout of the coronavirus crisis.

This is the second in the series of the Congress leader's discussion series that began with renowned economist and former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan last week.

Abhijeet Banerjee said in the interaction that cash transfers must go beyond the poorest of the poor.

Rahul on his part noted that many small and medium businesses hit by the COVID-19 lockdown could "go bankrupt" because of the shock. This, he said, would cost jobs.

"That's the reason a lot of us have been saying that we need a stimulus package," the renowned economist agreed. "That's what the US is



India should take a cue from the US by pumping in more money in the hands of the people to revive demand, Dr Banerjee said, while suggesting that one should try to be optimistic about overall economic revival in India post-lockdown.

As Rahul suggested he was talking about some form of direct cash transfer to people, Dr Banerjee said the beneficiaries must be among the poorest, but it was important to decide what criteria to target. "I would say bottom 60% of the population, we give them some money, nothing bad will happen in my view," said the economist. Dr Banerjee said he believed while it was important to come out of the lockdown, one needed to be aware of disease's path.

doing, Japan is doing, Europe is doing. We really haven't decided on a large enough stimulus package. We are still talking about 1% of GDP. United States has gone for 10% of GDP."

India should take a cue from the US by pumping in more money in the hands of the people to revive demand, Dr Banerjee said, while suggesting that one should try to be optimistic about overall economic revival in India post-lockdown.

"Giving money in the hands of everybody, so that they can buy in stores or they buy consumer goods," he said. As Rahul suggested he

was talking about some form of direct cash transfer to people, Dr Banerjee said the beneficiaries must be among the poorest, but it was important to decide what criteria to target.

"I would say bottom 60% of the population, we give them some money, nothing bad will happen in my view," said the economist.

Dr Banerjee said he believed while it was important to come out of the lockdown, one needed to be aware of disease's path.

"The sooner you come out of the lockdown of course depends on the disease. You don't want to take down the

Work in full swing to build 'Atal Tunnel' in Manali



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Despite coronavirus pandemic and inclement weather, work is in full swing to construct the Rohtang tunnel known as Atal Tunnel in Manali and ensure its completion in September this year. The tunnel will then connect Lahaul and Spiti valleys of Himachal Pradesh with the

entire country throughout the year and also provide alternate strategic road connection to Ladakh. At present, the Rohtang pass at a height of more than 13,000 feet is closed for more than six months starting November due to heavy snow.

Stressing the point that the Border Roads Organisation(BRO) is determined to meet the target of

September, officials said in New Delhi on Tuesday proactive measures including road surface works, installation of electro-mechanic fittings including lighting, ventilation and intelligent traffic control systems are being executed. One steel super structure bridge of 100-meter length across river Chandra on the north portal of the tunnel is also under construction.

The work was halted for 10 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Director General Border Roads Lt General Harpal Singh had taken up the matter with Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur. This resulted in resumption of work on April 5 with on-site labour in active coordination with the state government. Works in Atal Tunnel are being executed with all necessary COVID-19 precautions in place to ensure its completion in September 2020 as planned.

Atal Tunnel is being constructed since Manali-Sarchu-Leh road remains closed for six months every year due to Rohtang Pass being completely snow bound between November and May. The tunnel will connect Manali to Lahaul Valley throughout the year and will reduce the road length of Manali-Rohtang Pass Sarchu-Leh road by 46 kilometres. Besides connecting the people of Lahaul to rest of India through the year the tunnel will aid the forward connectivity offering the security forces a major strategic advantage.

Rajnath says Govt determined to expand NCC especially in coastal, border areas

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday announced that the Government is determined to expand the National Cadet Corps (NCC), especially in the Coastal and Border areas.

The Minister shared this while reviewing the contribution of (NCC) in preventing the spread of COVID-19 through a video conference. This is the first-ever such conference in which the Defence Minister has directly interacted with 17 NCC Directorates located all over the country.

Lt Gen Rajeev Chopra, DG NCC and Dr Ajay Kumar, Defence Secretary participated in the conference.

Singh appreciated the vital role that the NCC directorates were playing as more than 60,000 NCC cadets, of whom



25 per cent are girl cadets, are assisting the local administration in preventing COVID-19.

The NCC cadets have been engaged in logistics and supply chain management duties, ensuring supply of essential food material, medicines, assisting in traffic duties, etc. Some of cadets have also made educational

videos for social media, while others have made masks and distributed them locally.

While appreciating their praiseworthy role, the Minister cautioned that the

NCC cadets should be deployed for only such tasks for which they have been trained.

He also stressed on the modernisation of NCC with a view to make it more relevant to the new and changed times and to make the NCC activities compatible with the semester system of the colleges and universities.

Now, WhatsApp, e-mail to Janaushadhi Kendras for home delivery of medicine

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid Covid-19 lockdown, many Janaushadhi Kendras under the Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers are accepting the orders for medicines on WhatsApp and e-mail on the basis of uploaded prescriptions and being delivered at the patient's doorsteps.

The move is ensuring use of technology for facilitating easier procurement of medicines by the users at a time when Coronavirus scare has restricted their movement.

Complementing the Kendras initiative, Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers DV Sadananda Gowda said, "it is heartening to note that many PMBJKs are using modern communication tools including social media platforms like Whatsapp to provide better services in effecting faster delivery of essential medicines to the needy."

Janaushadhis are working under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP). At present there are over 6,300 PMBJKs functioning in 726 districts of the country ensuring supply of quality medicines at affordable prices. These medicines are cheaper by about



50 per cent to 90 per cent on an average, said an official from the Ministry.

In April this year, around Rs 52 crore worth of medicine have been supplied through the country.

In addition, supply arrangements with India Post has also been made for supply to remotely located stores, he added.

Moreover, Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India(BPPI) under Department of Pharmaceuticals, Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, has paid its vendors within due date for solving their working capital issues for

raw material and logistics. Dedicated Team has been created of BPPI Officers for every State to sort out bottlenecks in supply due to lockdown, said the official.

Jan Aushadhi warehouses are working at full capacity and inhouse residential arrangements have been made for staff while helpline numbers have been launched to resolve any issues of consumers and store owners.

For maintaining supply of essential Medicines during lockdown period, BPPI has issued purchase orders for 178 fast moving medicines in April, 2020 worth ₹186.52 crore.

Lockdown:Consular access to stranded foreigners extended

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Due to the ban on international flights, India has extended the consular access to the stranded foreigners and continued cancellation of VISA except in diplomatic category. According to Union Home Ministry the present norms will continue till the starting of operation of international flights.

"Right of Multiple entry long term Visa facility for visiting India for any purpose, granted to OCI Cardholders, to remain in abeyance till prohibition on international air travel of passengers from and to India is lifted. Government of India grants Consular Services to Foreign Nationals, stranded in India due to travel restrictions in wake of Covid-19 pandemic, for a period upto 30 days from the date of lifting of prohibition on international air travel of passengers from India," said Union Home Ministry.

The Home Ministry also said that all the entry VISAs except granted to officials, diplomats and UN staffers are continue to stands cancelled till further announcement.

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury yet again appointed PAC chairman

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury has been yet again appointed as the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

Every year, Lok Sabha Speaker re-constitutes the panels including PAC, which is traditionally headed by the representative of the main Opposition party. Chowdhury is the only member of Congress in the PAC, which has total 15 members from Lok Sabha and seven MPs from Rajya Sabha.

Lok Sabha members in the committee from BJP include -- Jayant Sinha, Ajay (Teni) Misra, Sudheer Gupta, Darshana Vikram Jardosh, Satya Pal Singh, Subhash Chandra Baheria, Vishnu Dayal Ram, Jagdambika Pal, and Ram Kripal Yadav. The members from other parties include TR Baalu, Rahul Ramesh Shewale, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Balashowry Vallabhnaneni, and Bhartruhari Mahtab, as per the press release issued by Lok Sabha Speaker OM Birla.

The members appointed from Rajya Sabha to the PAC



The PAC which is the most powerful panel of Parliament is empowered to consider all CAG reports

are Rajeev Chandrasekhar, C M Ramesh, Naresh Gujral, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, and Bhpender Yadav. Two seats have been kept vacant.

The PAC which is the most powerful panel of the Parliament is empowered to consider all CAG reports and give recommendations to Government. The panel can look into any accounts and fund flow and its irregularity related issue to examine and summon any Government officers and private individu-

als. Though Chairman who is always from the main opposition party has authority to discuss and select any subject to be examined, voting system helps the ruling party to take decisions in the report.

The members including Chairman is also empowered to put their dissenting views attached with the main report.

At present the major subjects listed before the PAC are the controversial Rafale jets purchase and clean Ganga project.

The new committee is expected to carry forward this. However, due to massive majority of BJP and non-active nature of Opposition parties, from mid 2014, the PAC's functions are considered to be slow pace. Earlier during UPA regime, the PAC under then BJP veteran leader Murli Manohar Joshi's reports were always created blows to the Government. In the present PAC, except Chowdhury, no other Congress MPs are accommodated and this would be major blow to Congress in raising issues against Government.

Modi Govt buys around 2.61L tonnes of pulses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Tuesday said it has so far purchased around 2.61 lakh tonnes of pulses and 3.17 lakh tonnes of oilseeds from farmers worth ₹2,682 crore during the ongoing marketing season of rabi (winter) crops under the Price Support Scheme (PSS). The PSS is operationalised on State Governments' request when prices fall below the minimum support price (MSP).

The procurement is undertaken by nodal agencies like Nafed at minimum support price (MSP). Only fair average quality commodity is purchased. However, in view of COVID-19 pandemic, the daily procurement limit has been increased from 25 quintals to 40 quintals per day under PSS for rabi crops.

In a statement, the Union Agriculture Ministry said oilseeds and pulses have been purchased at MSP value of ₹2,682 crore, benefitting 3,25,565 farmers. Of the total procurement so far, about 14,859 tonnes of pulses and 6,706 tonnes of oilseeds were purchased on May 1-2 in six states namely Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, it said.

As per the second estimate of the ministry, pulses and oilseeds output during the 2019 rabi season have been pegged at 15.11 million tonnes and 10.75 million tonnes, respectively. According to the ministry, the state-run agencies have procured 181.36 lakh tonnes of wheat, the main rabi crop, so far.

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, farmers are undertaking sowing of kharif (summer) crops where rabi crops have been harvested. Paddy, the main kharif crop, has been sown in 34.80 lakh hectares so far, higher than 25.26 lakh hectares in the year-ago period, it said.

For pulses also, area sown has increased to 8.77 lakh hectares from 5.44 lakh hectares, while that for coarse cereals rose to 9.12 lakh hectares from 5.49 lakh hectares in the said period. Area under oilseeds has increased to 8.87 lakh hectares so far in the ongoing kharif season from 7 lakh hectares a year ago. Sowing of kharif crops normally picks up with the onset of southwest monsoon from June.

The India Meteorological Department has forecast a normal monsoon this year, which will help 52 per cent of the rainfed area in the country. The Ministry also said that the government is taking several measures to facilitate farmers and farming activities at field level during the lockdown period in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) Scheme, the Government has disbursed ₹18,134 crore during the lockdown period, benefitting 9.06 crore farmers, it added.

SC fumes over Govt not filling vacancies at tribunals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Tuesday expressed displeasure over vacancies not being filled at tribunals and said that government keeps creating forums to take away work from judiciary but cannot man them.

The top court also referred to the vacancies in high courts and said that many a time the Supreme Court collegium and Government are not on same page due to which large number of recommendation do not go through.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, Sanjay Kishan Kaul and B R Gavai extended by three months the tenure of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) member V K Jain, who is set to retire on May 29.

The bench asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to take some constructive instructions on filling up of vacancies and posted the matter after six weeks.

During the hearing, senior advocate Parag Tripathi said there are seven vacancies at NCDRC as against the sanctioned strength of 11 members and includes three for judicial and four non-judicial members.

Covid infects TN’s White House, spreading fast

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Chennai residents were in Cfor a shock when it was known that the virus had infected White House, the headquarters of Tamil Nadu Police by Tuesday. Nine officials working in the police headquarters were diagnosed with coronavirus and investigation is on to find out the damage caused by corona in one of the heavily guarded buildings in the State.

The speed with which Tamil Nadu crossed the 4,000 mark in the number of persons tested positive for coronavirus has shocked all except Dr T Jacob John, south India’s leading virologist and the duo of Dr



CV Krishnaswamy and Prof B M Hegde , the country’s medical warriors.

These three doctors with

decades of experience in diagnosis, research, treatment, turned medical evangelists and were asking the general public

about the importance of wearing face masks, washing hands frequently, observing the social distance and staying indoors which were ignored to a big extent.

It was on March 7, 2020 the State confirmed the detection of the first coronavirus patient. It took 36 days for the number of patients with COVID-19 t reach the 1000 mark. Within the next 16 days Tamil Nadu’s coronavirus cases crossed 2000. The number shot past the 3000 mark in five days and by Monday evening it stood at 3,550. It crossed the 4000 mark in just two days.

Officials of the Department of Health said that majority of those who tested positive were

contacts of covid-19 patients. “On Monday there were 36 primary cases out of the 266 persons tested positive in Chennai alone. Remaining were those who had contacts with the affected persons,” said a senior official.

Koyambedu, the State’s biggest fruits and vegetable market was found to be the epicentre of coronavirus in Chennai city.

Based on the number of persons who were infected with coronavirus after visiting the market(mandi), the disease itself has been renamed (though unofficially) as Koyambedu Corona.

The market has been shut down and hectic activities are

on to translocate the same to Thirumazhisai, a far away suburb. This has prompted the wholesale businessmen in Koyambedu to declare a shut down till May 10. Rajasekhar, the leader of the association of wholesale dealers said that Thirumazhisai has no infrastructure facilities and hence it was not possible to set up shops in the area.

Ayurvedic medical doctors in south India are upset over the indifference being shown by the Clinical Trials Registry-India to their request that a drug for coronavirus they developed yet to be taken up for clinical trial though a private company has been preference over them.

K’taka BJP MP gets threat calls from ‘jehadi’ in Gulf

Bengaluru: Karnataka BJP’s firebrand Lok Sabha member Shobha Karandlaje alleged that some “jehadi” elements have been making threatening calls to her from the Gulf region of late, a party official said on Tuesday.

“She (Shobha) has been getting many unknown calls through the internet on her phones, mostly from Gulf countries like Dubai and Muscat, giving her death threats for unspecified reasons,” Karandlaje’s spokesman D Abhishek told IANS.

The threat calls increased after May 3 when she wrote a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, seeking action against an Indian Muslim in Kuwait for allegedly attacking an Indian taxi driver in the Gulf country for “praising” Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his leadership.

“Though she is not worried about the threat calls, as she does not follow the language in which they speak (Urdu or Arabic), she has complained to the police in the state and New Delhi along with the voice calls to investigate who have been calling her from abroad,” Abhishek said.

A former state minister in the previous BJP government in the southern state (2008-13), Karandlaje is a two-time lawmaker from the Udupi-Chickmangalur parliamentary seat on the state’s west coast.

“As Shobha has been busy with the development woks in her constituency and taking care of her people during the lockdown in force since March 25 to contain the coronavirus spread, the police are investigating the case,” said Abishek.

Action should be taken

SHOBHA HAS BEEN GETTING MANY UNKNOWN CALLS THROUGH THE INTERNET ON HER PHONES, MOSTLY FROM GULF COUNTRIES LIKE DUBAI AND MUSCAT, GIVING HER DEATH THREATS FOR UNSPECIFIED REASONS



against the accused Muslim (Asi Chullikkara) from Rajapuram of Kasargode in north coastal Kerala for attacking, slapping and humiliating a Hindu driver Sri Praveen in Kuwait recently for praising Modi and posting it on his social media platform Facebook,” Karandlaje had asserted in her letter.

The accused had forced Praveen, a native of Kerala, was also made to apologise for lauding Modi.

“The accused also pressured Praveen to admit that any post appreciating Modi is an insult to the Muslim community. A video of the incident has gone viral,” said Karandlaje in her letter to Shah.

Terming the attack outrageous, the Chikmagalur constituency member said the accused had to be punished for his act.

“We must mount pressure on the authorities in Kuwait to extradite Chullikkara and brought to India for trial,” asserted Karandlaje in the letter.

IANS

Wipro to set up Covid hosp on Pune IT campus

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Global Information Technology major Wipro Limited has teamed up with the Maharashtra Government to set up a 450-bed intermediary care Covid-19 hospital on its IT campus at Hinjewadi in Pune.

The Covid-19 hospital will be ready by the end of this month and will be equipped to treat moderate cases. Among other things, the hospital will have 12 beds to stabilise critical patients before shifting them to a tertiary care facility.

This will be an independent, isolated COVID-19 dedicated complex. It will also include 24 well-appointed rooms to accommodate doctors and medical staff.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Wipro Ltd and the Maharashtra government in this regard, recently in the presence of Pune district Collector Naval Kishore Ram

and Pune Zilla Parishad’s Chief Executive Officer Ayush Prasad and Wipro’s Senior Vice President and Global Head-Operations Hari Prasad Hedge to set up Covid-19 hospital in Pune.

Speaking on the occasion, Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray said: “This humanitarian contribution by Wipro will further strengthen our medical infrastructure and benefit the medical fraternity who are at the forefront of our fight against the pandemic.”

Rishad Premji, Chairman, Wipro Limited, said: “Wipro will provide the physical infrastructure, medical furniture, and equipment besides appointing an administrator and skeletal support staff to help operationalize the hospital quickly with the required medical professionals.”

“We are fully committed to supporting the country’s pandemic and we must all

work together to deal with this crisis and minimise its human impact. We stand firmly with the Government of Maharashtra in its battle against COVID-19,” Rishad said.

The Wipro Ltd, Wipro Enterprises Ltd and Azim Premji Foundation, together have contributed Rs 1,125 crore to tackle the unprecedented health and humanitarian crisis arising from the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

“These resources will help enable the dedicated medical

and service fraternity in the frontline of the battle against the pandemic and in mitigating its wide ranging human impact,” Rishad said.

“Wipro and Azim Premji Foundation are engaged in COVID-19 related humanitarian and healthcare relief work in Maharashtra across Mumbai, Pune, Aurangabad-Waluj, Amalner, Ahmednagar, Akola, Beed, Chandrapur, and Gadchiroli,” a company spokesperson said.



CRPF jawan, cop injured in grenade attack in Budgam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

A day after killing three ACRPF jawans in Handwara, unidentified terrorists hurled a grenade on CRPF jawans in Pakherpora area of Budgam injuring six people, including a policeman and a CRPF jawan on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, in Doda district of Jammu province, army and J&K police in a joint operation arrested a Hizbul Mujahideen militant from Village Sheikhpura of Gundana tehsil on Monday.

According to police, a grenade attack was reported from Pakherpora area of Budgam in which one CRPF jawan, a policeman and four civilians received injuries.

Official sources said, on Sunday, terrorists ran away by looting service weapons of CRPF jawans from Wagam area of Handwara.

In Doda, police identified the arrested militant as Tanveer Ahmed age 27 years S/o Late Jamal Din Malik R/o Village Tantana Tehsil Gundana District Doda. He was associated with Hizbul Mujahideen

Police has also recovered, one Pistol along with 10 rounds of pistol from his possession. Police spokesman claimed, “Initial interrogation revealed that he was earlier associated with Haroon (terrorist of HM outfit killed in January) and at present with Tahir of Pulwama and Masood of Doda (both active terrorists of HM in Doda).”

Why int’l flights were allowed after March 11, TMC asks BJP

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The mutual mudslinging between the Trinamool Congress and the BJP culminated into a fierce attack launched by the former which on Tuesday raised a “fundamental question” holding Central Government responsible for “importing” corona to India.

A day after Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar — whom the TMC regards as a “BJP spokesperson” — slammed Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for running a police raj and diluting lockdown protocols — the Bengal ruling outfit launched a fierce counter-attack retracing the history of corona pandemic in India.

It held the Centre responsible for its “gross negligence” allowing the disease to proliferate in the community. In a press conference addressed by three senior Ministers of the

State, Partho Chatterjee, Chandrima Bhattacharya and Rajib Banerjee, the party raised a “fundamental question” asking “why the BJP Government risked the lives of millions of Indians by allowing repatriation of lakhs of Indians who were flown in even after the World Health Organisation announced the pandemic.”

In a hard-hitting attack Rajib Banerjee said, “the first case in India was recorded on January 30, after that, cases were reported from Karnataka and Haryana on March 9 and 5 ... the next week WHO declared corona as a pandemic.

“Still the Government continued to snore it away. They flew in lakhs of Indians stranded in other countries. This procedure of flying in Indians continued till March 22 ... This was a gross negligence on the part of the Centre which

was at that time more occupied horse-trading to topple an elected Government in Madhya Pradesh.

“Many infected Indians who were flown in spread the pandemic in India. So who should be held accountable for pushing Indians to this situation.”

It was Mamata Banerjee who had first objected to the Indians being flown in indiscriminately without putting any concrete plans in place he said. “The people were simply flown in and left to mingle among the public. There was no plan in place and not they are blaming the opposition ruled Governments. Our Chief Minister objected to this but none listened.”

Attacking the BJP and the Governor “who is acting like its spokesperson” for maligning Bengal and bringing it to disrepute TMC general secretary Partho Chatterjee said “After

pushing India and Bengal into this great trouble they sent IMCT to fish in troubled waters ... This team did not come to cooperate with us but to fund loopholes and create problems in fighting the virus.”

Questioning the propriety of sending the IMCT without testing the officers for the virus the Ministers said “the members of the team that was travelling Bengal was untested... Today we hear that the driver of the team and a security officer has been infected. Now who will trace their contacts?”

Hitting out at the Centre for spending crores in beautification of Delhi and erecting statues but forcing the migrant workers to pay for their train tickets back home the TMC leaders said “Rs 20,000 crore is being spent to beautify Lutyen’s Delhi, Rs 3,000 crore was spent to erect a statue and Rs 80 crore was spent to host Donald Trump but the poor workers

were forced to pay for their return ticket.”

Attacking the Centre for coming out with contradictory guidelines Banerjee said, “today they are asking as to impose strict lockdown and then tomorrow they are telling us to open shops. When we ask for clarification there is no reply. The Centre’s anti-corona policy is full of ad hocism... But here the BJP is out politicizing the whole war against corona by blemishing our Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who unlike her counterparts putting her own life at risk and descending on the streets to enforce lockdown.”

Rejecting the BJP and the Governor’s allegations about malpractices in the public distribution system the TMC leaders said “about 9 crore of people have been served by the current rationing system and the corrupt ration dealers have been punished. There has been

no irregularity as such in PDS system.”

Rather it was the BJP which was indulging in ration corruption Chatterjee said adding how “rice bags provided by the central Government were recovered from several BJP party offices in North Bengal.”

Meanwhile, Bengal on Tuesday recorded 85 new infections taking the total number of active cases to 1008, sources said.

There were 7 more deaths in the past 24 hours taking the total number of deaths to 68.

The central report however put the tally at 131. The State had tested 2455 people in the past one day Home Secretary Alapan Bandoopathyay said adding the total number of people tested were 25,116. A train carrying about 1,200 people from Ajmer Sharief returned to Kolkata on Tuesday.

Pak guns continue to boom along LoC in J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

Pakistani guns continue to boom along the Line of Control in Manjakote and Balakote sectors of Rajouri and Poonch in a bid to push large groups of heavily armed terrorists, assembled at launch pads.

According to ground reports, Pakistani army resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation around 8.30 p.m in Manjakote sector of Rajouri and after a gap of half an hour, forward areas of Balakote were also pounded with mortar shells by the Pakistan army.

Jammu based Defence spokesman, Lt-Col Devender Anand confirmed, “two back to back incidents of ceasefire violations were reported along the line of control in Manjakote and Balakote sectors of Rajouri and Poonch late Monday evening?”

He said, India army was giving befitting reply at both the places.

Ground reports claimed, Indian army is targeting notorious Pakistani posts across the line of control to prevent infiltration of fresh batches of infiltrators, camping at these launch pads.

Dharavi on boil, 33 more test +ve, total 665 cases

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Coronavirus situation in Mumbai’s Dharavi locality continued to be on the boil on Tuesday, as 33 more persons tested positive for Covid-19 taking the total number of infected cases in Asia’s largest slum to 665.

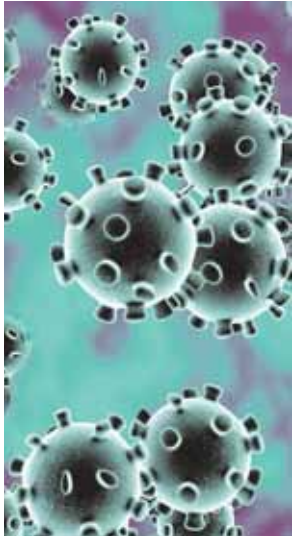
A day after 42 positive cases were reported from this densely populated slum, Dharavi once again erupted as it came up with 33 pandemic cases.

There were nine infected cases in 90 feet area in this slum. Of the infected was a seven year-old girl.

Indira Nagar was another severely affected area from where five positive cases were reported.

The other areas where active cases were recorded comprised: Ambedkar chawl, Kumbharwada, Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, Madina Nagar, PMGP colony, Gangadhar chawl, Vijay Nagar, Mukund nagar, Social Nagar, TATA colony, Abu Bakar chawl, janata housing society, 60 feet road area, New municipal chawl, Dharavi PC, Matunga Labour camp, Kalyanwadi and Shashtri Nagar.

With 33 fresh cases, the



THERE HAVE SO FAR BEEN 20 COVID-19 TRIGGERED DEATHS IN DHARAVI, WHICH IS ONE OF THE CORONAVIRUS HOTSPOTS IN MUMBAI

total number of positive cases has risen to 665 in Dharavi. Dharavi has witnessed substantial number infected cases in Dharavi for the past four days.

On Monday, there were 42 new positive cases of Covid-19.

On May 3, Coronavirus claimed two lives and left a record day’s tally of 94 others infected in this slum. On May 2, Dharavi recorded as many as 89 Covid-19 positive cases. On May 1, there were 38 new cases. Earlier on April 23, one death and 25 cases had been reported from Dharavi in a single day.

There have so far been 20 Covid-19 triggered deaths in Dharavi, which is one of the Coronavirus hotspots in Mumbai.

“We have so far screened 83,500 people in Dharavi. Currently, as many as 2380 people are in institutional quarantine. Of the earlier infected persons, 196 people have been discharged from various hospital after full cure,” a senior official of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said.

Spread over 240 hectare area, Dharavi is home to more than 4 lakh people. Ever since first few cases of Coronavirus were reported in the early first week of April, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is closely monitoring the situation in Dharavi where the health authorities have clamped a total lockdown.

T promotes Classes I-IX students without exam

Hyderabad: The Telangana Government, here on Tuesday, promoted students of classes I to IX in all schools, including aided and private unaided, to the higher classes for academic year 2020-21.

The School Education Department issued the order, as the state cabinet had decided to do so last month.

No examinations could be conducted for these classes due to the lockdown that began on March 22. Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao had earlier announced since there was no detention system for classes I-IX in the state, there was no need to conduct examinations and all the students be promoted to the next classes.

As the Summative Assessment (SA-2) examinations during the academic year 2019-20 could not be conducted due to the lockdown, the Commissioner of School Education had requested the government to issue necessary orders. The Government is yet to take a decision on the annual examination of 10th standard, known as the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination. The SSC examanations began on March 19.

IANS

Robots in Varanasi to crack down on lockdown violators now

Lucknow: As researchers and health workers try out new experiments to stop the spread of coronavirus across the country, an engineering student from Varanasi has designed an ‘anti-COVID-19 robot’ which will help security forces by giving a shock to lockdown violators.

Vishal Patel, a third year student of mechanical engineering at the Ashoka Institute in Varanasi, has developed this robot that can not only run on shallow water but can also operate comfortably on smooth and bumpy surfaces.

Patel, who built the robot under the supervision of his senior Shyam Chaurasia, claims that the device is also a security shield for police personnel.

It will also help the police to crack down on those flouting the lockdown rules. The police who are at a risk from coronavirus infection can maintain social distancing by operating through the robots who will monitor the situation.

Vishal claims that the robot will prove to be a very effective weapon in maintaining social

distancing. With a moving camera, remote and through the Internet, this device can be followed by two-way calling while sitting at a police check-point.

Mahadev Pandey, in-charge and scientific officer of Gorakhpur Planetarium told IANS, “There are many types of robots developed in this period, but the specialty of this robot made in Benaras is that it can be used even in rugged places and remote areas. It has wheels that allow it to run on a bumpy road in the countryside.”

IANS

As lockdown disrupts tourism, hundreds of guides sit idle at home

Agra: With the nationwide lockdown adversely affecting different sections of society financially, around 3,500 men and women acting as guides at different tourist places and spots in the region too have not remained untouched.

With no financial backing from their association for such exigencies, they are all at sea as to what the future holds for them. They claimed that they wrote to different authorities but got no response.

Unesco World Heritage Monuments include the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Humayun’t tomb and Qutub Minar in Delhi and Mahabalipuram etc. In the second category, there are monuments under the Archaeological Survey of India like

the tomb of I’timad-ud-Daulah in the city and Sikandra near Agra.

These monuments have been closed since March 17, even before the nationwide lockdown was announced amid coronavirus fears.

Agra Approved Guides Association President Sanjay Sharma told IANS that while all sectors of the economy had been hit by coronavirus pandemic, the tourism sector and those associated with it directly or indirectly too had been hit hard and left in the lurch.

“The tourism sector and guides have been hit hard because the work is seasonal and tourists make bookings in advance,” he pointed out.

IANS

An urban disturbia

‘Bois locker room’ chats show how boys of elite Delhi schools engage in deviant behaviour against fellow girl students



When teen boys in elite schools in our metropolitan cities talk about raping or gang-raping their classmates, share nude pictures of underage girls, objectify them and post sexually explicit chats, it means just one thing, that India, as a nation has failed its women/girls. That bestiality is a natural response even among the young, too easily molly-coddled as “raging hormones.” And that education is basically an exchange value for a good life and not true knowledge or enlightenment. How else does one explain this abominable, unhealthy and sexist mindset among the privileged lot of society that continues to see the opposite gender through a medieval stereotype? As an object of prey of possession. How else will we then rationalise the sexual deviance of uneducated juveniles? So, it shouldn’t surprise us when our sensibilities are repeatedly shocked by the outing of “bois locker room” chats of the kind that came out this Sunday. Or the one a few months ago, in which the “bois” in question were as young as 12. What is more frightening is that all these cases involve children of well-heeled parents, who come from “good families” and have had entitled and privileged lives. Liberated even, without developing a mindset to handle the spirit of liberalism. And if these boys think that it is their right to treat women as sex objects then we, as parents, have done a bad job of bringing them up. We have not raised them to respect women/girls, treat them as equals and not objectify them. We have not brought up gentlemen but brutes and misogynists. Spare the rod and spoil the child goes an old adage. That changed when post-liberalisation, the world opened up and millennials were exposed to unfiltered content as part of their experiential education in a new, wider world, courtesy the internet and cell-phones. With corporal punishment banned in 2010 and severe strictures against teachers if they overstepped child rights, schools, too, became cagey about stepping into or monitoring extra-curricular or non-school activities. So what do we do now? We have a generation of spoilt, brazen and sexually-depraved boys, who will one day be men and wield power of some sort over someone of the opposite sex. How many Weinstains have we raised?

For now, we have to be satisfied with the fact that one of the 22 school-boys has been taken into custody and more have been identified as the police investigate the horrific Instagram group chat that has been deactivated. The teen has identified 21 of the boys who were active on the group and his phone has been seized by the Cyber Cell of Delhi Police. But what of all those groups that no one knows about. And can we truly just blame the boys? What about unsupervised teens left to their own devices by busy parents? What about the expensive gadgets they are showered with to assuage parental guilt or just to get them out of our hair? Do we ever take the time and see what they are getting up to in their free time or locked away in their rooms? Have we ever taken the time or trouble to sit with them and talk about sex and the importance of consent? Have we ever given them the confidence that if they have questions about sex they can come to us and we will educate them as we do for every other thing? And what about the easy access to porn? Most are initiated into sex through these sites which objectify and degrade women. Violent images that get seared in their impressionable minds and desensitise them, making them think that women are meant to be violated. What of the criminal justice system that teaches them that you can get away with it? Our power brokers and politicians don’t make the best role models for our youth. So it is not enough or done to point fingers at the boys, we as a society have a lot to answer for. And some of the answers to these tricky questions are certainly not going to be of our liking. This is reflected in our crime graph. If the latest NCRB data is anything to go by, 33,356 incidents of rape were reported during 2018 involving 33,977 victims, an average of 89 rapes a day. Overall, 72.2 per cent of rape victims were above 18 years and 27.8 per cent below 18. And social media platform owners ought to monitor such base content.

Bubble of hope

As the world grapples with the Corona pandemic, travel bubbles may be the way ahead to open international tourism



At a time when tourism, which was considered to be a growth engine of the new economy and a defining lifestyle statement, has reached a dead end courtesy the Coronavirus, here’s some solace from at least from one corner of the world. Ongoing talks between New Zealand and Australia to chalk out a plan to create a “travel bubble,” which would allow citizens of both nations to cross the 2,000-kilometre sea line, offer some hopes for recovery for this industry. Maybe create a template for the rest of the world. Agreed, it may take some time for tourists to start moving freely but a designated guided tour between two or microdots of “safe” countries may yet rescue a sector from dying. As the two countries work on the modalities to create the bubble, it must not be forgotten that this is a hard choice they have had to make. However, both nations have been way ahead in containing the pandemic — registering only one per cent growth in new cases — which is why they have been lucky enough to consider the option to open each other’s borders for their citizens. Besides, the two nations share the closest bilateral relationships in the world. With easier visa agreements, the flow of people, work-related or for pleasure, had been pretty smooth before all hell broke due to the spread of the pandemic. Heavily dependent as they remain on each other, with Australians making up almost 40 per cent of international arrivals to New Zealand and the latter making up for around 15 per cent of the former’s international visitors, they might just get a micro-economy going.

With Australia looking to double the pace of economic growth next year and a somewhat diluted form of recession in New Zealand, this would be a symbiotic relationship that has to be closely monitored in terms of disease control protocols. Moving too fast would mean not only a second wave of COVID-19 cases but a challenge laden with potential risks of new infections. With another country being involved in the mix, contact tracing would be even more difficult. From following stricter health protocols to tightening up airport rules and quarantine checks, a lot would be needed to restore confidence of travellers. Technology would have to be deployed to intensify the screening and tracking the movement of the each tourist. A bubble indeed that cannot be allowed to burst. India, too, over the course of time, can experiment with domestic bubbles between “safe, contiguous” territories.

opinion06

Afghan quest continues

With the Afghan peace deal on hold due to its infirmities and COVID-19, India has its role cut out: To open a back channel with the Taliban and carve out a place in intra-Afghan dialogue



ASHOK K MEHTA

For the Americans especially, the most spectacular political event in the first quarter of 2020 was the signing of the Afghanistan peace deal between the US and the Taliban at Doha and simultaneously, a US-Afghanistan agreement at Kabul. The first agreement fructified after many nations, including Russia and China, failed to broker one. However imperfect, indeed flawed, for US President Donald Trump, the deal is meant to be a game-changer for his reelection later this year. He will bring back 4,000 US soldiers by August and the remaining 12,000 by July 2021.

The International Crisis Group, Brussels, described the agreement as “ambiguous and at places contradictory, leading to confusion.” The anomalies have already been discussed threadbare. The agreements have opened two new mechanisms: Direct military channel between the US military commander at Kabul with the Taliban at Doha; and a new Afghanistan-Pakistan dialogue facilitated by America, aimed at border security and ending terrorist safe-havens.

Trump was overwhelmed by the agreements but acknowledged in response to a question that the Taliban could seize power after the US and Nato forces leave Afghanistan. “Yes, that is possible...US’ commitment to Afghanistan comes with an expiry date,” he said. The swearing-in of the two Afghan Presidents in the same building created its own confusion dynamics but this time around, US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, instead of mediating between them, threatened to cut \$1 billion from security funding, not just for this year but also next year. The prisoner swap — of 5,000 Taliban for 1,000 Afghan soldiers — is also stuck on the modalities of release and the Taliban not reducing violence, leading to a comprehensive ceasefire. For the first time, the US mission in Afghanistan has refused to disclose the details of ground operations and casualties. But the office of Afghanistan’s National Security Advisor said that the Taliban has carried out 2,804 attacks since the peace agreement was signed on February 29.

The mother of all problems on both sides, the Taliban and its adversaries, is the COVID-19 pandemic, which has invaded the presidential palace, too. The first Corona case in Afghanistan was detected at Herat on February 24. On May 4, 3,894 positive cases were reported with 400 recoveries and 90 deaths. The highest incidence of cases is in Herat due to its proximity to Iran and several thousand Afghan refugees are returning home. A Coronavirus task force, led by Vice President Amrullah Saleh, former head of National Directorate of Security, along with a technical team from the National Security Council attached to it has been established. It is feared that if the pandemic is not con-



tained, it could spread to central Asia.

India has been relatively active in Afghanistan following the signing of the peace agreements. Its consistency in refusing to open the channels with the Taliban is remarkably amazing. Foreign Minister S Jaishankar likened the US-Taliban deal with a long-awaited film, *Pakeezah*, and its 17 trailers, employing his emblematic phraseology: “We will watch this space for outcomes.”

Interestingly, India had stopped short of welcoming the agreements. Instead, the Ministry of External Affairs had noted that the “entire political spectrum in Afghanistan welcomed the opportunity for peace and stability.” Jaishankar has maintained India’s position that the gains of the last 18 years must be preserved. New Delhi was quick to acknowledge Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani’s victory in the presidential elections, overlooking loyal partner Abdullah Abdullah, whose family our country has hosted for several years. A deal between Ghani and Abdullah is in the making where the latter has proposed his name as Executive Prime Minister and leader of the talks team with the Taliban.

For the second time in three months, Taliban

spokesperson Suhail Shaheen said that his organisation would want good relations in the neighbourhood on the basis of mutual interest and respect. “We will never want any foreign organisation to use the Afghan soil to target another country.” On February 29, Taliban supreme Hibatullah Akhundzada said that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan believes in sound relations with the world and the region.

The recent attack on a Gurudwara in Kabul that killed 25 Sikhs whereby it is not clear if the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant — Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) or the Haqqani Network was in the works, has sent a chilling message for the future of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) operations in Afghanistan targeting Indian assets. The arrest of ISIS-K leader, Abdullah Orakzai, a Pakistani national, by the National Directorate of Security (NDS) recently will open up new trails. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) has claimed that ISIS-K has been virtually eliminated, including its top leaders, an achievement hailed by Ghani as the defeat of the ISIS-K. The Taliban, assisted by US firepower, apparently played a lead role in this victory. Latest threat assessments prompted

India to withdraw two of its four consulates in Afghanistan at Herat and Jalalabad with two others in Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif remaining in place. Both these consulates have been targeted in the past too — Jalalabad has been attacked four times since 2007, even forcing its relocation in 2016. Herat was attacked in 2014 and Mazar-e-Sharif in 2013. The Jaish-e-Mohammad and the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, in concert with the Haqqanis, were involved in these attacks.

The optimistic inference drawn from the US interlocutor Zalmay Khalilzad’s recent conversation with Jaishankar, enquiring on the COVID-19 pandemic and briefing him on the progress in the agreement with the Taliban, that India is now part of the peace process is highly misplaced. Expectations were raised by former President Hamid Karzai when he said at the Raisina Dialogue in January and more recently after the Khalilzad-Jaishankar conversation that India should be part of the peace process. Similarly, Mohammed Masoom Stanekzai, head of the Ghani-appointed 21-member talks team with the Taliban, said at a conference that India should be part of the regional conference on Afghanistan. Pakistan

will never allow India to come inside the tent. Jaishankar knows it and will be watching that space keenly.

After all, the peace deal is a troop extrication agreement, not part of a peace process as the two agreements signed at Doha and Kabul are apparently not interlinked. Even so, last week, Khalilzad had urged the Taliban to observe peace and suspend offensive military operations during Ramadan as it was an opportunity for humanitarian ceasefire, at least till the Coronavirus crisis was over.

The Afghans are unhappy that the Taliban has pledged not to attack the US and other foreign forces but is continuing to kill fellow Afghans. With the implementation of the peace deal on hold due to its infirmities and COVID-19, India has its role cut out: To open back channel with the Taliban; hasten bridging the gap between Ghani and Abdullah, vital for the cohesion of national response to Taliban; re-deploy consulates at Herat and Jalalabad as soon as feasible; and carve out a place in intra-Afghan dialogue.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander IPKF South, Sri Lanka and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff.)

SOUNDBITE

India needs a stimulus package. We have not dedicated a large enough financial package yet. Spending is the easiest way to revive economy.

Nobel laureate
—Abhijit Banerjee



From action sequences to getting intimate, there is a lot of physicality involved in our job. So I am wondering about how the entire film industry is going to operate.

Actor
—Sanjay Kapoor



Efforts of global leaders, who managed to raise funds worth billions of Euros to boost work on the development of a Coronavirus vaccine, is a powerful show of solidarity.

WHO chief
—Tedros A Ghebreyesus



People are not yet used to maintaining social distancing or wearing a mask. Others talk from my mind. I talk from my heart. *Dar lagta hai.*

Haryana Minister
—Anil Vij



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Inculcate change

Sir — This refers to the editorial, “All for a drink” (May 5). The consumption of alcohol is known to have serious ill-effects on people’s health. Its intake in the middle of a pandemic can prove to be counter-intuitive. As was seen, the opening up of this sector led to massive crowding. This can defeat the very purpose of social distancing. But it cannot also be denied that the closure of liquor shops was a gross mistake on the part of the Government. Not only has it depleted State revenues but also led to the emergence of black marketing. Liquor is an important source of revenue for State Governments. In times like these with the economy shut, they must not be deprived of a vital source of revenue.

When social distancing is being enforced for essential services, it can be enforced for liquor shops, too. Why can’t liquor be delivered at home? Citizens, too, must learn to conduct themselves responsibly. They must get used to maintaining social distancing now.

Mayank Khatri
Ujjain

Sort out the economic mess, too

The decision of the Centre to extend the lockdown till May 17 must have been difficult. A number of States have been pressuring the Government on account of their funds running out; an extension of the lockdown will likely mean greater financial losses. It seems that that the Government has considered all of this in order to take the pragmatic decision of dividing the country into red, orange and green zones with certain relaxations in movement and activities.

The latest guidelines allow industrial establishments in urban areas, such as special economic zones and export-oriented units, to function even if they fall under the red zone. The permission to restart the manufacturing units of essential goods and their supply chain, the manufacture of IT hardware and the jute industry with staggered shifts and social distancing is welcome, too. This will ensure that businesses gradually get back on their feet.

A graded exit plan will be essential for the seamless merger of economic activities among all zones. It is up to the State Governments to ensure the smooth



supply of essential goods, both within their territories and inter-State. It is a good decision to allow for relaxations in the sale of tobacco and liquor as these boost the finances of a State considerably. But the Government must provide a strong economic package as well so that the slowdown is not prolonged.

Bal Govind
Noida

Life not as usual

Sir — This refers to the editorial, “All for a drink” (May 5). Large crowds outside liquor vends made for a bizarre scenario. People were seen avidly jostling to buy liquor, thus giving the police a tough time to manage the

unprecedented rush even as all social distancing norms went for a toss. Honestly speaking, the Indian economy has suffered miserably ever since the lockdown came into force. Revenue collections for States, too, have been badly affected. At this juncture, when the ruling regime is in the line of fire from the Opposition

for its controversial move, it is caught in a Catch-22 situation of choosing between the health of the economy and people’s well-being. Citizens must understand that the relaxation of the lockdown does not mean a return to normalcy as life existed before.

Azhar A Khan
Rampur

Save print media

Sir — In the wake of the spread of Coronavirus, newspapers, which were already in the process of dying, are now finding it difficult to sustain economically. Print runs have been drastically reduced because of distribution problems. Due to a sharp drop in advertisements, edition sizes, too, have been cut back.

A number of newspapers have either suspended publication, furloughed staff and announced further cost cuts. Although publishers have announced that this is just temporary, there’s reason to believe some may be permanent. The problem facing them is that they are unable to find a viable source of revenue in the absence of suspension of advertisements. For the sake of journalism which is vital for society, something needs to be done. And this isn’t the responsibility of the Government alone. All of us must find ways to support this industry.

Shambhavi
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

(The writer is a socio-economic commentator)

UK BECOMES VIRUS EPICENTRE OF EUROPE

Global virus cases: 3,690,863

Global virus deaths: 2,55,176

AP ■ LONDON

Britain on Tuesday became the first country in Europe to confirm more than 30,000 coronavirus deaths and infections rose sharply again in Russia, even as other nations made great strides in taming the virus. China marked its third week with no new virus deaths and South Korea restarted its professional baseball season.

In the US, some states began halting steps to lift the lockdown restrictions being blamed for throwing millions out of work and upending the global economy even as thousands of new U.S. infections and deaths were being reported daily.

Britain looks set to surpass

Italy as Europe's hardest-hit nation. The Government said 28,734 people with Covid-19 had died in UK. Hospitals, nursing homes and other settings while Italy has reported 29,079 fatalities. Tallies from both are likely to be underestimates because they only include people who tested positive and testing was not widespread in Italian and British nursing homes until recently.

Yet official UK statistics released on Tuesday that take into account people who died with suspected Covid-19 give a fuller picture and put Britain's coronavirus toll at more than 30,000 dead. The statistics, which go up to April 24, show that deaths were a third higher than the Government count. A comparable figure for Italy

| COUNTRY | TOTAL CASES | TOTAL DEATHS |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| USA | 1,221,981 | 70,812 |
| Spain | 2,50,561 | 25,613 |
| Italy | 2,13,013 | 29,315 |
| UK | 1,94,990 | 29,427 |
| France | 1,69,462 | 25,201 |
| Germany | 1,66,490 | 6,993 |
| Russia | 1,55,370 | 1,451 |
| Turkey | 1,29,491 | 3,520 |



was not available.

In Russia, the number of infections rose sharply again, with Moscow reporting more than 10,000 new cases for three days in a row.

At the same time, many European countries that have relaxed strict lockdowns after new infections tapered off were watching their virus numbers warily.

"We know with great certainty that there will be a second wave - the majority of scientists is sure of that. And many also assume that there will be a third

wave," Lothar Wieler, the head of Germany's national disease control centre, said.

Italy this week allowed 4.4 million people to go back to work and eased restrictions on personal movement for the first time in two months. Scientists on Tuesday warned lawmakers to prepare for a new wave of infections.

The coming weeks are essentially an "experiment" to see how the infection curve reacts to the easing of the West's first lockdown, the head of infectious diseases at Italy's

Superior Institute of Health told the La Repubblica newspaper.

"We are not out of the epidemic. We are still in it," said Dr Giovanni Rezza. "I don't want people to think there's no more risk and we go back to normal." Widely seen as a success story, South Korea reported only three new cases of the virus, its lowest total since Feb. 18. Schools will be reopened in phases starting with high school seniors on May 13, but the highlight Tuesday was the baseball season.

No spectators were allowed. Cheerleaders danced beneath rows of empty seats and umpires wore protective masks as one of the world's first major professional sports returned to action in games broadcast to sports fans around the world. The Korea Baseball Organization also employed other protective measures, including fever screenings for players and coaches before they entered the stadiums.

China, it's been three weeks since any new deaths have been reported in the country where the pandemic began late last year. Just one new case of infection was confirmed, and fewer than 400 patients are still being treated for Covid-19, health officials said. Other places in the Asia-Pacific region have also suppressed outbreaks, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand, which has had zero new cases for two

days.

But experts said India, a nation of 1.3 billion people, has yet to see the peak of its outbreak.

In Britain, which unlike other European nations remains in lockdown, a trial began Tuesday of a mobile phone app that authorities hope will help contain the outbreak. The app, which warns people if they have been near an infected individual, is being tested on the Isle of Wight, off England's southern coast. The government hopes it can be rolled out across the country later this month.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson plans to soon detail a route out of a nationwide lockdown that began March 23 and runs through Thursday. Critics say Johnson's Conservative government responded too slowly when Covid-19 began to spread, failed to contain the outbreak by not widely testing people with

symptoms, then failed to trace and isolate the contacts of infected people. Countries that did that, including South Korea and Germany, have recorded much lower death rates than those that did not.

The British government's chief scientific adviser, Patrick Vallance, acknowledged Tuesday that "if we'd managed to ramp up testing capacity quicker it would have been beneficial." In France, scientists released a study saying they may have identified a possible case of the new coronavirus dating back to December - about a month before the first cases were officially confirmed in Europe.

Outside experts said the study, which was done retrospectively from incomplete medical records, was interesting but not conclusive proof that the virus started spreading in Europe before previously believed.

Around the Globe

● Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Monday what he called a "normalisation plan" to gradually ease restrictions imposed during the coronavirus pandemic as the death rate falls, but warned of tougher measures to come should the number of infections rebound. In a televised address following a Cabinet meeting, Erdogan said shopping malls would be allowed to open starting on May 11, as would barber shops, hairdressers and beauty parlours — as long as they work on a system of appointment and accept customers at half-capacity

● Singapore on Tuesday reported 632 new Covid-19 cases, mostly foreign workers living in packed dormitories, taking the total number of infections in the country to 19,410. A total of 605 of the new cases are foreign workers on work permits and residing in dormitories, said the Health Ministry said. Fifteen patients are work permit holders residing outside dormitories and 12 cases were from the community, comprising eight Singapore citizens or permanent residents (foreigners), and four work pass holders (also foreigners).

● Pakistan's Cabinet on Tuesday decided to discuss the ways to ease nationwide lockdown with chief ministers of all the provinces on Wednesday, even as the death toll from coronavirus crossed 500. Prime Minister Imran Khan chaired the Cabinet meeting which was briefed by Planning Minister Asad Umar about the status of ongoing lockdown which will end on May 9 unless extended. Information Minister Shibli Faraz told the media that the Cabinet decided to discuss lockdown and other coronavirus related issues in the meeting of the National Command and Control Centre (NCCOC) on Wednesday.

● Paris Opera is looking at losses of 40 million euros (\$43 million) this year, its director warned on Tuesday, and may not reopen until 2021. Europe's biggest opera and ballet company was hit by a catastrophic strike over pensions reform earlier this year before the coronavirus brought the curtain down again in March.

Developed antibody against virus, 'terrific breakthrough': Israel

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli Defence Minister Naftali Bennett has said that scientists at the country's main biological research institute have made a "significant breakthrough" in developing an antibody to the novel coronavirus, as the researchers wrapped up the development phase and moved to patent and mass produce the potential treatment.

Bennett visited the labs of the Israel's Institute for Biological Research (IIBR), supervised by the Prime Minister's Office and mandated to develop a vaccine for coronavirus, in Ness Ziona on Monday and was shown the "antibody that attacks the virus in a monoclonal way and can neutralise it within the bodies of those ill", a statement from his office said.

The statement said that the antibody's development had been completed and that the institute was in the process of patenting the find "and in the next stage, researchers will approach international companies to produce the antibody on a commercial scale".

"I am proud of the institute staff for this terrific breakthrough," Bennett said, adding

that "their creativity and the Jewish mind brought about this amazing achievement".

In March, Israeli daily Ha'aretz, quoting medical sources, had reported that scientists at the institute had made a significant breakthrough in understanding the biological mechanism and qualities of the virus, including better diagnostic capability, production of antibodies for those who already have the virus and development of a vaccine.

It was not immediately clear if the breakthrough presented to Bennett was in addition to progress that was reported in late March, and no further details were provided.

The statement also did not specify whether human trials were conducted.

The IIBR was established in 1952 as part of the Israel Defence Forces' Science Corps, and later became a civilian organisation. It is technically under the supervision of the Prime Minister's Office, but is in close communication with the Defence Ministry. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is said to have ordered the institute to devote resources to develop a vaccine for Covid-19 on February 1.

Because I'm Asian: Stranded cyclist alleges turned away by Guinea hotels

AFF ■ CONAKRY, GUINEA

Raymond Lee had been travelling the world by bicycle for two years when the coronavirus erupted and he suddenly found himself stranded in the poor West African state of Guinea.

After cycling through Europe and then across the Sahara, the 33-year-old South Korean was in Guinea, heading south, when the government shut the borders in a bid to curb the spread of the virus.

"When I was in Guinea this thing became really serious," said Lee, a former flight atten-

dant with an easy smile and a shock of long hair.

Now stranded, he was repeatedly turned away from hotels in the seaside capital Conakry, in what Lee described as a prejudiced reaction to the pandemic. "They didn't let me in because I am Asian," he said by phone, explaining that he was turned away from seven or eight hotels.

"It was pretty messed up," he added. "I personally never experienced any racism in my entire life, this is the first time".

In spite of abundant natural resources, Guinea is a poor country where the fragile health

system is causing concern in the face of the pandemic.

The nation of some 13 million people also has one of the worst outbreaks in the region, with about 1,300 confirmed cases and seven fatalities. Lee began asking around on the street for a place to stay — only to be swindled by a man who agreed to host him for 50 euros (\$55) a month, but who vanished after receiving the money.

With nowhere to stay and living off savings, he found a room in an upmarket hotel which he could not afford for long.

As Trump resumes travel, staff takes risks to prepare trip

AP ■ WASHINGTON

For much of the last two months, President Donald Trump has rarely left the grounds of the White House as he's dealt with the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic and sought to minimise his own exposure to the disease.

But that changes Tuesday, when Trump is scheduled to travel to Arizona to visit a Honeywell facility that makes N95 masks in what the president suggests will mark the return to more regular travel.

The trip also means a small army of advisers, logistical experts and security staff — a coterie of hundreds that includes personnel from the White House, Defense Department, Secret Service and more — will resume regularly hitting the road again

and taking a measure of risk to assist Trump.

In addition to Tuesday's trip to Honeywell, Trump says he will travel soon to Ohio, to New York in June for the US Military Academy graduation, and to South Dakota in July for a holiday fireworks display at Mount Rushmore.

Trump said he's also eager to get back on the campaign trail, though he acknowledged during a Fox News forum Sunday that it might not be able to hold his signature big-stadium rallies until the final months before the November 3 election.

"I've been at the White House now for many months, and I'd like to get out, as much as I love this. ... Most beautiful house in the world," Trump said in announcing his travel plans.

Russia: Domestic violence reports spike amid lockdown

Moscow: The number of domestic violence cases in Russia grew 2 1/2 times during the lockdown the Government ordered to stem the spread of the coronavirus, Russia's human rights ombudswoman said on Tuesday.

Complaints and reports made to Russian non-governmental organisations spiked from roughly 6,000 in March to more than 13,000 in April, human rights ombudswoman Tatyana Mosalkova said.

"The picture is rather non-optimistic," the RIA Novosti news agency quoted her as saying. Russia imposed a nationwide lockdown in late March, with authorities in the vast majority of regions suspending most businesses and requiring residents to stay at home. AP

AROUND THE WORLD IN PICTURES



A man wears full protective equipment to protect against the coronavirus as he shops in London AP



A man wears full protective equipment to protect against the coronavirus as he shops in London AP



US scientists warn a mutant, most contagious coronavirus strain has emerged

nuclear weapons.

According to the scientists who posted their report The 33-page report was posted Thursday on preprint portal BioRxiv, which is yet to be peer-reviewed, the new strain appeared in February in Europe, migrated to the US

East Coast and has been the dominant strain across the world since mid-March, according to a report in Los Angeles Times on Tuesday.

"In addition to spreading faster, it may make people vulnerable to a second infection after a first bout with the dis-

ease," the authors warned.

The mutation affects the now infamous spikes on the exterior of the coronavirus, which allow it to enter human respiratory cells.

The authors said they felt an "urgent need for an early warning" so that vaccines manufacturers around the world will be prepared to take on the more deadly mutated strain.

The new strain's dominance over its predecessors demonstrates that it is more infectious, though exactly why is still not known.

Former Hong Kong leaders launch pro-Beijing coalition

AP ■ HONG KONG

Two of Hong Kong's former leaders launched a pro-Beijing alliance Tuesday to uphold China's "one country, two systems" policy and work to revive the city's economy following months of anti-government protests.

The move by former chief executives Tung Chee-hwa and Leung Chun-ying comes ahead of key legislative elections in September.

The ruling pro-Beijing Government took a drubbing in district elections last year amid demonstrations calling for greater democracy. Tung and Leung said the

new Hong Kong Coalition will support employment by creating jobs, providing internships and offering volunteer work to fresh graduates. They did not provide details of how they would do that.

"We will give full play to 'One Country, Two Systems' and recover our economy, and continue to safeguard the rule of law so that we can achieve stability and prosperity in Hong Kong," said Tung, who led the city from 1997 to 2005.

Hong Kong was riven by anti-government protests last year against what critics see as growing Chinese influence in the city's affairs.

The former British colony was handed back to China in

1997 under the "one-country, two-systems" framework, in which Hong Kong was given freedoms not enjoyed on the mainland and promised a high degree of autonomy over local affairs for 50 years.

During the protests, hundreds of thousands took to the streets and violent clashes erupted between police and hard-line demonstrators. Among the protesters demands was the direct election of the city's leader, currently picked by a committee.

The launch of the coalition comes a day after Hong Kong said its economy contracted 8.9% year-on-year for the first three months of 2020, the largest decline on record.



Govt. of Bihar

Public Health Division, Buxar

TENDER NIT NO. – PHED/BXR-01-(MVS)/2020-21

National Competitive Bidding

(Through e-procurement mode on <http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in>)

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1 | Designation and Address of Advertiser | Executive Engineer, P.H. Division n, Buxar. | | | |
| 2 | Date of issue of Tender Notice | 29.04.2020 | | | |
| 3 | Period of sale (downloading) of tender Bid Document | From 19.05.2020 to 17.06.2020 up to 17:00 Hrs. through http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in | | | |
| 4 | Date, time & place of pre-bid meeting | 02.06.2020 at 15:00 hrs in the Office of Regional Chief Engineer Patna Zone Patna | | | |
| 5 | Last date and time of receipt (uploading) of tender | 20.06.2020 up to 17:00 Hrs on http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in | | | |
| 6 | Last date and time of submission of hard copy of EMD (in original) along with copy of uploaded documents. | 23.06.2020 up to 15:00 hrs in the Office of the :- A. Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Buxar. B. Superintending Engineer, P.H. Circle Ara C. Regional Chief Engineer, Patna Zone Patna | | | |
| 7 | Date and time of opening of technical bid | 24.06.2020 at 13:00 Hrs on http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in in by the office of Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Buxar | | | |
| 8 | Date and time of opening of financial bid | To be informed later after the approval of technical bid. | | | |

9. Details of Works:-

| S. No. | Name of Work | Estimate-d Cost (Rs. In Lakh) | Earnest Money (Rs in Lakh) | Cost of B.O.Q (Non-Refundable (in Rs.) To be Paid Online in BDEDC A/C directly by the Tender) | Processing fee for BSECD in Rs. (To be Paid Online in BDEDC A/C directly by the Tender) | Time of Completion |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2 | | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 01 | Design, construction, Supplying, Testing, and Commissioning of balance work of Simri Multi-Village Pipe water Supply scheme (Capacity 17.66 MLD) for Arsenic affected Villages of Simri & Buxar Blocks in District of Buxar including construction of floating jetty (M.S. Barge) structure and raw water pumping station, Water Treatment Plant, Master ESR, Intermediate ESR, Zonal ESR, Main Distribution line with D.I. and H.D.P.E. Pipe, House service connection to each household, Underground Water Reservoir, Solar Lighting System, SCADA, Boundary Wall, Approach Road, Electrical/Mechanical Works, Highway/ Railway/ Canal Crossing and other allied works etc, as per direction of E/I with supply of all materials, supply and installation of all Electrical and Mechanical equipment and supplying, laying, jointing, testing of jointing at mislik of existing rising repair distribution pipe line of different dia including operation and maintenance for 5 years on turn-key basis with three months trial & run period and three months defects and liability after successful Commissioning all Complete job. | 8397.00 | 94.00 | 10000.00 | 17700.00 | 18 Months |

- Estimated cost of the tender may change, but cost of E.M. and other fees will remain the same.
- Bid Validity – 180 days
- Any Contractor registered with Central Government/ any State Government, any PSU in requisite class may participate in the tender but registration with the Public Health Engineering Department, Bihar in requisite class will be essential before entering into agreement after issue of LOA.
- The bidder shall submit his bid/tender on e-Procurement platform at <http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in>

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए www.prdbihar.gov.in पर सम्पर्क करें

PR-00715 (P H E) 2020-21

Executive Engineer,
P.H Division, Buxar

नोबल कोलेजा के संबंध में विस्तृत जानकारी एवं सहाय्य हेतु  Toll Free No. **104** पर सम्पर्क कर सकते हैं।

स्वायत्त सम्पत्ती – संबंधी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

किसी भी तरह आपदा की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु आपदा प्रबंधन के हेल्पलाइन नं. 1070 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

The new date for JEE Main is slated between July 18-23. It is time for students to pull up their socks. RL TRIKHA shares tips that can help them ace the exam



The COVID-19 pandemic has put the state under complete lockdown, which has been extended further till May 17, 2020. except for the state, coronavirus lockdown has also put a halt to the dreams of scholars looking forward to seem in JEE Main (April session) followed by JEE Advanced in May.

Before the lockdown, JEE Main (April Session) was scheduled to be conducted on April 5, 7, 9 & 11. Moreover, soon after the extension of the lockdown, the National Testing Agency (NTA) reopened the correction window for JEE Main applications. Here, students who have applied for April Session can make corrections. On Tuesday, the HRD minister announced new dates for the second session of JEE Main which is from July 18 to July 23, 2020. Students don't have to panic and instead utilise the given time in boosting their preparation. Consider this situation as a blessing in disguise, students must keep calm, stay healthy and invest quality time in identifying their loopholes & strengthening their preparation.

When nothing seems to be under your control, it's best to spent time in facing the challenges, evolving your skills & stepping towards Excellence for a brighter tomorrow. the necessity of the hour is to remain positive, utilise additional time effectively to churn out something productive & better. Following points will definitely

facilitate you in utilising the time well:

Draft a workable schedule: When you would like to realise something, the primary thing is to plan out it slow table. Schedule shall be made during a way that revision, learning and testing go hand in hand. It also allows you to quickly run through short notes, formulae & concepts. Give equal time to every subject & work upon to strengthen the concepts and their application by attempting mock tests and past years' exam papers. In-depth learning is that the mantra than memorisation.

Go online for quality teaching: Current scenario has certainly raised the importance of technology. There are online platforms working genuinely to provide a virtual classroom ambience with complete notes, expert opinions, online classes, mock tests etc for optimum preparation. Edfora my PAT powered by knowledge partner FIITJEE, is one such platform that enables students to learn effectively and the safely from their homes.

Choose 3-tier revision method: Revisiting in time must boost the retention and productivity. Here, a stu-

FOR OPTIMUM PERFORMANCE, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOUR MIND & BODY ARE IN SHAPE. STUDYING FOR HOURS WITHOUT TAKING ANY BREAK IN BETWEEN MIGHT NOT REAP DESIRED RESULTS. FREQUENT BREAKS ARE VITAL FOR THE BRAIN TO ASSIMILATE AND REGAIN THE LOST ENERGY

dent can value more highly to add three tier method. A subject done on a given day will be revised after three days so the identical topic will be refreshed at the tip of the week. during this manner, a student is probably going to induce a robust hold on topics & subjects.

Conceptual application of key formulae: Today's competitive environment needs one to learn & conceptually apply formulae in JEE Main type questions.

This can be further strengthened at the time of revision. Students who consume plenty of time in solving questions can practise and increase their speed.

Mock tests: Mock Test is sort of a practice match that prepares students for the real match with the correct temperament of the exam. For accurate analysis of current preparedness, mock test plays a significant role.

Be relaxed & stay enthused: For optimum performance, it's important that your mind & body are in shape. Studying for hours with not taking any break in between might not reap

desired results. Frequent breaks are vital for the brain to assimilate, regain the lost energy and re-energise the mind and body for next study session. So, stay calm and determined towards your goal.

Time mangement: It must be utilized effectively and productively. Wise utilisation of this additional time & working towards getting a decent hold on concepts is that the need of the hour.

Accurate Strategy and Proper Time Management are the tools that each student must use during this current lockdown and are the steps towards attaining excellence. Moreover, success depends on the day's performance. So, one should practise and not waste even one hour. Time to Ace JEE Main 2020 & to follow it successfully in JEE Advanced 2020 is now.

After attempting January session of JEE Main 2020, it's time to analyse performance, discover the loopholes, strengthen weak areas & put in optimum efforts to deliver the most effective.

The writer is Director, FIITJEE

Time to brush up skills

These are uncertain times with schools and colleges being shut. However, both students and faculty can utilise this time to acquire new knowledge and be future ready, says DR PRADEEP KUMAR SINHA

In an unprecedented move, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that his Government was enforcing a 21-day nation-wide lockdown to combat the outbreak of Coronavirus. He assured the public that both the union and State Governments will ensure supply of essential goods and services so that people can easily stay put in their houses during the three-week lockdown.

Nonetheless, the shutting down of schools, offices and public transport has significantly disrupted the lives of common people including that of students. Students at different stages of their academic pursuits are finding it hard to keep up with their course developments even though teachers are offering online classes as well as other types of digital academic assistance. With examinations, entrance tests and interviews postponed indefinitely, there is a great amount of uncertainty among students. However, it is important that both students and faculty members utilise this time to brush up their skills, find new avenues of knowledge and keep themselves prepared for a different future.

Research potential colleges/pro-



grammes: While you are at home, you could do a deep study on colleges and programmes you are considering. Scan through each university website and understand its requirements so that you know exactly what you need to do to get admission.

Prepare for standardised tests: As you have ample time at home, you should prepare for the entrance exams. Prepare with the help of mock tests,

or quiz templates to familiarise yourself with the test. Study the test pattern thoroughly, as these tests are unlike what you have encountered in your school or college education.

Draft a winning resume: Take the time out to prepare a crisp, error-free and coherently presented resume. While writing your resume, don't beat around the bush. Be specific and honest.

Read: Reading is a good way to absorb. Don't restrict your choice of genre or author. The more you open your mind to new books, the richer your experience will be. See the world through the eyes of eminent writers, and you will gain valuable lessons from them. Join a digital library or spend time at online book clubs to build your knowledge about books.

Guidelines for faculty members ■ The faculty members and students should make best use of online teaching/learning methods to cover the courses of this semester.

■ Members wishing to improve their technical understanding of some subject may pick up a classic textbook on the subject and read it completely. For example, you can pick a book on computer networks, signals and systems, communication systems, computer architecture, robotics, internet of things, artificial intelligence, machine learning, cognitive systems, cyber security and operating systems.

■ Try doing things that will help in making the institute better and in improving the image of your institute.

The writer is Vice Chancellor & Director, IIT Naya Raipur

Report on student's preferences

Shiksha, a part of Info Edge Limited, recently surveyed the "Impact of global COVID-19 lockdowns on study abroad plans of Indian students" that highlights the moods and preferences of students who are planning to go for 2020 intake and those in the early stages of their 2021 intake journey.

The survey has been conducted amongst students interested in studying abroad. Amongst the total number of survey respondents, 72 per cent of respondents planned to go in 2020, while 27 per cent of respondents planned to go in 2021 or later.

As per the survey report, for the students who are looking for 2020 intake, 46 per cent are extremely concerned about the impact on jobs and salaries which seems to suggest that students are already thinking about long term potential impacts on their future jobs and salaries. If this turns around, students will revive their admission plans. Other dimensions where students are extremely concerned are personal health, international travel and any future impact on stay back periods. The quality of online education also seems to be a cause of worry. Whereas, the concerns for students who are planning for 2021 intake or onwards include personal health, arranging finances, accommodation, impact on jobs & salaries. While inquiring if the current

situation has impacted their study abroad plans, amongst students who want to go abroad this year, very few students (11 per cent) are strongly considering canceling their plans and 41 per cent are strongly confirming that they are planning to go and have not changed their plan.

On the other hand, 50 per cent are considering the possibility of deferring their plan to future intake and 76 per cent of students are likely to see how the situation evolves. This seems to suggest that if the situation turns around, both students and universities have a good chance of rescuing their intake. A very similar pattern emerged in the case of aspirants for 2021 or later. (Note: This question was a multiple choice where students can select multiple options because the underlying situation is changing quite dynamically and forced preference taken on a particular day may not hold true in future weeks.)

The study also emphasises that a majority of students (61 per cent) interested in 2020 intake have suggested they will defer to future intake while 26 per cent have indicated their willingness to enroll for online classes. It has been observed that Canada & the USA are two countries where there seems to be a maximum willingness to enroll online. However, these are countries that also have a maximum time difference with

India. So when classes are conducted during daytime in these countries, it will be night in India and this can become an impediment in their uptake.

The survey also focuses on the fact that if the current situation is likely to have an impact on students who are interested in 2021 or future intakes changing their study destination. It shows that students who are interested in Australia are most likely to change their country preference (69% are likely), while those interested in the UK are least likely to change their country preference (only 25 per cent are likely).

In this context, Vivek Jain, Chief Business Officer Shiksha.com said: "As we can see, the survey clearly shows a likely change in student's choice of the country due to the current situation. I expect the number of students going abroad for higher studies to see a temporary decline and again increase after the fears subside. While the global economy may get impacted in the short run, students going abroad for studies get impacted by the situation prevailing when they graduate and not when they join the course. If the economy sees an improvement next year onwards, students joining the courses this year may benefit. My suggestion will be not to panic and stick to your long term plans."

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Education, whatever else it should or should not be, must be an inoculation against the poisons of life and an adequate equipment in knowledge and skill for meeting the chances of life.
— Havelock Ellis

UG-PG programmes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Institute of Management Studies IMS Offered Degree Programs affiliated to CCS University Meerut invites application for different courses for its 2020 batch. IMS Noida offers under graduate and post graduate programmes in business management, law, mass communication, and information technology.

How to apply: Applicants seeking admission are required to fill a separate application form for the same. Applicants can collect the application form, from the institute by paying ₹1,000/ for UG courses & ₹1,400/ for PGDM programme. It can also be obtained by post, through online or demand draft facility of ₹1,050/ for UG courses & ₹1,450/ for PGDM in favour of

IMS- NOIDA payable at Noida /Delhi.

Admission process: Applications for Academic Year 2020-21 is open to applicants who have passed or will appear for the qualifying examinations under the higher secondary from any recognised board of education such as AISSEE/IB/ICSE, or equivalents.

All eligible candidates will have to undergo Entrance Exam Campus at Noida which comprises of a written test and personal interview. All qualifying candidates will be required to carry their portfolio. Admission is based on the marks obtained in qualifying examination and the performance in written test and personal interview.

Last date to apply: July 2020

Admissions go online at JGU

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an unprecedented technological development, admissions to all degree programmes (UG & PG) of JGU across all the schools will be conducted online under the aegis of the Jindal Scholastic Aptitude Test (JSAT) administered by Pearson VUE. The exception to this are the five-year law programme of the Jindal Global Law School (JGLS) and the five-year architecture programme at the Jindal School of Art & Architecture (JSAA).

Candidates from India and around the world can now take the JSAT exam at their convenience from home starting from May 11, 2020. It is the first time in more than 25 years of existence of Pearson's Virtual University Enterprises (VUE) that an Artificial Intelligence-enabled, home-proctored online solution has been made available in this format. The prospective students seeking admission to JGU can take the exam at their own convenience from the safety of their homes to complete the admissions process to their chosen programmes in an efficient and timely manner.

"This is a technologically advanced admission solution, which allows students a seamless new system to complete the admissions process into the various courses of their choice. At the core of JGU's vision and mission is our aspiration to be a role model for excellence in higher education. We aim to promote a global perspective and provide an enriching, intellectually engaging and discovery-based learning environment to our students," says Professor (Dr) C Raj Kumar, Founding Vice Chancellor of JGU.

Virtual masterclass series

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BML Munjal University (BMU), a Hero Group initiative, has launched a virtual masterclass series, titled — When Tomorrow Comes. The masterclass brings accomplished leaders from different walks of life to share their real-life experiences, stories, and learnings on how to prepare for, embrace and thrive in change.

The masterclass series complement BMU's focus on transformative learning. Targeted at all students — the university's own and otherwise, the series aims to provide motivation and the right mindset to be ready and resilient for whatever changes, revolutionary or

evolutionary that the future might throw their way.

The 60 minute live sessions are being held weekly. The first masterclass featured Sunil Kant Munjal, Chancellor, BML Munjal University, and was hosted by Prof Nigam Nuggehalli, Dean, School of Law. Munjal discussed the importance of adapting to change, the importance and humility of appreciating other people's work, and shared how people need to lead by example, take criticism constructively and always possess the desire to learn.

The second episode masterclass discussion touched upon the impact of COVID-19 on the entertainment industry and the changes expected.

STEPapp relaunches with add-ons

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the situation where most of the sectors are at standstill in terms of new innovations and expansion, lockdown has inadvertently catalysed growth for edu-tech industry. Following the growing demands and needs, tech-education player continues to introduce develop their business horizon.

From promptly making of the app at discounted price, grading up the courses to adding the new elements, the

supplementary edu-tech players are going beyond to beat the competition during crisis.

STEPapp one of the emerging players in the edu-tech has sensed this opportunity through the growing figure of users and downloads. STEPapp which is a gamified learning app, has seen an increase of more than 3 lakh users from March 15, 2020. In last four months, the app has a total of two million downloads.

During the lockdown

period, the app has turned out to be a popular solution for students to learn Math & Science concepts in a gamified format mapped as per the CBSE, ICSE and SSC boards.

Based a strong popularity of the gamified learning format in last few months. The app has decided to relaunch the app by introducing new subjects. With an effective approach of Artificial Intelligence, the app will be adding Social Science and language subjects as per the education board guidelines.

The newly introduced subjects will be soon available for CBSC board students. The app is in process to prepare the course for other education boards as well.

The additional feature of the app, such as segregated topics of each chapters that allow students revise and grasp the concepts easily, simplified testing methodology to track the progress of students and dashboard that collects data on each subscribed students will also be added to the newly introduced subjects.

Think differently

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Youva, the youth stationery brand from the house of Navneet Education Limited is all set to release three new TVCs around their new brand tag-line "Think. Create". Youva Through their TVCs aims to enable and inspire creativity and celebrate young creators from various walks of life.

The TVCs are based on different sce-

narios pivoted on the thought young minds think differently.

It showcases creation as a force that resides in every individual. The films are emotional, nostalgic, endearing and have a high quotient that brings out the creativity of the child in every instant. The innocence of the child showcases how kids have started to think & execute things differently.

The NEET exam is now slated for July 26. Here are tips that aspirants can follow to make the most of this extra time



A NEET PREPARATION

The COVID-19 situation has put not only the nation under jeopardy but has also halted the dreams of numerous aspirants who are preparing for various competitive examinations. With the ever increasing number of students appearing for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) every year, it has been deemed as one of the coveted entrance exams held in the country. Owing to the unprecedented situation, the dates of the examinations have been delayed much beyond expectations creating panic, pressure on students to work even harder to achieve their goal.

At times, due to this pressure, the students are unable to calm their nerves during the examination and tend to make careless mistakes. The students must utilise this time to keep themselves calm and identify their loopholes and formulate ways to handle them and gain an edge over others.

Here are some powerful tips that can help students to strengthen their preparation:

Identify the pattern of mistakes: No mistake is actually silly as it affects the grading system. One

must look carefully, scrutinise it to find a pattern in these mistakes. While practicing previous year papers or mock tests, students should carefully evaluate the mistakes they have made. This would help them to understand the kind of mistakes they are prone towards making so that it can be avoided in the final exam. Since mostly students are writing tests in online mode hence it would not be difficult to identify the pattern of mistakes which they are committing in test papers.

Questions to be read carefully: It is rightly said that human brain has a tendency to see what it wants to see. Due to anxiety to complete the paper in time, students tend to rush through the questions, overlooking essential information. As a result, they fail to register the key information stated in it. Instead they should vigilantly go through the questions and focus on tricky sentences and words like not, correct and incorrect. A thorough and meticulous reading of the questions can help students avoid silly makes and answer it rightly.

Organisational skills: Managing rough sheets is not only

substantial but also an intimidating task during the exam. However, what is more difficult is to find out and locate which solution belongs to which particular question. With paucity of time at the end, students start anxiously searching all the sheets resulting in loss of time. Unorganised rough sheets can, thus, lead to careless which eventually affects the evaluation process. Students should, therefore, organise their sheets by marking them appropriately. In addition, they can compartmentalise the sheet with lines. This would reduce the chaos and enable them to refer to the required solution as and when required and without wasting time.

Pay special attention to the OMR Sheet: One of the most common mistakes that students make during the exam is not paying attention to the OMR sheet and leave the marking of the answers for the end. Eventually, they are left with no time and end up marking the options incorrectly. Students are advised to darken the circles properly. They should always fill the OMR sheet simultaneously while solving the question and mark the correct answer.

Leaving the circles to be marked with the correct answer at the end can be detrimental as the time may get over before students are able to fill in the circles. In addition, students should also note that partially filled or marking multiple circles for the same question should be avoided at all costs. In order to rectify these mistakes, students are suggested to make it a point to mark their answers on the OMR sheet every time they solve test papers in offline mode.

Practice makes an individual perfect: There is no replacement for hard work. So students should practice as many mock tests and previous year papers as possible. They should try to create the exam environment while practicing at home like setting a timer in order to keep track of their speed. This will help them access how much time they take to solve a question and thereby devise a strategy to improve it. Competitive exams are all about speed and accuracy and practicing more and more will help students to reduce the chance of mistakes.

Integrate a Systematic Exam Strategy: Planning and strategis-

ing is one of the key attributes that students usually fail to keep in mind during the examination. They should aspire towards allocating adequate time to the different sections of the paper and leave the portion which they are finding tough for the end. In addition, they should keep abreast with the time so that they are able to complete the paper on time. Students should also deter from dedicating too much time to a single question and diligently work towards completing the paper in a hassle-free manner by implementing a systematic and comprehensive strategy.

Manage stress levels: Considering the unpredictability and the difficulty level of the question papers, anxiety is a common trend among students. The pressure to perform and lack of confidence in one's abilities seem to perplex the students. They should, thus, learn stress management and should know their strengths and weaknesses in order to fight their anxiety. Sipping a little water and taking deep breaths can help in overcoming anxiety during the exam.

Inpitted by Aakash Chaudhary

‘Edtech a need, not just teaching tool’

With schools and colleges shut due to lockdown, Edtech is not merely an alternative to offline education but progressively becoming primary model of education, says SHOBHIT BHATNAGAR

With schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions shut due to the lockdown, students preparing for any kind of exams are confined within the four walls of their home. If they need help or guidance, they can't go out to their coaching/ tuition centres, the services of those they've already paid for. Apart from cities, there are also students in rural areas who used to travel long distances to reach their respective coaching centres and now, can't do the same. So, the question is how do we help these students whose life choices/future depends on the upcoming competitive exams?

The situation is not only a challenge but also an opportunity. By ensuring that students' learning continues uninterrupted by providing free live classes, EdTech is delivering on the premise 'education is a basic right'. The biggest benefit that the EdTech industry offers, especially in times like these is a safe, convenient, study-from-home option. This short term situation is increasing the trust of students and their parents on EdTech. The current situation will result in the increased acceptance of EdTech as an alternative to offline education and eventually progress to becoming the primary model of education.

There has been a lot of demand for educational videos, doubt solving and online classes. A research report in 2019 indicated that more than 70% students are willing to shift online if they can access online classes. The report also suggested that this percentage is much higher among tier II and III cities, with 80% of aspirants preferring online learning. Since 2016, we have seen an uptick in the Google search query for doubt solving and online classes. The fourth largest category on YouTube, education saw 19.12B views in 2019 (a growth of 53% from 2018).

Education sector was valued at \$100B in 2016 and is expected to nearly double to \$180B by the end of 2020. Investors, who are well versed with this sector, have hypothesised that some of the delivery of education will move online. According to a Google-KPMG study, the total annual market opportunity for Online Education



could reach \$1.96 billion by 2021.

The current scenario is somewhat similar to what monetisation was for digital payments. Withdrawal from one mode magnified the opportunity for another. We are witnessing an increase in the digital consumption of educational services. Currently, the online education market is accelerating faster and can be bigger than \$1.96B by 2021.

EdTech companies that provide quality service will be able to tap into this opportunity. Companies will have to raise the bar of education services by incorporating AI, ML on their platforms for an enhanced learning experience. Only those who will be sufficiently armed to serve a new wave of students with evolved curriculum needs every year while retaining their existing user-base, will steal the show.

The current pandemic may have shown us a glimpse of the change in "forced" user behaviour, but we strongly believe that the behaviour will be sticky and online teaching will be adopted by many students and educational institutes in the future. Online education market will reach \$350B globally by 2025. India is likely to join the ranks of US and China in the near future.

The global pandemic — Covid-19, since its first appearance in late 2019 has resulted in large scale destruction of life and livelihood. Having claimed an estimated 50,000 lives until today and paralyzing some of the major economies of the world - the deadly virus has spread its antlers far and wide.

In the current atmosphere of paranoia and tension, the only means of entertainment that children cocooned in the confines of their houses can resort to is few indoor games, local television and the World Wide Web. This can result into brooding situation of kids being exposed to a variety of content that may be inappropriate for their age. Without checking the

factuality of information available to them, these innocent and impressionable minds may believe what they read. Thus adversely affecting their mental health. Anxiety, post-traumatic stress and hypertension are just a few examples of disorders that may plague children in these situations.

In such a scenario, parents or adults living with the children are the only reliable sources of information they have. Hence, maintaining and ensuring healthy routine and fit mental health of the tiny souls is a serious responsibility of the parents.

To ensure that the external environment and the challenges therewith don't distress the child, it is pertinent that parents consciously follow these steps mentioned

MIND IT

below:

Resolve queries: Children are curious minds with a continuous stream of questions running in their head. Parents should regularly talk to their children and answer each of the questions they may have. This way, parents can ensure that the child is getting appropriate information and not forming an opinion on the basis of something they picked up from the Internet. Instead of simply snubbing their questions, parents should make a conscious effort of responding to their children's curiosity.

Listen to children and understand their actions: Children often fall prey to the disturbances in their surroundings and build a mental image about it. Parents should listen to their children and try to gauge their actions. When a child speaks about how he/she is feeling, parents should take that into account and try to ease them down. Once children are assured of parental support, it becomes easier for them to deal with their feelings.

Create a positive atmosphere: Positivity is a priceless virtue. Parents

should actively monitor the information sources their children are following and make sure they are exposed to age appropriate positive news and information only. Additionally, even in the house parents should create a positive atmosphere of fun and frolic so that the child feels relaxed and distressed from external happenings.

Keep them occupied: It is rightly said, an idle mind is a devil's workshop. Parents should indulge in different indoor activities with them to keep them occupied. This will help parents spend time with their children, help the child learn new activities and keep his/her mind off from any harmful unrequited information that he may come across.

Keep them connected: Parents should use technology for the right reasons and facilitate virtual playdates for their children and friends. This way, even though the child is restricted to the four walls of his/her house, they can still communicate with their friends and feel like their life is as normal as it was pre-Covid. The effect of this pandemic on mental health of both children and adults is very evident. The constant bombardment of information regarding the virus and its spread is making people anxious. In such a situation, it is important to take all possible measures that can help one maintain a healthy routine.

The writer is Rajiv Bansal, director, Operations, Global Indian International School, India



The University of East Anglia invites applications for John Boyne Scholarship. The aim of this application is to inspire talented students to consider pursuing one-year master level studies in creative writing.

Eligibility: Must hold an offer to study in MA creative writing within the school of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing at University of East Anglia. Preference is given to those over 35; Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate genuine financial need. Submit: Pre-qualification degree; Copies of academic transcripts and award; Certificates of English language proficiency; A copy of passport.

Admission Requirements: Master programme is at least a 2:1 in a UK undergraduate degree or equivalent.

Language requirement: If English is not your first language, then you can prove your proficiency in this language through: IELTS of 6.5 overall with a minimum of 5.5 in each component.

Pearson Academic English of 58 overall with a minimum of 42 in each

component; TOEFL iBT

How to apply: To start the application process for this award, you will need fill out an online application form.

Application deadline: The last date to apply is June 1, 2020.

The programme is open to international students who have demonstrated academic achievement in their previous studies and want to apply for a diploma at QUT in Australia.

Eligibility: The applicants who have studied Australian curriculum, either in Australia or overseas, and received an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) of 74, or higher.

Admission requirements: Candidates need to check out the admission requirements page at the university to apply for this study grant.

Language requirement: Applicants, whose national language is not English, are suggested to demonstrate the English language excellence through TOEFL or IELTS test.

How to apply: Take admission at the Queensland University of Technology.

Application deadline: The last date to apply is October 31, 2020.

BACKEND DEVELOPMENT AT LOCALS DIGITAL SERVICES
Location: Work From Home
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390629
Application deadline: May 28, 2020

COUNSELLING AT MOBISHAALA
Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹10,000-₹15,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390636
Application deadline: May 27, 2020

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT MO'S F&B GROUP
Location: Delhi
Stipend: ₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390637
Application deadline: May 27, 2020

JAVA DEV AT VASONOMICS LLC
Location: Lucknow
Stipend: ₹5,000-₹10,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390638
Application deadline: May 25, 2020

MARKETING AT SEAL RIPPED
Location: Chandigarh
Stipend: ₹5,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390639
Application deadline: May 27, 2020

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (SALES) AT DOON DECORS AND EXHIBITION
Location: Ranchi
Stipend: ₹7,000-₹12,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390640
Application deadline: May 22, 2020

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (SALES) AT EPITOME TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS
Location: Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Indore, Kolkata, Mohali, Jaipur
Stipend: ₹3,000 per month
Link: internshala.com/i/3390643
Application deadline: May 18, 2020

STUDY ABROAD ‘Manage situation through engagement’

Those students who had applied for studying in the US can take heart that the situation is being monitored on a daily basis, says ADARSH KHANDELWAL

Some queries being asked are about education in the US are: Will students be permitted to defer their acceptances? By when do students have to confirm their acceptance? Will the IBDP and A-AS level exams be held on time? The situation is being monitored and responded to on a day-to-day basis. However, there is this one certainly guiding the decisions and actions of every education provider in the world- and that is 'education of our children must continue'

For those students who intended to take the AP exams in May for college credits, it would be a relief to know that the exams may not be cancelled and students may be permitted to take the exams online. This needs to be monitored for any changes.

The IB will be taking the following actions for the 2020 May Examination session:

The May 2020 exam for diploma programme and career-related programme students will not be

held in any country.

Student will be awarded a diploma or a course certificate(s), depending on what they were registered for.

These will be awarded based on the student's coursework and the established assessment expertise, rigor and quality control already built into the programmes. Over the past weeks IB has undertaken significant modelling using global data to make decisions to supply universities with student results that fairly reflect their standard of work.

The CIE finals also stand cancelled for all students globally. Schools will conduct internal assessments to award a final grade. To know more, contact school administration directly.

We are dealing with a situation which requires constant alertness to updates and a respect for flexibility in adapting to new developments. It is important to be in touch with the International College Advisors and other concerned authorities designated by the colleges. The transition to college may seem more challenging this year than ever before, but this situation can be managed through greater engagement.

The writer is Co-founder, Collegify

IN BRIEF TRAINING FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Internshala Trainings has launched its Faculty Development Programme to assist the college teachers in India to learn new skills and upgrade their skill-set. Under this initiative, Internshala would be providing the college faculty members across India with free of cost trainings in the latest industry skills. The eligible teachers could apply for the initiative by May 15, 2020 using the official email ID provided to them by their academic institution where they are currently teaching.

The initiative is first being rolled out for the first 1000 teachers enrolling for

the trainings and will gradually be rolled out for all the college faculty members across the nation. The faculty could choose to learn any skill from 19 short-duration training programmes including programming with Python, web development, ethical hacking, Android app development, creative writing, French language, advanced Excel, data science, machine learning, Angular, business communication skills, photography, and Solidworks.

For more information or to apply for the Faculty Development Program, visit: <https://bit.ly/faculty-initiative>.

ESTABLISHING NETWORK OF VENTURE ECOSYSTEM

The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad is going to collaborate with New Frontier Capital Management, a financial firm based in Hong Kong with offices in Tokyo and Singapore, to establish a global network for ventures as well as to create a venture ecosystem. The core objective of this partnership will be to promote innovation, research and incubation.

An MoU was signed by Prof BS Murty, Director, IIT Hyderabad and Shigeki Usuki, Chief Executive Officer, New Frontier Capital Management, to facilitate this collaboration.

This MoU will also enable New Frontier Capital Management to establish an office at the IIT Hyderabad campus.

The MoU also envisages establishment of Joint Innovation Centres in Tokyo, Japan, as well as in Telangana and will help create an ecosystem that is connected to global research institutions.

This collaboration will also facilitate the introduction of more Japanese and global companies to IIT Hyderabad to promote research and development, innovation and incubation.

LIVE ONLINE CLASSES FOR STUDENTS

Bright Tutee, a New Delhi-based edutech company has launched free live classes on YouTube for students of Class VI to VIII across multiple education boards in India.

The live lectures initiated will follow a class-wise schedule. For instance, Class VI live sessions will go live from 11 am to 11:40 am, Class VII goes live from 12 pm to 12:40 pm, while the

Class VIII periods ensues from 1 pm to 1:40 pm to provide a virtual schooling atmosphere.

Anant Goyal, director-founder of Bright Tutee said: "To ensure that students stay secure and can learn from the safety of their homes, we have decided to leverage social media channels like YouTube to conduct free classes for students across the country."

If cricket is played in empty stadiums, so be it: Stokes

PTI ■ LONDON

The element of competitiveness will not be lost even if action unfolds before empty stadiums, says world's premier all-rounder Ben Stokes who wouldn't mind international cricket becoming a 'TV only sport' till COVID-19 pandemic is under control.

Stokes' opinion was sought whether the upcoming England vs West Indies series at home in empty stadiums will lose its sheen as ECB is contemplating cricket without live spectators for some time.

"I don't think so. Think about it, we are walking out to represent our country, three lions on our chest and there is game that we are supposed to win. So whether it is in front of nobody or like we are used to in-front of full crowd, I don't think it's going to take that competitive side away," Stokes told BBC Radio 5 Live.

The England all-rounder however admitted that it will take some time to adjust to the possible scenario after being used to playing in front of capacity crowd.

"Yeah, completely different scenario to get our heads around that there isn't going to be the atmosphere or cheering (of supporters) when we play international games" said the 28-year-old Stokes, who has played 63 Tests, 95 ODIs and 26 T20Is.

For Stokes, cricket on TV for the time being is the best option.

"We would do anything to get



"WE WOULD DO ANYTHING TO GET CRICKET BACK ON TVS, AND PEOPLE, WHO FOLLOW AND WATCH. IF THAT MEANS PLAYING IN-FRONT OF NOBODY THEN SO BE IT,"

cricket back on TVs, and people, who follow and watch. If that means playing in-front of nobody then so be it," he said.

However he maintained that safety and well-being of everyone remains a priority.

"We are still not hundred percent sure when that's going to happen. Everybody's concern at the moment is safety and well being of everybody," he said.

"Players and ECB are not going to push anything until everybody is satisfied, without being having to worry about whether people are going to be exposed or put in danger to anything," England's World Cup hero said.

"At the end of the day, cricket is just a sport and its the safety, health and wellbeing of everybody involved, not just in the team but around cricket community is important right now."



Key is not to get attached: Karthik

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

The coronavirus pandemic has not just forced a suspension of all sporting events across the globe, it has also raised question marks on the future and whether the ICC should look at other options to help the bowlers keep the shine on the ball rather than using saliva or sweat. And Dinesh Karthik believes that there needs to be a definite balance between bat and ball.

"I believe that there should be a fair contest between bat and a ball which is missing now a days especially in white-ball cricket. But I don't know if they allow ball tampering, where would they put a stop to it because that will be really hard. They have to manage it. To get the ball to swing, you need sweat and saliva. With new ball you use saliva and when it grows old you use sweat. But in England they use Murray Mint to the saliva, it helps ball to

swing a lot more. That's why Test cricket in England is so challenging," he said in the latest episode of ESPNcricinfo One on One #Workfromhome.

Talking about switching roles when playing for India and in the IPL, Karthik said: "With experience comes adaptability. Over a period of time what you need to learn is that as a middle-order batsman you should be able to bat anywhere between number 3 and 7 and sometimes even 8. The key is not to get attached to where you're batting but about which situation you're walking into and how can you give your best."

"T20 has evolved in such a way that it doesn't matter whether you're a 1 down batsman or a 2 down batsman. All you need to know when you walk into the game is — is it the 8th over or the 11th over or the 14th over and then accordingly react to the situation and use your skill set to do your best."

DHONI AN IDOL, IPL PLEASURE TO WATCH: BUTTLER

FIANS ■ LONDON

Dashing England wicket-keeper batsman Jos Buttler has said that Mahendra Singh Dhoni has always been a big idol and while playing in the Indian Premier League (IPL) one lesson for him has been how the decorated former India

captain manages all the fanfare and still performs in crunch situations.

"MS Dhoni has always been a big idol of mine and chaos is always going around him, people wanting a bit of him, the cricket and the noise."

"...it is such a great lesson to just watch him and

see first hand how to manage all that thing if you have to perform at the top level and perform in those crunch moment, that certainly has been one of the massive pluses," Buttler said in an interview to Lancashire Cricket with Warren Hegg.

Buttler plays for Rajasthan Royals in the IPL

which is the currently postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 29-year old England's limited over vice-captain said the cash-rich T20 league has taught him how to handle pressure.

"It was one of pressures you have to learn, especially in India, as an overseas players, you are one of the

four in the team and you know the other four who are not playing are also world-class players. So you are under pressure to perform," he said.

"So that's been a great learning curve. One of the things I came out with from the first IPL is to just learn to deal with the chaos."

"There is so much going on off the field, with adverts and stuff that you never done before, meet and greet and different things for different sponsors and then thinking about the game all the time and finding ways to switch off," added Buttler who started his IPL journey with Mumbai Indians.

England have to make do with limited chances to prepare for T20 WC: Morgan

PTI ■ LONDON

England's white-ball captain Eoin Morgan says his team will have to make do with limited opportunities that come its way to prepare for this year's T20 World Cup after the COVID-19 pandemic forced a cricket shutdown in the country.

The coronavirus outbreak has forced the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) to suspend professional games in the country till July 1 and has put in doubt Australia's ODI and T20I tour of England in July.

Morgan feels converting England's three-ODI series against Ireland into a T20 rubber in September will be their best chance of getting some practice ahead of T20 World Cup.

"For the last month, everybody has struggled to get a sense of what's possible and what might or might not happen," he told reporters via Zoom during the launch of the Abu Dhabi T10.

"We may have to make do. If tests were going on, there would be ways and means we could have meaningful practice games in and around those Ireland games in a similar environment."

"We could have proper opposition and maybe use the England Lions there too to make it as highly competitive as possible."

The global health crisis has also put under threat the T20 World Cup, which is scheduled to be held from October 18 to November 15 in Australia.

"If the T20 World Cup goes ahead in the slot that it's been allocated at the moment, we'll have certainly played a



limited amount of cricket before then," Morgan said.

"Given the circumstances we'll have to see how much cricket we play and the opportunities that land on guys' laps. They'll have to make the most of them."

Akhtar keen on becoming Ind bowling coach

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Pakistan speedster Shoaib Akhtar says he is interested in becoming India's bowling coach if there is an offer, asserting that he is capable of grooming "more aggressive, fast and talkative" pacers.

Akhtar expressed his willingness in an interview on social networking app 'Hello'.

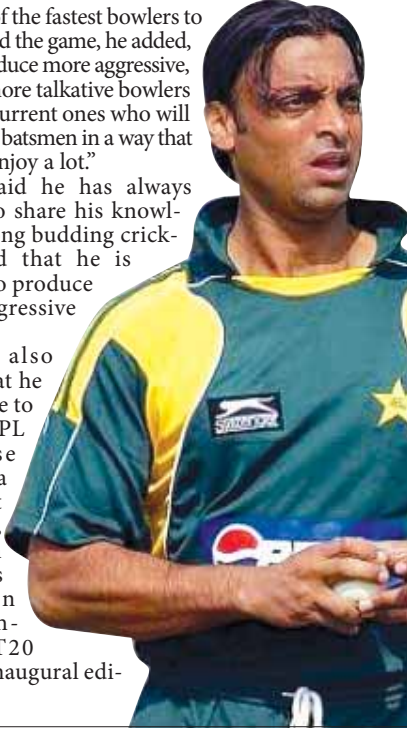
Asked if he would like to be associated with the Indian bowling unit in future, he responded in the positive. India's current bowling is Bharat Arun.

"I will definitely. My job is to spread knowledge. What I have learned is knowledge and I will spread it," Akhtar said.

One of the fastest bowlers to have played the game, he added, "I will produce more aggressive, fast and more talkative bowlers than the current ones who will tell-off the batsmen in a way that you will enjoy a lot."

He said he has always wanted to share his knowledge among budding cricketers and that he is looking to produce more aggressive bowlers.

He also added that he would like to "coach" IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders, for whom he has played in the cash-rich T20 league's inaugural edition.



Warne suggests using weighted balls to avoid saliva and tampering

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian spin legend Shane Warne has offered a unique answer to the question of how to swing the ball without using saliva or resorting to tampering in a post COVID-19 world — make one side of it heavier to ensure that it doesn't need any shining.

Warne feels it can help fast bowlers generate swing even on flat wickets and permanently eradicate ball-tampering.

"Why can't the ball be weighted on one side so it always swings? It would be like a taped tennis ball or like with the lawn bowls," said warne.

There is speculation that the use of saliva to shine the ball will be stopped to cut down the risk of the highly contagious.

Responding to the extraordinary situation, Australian manufacturer Kookaburra has started developing a wax applicator — which could be ready in a month — as an alternative to saliva and sweat to help bowlers shine cricket balls in the post COVID-19 world.

"I'm not sure you'd want it to hoop around corners like Wasim and Waqar but it could swing and give the seamer something on flat wickets when it's hot and the pitch is



Players will need to adapt to new rules: Labuschagne

SYDNEY: Australian run-machine Marnus Labuschagne is willing to "sacrifice" the use of saliva to shine the ball in order to get back on the field in the post COVID-19 world as the batting all-rounder feels players must be able to adapt to new rules. There has been widespread speculations that the use of saliva and sweat to shine the ball will be stopped to cut down the risk of spreading the highly contagious coronavirus

when cricket restarts. "The objective for everyone is to get back on the field, so whatever sacrifices or slight tweaks in the game that need to be made... For us as players, it's about being adaptable and being able to abide by those new laws, if that is the case," said Labuschagne. Labuschagne admitted that it would be strange if the practice is banned as the action has become a habit for

the ball shiners on the field. "In terms of shining it, it will be slightly strange. When you're on the field it's so natural if you're one of the ball shiners to get the ball and put a little bit of saliva on your finger and try to buff out some of the rough areas of the ball," Labuschagne said. "If that doesn't happen, then that's the way it is. That's just how we're going to have to deal with this situation," he added.

PTI

at its flattest on day two, day three," Warne said. "It would actually be a really good way to move forward, as you know

no one needs to do anything to the ball. "You wouldn't have to worry about anyone tampering with it with bottle

tops, sandpaper, or whatever. It would be a good competition between bat and ball," he added.

Badminton restart 'difficult to predict': BWF chief

AFF ■ HONG KONG

Badminton will be back in action "as soon as possible" after the coronavirus crisis, the sport's chief told AFP, adding that international travel restrictions were complicating the picture.

Badminton, like tennis, golf and other sports with an international circuit, faces major hurdles after countries introduced an array of travel bans and quarantine periods to combat COVID-19.

Thomas Lund said an announcement on a rejigged 2020 calendar was expected soon. But he cautioned that the situation remained fluid.

"We are gearing up to be ready to start competition as soon as possible. This includes formulating a revamped BWF tournament calendar for 2020. An announcement on this will be made shortly," Lund said.

"But at this point in time, it is difficult to predict when international movement and entry restrictions will be lifted by individual countries and territories in order to guarantee that players, their entourage, officials and staff can participate in tournaments safely."

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Conceding that the risk of athletes losing motivation in the ongoing lockdown is real, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Tuesday sought the views of athletes, coaches and other stakeholders on how to restart the national camps.

National Sports Federations and State Olympic Associations have been asked to collect feedback from the stakeholders such as athletes, coaches, support staff, central and state government ministries, match officials and sports administrators on how and when training should resume.

IOA seeks feedback from athletes

The lockdown has been extended till May 17.

The stakeholders are being asked to respond to a questionnaire and the feedback will be collated and compiled to form a White Paper under IOA President Narinder Batra.

"Training of the athletes was at the peak when the lockdown was enforced and the athletes had to stop their training at once, although it differs from sport to

sport. The risk of athletes & coaches losing motivation is real," the document released on Tuesday read.

"In the present scenario, we will have to find out what is the way forward and how athletes can resume sports activities, training and eventually competitions," it added.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has also spoken about a phased reopening of national camps by the end of this month.

The IOA, however, made it clear that the resumption of sports will have to be guided by the public health policies laid down by the central and state governments.

Eighteen National Sports Federations (NSF) and 16 state Olympic associations (SOA) have been asked to send the collated responses from the athletes and other stakeholders so that a draft White Paper is prepared by May 20.

After that, the remaining NSFs and SOAs have been asked to submit the responses by May 31 so that a final White Paper is ready in June.

"IOA President, Secretary General and Chairman Preparation Committee will consult experts and oversee the compilation of the White Paper as well as ensure effective implementation of the training/competition programme and remove hurdles, if any," the document said.

Sports ministry invites nominations for national awards through e-mail

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Sports Ministry on Tuesday told aspirants for this year's national sports awards to e-mail their nominations in view of the lockdown to contain the COVID-19 pandemic as it began the process for selecting the multiple honours, including the

prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna.

The process, which usually begins in April, was pushed to this month because of the lockdown, which is into its third phase and will end on May 17.

"Due to lockdown on account of outbreak of COVID-19, hard copies of nominations are not

required to be sent. Scanned copies of nominations duly signed by the applicant and recommending authority may be sent before last date of submission," read a ministry circular.

The last date of filing nominations has been fixed at June 3. "Nominations received after last date will not be entertained.

The Ministry will not be responsible for any delay," the circular stated.

The national sports awards cover multiple aspects.

The athletes are rewarded through the Arjuna and Khel Ratna, which is the country's highest sporting honour.

The Dronacharya award cov-

ers excellence in coaching, while the Dhyani Chand award honours lifetime contributions.

For this year's Arjuna and Khel Ratna awards, the performances from January 2016 to December 2019 will be taken into consideration. As is always the case, athletes with dope taint will not be considered.

"Sportspersons who have been penalized or against whom enquiry is pending/ongoing for use of drugs/substances banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) based on a sample collected by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)...Will not be eligible for the Award," the ministry stated.