

OPINION 6

MORE THAN A
HEALTH CRISIS

WORLD 8

VIRUS PUSHING TIES WITH US
TO BRINK OF 'COLD WAR': CHINA

SPORT 12

LEIPZIG BEAT MAINZ
IN BUNDESLIGA

NEW DELHI, MONDAY MAY 25, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3

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VARUN
LEARNS
SPANISH
10 VIVACITY

Actual corona number tenfold!

Only a fraction of cases/fatalities detected for want of adequate tests worldwide, says former director of WHO's Health Action in Crises

NAVIN UPADHYAY ■ NEW DELHI

On March 27, Daniel Lopez-Acuna, former director of healthcare in crisis situation with the World Health Organization (WHO) said the number of people currently affected by coronavirus is very, probably "ten times", higher than the official confirmed case, both in Spain and worldwide.

Nearly two months ago, when coronavirus spread was in its midway stages, Lopez-Acuna's warning failed to create any stir, both in Europe and elsewhere. After all, a Spanish citizen was speaking primarily in the context of the Spanish outbreak. Two months down the line, the entire world is haunted by the fear that the number of actual cases could be many time more than the reported ones. The death count could be equally manifold.

Various studies conducted across the globe have shown that only a fraction of the infection and fatalities are being detected due to inadequate testing. This means the number of people who have been quarantined is far less than those out in the streets or filling up work places and spreading the virus. These undetected "carriers" may be the single biggest hurdle in preventing the spread of coronavirus, more so in India, where testing has



A monk uses a digital probe thermometer to measure the body temperature of a roadside vendor in Dharmasala on Sunday. AP

been far less than other equally affected nations.

Take the case of the United Kingdom, which has 2,57,154 cases till date. A study by the researchers at Stanford University estimated that the virus kills 1.04 per cent of affected patients in the United Kingdom. Since on May 19, the day the study was published, the UK had reported 48,417 deaths, it is estimated that the total infection stood at 4.65 million, nearly 19 times more than the tally of 2,40,00 cases

on that day.

Similarly, researchers from the University of Bonn have said the number of coronavirus infections in Germany could be 10 times higher than currently thought.

The researchers tested 900 persons at Gangelt in Heinsberg district in the western German state of North Rhine-Westphalia. The finding published on May 3 showed that out of 900 persons from 404 households who were tested, around 15 per cent were

found infected. This was five-time higher than the number of confirmed cases reported officially by the Robert Koch Institute.

The infection rate corresponded to fatality rate of 0.37 per cent. If this fatality rate is applied on a national scale, it would mean ten-time more infection than the reported ones in Germany.

Similarly, way back on March 24 itself, a top Italian Government official who headed the agency collating the

Covid-19 data, confirmed that the number of cases in the country could be ten-time higher. "A ratio of one certified case out of every 10 is credible," Angelo Borrelli, the head of the Civil Protection Agency, told La Repubblica newspaper.

Let us now take a look at the US scenario. According to the Worldometer --- the foremost global website that 24x7 tracks down the countrywide number of new cases and fatalities --- since a large number of cases are asymptomatic and that testing is sparse, only a fraction of the infection is detected.

"The number of actual cases is therefore estimated to be at several multiples above the number of reported cases. The number of deaths also tends to be underestimated, as some patients are not hospitalised and not tested," it said.

"If we base our calculation (deaths/cases) on the number of reported cases (rather than on the actual ones), we will greatly overestimate the fatality rate," it said.

The Worldometer analysed the data provided by New York City, the New York State antibody study, and the excess deaths analysis by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and said that the number of actual cases is 10 times the number of confirmed cases.

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States allow domestic flights with conditions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

Maha allows only 10% flights from Mumbai from today; air travel in Bengal from May 28

A view of 'Scan & Fly' kiosk outside T3 departure gate of Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

The States have agreed to allow a limited number of domestic flights operations from Monday with several riders while West Bengal will resume flight operation from May 28, Maharashtra, which has been unwilling to reopen its airports for passenger flights has agreed to allow 25 flights to and from Mumbai on Monday instead of proposed 250 flights. West Bengal will allow flights from Kolkata and Bagdogra airports from May 28 instead of May 25.

The Tamil Nadu Government also allowed air travel but mandates 14 days home quarantine for passengers and who don't have facility for home quarantine will be moved to institutional quarantine. According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Hyderabad airport has agreed to allow 15 arrivals and 15 departure flights while airports Vizag and Vijaywada in Andhra Pradesh have agreed to resume flights from May 26.

Meanwhile, pilots and first officers seem to be concerned over lack of clarity on quarantine requirements for them.

Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are home to some of the busiest airports in terms of passenger traffic. According to Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, it has been a long day of hard negotiations with

various State Governments to recommence civil aviation operations. Except Andhra Pradesh which will start on May 26 and West Bengal on May 28, domestic flights will recommence across the country from Monday. "For Tamil Nadu, there will be maximum 25 arrivals in Chennai but there's no limit on no. of departures. For other airports in Tamil Nadu flights will operate as in other parts of country," the Minister said.

Meanwhile, confusions prevailed on Sunday as different States imposed their own set of conditions on reopening airports. Many States like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Bihar, Punjab, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu were opposed to opening up of their airports and have announced their respective quarantine measures for passengers arriving at their airports.

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All travellers need to self-quarantine for 14 days: Govt

7-day institutional quarantine for those arriving from abroad

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Sunday issued guidelines covering entire gamut of travelling, including international arrivals, domestic flights, train and bus for inter-State travel making clear that asymptomatic domestic passengers will be allowed to travel with a further rider that on arrival they will need to go for 14-day self-quarantine.

In case of international arrivals on the resumption of flights, the travellers will have to mandatorily check into an institutional quarantine for seven days at their own expense followed by another seven days of home isolation while only asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to board the flight, train or bus for inter-State journey.

Specifying guidelines for the international arrivals, the

Ministry said before boarding, all the travellers would have to give an undertaking that they would stick to the above rule to ensure least chances of Covid-19 transmission.

However, exceptions will be for cases related to those in distress, pregnancy, death in family, serious illness and parents accompanied by children below 10 years of age. They will be asked to self-isolate at home for 14 days.

All international passengers arriving would also be advised to download Aarogya Setu app on their mobile devices. At the time of boarding the flight or ship, all the asymptomatic travellers would be allowed to board after thermal screening. A list of dos and don'ts would also be provided along with the ticket by the agencies they were travelling with.

Also, self-declaration form in duplicate shall be filled by the person in the flight or ship and a copy of the same will be given to Health and Immigration officials present at the airport/seaport/landport

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India pips Iran to be 10th worst-hit nation

Maha crosses 50K cases; with 7,111 new cases total in India at 1,38,536

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Maharashtra on Sunday crossed 50,000-mark, reporting the highest-single day coronavirus surge with Mumbai recording 30,542 cases as States of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Delhi also followed it with high spike in their coronavirus counts. With the addition of around 7,111 new cases and 156 deaths, the total coronavirus cases in the country rose to 1,38,536 and death count crossed 4,000. After today's spike India on Sunday pipped Iran to emerge as the tenth worst affected country in the world.

Maharashtra led all States in the count of those infected by the virus and crossed 50,231 numbers with 3,041 new cases. The State recorded 58 new deaths taking the total toll in the State to 1,635.

Besides Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu recorded 765 rise in the cases with total count of

Covid-19
TOTAL CASES: 1,38,536
DEATHS: 4,024
RECOVERED: 57,692

16,277. With 8 new deaths, total toll in the State reached 112. Tamil Nadu Capital Chennai itself has registered total 10,582 cases with 587 new cases and with six deaths on Sunday the toll in the city has reached at 81.

In view status of coronavirus cases in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the Governments there have sought more time to resume large-scale domestic flight services in their respective States on Monday. West Bengal witnessed spike of 208 cases taking total number of affected people in the State to 3,667 with 272 casualties. The State Capital Kolkata witnessed 52 new cases and total affected in

STATES	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Maharashtra	50,231	1,635	14,600
Tamil Nadu	16,277	112	8,324
Gujarat	14,063	858	6,412
Delhi	13,418	261	6,540
Rajasthan	7,028	163	3,848
Madhya Pradesh	6,665	290	3,408
Uttar Pradesh	6,268	161	3,538
West Bengal	3,667	272	1,339
Andhra Pradesh	2,780	56	1,841
Bihar	2,574	11	653



Migrants undergo thermal screening after arriving from Bhubaneswar via special train to reach their native places at Prayagraj railway station on Sunday. PTI

the city numbered 1,665 with 180 deaths.

Gujarat, among top three States in the coronavirus count, recorded a rise of 394 cases tak-

ing the total number of those affected with the virus to 14,063 and 29 fresh deaths taking toll figure in the State to 858. Delhi recorded total of

13,418 cases with 508 new cases. With 30 new deaths on Sunday, the National Capital stood at 261 deaths as on Sunday. Other States witnessing spike in cases include Karnataka with 130 new cases taking its count to 2,089 with total 42 casualties, Bihar with rise of 117 cases reaching the count at 2,511 with 11 deaths as on date.

Rajasthan witnessed 286 new cases with total count at 7,028 and 163 fatalities in the State, while Madhya Pradesh recorded 294 new cases for a tally of 6,665 cases and 290 deaths. Odisha addition of 67 cases took the count of coronavirus affected to 1,336 with seven deaths and Assam in the North-East recorded six new cases taking total number of virus affected people to 353 with four casualties.

Assam Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier claimed that return of natives from southern and western regions of India to the Northeast region has led to a sudden rise in Covid-19 positive cases, especially in Assam.

The Central Government has claimed that around 50 lakh stranded migrant labourers have reached their homes.

Sadhu killed in Maha ashram, hardened criminal arrested

PNS ■ MUMBAI

In another shocking incident involving a sadhu from Karnataka, Shivacharya Nirvanandura Pashupatinath Maharaj, the founder-spiritual head of Nirvanji Pashupatinath Mutt, was found dead in his bedroom at his ashram in Umri near here on Sunday morning, with police stating that robbery may have been the motive.

Later in the evening, the Nanded police arrested the prime suspect behind the Mutt head and one of his associates.

After killing Pashupatinath Maharaj's associate Bhagwan Shinde, the prime suspect identified as one Sainath Langote --- went to the ashram late on Saturday night.

Finding Maharaj alone resting in his bedroom at his Ashram, Langote allegedly threw chilli powder in his eyes, blinding him. He took away ₹69,000, his laptop, other valuables in the bedroom worth approximately ₹1.50 lakh and the sadhu's car keys.

As Maharaj put up some resistance, Langote overpowered and strangled him. Later, he dragged the deceased Mutt head's body to the latter's parked outside and dumped it into the vehicle's boot and sped off from the place. Acting on a tip-off that the prime accused had fled to Telangana, the police traced to a nearby Tanur village in the neighbouring State and arrested him.

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RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Just a day before Nautapa, beginning from May 25, the maximum temperature of Rajasthan's Churu and Ganganagar on Sunday recorded 47 degrees Celsius, hottest in the country. Nautapa is considered hottest days of the summer season when the sun enters into the Rohini Nakshatra. The next nine days beginning from Monday, could be hottest days of the season.

During Rohini Nakshatra, the distance between the sun and the earth gets reduced significantly resulting in days and nights getting hotter than the rest of summer months comparatively. During this period, maximum and minimum temperatures soar up.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the maximum temperatures could soar up to 47

During Rohini Nakshatra, the distance between the sun and the earth gets reduced significantly resulting in days and nights getting hotter than the rest of summer months comparatively

degrees Celsius while minimum temperature could also soar up to 25-28 degrees Celsius in several parts of the country.

The IMD on Sunday issued a "red" warning for Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Rajasthan for the next two days. The IMD has also issued an orange warning for heatwave for east Uttar Pradesh. This is also for the first time this summer season that

a red warning has been issued for heatwave.

According to Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of IMD's Regional Meteorological Centre, this season, the temperatures did not rise the way it usually does in North and Central India because of significant rainfall activity during April that continued till mid-May. Srivastava said due to dry north-westerly winds and a trough between Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu, conditions are favourable for heatwave to severe heatwave.

"Heatwave conditions over some parts with severe heatwave over isolated pockets are very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha and Telangana during the next five days," the IMD said in its daily bulletin.

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Brace for scorching heat as Nautapa begins today



A mirage appears on India Gate as mercury soars in the national Capital on Sunday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

STANDOFF IN EASTERN LADAKH

No signs of India, China troops backing off

New Delhi: Indian and Chinese troops appeared heading for a long haul as their tense standoff in the disputed areas of Pangong Tso and Galwan Valley along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh showed no signs of abating even as efforts to de-escalate the tension through talks continued.

In the midst of the flare-ups, the Indian Army on Sunday categorically rejected reports that Indian patrol teams were detained by Chinese troops in Eastern Ladakh in the last few days, but did not provide any details of the current situation in the region.

"There has been no detention of Indian soldiers at the borders. We categorically deny this. It only hurts national interests when media outlets publish unsubstantiated news," the Army said in a statement.

People familiar with the situation in the region said the two sides were engaged in try-

ing to resolve the dispute, but there was no indication of a positive outcome yet as both the armies continued to bolster their positions in disputed areas of Pangong Tso and Galwan Valley and Demchok.

The Chinese side has particularly strengthened its presence in the Galwan Valley, erecting around 100 tents in the last two weeks and bringing in heavy equipment for construction of bunkers.

The Indian side has conveyed its strong objection to China pitching tents and bringing in heavy equipment during the meetings between local commanders of the two armies last week. There have been reports of multiple incidents of transgressions by Chinese troops in several areas in Eastern Ladakh and soldiers from the two sides were involved in scuffles on at least two occasions, sources said. The sources said the Indian Army has also been increasing

its strength in both Pangong Tso lake, Galwan Valley and Demchok. The Indian troops are also resorting to "aggressive patrolling" in several sensitive areas including Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldi, they said.

The situation in Eastern Ladakh deteriorated after around 250 Chinese and Indian soldiers were engaged in a violent face-off on the evening of May 5 which spilled over to the next day before the two sides agreed to "disengage" following a meeting at the level of local commanders.

Over 100 Indian and Chinese soldiers were injured in the violence.

The incident in Pangong Tso was followed by a similar incident in North Sikkim on May 9. India on Thursday said the Chinese military was hindering normal patrolling by its troops and asserted that India has always taken a very responsible approach towards border management. **PTI**

Man unleashes cobra to kill wife in Kerala, say police

Kollam: In a chilling plot, a man allegedly killed his 25-year old wife by letting a cobra bite her in her sleep near here early this month with police cracking it following suspicions raised by her family as it was the second time she suffered a snake attack in three months.

Police said after investigations by the crime branch they arrested Sooraj, a private bank employee from Adoor in Pathanamthitta district, and a snake-catcher who supplied the cobra and a Russell's viper, both highly poisonous, on charges of killing the woman.

Parents of the woman had approached the police saying there was something suspicious about the death of their daughter on May 7 as barely a couple of months ago she had survived a snake bite.

The couple were married for around two years and some financial angle was suspected behind the shocking killing, police said adding Sooraj had received 98 sovereigns of gold jewellery as dowry. **PTI**

"One guy who provided the snakes and the husband who initially attempted to kill his wife with a poisonous snake and later succeeded in killing her in the same manner have been arrested," Kollam police chief K S Hari Sankar told mediapersons here on Sunday. Police found digital evidence on the man's mobile phone using which he had been watching snake-related videos on YouTube since the last three months, apparently to get trained in handling them, he said.

Police said Sooraj bought Russell's viper from Suresh and on March 2 he attempted to kill his wife at their house in Adoor using thesnake.

The woman was hospitalised and discharged on April 22 after which she had returned to her parent's home in Anchal in Kollam district.

Sooraj once again contacted Suresh and purchased an Indian cobra and on May 6 night he had dropped it on his wife while she was sleeping. **PTI**

Tihar reports first case as Assistant Superintendent tests corona +ve

New Delhi: Tihar Jail reported its first coronavirus case after a 45-year assistant superintendent tested positive for the infection on Sunday, jail officials said.

The assistant superintendent, posted at Central Jail No 7, is a resident of Staff Residential Complex of Tihar Jail, they said.

Director General (Prisons) Sandeep Goel said the assistant superintendent had taken leave on Friday as he wanted to go home and meet his family but he did not show any symptoms.

However, before leaving, he got himself tested for Covid-19 on May 22 in

Amrapali Hospital and his results came positive on Sunday, he said.

According to the jail officials, as the official was tested positive his contact tracing was done by jail authorities and it was found that one jail staffer, who is said to have been in close contact with the infected jail staffer, has been tested for Covid-19 but his results are awaited and he was sent for home quarantine.

While five others, including two other jail staffers, who also came in contact, have been sent on home quarantine while three inmates have been kept in an isolation barrack,

senior jail officials said.

As a precautionary measure, the infected official's nine neighbours, who also work at different Delhi jails, have been asked to quarantine themselves and not to attend duties even though none of them came in contact with him, they said.

All the men are presently asymptomatic and authorities will keep a check on their medical condition, they added.

Till date, 18 people from Rohini Jail have tested positive for COVID-19 while another case was also reported from Mandoli Jail after a deputy superintendent tested positive last week. **PTI**

Quarantined migrants to make space for Amphan-affected people in Odisha

Kendrapara (Odisha): Cyclone Amphan may have brought trails of misery for many, but it also did pleasantly surprise some migrant returnees who were asked to vacate the shelter homes in Odisha and undergo home quarantine to make space for the storm-hit people. Around 2,000 migrants in the coastal districts of the state were exempted from the mandatory institutional quarantine after they tested negative for COVID-19.

"The returnees in temporary health camps (THCs) were subjected to COVID-19 test. And those who tested negative were sent to their respective homes," Jagatsinghpur District Collector Sangram Mohapatra said. "They were directed to remain under self isolation for 28 days." The move was aimed at vacating some of the temporary quarantine centres, which have now doubled up as cyclone shelters, too, he said.

"Altogether 815 people quarantined in 39 health camps were provided with the opportunity to return home and maintain self isolation," Mohapatra said. "They have

submitted a written undertaking that they would not violate the isolation norms."

All health camps were thoroughly sanitised before converting them into cyclone shelters, he said.

Nearly 45 lakh people in Odisha have been adversely affected by the extremely severe cyclonic storm Amphan, which fiercely went past the state coast and made landfall in West Bengal's Sunderbans last Wednesday

At least two lakh people were evacuated from the vulnerable areas of the state ahead of the landfall. Several people have also been rendered homeless by the storm.

In Kendrapara, around 250 migrant workers were sent home after their COVID-19 tests confirmed that they have not contacted the infection.

"Eight health camps that had been housing quarantined people over the past two months are now serving as cyclone shelters. Over 250 have been asked to maintain self-isolation at home," Kendrapara District Collector Samarth Verma said. **PTI**

WARANGAL

Police term workers' death 'murder', arrest 1

WARANGAL: In what could be regarded as a major breakthrough achieved by the Warangal police, the death of nine migrant labourers in Gorrekunta is now confirmed as murder.

Sanjay Kumar Yadav, who is in the police custody, has reportedly confessed that he along with his friends had committed the crime in the episode. Yadav is termed as the paramour of Busra, the daughter of the family head, Masud Alam. Sources said the police would produce the accused before the media on Monday. **PNS**

Uncertainty looms over resumption of flight operations in TN

Chennai: Uncertainty prevailed over resumption of domestic flight services in Tamil Nadu effective Monday as the state government, which has opposed allowing the operations till May 31, was yet to announce its final decision and notify the Standard Operating Procedure.

As the nationwide domestic passenger flights are set to resume after a gap of two months amid the fourth phase lockdown, airport sources here said "We are ready to operate, the airlines are also ready; but the state's final nod is awaited."

The state government's nod signifying concurrence on operation of flights and the SoP on handling passengers were being awaited, they told PTI.

Besides Tamil Nadu,

Maharashtra and West Bengal have also opposed allowing domestic flights in view of the rising number of coronavirus cases in these states.

The Tamil Nadu government, which had shown inclination recently to allow departures rather than arrivals was, however, yet to announce its final stand and also has to clarify on "quarantine" aspects as well (in the SOP), the sources said.

Citing increasing COVID-19 cases in Tamil Nadu, Chief Minister K Palaniswami had on May 11 came out against resumption of passenger train and air services till May 31 and the stand was reiterated later as well by the government.

The state on Sunday record-

ed eight deaths due to COVID-19, taking the death toll to 111 while 765 fresh cases saw it's total infections breaching the 16,000 mark.

Meanwhile, when asked about an "SoP," that was circulated on the social media for air passengers arriving in Tamil Nadu, a senior state government official said it was "incorrect, not official." However, the official did not elaborate if the government will notify the SoP and extend support for passenger movement.

Officials of the Greater Chennai Corporation, which coordinated logistics and quarantine of passengers who arrived here as part of the Vande Bharat Mission also declined to comment.

"We are ready to coordinate and work. But the word go has to come from the state government," an official said.

While purported "flight schedule," to and from Tamil Nadu was being shared in social media, the official said airport authorities have not officially communicated about it to anyone. Adding to the uncertainty, there were several comments about resumption of flights in micro blogging site Twitter.

While Congress MP Manickam Tagore tweeted #Madurai Airport will resume operations from tomorrow, DMK MP S Senthilkumar, replying to a twitter user said "June first week can expect operation of flights to TN." **PTI**

Actual corona number...

From Page 1

According to the analysis, the New York State conducted an antibody testing study showing that 12.3 per cent of the population in the state had Covid-19 antibodies as of May 1, 2020. The survey developed a baseline infection rate by testing 15,103 people at grocery stores and community centers across the state over the preceding two weeks. The study provides a breakdown by county, race (White 7%, Asian 11.1%, multi/none/other 14.4%, Black 17.4%, Latino/Hispanic 25.4%), and age, among other variables. 19.9 per cent of the population of New York City had Covid-19 antibodies.

With a population of 83,98,748 people in NYC, this percentage would indicate that 1,671,351 people had been infected with coronavirus and

had recovered as of May 1 in New York City. The number of confirmed cases reported as of May 1 by New York City was 1,66,883, more than 10 times less.

As of May 1, New York City reported 13,156 confirmed deaths and 5,126 probable deaths (deaths with Covid-19 on the death certificate but no laboratory test performed), for a total of 18,282 deaths The CDC on May 11 released its "Preliminary Estimate of Excess Mortality During the Covid-19 Outbreak - New York City, March 11-May 2, 2020" in which it calculated an estimate of actual Covid-19 deaths in NYC by analysing the "excess deaths" (defined as "the number of deaths above expected seasonal baseline levels, regardless of the reported cause of death") and found that, in addition to the confirmed and

probable deaths reported by the city, there were an estimated 5,293 more deaths to be attributed.

"After adjusting for the previous day (May 1), we get 5,148 additional deaths, for a total of actual deaths of 13,156 confirmed + 5,126 probable + 5,148 additional excess deaths calculated by CDC = 23,430 actual Covid-19 deaths as of May 1, 2020 in New York City," the analysis said.

These studies are pointer to a grim scenario that could unfold in weeks and months to come in the backdrop of the fact that the countrywide lockdown has been reduced to a mere formality after the relaxation of norms, major discrepancies have surfaced in death figures from States, and millions of hapless migrants are on the march as "super carriers of corona."

Sadhu killed...

Talking to media persons later in the evening, Nanded's Superintendent of Police Vijaykumar Magar said the accused first killed the sadhu's associate Bhagwan Shinde and then went to the ashram late on Saturday. "After killing Maharaj, the accused tried to escape using his car parked outside the ashram. While driving out of the Ashram, the car crashed into the main gate of the ashram causing a huge noise and commotion. The followers of the Swami who were sleeping inside the ashram woke up and tried to catch the accused," Magar said.

"The Swami's followers attempted to stop Langote. But, the accused managed to escape after stealing a motorbike in the neighbourhood. He sped off into the darkness and hours later, the police found the body of the Swami's associate Shinde from a nearby school premises, Magar said. "We have arrested the prime suspect. We will interrogate him and find out further details of the crime," Magar said. Shivacharya Maharaj, who originally hailed from Karnataka, came to Nanded more than a decade ago and set up the ashram which he ran along with a band of followers.

Incidentally, the twin murders, including that of a sadhu, have taken place in the home district of senior Congress leader and Cabinet Minister in the Uddhav Thackeray Government Ashok Chavan.

From Page 1

Hours after Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said there should be "minimum possible domestic flights from Maharashtra from May 25 which are purely emergent in nature", Maharashtra Cabinet Minister Nawab Malik announced that beginning from Monday, the State Government had allowed 25 flights to and from the Mumbai.

Echoing similar sentiments, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has stated that she will urge the Centre to postpone the resumption of domestic flight services at Kolkata and Bagdogra airports by a few days.

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Brace for scorching heat as Nautapa begins today

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It added that heatwave conditions in isolated pockets over Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Gujarat, central Maharashtra and Vidarbha, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Rayalseema and north interior Karnataka are also likely during the next 3-4 days.

A heatwave is declared when the maximum temperature is at least 40 degrees Celsius and the departure from normal temperature is 4.5 degrees Celsius to 6.4 degrees Celsius. For the plains, a heatwave is declared when the actual maximum temperature is 45 degrees Celsius and severe heatwave when it is 47 degrees Celsius or above.

The IMD said relief is only expected after May 28 as a western disturbance is likely to bring some rainfall. A western disturbance is a cyclonic storm that originates in the Mediterranean and travels across Central Asia. When it comes in contact with the Himalayas, it brings rains to the hills and plains.

The IMD issues colour-coded warnings depending on the intensity of any weather system in ascending order - green, yellow, orange and red. Srivastava said the red warning has been issued to caution people not to step out during 1 pm to 5 pm, when the intensity of the heat is the most.



DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
GOVERNMENT OF N.C.T OF DELHI
1st Floor, ISBT Building, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-10006
Advertisement

Department of Women & Child Development. GNCT of Delhi seeks to fill following vacancy on contractual basis for a period of 1 year for the State Level Centre for Women(SLCW) under Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme (MSK) of Govt. of India, MWCD. The details of positions are as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Remuneration (Consolidated) per month No.(Rs.)
1.	State Project Coordinator	1	52,500/-
2.	Specialist Gender	1	36,750/-
3.	Research Officer	1	26,250/-
4.	Training and Research Officer	1	26,250/-
5.	Assistant	1	15,750/-

The terms of references (TORs), essential qualification, experience required, job details etc., are available on the website of the Department www.wcdcl.in. The eligible candidate may apply online from 27.05.2020 (11:00 AM) through the website of the department or link at http://cams.wcdcl.in.

The last date of closing of online application is 15.06.2020.

After scrutiny of applications the list of eligible candidates will be displayed on the website. The interview for selection is likely to be held in the month of July 2020. For updates on this, website of the Department may be visited.

Reservation to SC/ST candidates as pre rule shall be applicable.

The eligible candidate will be invited for interview through E- mail only. No interview letter will be sent. Candidates are also advised to refer to department's notice board/ website of the department i.e. www.wcdcl.in & http://cams.wcdcl.in for dates of interview and any other update in this regard.

Note - No other mode of application except online shall be entertained by the Department.

Sd/-
Director,
DIP/Shabdarth/0045/20-21
Deptt.of Women & Child Development,

All travellers need to self-quarantine...

From Page 1

"The form may also be made available on Aarogya Setu app. Suitable precautionary measures such as environmental sanitation and disinfection shall be ensured at the airports as well as within the flights," as per the guidelines.

Suitable announcement about Covid-19 including precautionary measures to be followed shall be made at airports/port and in flights/ship and during transit. While on board the flight/ ship, required precautions such as wearing of masks, environmental hygiene, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene etc. are to be observed by airline/ ship staff, crew and all passengers, says the guidelines. On arrival, thermal screening would be carried out in respect of all the passengers by the Health officials present at the airport/ seaport/ landport while the passengers found to be symptomatic during screening shall be immediately isolated and taken to medical facility as per health protocol.

The remaining passengers shall be taken to suitable institutional quarantine facilities, to be arranged by the respective State/UT Governments. These passengers

shall be kept under institutional quarantine for a minimum period of 7 days and will be tested as per the ICMR protocol. Passengers arriving through the land borders will also have to undergo the same protocol as above, and only those who are asymptomatic will be enabled to cross the border into India. The persons will have to file a self-declaration form in duplicate in the flight/ship and a copy of the same will be given to Health and Immigration officials present at the airport/ seaport/ landport. The form may also be made available on Aarogya Setu app.

On Sunday, the Centre also issued guidelines for domestic air, train and inter-state bus passengers making clear that asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to proceed to their destination on arrival but will need to self-quarantine for 14 days.

This comes ahead of domestic civil aviation set to begin from Monday, while the Railways will be running 200 new passenger trains from 1 June.

The Centre has already allowed the inter-state movement of passenger vehicles and buses with

restrictions and subject to mutual consent between the states or Union territories involved.

According to the guidelines for domestic travellers, dos and don'ts shall be provided along with tickets to the travellers by the agencies concerned and all passengers will be advised to download the Aarogya Setu app on their mobile devices. All passengers will have to wear face covers or masks during boarding and travelling.Further, all passengers will be required to undergo thermal screening at the point of departure and only asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to board the flight, train or bus with the advice that they should self-monitor their health for 14 days. Thermal screening will also take place at the exit point.

Measures to ensure social distancing will have to be taken at airports/railway stations/ bus terminals and they shall be also regularly sanitised and disinfected.

And if they develop any symptoms, they will need to inform the district surveillance officer or the state/national call centre, according to the guidelines for domestic travel by air, train and inter-State bus travel.

BJP doing politics on Covid deaths: AAP

CHANDAN PRAKASH ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party national spokesperson and MLA Raghav Chadha accused the BJP of playing politics with the number of deaths in Delhi due to Covid-19 even after the Delhi High Court upheld the accuracy and sanctity of death figures published by the Delhi Government.

Referring High Court judgment, Raghav said that the court has concluded that there is no arbitrariness, discrimination or fabrication of data.

Hitting out at the BJP, Chadha demanded an apology from the party for indulging in baseless, motivated and malicious campaign. "The Delhi High Court after hearing both the sides have come up with a significant order saying that these allegations against the accuracy of the death figures published by the Delhi government is absolutely baseless," he said.

The court further observed that there is no ground based



on which these allegations are leveled, he said.

The Delhi High Court has noted that the 'Death Audit Committee' is a competent authority comprising of experts and the data published by the Delhi Government is free from any discrimination and free from any fabrication, he said, adding that it means that the data published by the Delhi government is correct and accurate and the Delhi high court has also upheld its sanctity.

"Delhi HC upholds the sanctity of figures of deaths published by AAP Govt. It concludes that there is no arbitrariness, discrimination or fabrication of data. It is shame-

ful that the BJP chose to level baseless & motivated allegations against AAP even in this humanitarian crisis," Raghav tweeted.

Talking about the increasing number of cases in Delhi, Chadha said that the focus should be on the number of deaths due to Covid-19. "The Delhi Government is working 24X7 to reduce the death rate and succeeded in keeping the number of death under control and in comparison with other states," he said.

Chadha further said that the Government is providing the best health care to the people and people are getting cured and going back home.

The national Capital is far ahead of other States in recovery rate with 273 people recovered till Saturday midnight total number of recovered patients reached 6540. The recovery rate of Covid-19 patients is now 48.75 per cent from previous 48.55 per cent. The national average of recovered patient is 41.29 per cent or nearly 7.5 per cent less than Delhi's average.

Maruti employee tests Covid +ve

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

An employee of the Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL) at Manesar plant tested positive for coronavirus, an official spokesman of the company said on Saturday.

The country's largest car-maker, Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) had re-opened the Manesar facility earlier this month after around 50 days of closure due to coronavirus-led lockdown.

The said employee had worked at the plant on May 15 after which his residence came into a containment zone and he did not join work thereafter.

He tested positive for the Covid-19 on May 22.

The Company has informed the district administration about the employee who has since been admitted to a hospital and his condition is said to be stable.

"We are providing all medical help and assistance to him as per government guidelines," the spokesperson said in a statement.

"There may be a possibility of a second case of infec-

tion that has just been reported. More information is being sought", the MSIL official said.

"The company has identified other employees who are working in his team. All of them have been asked to stay at home quarantine," he said.

The Manesar plant manufactures vehicles such as the Swift, DZire and Celerio.

Also, the Gurugram district on Sunday reported 09 more coronavirus cases in different localities of the city, a senior health official said.

Gurugram Civil Surgeon JS Punia said 2 new patients were reported in Rajendra Park area which is included in high risk zone. One case each was reported from Nai Basti, Krishna Colony, Rajiv Nagar, Pataudi, Sector-10A, Sector-22A and Jharsa.

The city now has 271 positive cases, including 105 still admitted in different hospitals. As many as 166 patients have been cured and discharged from hospitals.

Gurugram also registered 2 corona deaths in Sector 54 and Rajendra Park area in the last 3 days.

Govt directs pvt hospitals with 50 beds to reserve 20% of total capacity for virus patients

New Delhi: The Delhi Government has directed private hospitals and nursing homes with a capacity of 50 beds or more to reserve 20 per cent of their total bed strength for coronavirus patients, Health Minister Satyendar Jain said on Sunday.

Ten private hospitals have been declared as Covid-19 dedicated hospitals for admitting confirmed/ suspected cases of coronavirus on payment basis.

"It has been found that in the recent past the majority of beds earmarked for Covid-19 patients in the dedicated private hospitals are occupied at any

given time. Therefore, there is a need to increase the number of beds dedicated for Covid-19 patients in the private hospitals in the city," an order issued by the Government said on Sunday.

To increase the bed capacity for Covid-19 patients, all 117 nursing homes/private hospitals having bed strength of 50 beds or more are directed to reserve/ earmark at least 20 per cent of their total bed strength for Covid-19 patients, it added.

"The Delhi Govt felt an imperative need to increase the no. Of beds, dedicated to Covid-19 patients. Hence, all

117 pvt hospitals/nursing homes with a capacity of 50 beds or more, have been directed to reserve 20 per cent of their total bed strength for Covid-19 patients," Jain tweeted.

These 117 private hospitals shall bill the Covid-19 patients as per their respective schedule of charges, the order said.

"However, the billing for non-Covid patients admitted on extra beds shall not be more than 50 per cent of the lowest economy category of the hospital concerned as per earlier practise during upsurge of cases of vector borne diseases," it added. **PTI**

Govt directs liquor shops to ensure sale of alcohol through proper scanning

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After excise department observed liquor being sold at vends was not being properly scanned, the Delhi Government directed State-run liquor shops in the national Capital to ensure 100 per cent sale of alcohol through proper scanning.

The excise department issued the directive after observing that only 10 to 15 per cent of liquor being sold at vends was being scanned, which was a blatant violation of the order.

In the direction to the four state-run corporations, the department said this practice is likely to result in the submission of "inaccurate daily sales" information sought by Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia after imposition of 70 per cent 'Special Corona Fee' on the MRP of each bottle and also creation of Monthly Stock Record (MSR) gap.

Also, complaints of over-charging from the customers

are being received at various levels, it said.

Recently, the government ordered reopening of 66 private liquor stores that sell foreign and Indian-made foreign liquor in the capital.

This was in addition to about 172 shops, run by government agencies, which were allowed to operate from May 4. Another 300-odd government-run liquor stores spread across the city will reopen soon.

Of 863 liquor shops in Delhi, 475 are run by four government corporations – Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation, Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation, Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation and Delhi Consumer's Cooperative Wholesale Store – while 389 are owned by private individuals.

Of these 389, about 150 are located in shopping malls and not allowed to open during the fourth phase of lockdown which ends on May 31.

3 healthcare workers of SDMC test +ve



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Three healthcare workers of South Delhi Municipal Corporation have tested positive for coronavirus on Sunday. Following it, the civic body has conducted test of 35 other staff and report is still awaited.

A senior SDMC official said that three confirmed cases of Dr Bhomik, Ankit and Ranjit reported. "All were deputed at SDMC's Mehrauli health centre and found corona positive on Saturday," he said.

The official further said that Dr Bhomik is admitted in Safdarjung hospital while Ankit and Ranjit are home quarantined. "Covid-19 test of other 35 staff of the Mehrauli public health centre was also conducted and report still awaited," he added.

Disinfection drive was also carried out at the centre, he said.

2 new containment zones in Capital, 41 zones de-contained

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the addition of Hari Nagar and Rani Bagh, the number of containment zones in Delhi have gone up to 87 while 41 zones have been de-contained. Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Sunday said that the Delhi Government has barricaded the containment zones and no relaxation has been given in these areas.

"Whatever containment zones are there, we are barricading it and no relaxation from the Government has been given in these zones," the Minister said.

"All people must follow three rules. First, put a face mask when getting out in public. Second, keep social distancing. The third is to sanitise hands again and again. If people follow these three things, coronavirus can be avoided. If rules are not followed in any containment zone, then action will be taken against them," the Minister added.

On the issue of increase in the number of containment zones in the national capital, he said, "Now more than 500 cases are coming, because of

that the containment zones have increased. The doubling rate in Delhi is 13 days."

On being asked about the community spread, Jain said that institutions like the Central government, experts and ICMR can tell about this subject much better because there is a very thin line between the community spread and local spread. The Central government can give better information, he said.

Importantly, Delhi Government's Death Audit Committee given a clean chit by Delhi High Court on account of no fabrication of COVID death data.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia tweeted, "I am glad that honourable Delhi High Court has put an end to ugly politics being played by some opposition leaders on such a sensitive issue. Delhi govt. is providing correct figures related to Corona everyday to the people."

Meanwhile, Delhi reported 508 fresh novel corona virus case with this total number of cases 13418 till Sunday evening with 261 fatalities while 6540 cases recovered.

Positive AAP MLA on road of recovery, will donate plasma

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Days after being tested positive for coronavirus, AAP MLA Vishesh Ravi is now on the road to recovery and has been tested negative on May 23. He will also donate plasma for the treatment of other Covid positive patients.

The Karol Bagh MLA had been actively involved in Covid relief work in his constituency and had noticed symptoms, after which he was tested positive on May 1. He had tweeted, "I had a fever from last one or two days, as per doctor's advice I went for Covid-19 test. The report on Friday said I have tested positive. With god's blessings, the health is fine but due to mild symptoms, I have home quarantined myself." After 22 days of being in home isolation, he has now been tested negative.

The MLA said he will also be donating plasma after being fully recovered for the recovery of other COVID positive patients. "I want to inform you all on the twenty-second day of quarantine my Corona Test has come neg-

ative. However, I still have a little cough, so according to the advice given by the doctor after taking rest for a few more days, I will be ready to donate plasma and return back to work," the MLA tweeted.

Vishesh Ravi had been under home isolation for the last 22 days. He said, "The healthcare team of Delhi has been in regular touch with me for the last 22 days and has also conducted visits at regular intervals. On the advice of the doctors and healthcare staff, I had isolated myself and had been taking all precautions and a regular diet. It was on May 22 that the healthcare team conducted my test at my home which came out to be negative the next day. Once I recover fully, I will be ready to donate plasma for the service of the people."

Earlier in the month, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had stated that plasma therapy had yielded positive and encouraging results in Delhi. He had also urged those who have recovered from the disease, to donate blood for plasma therapy.

CM condoles death of pulmonologist Dr JN Pande



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday condoled the demise of former AIIMS faculty Dr JN Pande who died of coronavirus on Saturday.

Dr Pande had tested positive for Covid-19 earlier this week, died at his residence on Saturday at the age of 79.

"Heartfelt condolences to Dr Pande's family. He retired from AIIMS after a long service but continued to work in another hospital until his unfortunate demise this week due to coronavirus. Delhi salutes you sir. RIP," Kejriwal said in a tweet.

Pande, a pulmonologist and former head of the Department of Medicine at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here, had tested positive on Tuesday. He died at his residence with mild symptoms.

Dr Pande and his wife tested positive for the infection on Tuesday with mild symptoms and they decided to remain in home isolation, according to a senior AIIMS doctor.

But his wife was shifted to the AIIMS hospital on Saturday. After his retirement in 2003, Dr Pande joined the Sitaran Bhartia Institute of Science and Research and worked there as a senior consultant in the Respiratory Medicine department.



People purchase air coolers on a hot summer day in New Delhi on Sunday

PTI

Criminal carrying ₹50K bounty held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested a man who was carrying a reward of ₹50,000 for a case of armed robbery and attempt to murder was absconding since last 10 months after jumping parole.

The accused identified as Mohammad Israel (49), son of Sahabuddin of village Samana, Ghaziabad, has assumed a new identity in the name of Ajay Bidhuri to hoodwink the police. Israel was a member of infamous biker gang of 2008 led by Om Prakash and was previously found involved in more than 20 heinous cases.

According to Pramod Singh Kushwaha, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell, Israel

had jumped parole in July, 2019 and was now planning to commit armed robbery in Delhi-NCR during lockdown period.

"Police received specific information about his movements and a team was deployed at MP Road from where he was arrested on Saturday night. At about 7 pm, he was spotted arriving on a motorcycle near Kaya Maya hospital, MB road. Seeing police, he whipped out his pistol and threatened to fire. When asked to surrender, he fired a shot towards police. In self defense, even police team fired in the area but no one was hurt. Later, Israel was overpowered and disarmed," said the DCP.

"One single shot pistol with three live cartridges and

a bike was recovered from him at the time of his arrest. Being an active member of a biker gang led by Om Prakash in 2008, during that year, members of this gang committed several sensational armed robberies creating fear among traders, shopkeepers and citizens in Delhi," the DCP said.

"Om Prakash and his associate Rajesh died in an exchange of fire with Delhi Police on August 25, 2008 but Israel managed escaped but he was subsequently arrested," said the DCP.

"Israel was convicted in four cases. He was facing trial in other cases and remained in jail since then upto June 2019, but was released on parole and has been absconding since then," the DCP added.

Muslim clerics in city urge people to follow lockdown norms while celebrating Eid

New Delhi: Prominent Muslim clerics in Delhi said the moon was sighted on Sunday and appealed to people to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr on Monday adhering to social distancing and lockdown norms in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

Shahi Imam of Fatehpuri Masjid Mufti Mukarram Ahmed said the moon was sighted and Eid will be celebrated on Monday, marking end of holy month of Ramadan. Jama Masjid Shahi Imam

Syed Ahmed Bukhari appealed people to celebrate Eid with simplicity and help poor people and their neighbours during the pandemic crisis.

"Due to the coronavirus Eid Namaz can not be held as per tradition but people need to realise that the virus can be defeated only by taking precautions," he said.

The mosques in the city have been closed down due to the pandemic and the clerics have urged people to offer Eid Namaz at their home. **PTI**

Greater Noida authority to send migrant workers home

Greater Noida: For the last several days, trains are being run continuously to take migrant workers to their home districts. Even on Monday, 7 more special trains will transport workers from Delhi to their homes. This information was given by Narendra Bhushan, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority.



People sit in front of closed Jama Masjid on the eve of Eid al-Fitr at the old quarters of New Delhi on Sunday

AP

80% Shramik trains head to UP, Bihar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

At least 80 per cent of 2,813 Shramik Special trains run by the Indian Railways are destined for various destinations in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar till May 24.

Railways said nearly 60 per cent trains, originated from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab, are mainly destined for Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. "Most of the destinations in UP are around Lucknow and Gorakhpur, and in Bihar around Patna. Of the 565 trains on run since yesterday, 266 were going to Bihar and 172 to Uttar Pradesh," railways said.

Convergence of trains to these destinations caused congestion in the network. Further, increased time taken in de-



boarding of passengers due to the various health and social distancing protocols at the stations is leading to congestion at terminals which further affects network congestion.

To ease the congestion few trains were diverted via Mathura, Jharsuguda. Further, route rationalisation order has been issued to avoid congestion on routes with heavy traffic. Round the clock monitoring at Railway Board level, Zonal Railway level and Divisional level is being done to ensure

that trains are not delayed.

The train running staff have also been sensitised to ensure punctual running of Shramik spl trains. With these efforts, the congestion position has eased considerably and the mobility of trains has drastically improved.

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Due to the surge in east bound trains leading to network congestion, trains got delayed and this affected the meals distribution schedule. IRCTC and Railways have mobilized resources to ensure

regular supply of meals and water to the Shramik Special trains and minimize inconvenience to the passengers.

Indian Railways has run more than 2813 Shramik Special trains, carrying over 37 lakh passengers, till 10 am of May 24. Nearly 60 per cent trains originated from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab and are majorly destined for Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. 80 per cent of total Shramik Special trains are destined for various destinations in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (1301 for U.P. and 973 for Bihar). Most of the destinations in U.P. are around Lucknow - Gorakhpur sector and in Bihar around Patna. Of 565 trains on run since Saturday, 266 were going to Bihar and 172 to Uttar Pradesh.

Cong seeks probe into use of ‘poor’ ventilator

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday demanded a judicial probe into the use of a ventilator on Covid-19 patients in Gujarat that, it said, has not been approved by the DCGI. It alleged the mortality rate was highest at the hospital where these machines were installed. The party alleged that the low vulnerable quality ventilators were provided under CSR funds by the same businessman who had donated the ₹11-lakh suit worn by Modi during the visit of the then US President Barack Obama.

The Congress also lashed out at the Gujarat Government over the State's alleged 'sick healthcare system' and targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the issue.

The party said almost six weeks after Dhaman-1 ventilators were installed at Ahmedabad Civil Hospital on April 4, doctors there sought more ventilators claiming these machines did not work on patients and were not capable.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Kherra alleged the machines were donated under CSR funds by a company in which a Surat-based businessman, who donated the monogrammed suit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi which was worn by him during former US President Barack Obama's visit to India, has a stake.

The Dhaman-1 ventilator has been developed by Rajkot-based firm Jyoti CNC which "donated" 866 of them to the State Government last month in view of acute shortage of the machines, according to senior Gujarat government official.

A row erupted when the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital wrote to the Government, stating that the ventilators were not up to the mark, and sought sophisticated machines.

Kherra alleged the Vijay Rupani government projected the mechanised AMBU (Artificial Manual Breathing Unit) bag as ventilator, "playing with the lives of patients."

○ Congress spokesperson Pawan Kherra alleged the machines were donated under CSR funds by a company in which a Surat-based businessman, who donated the monogrammed suit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi which was worn by him during former US President Barack Obama's visit to India, has a stake

○ The Dhaman-1 ventilator has been developed by Rajkot-based firm Jyoti CNC which "donated" 866 of them to the State Government last month in view of acute shortage of the machines, according to senior Gujarat Government official

"Why was Dhaman-1 approved and installed when it had been tested on just one patient? Why was Dhaman-1 approved and installed without a licence by DCGI (Drug Controller General of India)," he asked.

"We also want to know if the PM Cares Fund was used to buy 5,000 pieces of Dhaman-1 through HLL Lifecare. All these answers can only be found through an independent judicial inquiry," Kherra said.

Training his guns on Chief Minister Rupani, he asked why Gujarat had "such shocking data" on COVID-19 patients as 11 per cent of the total coronavirus cases in the country were in the state, but 22 per cent of the deaths related to COVID-19 in the country were from Gujarat.

"Why this high mortality? Why the high mortality in Ahmedabad in particular? Why the highest mortality is in the civil hospital, where these machines were installed," he asked.

He asked why Dhaman-1 was marketed within and outside the state as a "ventilator when it is not a ventilator." The Congress leader asked why was Dhaman-1 allowed to be sold to other states and why was HLL Lifecare, a PSU, allowed to order 5,000 pieces.

Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi said: "Today, we don't have a healthcare system (in the state); we have a sick system. The inefficiency of the Gujarat Government in handling Covid crisis shows that it is undermining, underconfident, and under-achieving."

"It is my sad duty to bring to the country's attention the deplorable and indefensible

plight of medical and health facilities in Modi's home state and in part of Shah's constituency (4 assembly segments of Ahmadabad fall in Gandhinagar parliamentary constituency)."

Singhvi, Rajya Sabha member, said: "We would respectfully ask the PM, HM, GOI, and Gujarat CM -- Are you even aware of what is happening in your own home state? If so, have you ever intervened, chastised or punished the Gujarat government or does the latter have Covid immunity vaccine because they belong to the BJP?"

Singhvi said if such powerful people who control the levers of power were unable to provide justice on their home ground to the poor and needy, what could the rest of India's teeming millions expect from them.

The Congress leader referred to Gujarat High Court observations on the "lack of PPE, shortage of ventilators, ICUs and isolating wards..." and "pathetic" conditions at the Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad.

He said that even the High Court had observed that state Health Minister "does not seem to be aware of what is going on, nor appears to have ever visited the hospital".

The party also questioned why private testing of coronavirus suspected cases, even by authorised private institutions, was stopped by the Gujarat government which ordered that cornan tests can be conducted only at government hospitals.

Singhvi pointed to "proactive" role of the Bengal Governor but the "silence" of the Gujarat Governor on coronavirus situations in their respective States.

MHA issues revised travel guidelines for intrn'l arrivals, persons stranded in India



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Sunday issued revised guidelines for the international arrivals and persons stranded in India for travelling to their country or having visa to a particular country. Indians having visa to a foreign country would also be allowed to travel.

The new guidelines are basically issued for those stranded in other countries and wanted to visit India in medical emergencies or death of the family members.

The circular issued by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said that the expenses should be borne by the travellers and the travel list will be prepared by the concerned Indian missions.

The passengers must consent to being subjected to the quarantine norms on arrival, it said adding that the travellers' list must be finalized two days in advance.

"Priority will be given to compelling cases in distress, including migrant workers/labourers who have been laid off, short term visa holders faced with expiry visas, persons with medical emergencies/pregnant women/elderly, those required to return India due to death of family member, and students," the MHA said.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) will have nodal officers to oversee the arrival of stranded persons to India.

Based on the registrations received, MEA will prepare flight/ship wise database of all such travellers and their full details. MEA's digital platform will display the details of select-

THE PASSENGERS MUST CONSENT TO BEING SUBJECTED TO THE QUARANTINE NORMS ON ARRIVAL, IT SAID ADDING THAT THE TRAVELLERS' LIST MUST BE FINALISED TWO DAYS IN ADVANCE

ed persons in two days advance. "All travellers will also be required to give an undertaking that they are making the journey at their own risk. Passengers arriving through land borders will also have to undergo the same protocol and only those who are asymptomatic will be enabled to cross the border into India," said the new guidelines.

MHA said that those persons who wanted to go abroad have to get in touch with Civil Aviation Ministry's designated agency. "Only those persons shall be allowed to travel to the destination countries, who are citizens of that country or who hold visa of at least one year duration of that country or green card holder of that country or OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) card holder. In cases of medical emergency or death in the family, Indian Nationals holding six months visa can also be allowed," said the MHA's new guidelines allowing people to travel abroad.

Indian seafarers and crew working in foreign firms would also be allowed to travel.



Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan visits Chaudhary Brahma Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan, Delhi, which is functioning as a dedicated Covid Health Centre (DCHC), to oversee the preparedness to manage Covid-19 cases. He visited the various facilities and wards and witnessed first-hand the treatment being provided to Covid-19 patients, through a holistic approach as per the directions of Ministry of AYUSH
Pioneer photo

Min says 4 of 14 vaccines may enter trial stage within 5 months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Sunday said that at least four of the 14 candidate vaccines for novel coronavirus in the country may enter the clinical trial stage within five months. However, he cautioned that it is too early to expect any vaccine against the disease because there is a long due procedure involved in its development.

In a social media interaction with BJP leader GVL Narasimha Rao, the Minister said within five months, four of the vaccine candidates in the country may enter the clinical trial stage.

The Minister said, "The whole world is trying to develop a vaccine for COVID-19. There are over 100 candidate vaccines which are at different levels of development. The World Health Organisation (WHO) is coordinating the efforts. India is also actively contributing in it. There are 14 candidates in India also which are at different levels..." Vardhan said.

He said the Department of Biotechnology of the Ministry of Science and Technology is helping the academic world and industry in all manners

such as giving regulatory clearances, grants or financial support, among other things.

"As far as I know, four of our fourteen vaccines will soon be in the clinical trial stage, within 4 to 5 months. All the 14 are right now at the pre-clinical trial stage."

It will take minimum one year for the development of any vaccine even if it is developed earliest. Therefore use social distancing, masks and follow hand and physical hygiene -- the biggest safeguard against the disease- till any vaccine or cure is found, said the Minister.

On Sunday, the Minister also visited the Dedicated Covid-19 Health Centre (DCHC) at Chaudhary Brahm Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan (CBPACS), Najafgarh, a first Ayurveda hospital in the country engaged in providing care to the Covid positive patients on the basis of principles of Ayurveda as per protocol of Ministry of AYUSH. In addition to the Ayurvedic and herbal treatments, the holistic approach also includes yoga, meditation, pranayam, etc.

Till date a total of 201 patients have been admitted in the CBPACS Centre. Of these, 37 patients have been cured and 100 patients have been advised

home isolation. 19 patients have been shifted to Specialty hospitals on review of their medical condition. There has been no casualty in this Centre, said the government statement here.

Dr. RK Manchanda, Director (AYUSH) of the Delhi Government, Dr. Vidula Gujarwar, Director-Principal, CBPACS along with senior faculty and doctors and Ministry officials were also present during the review meeting at the Ayush hospital.

Overall, the Minister said, the fatality rate in the country stands at 2.9% while recovery rate has improved to 41.2%.

Talking about the healthcare infrastructure setup across the country, he said, a total of 968 Dedicated Covid hospitals have been identified across the country with 2,50,397 beds (1,62,237 isolation beds + 20,468 ICU beds); 2,065 dedicated Covid health centres with 1,76,946 beds (1,20,596 isolation beds + 10,691 ICU beds); and, 7,063 Covid care centres with 6,46,438 beds."

He further informed that States/UTs as well as central institutions have been provided with around 109.08 lakhs N-95 masks and around 72.8 lakh Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), as per the statement.

Al Qaeda ditches Pakistan on Kashmir

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

After Taliban, the Al Qaeda has now ditched Pakistan on the Kashmir issue by not even mentioning the region in a document circulated to top leadership of the global terror outfit.

The document titled "The Way Forward: A Word of Advice on the Coronavirus Pandemic" and circulated by Al Qaeda Central talked about the hardships of Uyghurs and Syrian Muslims besides the community members residing under hostile regimes but has been conspicuously silent on Kashmir which was earlier on the agenda of these terror groups.

Assessments here suggest the outfit could be frustrated due to the bickering between various terror groups in Jammu and Kashmir, especially the Kashmiri groups like Hizbul Mujahideen on whose inputs a number of terror commanders have been killed by the security forces after integration of the erstwhile State into the

Indian Union. Infighting between Pakistan-backed groups and their masters in the ISI and Pak army could also be a reason behind the outfit's change in stance.

This could have led to the distancing of the Al Qaeda from the issue as also a realisation of the changed realities on the ground post-abrogation of Article 370 where-in top terror commanders have been neutralised by the forces.

Sources, however, did not rule out that Pak deep state could have advised both the terror groups to disown the Kashmir issue for now so that India does not stop funding in Afghanistan for reconstruction. The cash starved groups might be eyeing to take control of such funds as Pakistan economy is in shambles.

"Before the great disaster (Covid-19) struck, obscenity and moral corruption had already become widespread in Muslim countries. In fact this phenomenon had extended its dirty tentacles to the vicinities



of the purest site on the face of the earth, the Haram in MakkahThe despots ruling over the Muslim World, specifically in the Arab World, have been guilty of committing the most unimaginable forms of torture and rights abuses against Muslim scholars and Mujahideen in secret torture cells that have become a norm across the Muslim world," it said.

It further said, "To make matters even worse, Islamic causes have been consigned to

oblivion across the Muslim world, especially Syria, Iraq, Waziristan, Palestine, East Turkistan, Libya, Islamic Maghreb, and Somalia...Muslims must learn some serious lessons this calamity (Covid-19) and start taking practical steps for the liberation of prisoners for the liberation of prisoners and missing persons across the Islamic World."

"Let us not forget that Covid-19 emerged from one of the filthiest places on earth, the

markets of Wuhan (China), where all known norms of decent and humane dietary practices tramples upon. From insects to rodents and reptiles, in short everything unsafe for human consumption, or the consumption of which is prohibited in all revealed religions, was sold and consumed there," it said in an indication of its disapproval of the atrocities on the Uyghurs.

"The very technological advancement and globalisation that man took immense pride in has become his undoing. Today, if someone sneezes in China, those in New York suffer from its consequences," it claimed.

Earlier, the Taliban spokesperson Suhail Shaheen had said that "the policy of the Islamic Emirate is clear that it does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries." Considering Kashmir as an internal affair of India is the clearest hint that Kashmir is not an issue or on the agenda of Taliban which is seeking to engage with India.

Remdesivir's initial trial shows its efficacy in fighting corona

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The preliminary results of the trial of the Gilead Sciences Inc's Remdesivir, the first drug cleared for the treatment of Coronavirus, has been found to be effective on patients who need extra oxygen but are not dependent on ventilators or heart-lung bypass machines, according to a report in the New England Journal of Medicine.

It said that Remdesivir was superior to placebo in shortening the time to recovery in adults hospitalised with Covid-19 and evidence of lower respiratory tract infection.

In the experiment, patients were randomly assigned to receive either Remdesivir (200 mg loading dose on day 1, followed by 100 mg daily for up to 9 additional days) or placebo for up to 10 days.

Preliminary results of this trial suggest that a 10-day

course of Remdesivir was superior to placebo in the treatment of hospitalised patients with Covid-19, as per the report.

The primary outcome was the time to recovery. In contrast to the placebo drug, Remdesivir helped Covid-19 infected patients to heal faster and allowed them to return home after about 11 days. Placebo treated coronavirus patients in 15 days.

In addition to this, there were also signs that the medicine increased the survival rate of patients on Remdesivir by 7.1 per cent.

On the other hand, 11.9 per cent of placebo-experimented patients died within two weeks, the research added.

The researchers said, "Remdesivir was superior to placebo in shortening the time to recovery in adults hospitalised with Covid-19 and evidence of lower respi-

ratory tract infection".

In the experiment, a total of 1,063 patients underwent randomisation. 538 were assigned to Remdesivir and 521 to placebo. Serious adverse events were reported for 114 of the 541 patients in the Remdesivir group who underwent randomisation (21.1 per cent) and 141 of the 522 patients in the placebo group who underwent randomisation (27 per cent), the researchers added.

The US Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) has made Remdesivir available under an emergency use authorisation for the treatment of adults and children with severe coronavirus disease.

The trial was sponsored and primarily funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Crop-eating locusts cross Rajasthan, to reach Central India

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A swarm of crop-eating locusts has crossed the border State of Rajasthan to reach Central India with thousands of the harvest flies swooping down on vast fields of moong dal in Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's Budhni constituency. It is said to be the biggest locust attack in the region in past three decades and is threatening to destroy crops worth ₹8,000 crore. Locusts' attack has also been reported from Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh.

While an expert team from Rajasthan is to visit MP to tackle the pest attack, in Jhansi the fire brigade team has been kept in readiness to spray disinfectant in the affected area. These locusts

come to India from Iran passing through Pakistan. This is the biggest locust attack in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in last 27 years and is likely to grow till monsoon season. The locusts entered through Neemuch district in the state and travelled to parts of Malwa Nimar to reach close to Bhopal.

In UP, as many as 17 districts including Agra, Jhansi, Aligarh, Mathura, Bulandshahr, Hathras, Etah, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etawah, Farrukhabad, Auraiya, Jalaun, Kanpur, Mahoba, Hamirpur and Lalitpur are affected from locusts that reached through Dausa, Rajasthan. Over the 250 tractors/ trolly have been kept in ready with chemicals.

According to officials of agriculture ministry, locust swarms have entered Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana,



and Madhya Pradesh a month in advance and pose a major threat to standing crops and vegetables. This is the fourth attack since December last year. Locust swarms enter the

desert areas of India via Pakistan for breeding in the summer of June-July, but this time Locust Hoppers as well as Pink Adult Swarms had entered border districts of

Rajasthan and Punjab in April itself. Officials said that India has taken up the matter with Pakistan as well as Iran, another country affected by the locust attack, and offered

pesticide support to both countries.

The Ministry of Environment also warned of locust attacks in Punjab, Haryana, UP an MP in the coming weeks.

In MP, four teams of the Central Government, besides teams of state agricultural development, are fighting the locusts by using chemical sprays with the help of tractors and fire-brigade vehicles. The Locusts

Organisation of the agriculture ministry has issued an advisory to the farmers in villages of the affected districts to keep continuous vigil over the desert locusts. They have been asked to keep the insects at bay by using loud sounds through drums, banging of utensils and shouting.

In UP, the agriculture department has directed fire

brigade to keep its vehicle ready with chemicals following a sudden movement by a swarm of locusts. As Deputy Director Agriculture Kamal Katiyar said the swarm of locusts, which is moving, is small in size.

To tackle the locusts, the ministry has ordered spraying machines from United Kingdom to tackle locust swarms and over 2500 tractors and trollies are engaged in spraying chemicals. Besides, drones are being used to keep an eye over locust swarms in Rajasthan, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The officials of agriculture departments of these States are worried a lot as summer crops sowing are going on these days and there are possibilities that if they are not controlled, they could damages to kharif crops in these

States.

In its latest update, the Locusts warning section of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), said locusts' breeding was continuing in southern Iran and south-west Pakistan, where control operations are in progress against hopper groups and bands.

"As vegetation dries out, more groups and swarms will form and move from these areas to the summer breeding areas along both sides of the Indo-Pakistan border in several waves from now until at least early July. Good rains are predicted during the first half of June along the Indo-Pakistan border [and] that would allow egg-laying to occur. This should reduce the further eastward movement of swarms that have already arrived in Rajasthan, India."

Cases continue to rise in Kerala

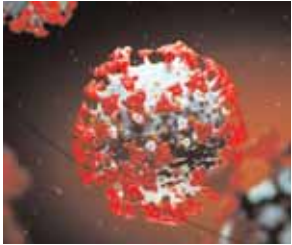
53 new cases, 322 undergoing treatment

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Number of persons tested positive for coronavirus continued to increase in Kerala in the backdrop of Ramzan festivities. On Sunday, 53 persons tested positive for the pandemic as the number of persons under treatment rose to 322, according to Kerala Minister for Health KK Shailaja.

Out of the 53 persons tested positive on Sunday, 18 were expatriates and 22 were from other States in the country. Till Sunday, 522 persons were cured of the covid-19 pandemic and sent home from hospitals.

The Minister said 188 persons were hospitalised on Sunday while the number of persons under observation rose to 95, 394. The last three days saw the number of coronavirus cases in Kerala increasing by



157.

According to Shailaja, the coming days would see a hike in the number of covid 19 patients. "This is because of the arrival of expatriates and people from other States to Kerala. The only option before us is to make sure that the people who come back to the State observe the guidelines of quarantine and observation. If those who come back follow the safety guidelines we can effectively control the spread of the pandemic and flatten the coronavirus curve," said the Minister. Dr Ranjith Vijayahari, gas-

tro surgeon, who has been focusing on covid-19 cases since the breaking out of the pandemic in the State, said the information disclosed by the Government about the number of cases is just the tip of the iceberg.

"There are more number of cases which are yet to be brought out. If only you test more and more persons you will be able to identify, isolate and quarantine the afflicted people. The situation is worrisome but I do not want to upset the people," Dr Vijayahari told *The Pioneer*.

He said the relaxation in lockdown over the last two-three days is sure to cause hike in the number of coronavirus cases in the coming days. "Any relaxation in lockdown rules will definitely cause an impact on the number of patients. But we cannot go on with lockdown indefinitely," he said.

765 new cases, 8 more deaths in TN

Total tally reaches 16,277, toll at 111

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

As on Sunday, there were 7,839 active coronavirus cases under treatment in various hospitals in Tamil Nadu, said the medical bulletin issued by the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Government of Tamil Nadu.

The bulletin said that 16,277 persons have tested positive till Sunday. "8,324 positive patients have been discharged following treatment till Sunday. Hence 7,839 active cases are under treatment as on date," said the bulletin.

A total of 765 persons tested positive on Sunday alone, taking the total number of cases tested positive till date to 16,277 in the State. The fatalities reached 111 with eight persons succumbing to the pandemic. The day saw 833 persons getting discharged following treatment and getting

well. There are 68n laboratories in the State which tested 11,441 persons on Sunday. The number of persons tested till Sunday all over Tamil Nadu reached 3,91,252.

Out of the 765 persons tested positive on Sunday, 587 were from Chennai which remained the district with maximum cases, 10,576. Chengalpattu (779), Thiruvallur (731), Cuddalore (427) were closely following the capital city.

A new disclosure made by the Government of Tamil Nadu vide the medical bulletin is the unprecedented increase in the number of coronavirus positive persons in the 13 to 60 age group. Out of the 16,277 positive cases detected in Tamil Nadu, 13,911 were in the 13 to 60 age group while 1,358 persons were in the 60 Plus age group. Children in the 0-12 age group accounted for 1003 cases.

Muted Eid celebrations in J&K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Amid strict lockdown, Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations remained a low-key affair across Jammu & Kashmir on Sunday.

None of the famous religious shrines including Hazratbal and Jamia Masjid witnessed congregational prayers in Srinagar city. Local police authorities had strictly enforced restrictions to ensure residents stay back at home and avoid stepping out in the wake of spike in number of cases of coronavirus across Kashmir valley. Police vans were seen making public announcements since early morning appealing people to stay indoors to ensure strict compliance of lockdown guidelines.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, 52 fresh cases were detected taking the total tally of coronavirus cases to 1,621 in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. While Srinagar district reported no fresh case on Sunday, 26 patients tested positive in Kulgam district alone. In Jammu division six cases were

reported from Samba, 4 from Kathua and three from Rajouri district. A police jawan, posted on duty at Lakhnapur entry point, tested positive and shifted to isolation facility.

Official sources maintained, majority of fresh positive cases had a travel history and were fresh returnees. At present, 791 cases are active positive and around fifty percent cases i.e 809 have recovered so far in Jammu & Kashmir.

According to local reports from Srinagar, worshippers offered Eid prayers at home and at few old places in remote areas small gatherings of close family members converged at one place to offer thanksgiving prayers ending the month long period of fasting during Ramadan.

Eid was celebrated across Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala on Sunday, while the rest of the country will celebrate Eid on Monday. In Jammu region too, no mass assembly was witnessed on the occasion.

Earlier, in August 2019, Eid-ul-Azha prayers could not be offered in Kashmir as authorities had imposed strict curfew in the wake of abrogation of Article 370 and division of then Jammu & Kashmir state into two Union Territories.

However, South Kashmir district of Pulwama witnessed incidents of stone pelting after a joint teams of security forces busted a terrorist hideout in the area.

A group of terrorists had carved a hideout in a shop owned by a government official of Revenue department. At least two people received injuries as clashes broke out in Mitrigam area of Pulwama after security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the area.

Security forces have recovered detonators, explosives and some logistic materials from the hideout. Some of the close family members of the government official, detained by the police for questioning, were earlier involved in terrorist activities.

Bureaucratic indifference delays clinical trial of drug for Covid-19

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Even as the country is struggling hard to contain the coronavirus pandemic which is spreading all over with vigor by the hour, indifference of bureaucrats towards the medicine developed to minimise and regulate the contagious disease is causing irreparable damage to the soul of India.

While scientists specialising

in modern medicine are groping in the dark in search of a vaccine to fight the coronavirus pandemic, an Ayurvedic drug and protocol developed by a team of eminent Ayurvedic physicians in collaboration with modern medicine specialists is given a raw deal by the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Ayush. The details of the drug and treatment protocol was submitted to the Ayush

Ministry on April 15 this year.

Messages to Shripad Yesso Naik, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) did not evoke any response. Dr Rajesh Kotecha, eminent Ayurvedic physician, who is also the secretary to the Ayush Ministry chose to ignore the messages sent to him requesting for details about the clinical trials.

The team of doctors that developed the ayurvedic drug

prepared from the age old Indian system of knowledge was led by Dr PR Krishnakumar, South India's leading Ayurvedic scholar and included a who's who of medical researchers. Dr Rama Jayasundar of All India Institute of Medical sciences, New Delhi, a physicist turned ayurvedic researcher, Dr CV Krishnaswamy, Tamil Nadu's leading physician, Prof B M

Hegde, described as the country's medical warrior are some of the members of the team that developed the drug and protocol.

Dr Krishnakumar has been honoured by the nation with Padma Sree while Prof Hegde is a Padma Bhushan with hundreds of publications in national and international journals. It was Prof Hegde who declared in his pathbreaking research

work "What Doctors Don't Get To Study in Medical School" that the drug for coronavirus and influenza would come from India.

"We submitted everything as per specification to the Ayush Ministry with a request that the drug be taken up for clinical trials. Without clinical trials, it can never be administered to the patients. But till date we have not received any communica-

tion from the ministry about the fate of our application," a visibly upset Dr Krishnakumar told *The Pioneer*.

Dr Jayasundar too sounded sad while speaking to *The Pioneer* over the inordinate delay in taking up their work for clinical trials. "I don't know what is happening. You have to check it with the authorities," she said when asked about the delay. Dr Krishnaswamy said

this clinical trial should have been taken up on a war footing.

"As you see, the number of coronavirus patients are shooting up on an hourly basis and our medical system should face the situation in a mission mode," said Dr Krishnaswamy.

A veteran medical doctor pointed out that the possibility of a vaccine to fight coronavirus getting ready in the near future is remote.

After confusion, Maha allows 25 flights to & from Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After hours of confusion on whether domestic flights will fly in and out of the metropolises in the coming days, the Maharashtra Government on Sunday evening agreed to allow operation of 25 flights to and from the Mumbai Airport from Monday.

Hours after Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said that there should be "minimum possible domestic flights from Maharashtra from May 25th which are purely emergent in nature", Maharashtra Cabinet Minister Nawab Malik announced that beginning from Monday, the state government had allowed 25 flights to and from the Mumbai.

Quoting his telephonic conversation with State Chief Secretary Ajoy Mehta, Malik said: "After discussions with all agencies, it has been decided that 25 flights will arrive and depart from Mumbai airport. The number will increase subsequently."

In a formal announcement made later, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA), Mumbai, said: late in the evening: "Starting May 25, 2020, CSMIA will resume 25 commercial

passenger flight movements on departure and 25 on arrival. The initiative comes after the directive issued by the Ministry of Civil Aviation as well as the State Minister giving a nod to recommence domestic flight operations to and from Mumbai.

"Furthermore, CSMIA also advises passengers above 80 years as well as expectant mothers and passengers with health issues to restrict travelling. While, arriving passengers will be temperature screened by the State Govt. and expected home quarantine for 14-days," CSMIA said in a statement.

"Moreover, CSMIA has also created a separate quarantine centre for symptomatic passengers. CSMIA has deployed resources to manage the queue effectively and to maintain minimal human interaction," the CSMIA statement added.

Earlier in the afternoon, chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's office tweeted: "CM Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray spoke to Civil Aviation Minister of State (Independent) @HardeepSPuri ji regarding domestic flights in Maharashtra."

"He communicated his views that till the time MIAL plans and fine tunes airport operations, they should initiate

minimum possible domestic flights from Maharashtra from May 25th which are purely emergent in nature like for international transfer passengers, medical emergencies, students, and cases on compassionate grounds," the CMO tweeted.

That the announcement made by Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri's about the resumption of domestic flights from May 25 without consulting the Maharashtra Government has not gone well with the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) could be evidenced from a strong tweet put out by State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh in the early hours of Sunday.

"Its extremely ill-advised to reopen airports in red zone. Mere thermal scanning of passengers inadequate w/o swabs. Impossible to have autos/cabs/buses ply in current circumstances. Adding positive passenger will add Covid stress to red zone," Deshmukh had tweeted. Malik also hit out at the Narendra Modi for taking decisions without consulting the State Government, by saying: "The Government at the Centre makes announcement after announcement without discussing issues with the State Government".

K'taka tally at 2,056 with 97 new cases

IAN S ■ BENGALURU

With 97 new cases, Karnataka's Covid-19 tally crossed the 2,000-mark, while 26 were discharged from hospitals taking the number of cured persons to 634, said an official, here on Sunday.

"The total number of Covid-19 cases across the state is 2,056, with 97 more testing positive during the past 18 hours," said a state health official. The number of active cases in the state is 1,378 and Covid-19 deaths 42, including 2 for non-Covid reasons.

Of the 26 discharged, 18 are in Davanagere, 4 in Chitradurga, 3 in Bagalkote and one in Haveri across the southern state. Of the new cases, 41 are women and 19 children below 20 years.

"68 of the 97 new cases are returnees from Maharashtra, the worst affected Covid-hit state in the country with 47,190 cases till Saturday," said the official.

Of the 30 Karnataka districts, Chikkaballapura recorded the highest cases at 24, followed by Udipi (18), Hassan (15) and Kalaburagi, Yadigiri and Mandya (6 each).

Sikkim reports 1st corona case

Maha CM hits out at BJP for politicising crisis, says lockdown to be lifted gradually

IAN S ■ GANGTOK

The Himalayan state of Sikkim reported its first coronavirus case when a 25-year-old student who returned from Delhi tested positive, a senior official said on Sunday.

Sikkim Health Secretary Pempa T. Bhutia said that the swab sample of the student was sent to North Bengal Medical College and Hospital in Siliguri (in West Bengal) for testing. The positive report came on Saturday.

The student from Rabangla in South Sikkim district is admitted at Sir Thutob Namgyal Memorial Hospital in Gangtok. Hospital sources said his health condition was stable. The student was living in Delhi to prepare for UPSC examinations but returned to the state by bus along with a few others last week.

Till Saturday night, 1,707 people were tested in Sikkim.

The first corona case was reported a day after the Sikkim government announced that teaching for students from Class 9 to university levels would resume from June 15.

The tiny Himalayan state was one of the first states to close inter-state and international borders and ban entry of both domestic and foreign tourists, besides migrant labourers.

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Hitting out at the Opposition BJP for its efforts to indulge in politics over the coronavirus crisis, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said here on Sunday that his Government would lift the lockdown gradually as it did not want crowds in public places which would compel the Government to re-impose lockdown in the State.

Two days after the BJP staged "Save Maharashtra" agitation against the "inept" handling of coronavirus crisis by his Government, Uddhav said: "I sincerely feel that this is a time of crisis, and hence, no one should play politics. You may do it, but we will not as we are vested with a responsibility and above all, the people of Maharashtra trust us".

Addressing the people across the state through social media, the Chief Minister said: "As much it is improper to impose lockdown all of a sudden, it is

also improper to lift the lockdown at one go. We are treading cautiously to ensure restoration of normalcy. While lifting the lockdown, we will have to take measures against crowds at public places. Every citizen will have to precaution of not indulging in undisciplined behaviour, a behaviour that will force us to re-impose lockdown".

"I want to thank people of all religions, social organizations and political parties for their co-operation," he said.

In a series of tweets put out after his interaction with the people across the state, Uddhav said: "A couple of days ago, I was part of a VC with Congress President Sonia Gandhi ji and other leaders. I said the real picture about our country will be clear in the coming fortnight due to the migration and the likely transmission of the virus due to the movement of people".

"This intra-state movement from one district to another has been allowed to

an extent. But, this can be permitted on a large scale only after following precautions. We have allowed shops and offices to open in some areas."

"We are also considering if the theatre, film and television industries can be allowed to resume shooting and post-production activities like dubbing and editing. They have asked us if they can shoot in the Green zone before the monsoons with due precautions," he said.

"We are also considering allowing outdoor games. The cabinet held a meeting to prepare for the Kharif season. We are launching a new project to make seeds and fertilisers available to farmers in their fields," he said.

"Since day one, we never stopped any agriculture activities or transport of produce. We are taking care of farmers. We have purchased 75 to 80% cotton in areas like Vidarbha, Marathwada and North Maharashtra, and this is still underway," he said.

NORTHERN RAILWAY'S STATION/TERMINAL-WISE TRAFFIC PLAN FOR THE TRAINS ANNOUNCED TO RUN W.E.F. 1st JUNE, 2020 AND ONWARD

For the convenience of rail passengers, Northern Railway will start train operations of announced Mail/Express trains w.e.f. 01.06.2020 from the following major Terminals/Stations of Northern Railway:-

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT NEW DELHI			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02230/29	Lucknow Mail	New Delhi	Lucknow Jn
02392/91	Shramji Express	New Delhi	Rajgir
02394/93	Sampoom Kranti Exp.	New Delhi	Rajendra Nagar
02418/17	Prayagraj Express	New Delhi	Prayagraj
02420/19	Gomti Express	New Delhi	Lucknow
02452/51	Shram Shakti Express	New Delhi	Kanpur
02560/59	Shivganga Express	New Delhi	Manduadih
02630/29	Karnataka S.K. Exp.	New Delhi	Yesvantpur
02724/23	Telangana Express	New Delhi	Hyderabad
02802/01	Purushottam Express	New Delhi	Puri
02218/17	Mahamana Express	New Delhi	Varanasi
02554/53	Vaishali Express	New Delhi	Saharsa
02382/81	Poorva Express	New Delhi	Howrah
02303/04	Poorva Express	New Delhi	Dehradun
02055/56	Jan Shatabdi Exp.	New Delhi	Nanded
02057/58	Jan Shatabdi Exp.	New Delhi	Una Himachal
02566/65	Bihar S.K. Express	New Delhi	Darbhanga
02806/05	AP Express	New Delhi	Vishakapatnam

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT NEW DELHI			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02716/15	Sachkhand Express	Amritsar	Nanded
02926/25	Paschim Exp. (Delux)	Amritsar	Bandra Terminus
02556/55	Gorkhdam Express	Hisar	Gorakhpur

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02156/55	Bhopal Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Habibganj
02618/17	Mangla Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Ernakulam
02963/64	Mewar Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Udaipur City
02182/81	Jabalpur Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Jabalpur
02284/83	Duronito Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Emakulam
02285/86	Duronito Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Secundarabad
02060/59	Janshatabdi Exp.	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Kota
02918/17	Gujarat S.K. Exp.	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Ahmedabad
02780/79	Goa Express	Hazrat Nizamuddin	Vasco-da-gama

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02904/03	Golden Temple Mail	Amritsar	Mumbai Central
02716/15	Sachkhand Express	Amritsar	Nanded

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT ANAND VIHAR T.			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
04010/09	Champran Satyagrah Exp.	Anand Vihar T.	Bapudham Motihari
02558/57	Saptkranti Express	Anand Vihar T.	Muzaffarpur
05274/73	Satyagrah Express	Anand Vihar T.	Raxaul
02220/19	Suhaldev Express	Anand Vihar T.	Gazipur
02234/33	Gazipur Express	Anand Vihar T.	Gazipur

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT DELHI JUNCTION			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02916/15	Ashram Express	Delhi Jn.	Ahmedabad
05484/83	Mahananda Express	Delhi Jn.	Alipurduar
05956/55	Brahmaputra Mail	Delhi Jn.	Dibrugarh

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT DELHI JUNCTION			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
04674/73	Shaheed Express	Amritsar	Jaynagar
04650/49	Saryu Yamuna Exp.	Amritsar	Jaynagar

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT DELHI SARAI ROHILLA			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02463/64	Sampark Kranti Exp.	Delhi Sarai Rohilla	Jodhpur
02066/65	Jan Shatabdi Express	Delhi Sarai Rohilla	Ajmer

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT LUCKNOW JN			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02229/30	Lucknow Mail	Lucknow Jn	New Delhi
02419/20	Gomti Exp.	Lucknow Jn	New Delhi
02533/34	Pushpak Exp.	Lucknow Jn	C Shivaji Maharaj Terminus

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT LUCKNOW JUNCTION			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02392/91	Shramjeevi Exp	New Delhi	Rajgir
02556/55	Gorakhdham Express	Hisar	Gorakhpur
02554/53	Vaishali Express	New Delhi	Saharsa
02558/57	Sapt Kranti Express	Anand Vihar T.	Muzaffarpur
02220/19	Suhaldev Express	Anand Vihar T.	Ghazipur
04674/73	Shaheed Express	Amritsar	Jaynagar
04650/49	Saryu Yamuna Exp.	Amritsar	Jaynagar
09037/38	Awadh Express	Bandra Terminus	Gorakhpur
09039/40	Awadh Express	Bandra Terminus	Muzaffarpur
02358/57	Durgiana Express	Amritsar	Kolkata
02218/17	Mahamana Express	New Delhi	Varanasi Jn
09167/68	Sabarmati Express	Ahmedabad Jn	Varanasi Jn
09165/66	Sabarmati Express	Ahmedabad Jn	Darbhanga

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT VARANASI JN			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
01072/71	Kamayani Express	Varanasi Jn	Lokmanyatilak T.
01094/93	Mahanagri Express	Varanasi Jn	Mumbai CST
02217/18	Mahamana Express	Varanasi Jn	New Delhi
09168/67	Sabarmati Express	Varanasi Jn	Ahmedabad Jn

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT VARANASI			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
01061/62	Darbhanga Exp.	Lotmanya Tilak (T)	Darbhanga
02792/91	Express	Danapur	Secunderabad Jn.
09045/46	Tapti Ganga Exp.	Surat	Chhapra

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT MORADABAD			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
02091/92	Jan Shatabdi Express	Dehradun	Kathgodam
02408/07	Karambhum Express	Amritsar	New Jalpaiguri
02230/29	Lucknow Mail	New Delhi	Lucknow Jn
02218/19	Mahamana Express	New Delhi	Varanasi
04674/73	Shaheed Express	Amritsar	Jaynagar
04650/49	Saryu Yamuna Exp.	Amritsar	Jaynagar
02358/57	Durgiana Express	Amritsar	Kolkata

TRAINS ORIGINATING FROM/TERMINATING AT AMRITSAR			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To
04674/73	Shaheed Express	Amritsar	Jaynagar
04650/49	Saryu Yamuna Exp.	Amritsar	Jaynagar
02716/15	Sachkhand Express	Amritsar	Nanded
02926/25	Paschim Exp. (Delux)	Amritsar	Bandra Terminus
02904/03	Golden Temple Mail	Amritsar	Mumbai Central
02408/07	Karambhum Express	Amritsar	New Jalpaiguri
02054/53	Jan Shatabdi Exp.	Amritsar	Haridwar
02358/57	Durgiana Express	Amritsar	Kolkata

PASSING TRAINS HAVING STOPPAGE AT AMBALA			
Train No.	Train Name	From	To

(The writer is Assistant Professor, JNU)

Virus pushing US ties to brink of ‘Cold War’: China

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Sunday accused the US of pushing the bilateral ties to the brink of a “new Cold War” by spreading “lies” about the coronavirus and said it was open to international efforts to identify the source of the virus that has killed over 3,00,000 people globally.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi also said the lawsuits filed against China in the US demanding compensation for Covid-19 is an attempt to blackmail a victim with fabricated evidence.

Under constant attack from US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo over the origin of the coronavirus and failure to provide timely information, Wang launched a broadside against Washington in his annual Press

Coronavirus unleashed by China: Trump’s aide

Washington: The deadly coronavirus was unleashed by China to the rest of the world and there has been a massive cover up by Beijing, US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien said on Sunday.

President Donald Trump and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have repeatedly said they suspect the novel coronavirus that was first detected in Wuhan was somehow released from a laboratory in China.

“This was a virus that was

unleashed by China. There was a coverup that someday they’re going to do an HBO show like they did with Chernobyl on this virus,” O'Brien told “Face the Nation” Sunday talk show of the *CBS News*.

When asked whether he was accusing the Chinese government as a whole or local officials of a coverup, O'Brien said, “We don't know, because they kicked out all reporters and they wouldn't let investigators come in and they're still stonewalling investigators.” **PTI**

China.

“It is the most regrettable that while the coronavirus is

still out there, a ‘political virus’ is also spreading in the US and jumping at any opportunity to attack and slander China,” he said in a video media conference on the sidelines of China's annual session of the National People's Conference (NPC).

“Some political forces in the US are taking China-US relations hostage and pushing our two countries to the brink of a new Cold War,” Wang said.

Some politicians ignored the basic facts and made up countless lies and conspiracy theories concerning China.

“The longer the list, the more it says about how low the rumour-mongers are willing to go and the more stains they will leave in history,” Wang, who is also the State Councillor, said.

He was scathingly critical of especially the lawsuits against China. A lawsuit was

filed by Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt against the Chinese government, the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), and other Chinese officials and institutions in the US District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

It alleges that during the critical weeks of the initial coronavirus outbreak, the Chinese authorities deceived the public, suppressed crucial information, arrested whistleblowers, destroyed critical medical research and permitted millions of people to be exposed to the virus, causing a global pandemic that was unnecessary and preventable.

Observers say the Missouri lawsuit could pose a problem to China given the US courts' claim of universal jurisdiction.

Asked whether Beijing is

concerned that China's overseas assets could be seized, Wang said “some people are clamouring for so-called accountability and compensation from a victim of Covid-19.

“They are fabricating so-called evidence for frivolous lawsuits. These people are tramping on international rule of law and betraying human conscience,” he said.

“If anybody thought they could use some ludicrous lawsuits to undermine China's sovereignty and dignity to deprive the Chinese people their hard-won gains they will be daydreaming and bring disgrace to themselves,” he said.

He also struck a reconciliatory note saying that both the US and China should work together.

The Covid-19 pandemic is the common enemy of China

and the US and it is the shared wish of the people of the two nations to support and help each other.

China and the US should share the experience of the epidemic fight and learn from each other to boost their respective responses, Wang said.

He said China is open to joint efforts by the international science community to identify the source of the virus, which originated from the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December. He said the process must be professional, impartial and constructive.

By being “professional,” it means that the process should be based on science, led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and conducted on a global scale by scientists and medical experts.

Around the Globe

- *The New York Times* has devoted its entire front page to the names of 1,000 of the Covid-19 victims as the US approaches nearly 1,00,000 virus deaths, the current highest in the world. The Sunday edition's front page comprises a simple list of names and personal details taken from obituaries around the US, the BBC reported. The headline is “US deaths near 1,00,000, an incalculable loss”, with a sub-heading that reads: “They were not simply names on a list. They were us.”
- China has reported 39 new coronavirus cases, including 36 asymptomatic patients — majority of them from Covid-19 epicentre Hubei province and its capital Wuhan, health officials said on Sunday. Of the three confirmed coronavirus patients, one is locally transmitted infection and two are imported cases, China's National Health Commission (NHC) said. The domestically transmitted case was reported in Jilin Province, it said.
- Six million Australians have downloaded a mobile phone app that helps health authorities trace coronavirus infections, officials said Sunday. Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt said the COVIDSafe app is playing a strong role in Australia's response to the pandemic and several countries have expressed interest in learning from its positive impacts. If a user is diagnosed, the app works to identify other users who have been in close proximity for 15 minutes or more in the previous three weeks.
- South Korea has reported 25 additional cases of the coronavirus over a 24-hour period, amid a continuation of small-scale outbreaks in the country. The Korea Centres for Disease Control and Prevention says the additional figures released Sunday took the country's total to 11,190 with 266 deaths. The agency says 10,213 of them have recovered and been released from quarantine.
- Pakistan recorded 32 coronavirus-related deaths during the last 24 hours, taking the total number of fatalities in the country to 1,133, the health ministry said on Sunday. The total number of patients also jumped to 54,601.
- There is currently insufficient scientific evidence to show that vitamin D can be beneficial in preventing or treating Covid-19, scientists say, warning against health risk due to high doses of supplementation. Following unverified reports that high doses of vitamin D could reduce the risk of contracting Covid-19, scientists, including those from the University of Manchester in the UK, assessed current scientific evidence base on the vitamin's use in treating infections.

Eid celebrated amid curfews, virus fears

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Muslims around the world on Sunday began celebrating Eid al-Fitr, a normally festive holiday marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, with millions under strict stay-at-home orders and many fearing renewed coronavirus outbreaks.



The three-day holiday is usually a time of travel, family get-togethers and lavish daytime feasts after weeks of dawn-to-dusk fasting. But this year many of the world's 1.8 billion Muslims will have to pray at home and make due with video calls. Some countries, including Turkey, Iraq and Jordan, have imposed round-the-clock holiday curfews. But even where many restrictions have been lifted, celebrations will be subdued because of fears of the pandemic and its economic fallout.

Saudi Arabia, home to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, is under a complete lockdown, with residents only permitted to leave their homes to purchase food and medicine.

In Jerusalem, Israeli police said they broke up an “illegal demonstration” and arrested two people outside the Al-Aqsa mosque, which Muslim authorities have closed for prayers since mid-March and will not reopen until after the holiday. Worshipers who tried to enter the compound scuffled with the police.

Al-Aqsa is the third holiest site in Islam and would ordinarily welcome tens of thousands of worshippers during the Eid. The hilltop compound is also the holiest site for Jews, who know it as the Temple Mount. The site has long been a flashpoint in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Iran, which is battling the

deadliest outbreak in the Middle East, allowed communal prayers at some mosques but cancelled the annual mass Eid prayers in Tehran led by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran has reported over 130,000 cases and more than 7,000 deaths.

The virus causes mild to moderate flu-like symptoms in most patients, who recover within two to three weeks. But it is highly contagious and can cause severe illness or death, particularly in older patients or those with underlying health conditions.

Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, has reported nearly 22,000 infections and 1,350 fatalities, the most in Southeast Asia. Lockdown orders intended to contain the pandemic mean there will be no congregational prayers at mosques or even open fields, no family reunions, no relatives bearing gifts for children.

“This outbreak is not just dampening spirits of Eid, but also has made the tradition entirely different,” said Andieka Rabbani, a university student in Jakarta. This year, like many Indonesians, he will only see family and friends through

video calls.

In neighboring Muslim-majority Malaysia, businesses have mostly reopened after weeks of lockdown. But mass gatherings are still banned and people are not allowed to travel back to their hometowns for the holiday. Police have turned away more than 5,000 cars and have warned of strict penalties for those who try to sneak home. Malaysians are only allowed to visit relatives who live nearby, and only on Sunday, with gatherings limited to 20 people. Mosques have reopened but are limited to small congregations of up to 30. Malaysia has reported 7,185 infections and 115 deaths.

Rohaizam Zainuddin said he felt blessed he could celebrate Eid with his elderly parents living nearby, but his sister in another state could not return home.

“We are frustrated that celebration this year is not the same,” he said. “But there is no point getting angry. We just have to accept it, life goes on.”

He and his family members are still wearing new clothes and preparing traditional dishes. Plates of cookies are set out for any visitors, alongside a ther-

mometer and hand sanitizer.

In Pakistan, Eid is being celebrated in the shadow of the coronavirus and in the wake of a passenger plane crash near Karachi on Friday that killed 97 people.

For the first time, Pakistan is celebrating Eid countrywide on the same day, ending an annual controversy between rival committees over the moon sighting that signals the start of the holiday.

Pakistan has taken measures to control the spread of the coronavirus since mid-March, but Prime Minister Imran Khan refused to close mosques during Ramadan despite pleas from doctors and a rising number of infections. Pakistan has reported more than 52,000 cases and more than 1,100 deaths.

More than 1,000 worshippers gathered and prayed shoulder-to-shoulder in an open field in Karachi on Sunday, with only a few of them wearing masks.

In neighboring Afghanistan, the government and Taliban insurgents announced a three-day ceasefire in honor of the holiday.

Some 2,000 Muslims gathered for Eid al-Fitr prayers Sunday at a sports complex in the Paris suburb of Levallois-Perret, carefully spaced apart and wearing masks, according to France-Info radio. Traditional embraces were not allowed.

France is allowing religious services to resume for the first time since March, but France's leading Muslim organization, CFCM, advised mosques to stay closed Sunday. The CFCM said the government decree didn't give mosques enough time to procure masks and hand gel to ensure that gatherings don't turn into super-spreading events.

COUNTRY	TOTAL CASES	TOTAL DEATHS	NUMBER OF CASES ON DECLINE IN US: TRUMP
USA	1,675,880	99,003	
Brazil	3,52,523	22,288	
Russia	3,44,481	3,541	
Spain	2,82,370	28,678	
UK	2,59,559	36,793	
Italy	2,29,858	32,785	
France	1,82,469	28,332	Washington: The number of COVID-19 cases and related fatalities in the US is coming down, US President Donald Trump said on Sunday, even as the country inched closer to the grim milestone of 1,00,000 deaths from the deadly coronavirus. The President's tweet comes days after White House coronavirus response coordinator Dr Deborah Birx said that there has been over a 50 per cent decline in new hospitalisations. PTI
Germany	1,80,153	8,371	

Study: Age, male sex, underlying illness validated as risk factors for death due to Covid

London: Age, male sex, and underlying illnesses like diabetes have emerged as risk factors for death due to novel coronavirus infection, according to a large cohort study which can help health professionals learn more about how the Covid-19 illness progresses. According to the study, published in the BMJ, the risk of death increases in people above the age of 50, as does being being male, obese, or having underlying heart, lung, liver and kidney disease.

In this largest prospective observational study reported to date, the scientists, including those from the University of Liverpool in the UK, noted the characteristics of patients hospitalised in the UK with Covid-19, and their outcomes.

At the time of publishing the study, the scientists said the study had recruited over 43,000 patients. While earlier studies had reported the risk factors associated with severe Covid-19 based on reports from China, the researchers said an understanding of features of patients in other parts of the world are lacking.

To address this knowledge gap, the scientists said they analysed data from 20,133 patients with COVID-19 admitted to 202 acute care hospitals in England, Wales, and Scotland between 6 February and 19 April 2020. **PTI**

Wuhan lab had 3 live bat coronaviruses, none matched Covid: Report

AFF ■ BEIJING

The Chinese virology institute in the city where Covid-19 first emerged has three live strains of bat coronavirus on-site, but none match the new contagion wreaking chaos across the world, its director has said.

Scientists think Covid-19 — which first emerged in Wuhan and has killed some 3,40,000 people worldwide — originated in bats and could have been transmitted to people via another mammal.

But the director of the Wuhan Institute of Virology told state broadcaster CGTN that claims made by US President Donald Trump and others that the virus could have leaked from the facility were “pure fabrication”.

In the interview filmed on May 13 but broadcast on Saturday night, Wang Yani said the centre has “isolated and obtained some coronaviruses from bats.”

“Now we have three strains of live viruses... But their highest similarity to SARS-CoV-2 only reaches 79.8 percent,” she said, referring to the coronavirus strain that causes Covid-19.

One of their research

teams, led by Professor Shi Zhengli, has been researching bat coronaviruses since 2004 and focused on the “source tracing of SARS”, the strain behind another virus outbreak nearly two decades ago.

“We know that the whole genome of SARS-CoV-2 is only 80 percent similar to that of SARS. It's an obvious difference,” she said.

“So, in Professor Shi's past research, they didn't pay attention to such viruses which are less similar to the SARS virus.”

Conspiracy rumours that the biosafety lab was involved in the outbreak swirled online for months before Trump and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo brought the theory into the mainstream by claiming that there is evidence the pathogen came from the institute.

The lab has said it received samples of the then-unknown virus on December 30, determined the viral genome sequence on January 2 and submitted information on the pathogen to the WHO on January 11.

Wang said in the interview that before it received samples in December, their team had never “encountered, researched or kept the virus.”

PAK PLANE CRASH Pilot, air traffic team’s role under probe: Reports

Karachi: A preliminary report on the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane crash, in which 97 people were killed, has raised serious questions about the pilot's handling of the aircraft and what prevented the crew in the cockpit from informing the air traffic controllers about the troubles.

Pakistani investigators are trying to find out if the crash of the national flag carrier's flight PK-8303 is attributable to a pilot error or a technical glitch, with new leads raising fresh questions over the circumstances of the incident, Geo News reported. **PTI**

Kim holds meet to discuss bolstering nuke forces

Seoul: North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un convened a key military meeting to discuss bolstering its nuclear arsenal and putting the country's strategic armed forces on a high alert, state media reported, in his first known public appearance in about 20 days. In early May, Kim quelled intense rumours about his health by attending a ceremony marking the completion of a fertiliser factory in his first public activities in 20 days. But he hadn't again made any follow-up public appearance in about another 20 days until the state news agency said he led a meeting of Central Military Commission of ruling Workers' Party. **AP**

Hong Kong police fire teargas, water cannon at protesters

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong police fired tear gas and a water cannon at protesters in a popular shopping district Sunday, as thousands took to the streets to march against China's move to impose national security legislation on the city.

Pro-democracy supporters have sharply criticized a proposal, set to be approved by China's rubber-stamp parliament this week, that would ban secessionist and subversive activity, as well as foreign interference, in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

The pro-democracy camp says the proposal goes against the “one country, two systems” framework that promises Hong Kong freedoms not found in mainland China. Crowds of demonstrators dressed in black gathered in the Causeway Bay

district on Sunday, chanting slogans such as “Stand with Hong Kong,” “Liberate Hong Kong” and “Revolution of our times.”

The protest was a continuation of a monthslong pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong that began last year and has at times descended into violence between police and protesters. Police raised blue flags, warning protesters to disperse, before firing multiple rounds of tear gas. They later fired a water cannon at the demonstrators.

At least 180 people were arrested, mostly on charges of unlawful assembly, police said.

They also said that some of the protesters threw bricks and splashed unidentified liquid at officers, injuring at least four members of the police media liaison team. They warned that such behavior is against the law and that police would pursue the matter.



Trump’s pitch to voters: Trust me, economy will soar in 2021

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has a new pitch to voters for this fall: Trust me.

As the economy faces a once-in-a-century recession, with more than 38 million people out of work, Trump is increasingly talking up a future recovery that probably won't materialize until after the November election. He's asking voters to look past the pain being felt across the nation and give him another four-year term on the promise of an economic comeback in 2021.

NETANYAHU LASHES OUT AT ‘LUDICROUS’ GRAFT CHARGES AMID TRIAL

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived at a Jerusalem court for the start of his long-delayed corruption trial, rejecting the “ludicrous” charges against him and declaring he was facing the hearing “with my head held high.”

The veteran premier, who has just forged a unity government after over a year of political turmoil, now faces the next challenge — being the country's first premier to face criminal charges while in office.

Flanked by ministers and bodyguards, PM Netanyahu addressed reporters before entering the Jerusalem District Court where he was to face charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust. **AFF**

1ST IRANIAN SHIP REACHES VENEZUELA WITH NO SIGN OF US THREAT

Caracas: The first of five tankers loaded with gasoline sent from Iran reached Venezuelan waters on late Saturday, expected to temporarily ease the South American nation's fuel crunch while defying Trump administration sanctions targeting the two US foes. The oil tanker Fortune encountered no immediate signs of US interference as it eased through Caribbean waters toward the Venezuelan coast and Venezuelan officials celebrated the arrival. **AP**

SpaceX’s 1st astronaut launch breaking new ground for style

AP ■ CAPE CANAVERAL

The first astronauts launched by SpaceX are breaking new ground for style with hip spacesuits, gull-wing Teslas and a sleek rocketship — all of it white with black trim.

The color coordinating is thanks to Elon Musk, the driving force behind both SpaceX and Tesla, and a big fan of flash and science fiction.

NASA astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken like the fresh new look.

They'll catch a ride to the launch pad in a Tesla Model X electric car.

“It is really neat, and I think the biggest testament to that is my 10-year-old son telling me how cool I am now,” Hurley told The Associated Press.

Biden wins Hawaii presidential primary delayed by virus

Honolulu: Joe Biden won the Democratic Party of Hawaii's party-run presidential primary on Saturday, which was delayed by more than a month because of the coronavirus.

Biden defeated Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders 63 per cent to 37 per cent.

Biden won 16 of Hawaii's delegates and Sanders will take eight. Biden has a total of 1,566 delegates to the party's national convention, according to the count by the *Associated Press*. He needs 1,991 delegates to win the nomination, a threshold he is projected to reach in June.

A total of 35,044 voters cast ballots in the party-run primary. All ballots were cast by mail.

The party had initially planned to hold the primary on April 4 and had expected most party members would vote by mail and some would cast ballots at about 20 in-person polling sites around the state. **AP**

Af, Taliban announce 3-day Eid ceasefire

AP ■ KABUL

The Taliban announced a three-day ceasefire during the Eid al-Fitr holiday starting Sunday in a surprise move following months of bloody fighting with Afghan forces after the group signed a landmark agreement with the United States.

President Ashraf Ghani swiftly welcomed the insurgents' offer and ordered his forces to also comply, while the US envoy to Afghanistan hailed the deal as a “momentous opportunity.”

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement posted on social media that the group's “leadership instructs all the mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate to take special measures for security of the countrymen, and conduct no offensive operation against the enemy anywhere.”

SpaceX’s 1st astronaut launch breaking new ground for style

“SpaceX has gone all out” on the capsule's appearance, he said. “And they've worked equally as hard to make the innards and the displays and everything else in the vehicle work to perfection.”

The true test comes Wednesday when Hurley and Behnken climb aboard a SpaceX Dragon capsule atop a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and, equipment and weather permitting, shoot into space. It will be the first astronaut launch from NASA's Kennedy Space Center since the last shuttle flight in 2011.

It will also mark the first attempt by a private company to send astronauts into orbit. Only Governments — Russia, the US and China — have done that.

FLOOR PRICE

Telcos approach Trai seeking early decision on issue

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom players have urged regulator Trai to move forward quickly on the issue of fixing floor price for tariffs, saying the matter is imperative to ensure that the sector is sustainable and in a position to bear the deferred spectrum and AGR dues.

Notwithstanding the nudge from the industry, a latest report by ICICI Securities has said that any huge tariff hike is unlikely for at least a quarter or two. “Tariff hike is unlikely before recommendation on floor price, as any suo moto tariff hike may work against telecom operators

for policy intervention. We do not see any huge tariff hike for at least a quarter or two,” ICICI Securities said in a report on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Cellular Operators’ Association of India (COAI) — whose members include Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Reliance Jio — has written to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) seeking an open house discussion on the issue “at the earliest”.

“Given the financial pressure on the sector and the fact that ARPU (Average Revenue Per User) and tariffs of the Indian telecom sector are the lowest in the world, floor pric-

ing is imperative to ensure that the sector is sustainable, and is in a position to bear the deferred spectrum and AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue) dues, while continuing to invest in world class networks and services,” COAI said in its letter to Trai Chairman R S Sharma.

The association said the industry looks forward to an early decision by the authority on having floor tariffs for data services.

“While, we acknowledge that the recent situation on account of COVID-19 might have caused some constraints, however the Authority has started conducting the OHD (open

house discussion) through online process on various other topics. Accordingly, we request the Authority to kindly hold an OHD on this issue at the earliest,” COAI said.

The industry is looking forward to an early conclusion on this important matter with great interest, COAI said, urging Trai for an early decision on the same.

Notably, the regulator had earlier this month, resumed its customary open house discussion (OHD) on pending matters through video-conference but Trai sources had made it clear that the issue of floor price of tariffs is unlikely to be taken

up via online mode for now, till the ongoing situation arising from COVID-19 pandemic stabilises. Given the coronavirus pandemic and the difficulties faced by people, Trai may wait for the situation to stabilise before it proceeds to the OHD stage on floor price issue, a source had said.

Recently, Bharti Airtel CEO, India and South Asia, Gopal Vittal in an earnings call drew attention to the pending floor price issue, saying while the telecom industry has seen some bit of repair, tariffs continue to be “unsustainably low”. He exhorted the sector regulator to address the floor price

issue “sooner than later”.

“We believe that an ARPU of ₹154 is inadequate to turn a reasonable return on capital as a company and remain hopeful that ARPUs will get to ₹ 200 in the short term and eventually to ₹300 which is where it should be for a business like ours.

“Of course, even at this level of ARPU we believe we will be very well placed to serve all the lower-end customers who may have the capacity to pay ₹100 or less,” Vittal had said. Airtel said the full impact of the tariff hike undertaken in December 2019 came through in its entirety with no downtrading.

India’s retail trade lost business worth ₹9 lakh cr in last 60 days, says CAIT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

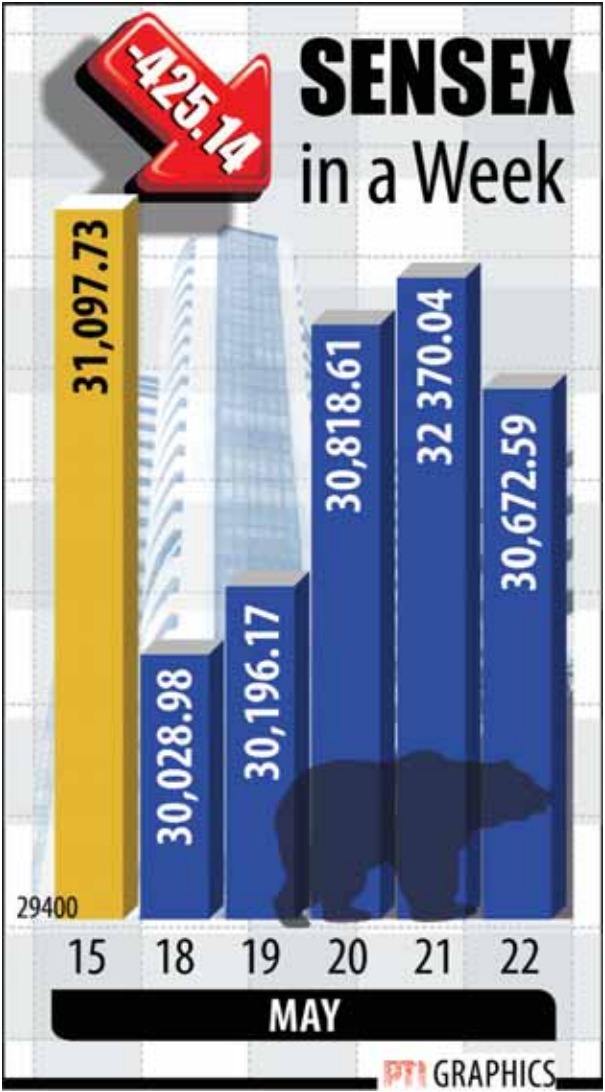
The country’s retail trade lost business worth ₹9 lakh crore in the last 60 days, mainly due to the nationwide lockdown to contain coronavirus pandemic, trader’s body CAIT said on Sunday.

Confederation of All India Traders said domestic trade is facing its worst period as shops and commercial markets across the country since last Monday could register only about 5 per cent of business, and only 8 per cent of workforce could resume their

duties in shops after migration of about 80 per cent employees to their native places.

CAIT Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal said during the span of 60 days of national lockdown, domestic trade has lost a business to the tune of about ₹9 lakh cr, causing a revenue loss of about ₹1.5 lakh cr to both the central and State Govts on account of GST.

The traders are facing acute financial crunch, and in absence of any policy support from the Government, they are worried about future of their business, he said.



CII asks companies to comply with competition law amid Covid crisis

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

As businesses and enterprises face a severe crisis amid the coronavirus pandemic, industry body CII has cautioned that although tough times may prompt companies to collaborate with their competitors, they must take decisions and operate as per the anti-trust law and the Competition Act of 2002.

In its competition law compliance manual for corporates in the wake of novel coronavirus, CII noted that the Competition Commission of India (CCI) would keep a close watch for any potential competition law infringement during this period.

“The current COVID-19 crisis has created unprecedented challenges in India and across the world. This impact of COVID-19 on the functioning of the economy may prompt companies to collaborate with their competitors to tackle the uncertainty and hardship faced. However, companies must note that antitrust laws continue to apply and all business decisions undertaken by companies must not fall foul

of the provisions of Competition Act, 2002,” said the industry manual.

It said that companies must carefully evaluate their business operations during the COVID-19 period, especially if their business operations might require close collaboration with competitors.

“The concrete antitrust risks surrounding any such collaboration remain difficult to assess. Given the absence of any guidance from the CCI, companies should tread with caution and consult their antitrust lawyers as and when required or while exploring any collaboration,” the CII manual said.

It said that companies should reach out to their external counsel to assess these risks and must avoid information exchanges through trade associations or any other platforms.

It said that while entering into any form of collaboration, companies should take care that the collaborative efforts must be limited to products or services directly affected by the pandemic or the exigency measures.

Construction industry seeks immediate release of pending dues from Govt agencies

PTI ■ MUMBAI

As the ongoing lockdown has severely impacted infrastructure activities across the country, liquidity starved engineering and construction industry is seeking immediate release of long pending dues from the central and State Government agencies.

According to industry players, release of these dues, most of which are stuck in arbitration and run into thousands of crores of rupees, would bring in immediate liquidity in the current COVID crisis scenario, rather than the ₹20 lakh crore economic stimulus package announced recently.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently announced a stimulus package of ₹20 lakh crore, or 10 per cent of the GDP, in five tranches to give a boost to the economy which will be in the negative territory for the current fiscal.

“Funding of construction projects will be instrumental in helping revive the economy as infrastructure investment has the highest GDP multiplier factor, almost 2.0x, and our industry is among the largest employment generators

impacting seven crore households. Risk aversion by financial institutions to infrastructure was prevalent pre-COVID, and has now worsened,” HCC Director and Group CEO Arjun Dhawan told PTI.

He further said that contract enforcement and timely dispute resolution is the bedrock of free enterprise and while we all hope for swifter conciliation or court proceedings, an immediate solution is the unqualified payment of arbitration dues without repeated challenge in courts or the onerous requirement of bank guarantees.

“This immediate liquidity will repay lenders, unlock supply chains, protect thousands of MSMEs including migrant labour while restarting the profit cycle that will trigger our economic revival,” he added. National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) alone has at least 180 cases in arbitration involving a sum of about ₹ 80,000 crore.

The agency has been holding dialogues (with contractors and industry players) to find resolution to disputes through reconciliation.

Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of India has also slashed

the repo rate by 40 basis points in eighth straight cut and also allowed lenders to extend an ongoing moratorium on loan repayment, which was due to end on May 31, by another three months till August 31, a move intended at easing liquidity pressure.

“These initiatives will boost liquidity subsequently as the clients or customers can avail credit, but eventually it would be spent on project execution. The policy announced relaxation in time limits for infra projects, but is silent on who would bear the cost implications of lockdown. Once lockdown ends, we expect more clarity and that would put to rest this debate,” Tata Projects Chief Strategy Officer Himanshu Chaturvedi said.

Echoing similar views, global professional services firm Alvarez & Marsal Managing Director Venkataraman Renganathan opined that the stimulus package is a step in the right direction and is intended to infuse liquidity into the system, however, it is a credit line.

“In a way, the stimulus package will get in the liquidity for projects which have been stranded for money.

Need to convert development into mass movement: Niti Aayog’s Rajiv Kumar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

There is a need to convert development into mass movement, and India should aspire to become second or third largest economy in the world by 2047, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar said on Sunday.

Addressing a webinar organised by Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal, Kumar pointed out that private sector investment is necessary for the economic growth of India.

“Today we need to convert development into Jan Andolan (mass movement)... India should aspire to become second or third largest economy by 2047,” Niti Aayog Vice Chairman said. Presently, India is the fifth largest economy in the world. Kumar also said if India generates enough employment opportunities then economic growth will happen.

He pointed out that COVID-19 pandemic has shown weaknesses of Indian society.

“80 per cent of our workers are below the radar, we don’t have data about them.

Gold imports dip for fifth consecutive month in April

Fall by almost 100%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India’s gold imports contracted for the fifth consecutive month in a row, falling by about 100 per cent to USD 2.83 million in April due to the lockdowns imposed globally on account of coronavirus outbreak.

The import of the yellow metal stood at USD 3.97 billion in April 2019, according to the commerce ministry’s data.

The decline in gold imports has helped in narrowing the country’s trade deficit to USD 6.8 billion during the last month as against USD 15.33 billion a year ago.

Gold imports have been recording negative growth since December last year.

India is the largest importer of gold, which mainly caters to the demand of jewellery industry. In volume terms, the country imports 800-900 tonnes of gold annually. Gems and jewellery exports declined 98.74 per cent to USD 36 million in April.

AWS driving Netflix, Fortnite, Zoom entertain and empower millions at home

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

As you stream your favourite movies or TV series on Netflix, Disney Plus or Hulu, or connect with your team via video meet app Zoom, leading Cloud service provider Amazon Web Services (AWS) in the backdrop is ensuring seamless, scalable and secure connectivity to help people at home and organisations function while they can’t operate normally at work.

According to AWS CEO Andy Jassy, a lot of things that are allowing humanity to deal with the global health crisis run on top of AWS which is Amazon’s Cloud arm and topped \$10 billion in quarterly revenue for the first time in the January-March period.

“We’re just trying to help our customers in various areas. If you look at Netflix, it runs completely on top of AWS. So does Disney Plus. Hulu runs on AWS. Prime Video runs on AWS. All those entertainment pieces have kind of made time

go by,” Jassy said during a fire-side chat at AWS Online Summit recently.

“Fortnite runs on top of AWS, and so does Sony PlayStation. A lot of other popular games too,” he informed. The popular Battle Royale game Fortnite has gained 350 million registered players, who in April collectively spent over 3.2 billion hours in the game. According to Jassy, AWS has its own video-conferencing service in Chime.

“But a lot of people use Zoom, and the vast majority of Zoom’s cloud infrastructure runs on AWS and will for the foreseeable future,” he said.

Amazon Chime Voice Connector is a service that enables enterprises to migrate their telephony workloads to AWS.

If you have kids at home, you also realise they’re all doing e-learning at the moment. “If you just look at companies like Blackboard and Instructure’s Canvas, which run on top of AWS.

THAKUR TO INDIA INC Take advantage of Govt initiatives and step up investment

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur has exhorted India Inc to take advantage of the recent Government initiatives and step up investments to make the country “Atmanirbhar Bharat”. In these difficult times, local industries should become the flag-bearers in showcasing that India is an attractive investment destination, he told PTI in an interview.

As part of ₹20.97 lakh crore Atmanirbhar Bharat package, Thakur said Govt has announced a slew of long-pending structural reforms concerning industry, especially land, labour and laws, in a bid to improve investment climate and ease of doing business.

Besides, the Minister said other bold reforms announced, including easing of limits on foreign direct investment in defence manufacturing, privatisation of six more airports, and

allowing private sector in commercial coal mining, provide newer avenues for investment.

To take care of liquidity needs, various schemes have been unveiled to provide cash to industries to kickstart their business, he said.

“I personally believe that we need more investment from local industries, Indian industries to showcase to others that India is an attractive destination. We need both investment from the domestic industries, and also from other countries,” he said.

Talking about new avenues for investment, the Minister said, “Agriculture, agro exports, manufacturing of defence equipment within the country and making it a hub for exports. Also, the area of space where you (private players) can get more investment and mining of coal and other mineral sectors could be looked at. So, there could be many sectors.”

Agro-Advisory to jute farmers in post-Amphan scenario by ICAR-CRIJAF

NEW DELHI

Jute is the important cash crop in eastern India, particularly in West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Assam and about 5 million people are directly or indirectly depends on jute crop for their livelihood.

Amidst COVID-19 crisis, jute was successfully grown in about 7.5 million ha in this season of 2020 pre-kharif successfully. Even in some states 10-15% more crop area was reported by field functionaries. But the recent ‘very severe cyclone ‘Amphan’ with wind speeds of 155 kmph and 200 to 230 mm rainfall have devastated the jute crop in some parts of North 24-Parganas, Hooghly, Nadia, Murshidabad, East Midnapur and Howrah districts of West Bengal which are main jute growing belt of West Bengal. The cyclone severely affected the standing jute crop by lodging, specially that attains a height of 0.5 to 1.5 mt.

Permission required to enter Chittaranjan Locomotive Works

Chittaranjan: As per notification of Govt. of West Bengal in the year 1971, No. 871-P dtd 06-02-1971 and of the Public Order dtd.06.02.1971 under the provisions of sections 2 (31), (2) 32,3, 144,146, and further to Railway Act , Chittaranjan township had been declared as Protected places and for entry and exit into the township prior permission of the concerned Security Officer will be required. This procedure are being followed since then. More over, in view of the current serious situation of COVID-19 pandemic , CLW administration is following strictly the recent guidelines of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt.of India and of Govt. of West Bengal by proper vigil and by deploying security personnel at various gates of this township to stop un authorised entry . Our efforts has lead to positive results and because of these strict measures, CLW township has so far, till the current Lockdown 4.0, not reported a single Corona positive case.

71% prefer domestic travel, only 1.4% wish to go abroad

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

A survey by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has shown that around 71 per cent people in the country would prefer domestic travel in the coming months, while only 1.4 per cent people wanted to travel abroad.

However, the report showed that 27.6 per cent respondents in the survey would like to travel both in India and abroad.

Around 33.3 per cent respondents said that they would like to travel within one month of the lockdown restrictions being lifted. Another 30.5 per cent said that they would

travel within 3 months.

As per the survey which was conducted in north India, around 29 per cent people would like to travel within six months of the curbs being eased and just 7.1 per cent would venture out more than 1 year after the lockdown.

Further, business travel and outing with family are the two biggest reasons for travel. The two reasons account for over two-thirds of responses.

Star-rated hotels are the most preferred place of stay for respondents, as 45.2 per cent preferring them. Around 21 per cent have shown preference for staying in resorts. Use of protective gear comes across as

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala - 147001, Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website: www.pspcl.in	
E-Tender Enquiry No. 272/P-3/EMP-W 11703 dt. 19.05.2020 & Tender ID: 2020_POWER_47758_1	
Scope of Work: Work of loading of material from transporter's godown /Railway Station, Loading/unloading, Checking, Counting and stacking of material at O&M stores, Shifting and Restocking of scrap material, preservation of material during storage, transfer of material from one Store Keeper to another Store Keeper and all other activities associated with handling of storage of material at GGSSTP, Rupnagar.	
Time period: One year EMD: Rs. 50,000/- fixed Date & time up to which tender shall be received 22.06.2020 & 11:00 AM Date & time of opening of tender 25.06.2020 & 11:30 AM Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL website https://eproc.punjab.gov.in & no hard copy of the same will be issued by this office.	
Note: 1) In case any difficulty regarding uploading of the tender the prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office and or e-procurement system Government of Punjab. Contact No.+91-(172)-2970263/284. It is also requested to get their digital signature well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only. 2) It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on website. eproc.punjab.gov.in RTP 22/2020	
Dy. CE Monitoring, GGSSTP, Rupnagar	
Energy Saved is Energy Generated Pay Electricity Bill online 24x7on PSPCL website: www.pspcl.in	

Trend Blazer

'Definition of a heroine has evolved'

Actor **BHUMI PEDNEKAR** feels the definition of a heroine has changed, with the audience open to stories that they can relate to.

"All the films I have been a part of or the roles I have played are all so different from each other. They may have few overlapping similarities like for example my characters tell the stories of women in the heartlands," Bhumi said.

"I am proud of the cinema that I have done so far. It has helped me connect to my audience. In today's time the definition of a heroine has undergone change and evolved," she added.



'Candle showcases a glimpse of my journey so far, which has been full of surprises, struggles, celebrations and soul-searching. One thing that ties this journey together is love and hope that everything happens for the right reasons. I hope it motivates my fans burn brightly no matter what obstacles they face.'

—**Madhuri Dixit**

Actor **VARUN SHARMA**, popular as Choocha in the *Fukrey* films, is trying to expand his linguistic skills. He is learning Spanish during the lockdown.



"It is difficult to keep yourself busy all the time, so I thought why not use this time to explore a new skill. Hence, I am learning a new language. I always wanted to learn a new language and finally I got some time," Varun said.

He has also been learning painting with tips from his mother.

On the work front, Varun will be sharing screen space with Rajkumar Rao and Janhvi Kapoor in *Roohi Afzana*.

'I was anxious about giving birth'

Actor **AMERICA FERRERA** has admitted that she was very nervous and anxious about giving birth during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier this month, Ferrera, popular for her role in the show *Ugly Betty*, welcomed her second child, a daughter Lucia Marisol.

In an episode of *Katie's Crib* podcast, she confessed that she had to cut down on news intake during pregnancy in order to not panic. "I just know I have to put up my filter because I don't have the emotional capacity to let that in," said she.



With the gradual opening up of offices amid lockdown 4.0, there are a number of precautions that we need to take to remain physically and psychologically healthy, says **AYUSHI SHARMA**

LIFE GOES ON



Undoubtedly, all of us have been going through a lot of stress these days. People tend to feel miserable because there are a host of uncertainties this pandemic holds. Someone might have lost a job or fears that they would, some are struggling to put together money to pay bills, a few of them are worried about their health and safety or that of their loved ones. The continuous onslaught of worry, fear and insecurity is certainly increasing mental health issues day by day. But how much more can you stop the world from moving? The economic damage from staying home could be worse than the impact of the disease, believe many global leaders. Yes, we are talking about learning to live with the virus.

Now, since the Centre has announced the opening of offices and industrial units amid lockdown 4.0, the major question here is — how can people psychologically and behaviourally rewire themselves while rejoining office? Experts share that it is very important that the guidelines are adopted in the community as a behavioural change.

The risk of returning to normal, as we knew it, is in no way possible. However, MBBS, MD, Psychiatrist, Dr Anuneet Sabharwal says, "The risk cannot be calculated. It is hard to get back into the routine of things when you first return to work but you can start by planning the day in advance and making a list of things that needs to be done. Strategising your work and focussing on doing one task at a time might help you to feel in control. Once you start doing it, your natural work rhythm will fall back into place. And you can start to feel productive again."

According to the recent data, a significant and sustained increase in symptoms of anxiety and depression have been reported. People with pre-existing health conditions and aged adults have all reported higher rates of anxiety and fear, shares Ariba Abbasi, Senior Counseling Psychologist, Msc, BA. The pandemic has brought huge changes in our lifestyle. Niharika Mehta, Psychologist at Hiranandani Hospital Vashi, a Fortis Network, tells us that new habits have to be adopted and conscious precautions have to be taken. Just as a new normal of different trends (such as diets, workout routines, fashion) are accepted, a new normal of work culture should be accepted as well. Being aware and accepting of change is the very first step towards adjusting to it, she feels.

Every other expert believe that psychologically people need to accept this as a new reality and take precautions on how to safe guard themselves. Ekta Soni, Chief Clinical Psychologist, suggests that we should focus on the things that are in our control — hand washing, using mask, sanitising and social distancing. "If we were to live constantly with insecurity and give fuel to our negative thoughts, then we would paralyse ourselves and not do anything. Eventually, things will snowball into a big mountain. Over a period of time, we will all develop our own safety measures and these would become

habitual. The fear has led to the rise of catastrophising (view or present a situation as considerably worse than it actually is) and hypochondriacal (obsession with the idea of having a serious but undiagnosed medical condition) traits," she says.

As per official derivatives, provisions for thermal scanning and sanitisation are being done. But what precautions can be taken individually? Dr Anuneet shares some of these simple measures that can be taken in order to prevent contracting the virus: Understand the signs and symptoms: The symptoms can include cough, fever, cold or shortness of breath. Most people may only experience mild symptoms but some can become very sick with additional health issues. If you think you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 and have symptoms, then get in touch with the emergency room immediately and inform them about your travel history as well. The best way to protect yourself is to practise good hygiene. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol based hand sanitiser. Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose with unwashed hands. Maintain social distancing when you step out of



home. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and places. It is highly recommended that people wear masks whenever stepping out of their homes, especially in situations where maintaining social distancing is difficult. You can use a tissue or a toothpick while touching the lift buttons. Make sure there is enough distance between you and your colleague's seat. At lunchtime, eat at a distance from others.

The threat of disease can lead us to become harsher judges of the people within our social group. The social attitude of people have become more conservative. This may reflect much deeper psycholog-

ical shifts. So what can be done? Dr Ekta feels that it is true that people may become more conservative but the mindset has to change from avoiding people to taking the above mentioned precautions ourselves. "People must realise that the fight is against the virus and not with each other. It is possible to win only if we all work together. It is important that people take responsibility for educating people in their social circles or extended families. Make sure to circulate right and verified information only," explains Dr Ariba.

These times are difficult for every single individual. Everyone is taking time to

process the change and take care of their well-being. Compassion, empathy, and support will make it easier, believes Dr Niharika. She says, "If someone is taking time off from social media to disconnect or not responding to calls and messages, instead of dealing with it negatively, try to understand that the person needs time to focus on self. It has nothing to do with your relationship. This strengthens the bond and creates a sense of social security and support. It's extremely important, especially in the current situation," says she.

Certainly, the pandemic will still be there but life has to go on...

Hope, comfort and love

New parents should feel positive about having a child irrespective of the environment around. Experts suggest and share some tips to deal positively with the threat perception related to the new born. By **TEAM VIVA**

The thought of bringing the child into the world is filled with phases of happiness, fear and anxiety. It is difficult to imagine what new parents are going through in the post-COVID world.

It has affected the plans of new parents and expectant couples. Parenthood is a blessing and it is a priceless feeling when you welcome your baby for the first time into this world. Nothing can ever come close to this emotion.

But during this these times of crisis, when there is a threat perception related to the new born, the realities of parenthood have changed and this makes it important to ensure that positivity engulfs the new parents even more today.

The ad world too is taking note. Recently, Pampers India released a film #WelcomeToTheWorld for the newborn babies with reference to the current context. At a time when a new mother is experiencing emotional upheaval, it captures her strength and positive outlook for her baby and portrays the true essence of the new world that will unfold for her newborn with each step and each milestone.

Dr Archana Dhawan Bajaj, Gynecologists and Obstetrician and IVF Expert, Nurture IVF Centre says that the expectant couples need to understand that everyone who's in the hospital or is going through a checkup is not COVID positive. And even if you contract an infection, there are chances that it would be a mild infection and not something related to Corona."

This is a lot of threat perception related to the newborns. Dhanvarsha Dadhich from Jodhpur is expecting her second child. She says: "I am just so scared of carrying this baby. Not just delivery but taking care of the child has become a scary task. I fear stepping out of my room as my area is a Corona



hotspot."

Dr Archana says that this is a new disease and there are very few studies related to it. So it would be difficult for anyone to comment on what would be the chances of a new born. "We just need to keep in mind the three portals of infection for the baby. First is the mother herself. So she needs to ensure that she maintains distance, use masks and take necessary relevant precautions. The other point of contact is the hospital where you deliver. Anybody who's about to deliver should choose their hospital very wisely. You should only deliver in a hospital which COVID tests all its pregnant women. Any good maternity will test the mother before taking her into the labour room. Try and avoid multi-speciality hospital where people from all kinds of ailments are likely to come. The general public has a higher chance of getting infected as compared to a pregnant woman because she is home bound and takes better care. The third place where the baby can get infected is when you are visit-

ing a paediatrician. So ensure that you go only when it's really necessary. Consult through video conferences and for things like immunization, go only when your paediatrics tell you that it is urgent." Though are various drawbacks of video conferencing as there is never a replacement for seeing a doctor. Doctors cannot judge many diseases unless they physically see the patient. But then, any good doctor will tell you to come to them if they are not getting adequate information through video conferencing.

It is also very important to understand that this fear of Corona will only make you feel anxious. "It is going to stay for at least two years. Women, their families and extended families need to get out of this phobia. Pregnant women are entering hospitals like Eskimos. They are covered from head to toe. This heat will smother them. So this fear has to go," says Dr Archana.

Pointing towards the silver lining, she says that a lot of male partners will get the chance to look after their wives and babies which they

wouldn't have been able to do otherwise. That's a plus. "Also, having a baby around this time gives you the opportunity to interact with him/her as you are homebound. If you are not stepping out and maintaining your quarantine, then your baby is not going to contract infections. In this scenario, other diseases that are specific to summer and would have occurred otherwise will also not happen," says she.

The new parents should follow all the necessary precautions — stay indoors, avoid meeting people or seeing vendors, don't get domestic helps who come daily, prefer the ones who stays within the house, eat well to increase your vitality, drink a lot water, keep exercising so that your lung capacity remains high, breathe fresh air, walk on your terrace or balcony. These are some of the little things one needs to take care of.

"Other than that being a new parent you have to condition yourself being positive irrespective of the environment around," says Dr Archana.

WEBBED



I'M NO LONGER HERE

A terrible misunderstanding with a local gang sends 17-year-old Ulises, leader of a group hooked on cumbia music, across the border to save his life. Starring Juan Daniel García, Angelina Chen and Jonathan Espinoza, the film releases on May 27 on Netflix.



SPACE FORCE

A four-star general begrudgingly teams up with an eccentric scientist to get the US military's newest agency — Space Force — ready for lift-off. Created by Steve Carell and Greg Daniels, season 1 releases on May 29 on Netflix.



THE VAST OF NIGHT

In the twilight of the 1950s, on one fateful night in New Mexico, a young switch board operator Fay and charismatic radio DJ Everett discover a strange audio frequency that could change their small town and the future forever. Directed by Andrew Patterson, the film releases on May 29 on Amazon Prime Video.

BLEND OF SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

Research during the last few decades has confirmed that yoga contributes to health and happiness of people. Filmmaker, art historian and photographer BENOY K BEHL explored the idea while shooting his latest film, *Yoga for Health & Global Harmony*

In the recent past, science and technology had been separated from spirituality. However, a lot of scientific research done in the last four decades has confirmed the far-reaching benefits of yoga and Ayurveda. The world is reaching out to integrate this ancient wisdom with the modern developments in medicine and psychology. While shooting my latest film, *Yoga for Health & Global Harmony*, Sujata Chatterji and I travelled across four continents and many countries to witness the marvellous blend of modern thinking and yoga which is taking place today. The deep connection between physical body, mind, emotions and spirit within us is being rediscovered around the globe.

Scientific research done in the last 30 to 40 years has confirmed the benefits of yoga. It has been found that it contributes to health and happiness of people in all walks of life. Further research needs to be done and yoga needs to be introduced in all branches of education, medicine and even in the workplace.

Yoga goes far beyond the medical system. It not only prevents disease but it covers all aspects of life. Integration of yoga and modern medicine would help the world to shift from disease management to health promotion.

In an interview in the film, Dr



Ananda Balayogi from Puducherry, who is a yoga expert as well as a doctor shares, “Yoga has come a long way from the time when it was confined to the ashrams in the forests or the caves of the high Himalayas. It is now found in modern hospi-

itals.” He says, “Genetic potentialities may be preventable from becoming actualities. Our genes are like a loaded gun but the choice of whether the trigger is pulled or not lies with us. Yoga enables us to make

the right choice.” In next interview, Dr Andreas Michalsen from Charite University Hospital, Berlin, shares, “Step-by-step in the last few years, we see more acceptance of yoga in mainstream medicine. It means that it is



now almost an established part of standard medical care in Germany.” Another Ayurveda and yoga expert, Ramesh Vangal from Bengaluru, India, explains that yoga’s entire essence is a concept called samatvam, which means bal-

ance. “It’s very logical, when you are balanced, your body heals daily. So balance is what restores and heals you in a way that no medicine does. Most allopathic medicines basically treat the symptoms. They provide symptomatic relief, they can never

cure,” says he. For instance, Vangal tells us, “If I had diabetes and I am taking an allopathic medicine, what does it do? It cuts the symptoms but the moment I stop taking it, I get diabetes back again. However, if I am balanced, I am able to fight the imbalance and restore health.” Anu Ramaswamy, Teachers’ Training Course Student, Sivananda Yoga Farm, Grass Valley CA, says in the next interview, “I have restless leg syndrome, it’s also known as Willis-Ekbom Disease. It’s a nerve neuromuscular pain in the leg and I have had it for about 15 to 20 years. Since it is a neuromuscular condition, the medicines are invasive and affect the nervous system. Meditation and pranayama actually helps me to keep the pain either in control or pretty much not experience it all. Also, I used to take the highest dose of sulfonylurea for diabetes till about six months ago, now I don’t take it at all.” Yoga researcher and expert, Dr Sat Bir Khalsa, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston, USA, says, “Modern medicine tends to be divided between psychiatry on the one hand and physical medicine on the other. The two really don’t talk to each other, yet obviously the mind and body are inextricably linked. So yoga addresses that link between mind and body.”

Working at the Corona hotspots from morning till evening, women police constables have been walking on the line of fire since the beginning of the nation-wide lockdown. Their contribution must be recognised not just as public servants but as women who are taking care of the nation along with their children and families.

Standing under the sun in Harnaamdas area — one of the hotspots of Meerut, constable Latesh sanitises her hands and then brings her mask down to wipe the sweat dripping down her forehead. “I have two children. The schools are shut so I am a little relaxed about their safety. I reach home around nine at night, take a bath, cook dinner, help them in their studies, make preparations for the next day and then go to bed past midnight. To ensure that all the household chores are complete before I leave for my duty, I have to wake up at five,” shared Latesh who, despite being worried about her health, puts duty first. The only thing she complains of is the lack of sanitation facilities. “Risk of contamination is higher in hotspot areas. In such a situation, where are we expected to relieve ourselves? There is no police station nearby where we could use the washroom. In its absence, we have to request people to allow us to enter their houses which increases our chances of exposure. We take huge risks to survive,” she added.

Constable Meenu, who is also posted in a hotspot in Meerut shares the challenges posed by the 12-hour long duty. “After reaching home, I bathe and keep my uniform outside the house in a separate box. In this 12-hour duty, I do not get time to wash and iron my uniform every day and have to use the same uniform for two days,” says she as she has to complete other household chores before and after the duty.

She believes that people are safe inside their houses and she puts in extra efforts to ensure that lockdown guidelines are

SHE, THE FORCE

Women constables serving in Corona hotspots take huge risks to survive in difficult situations with courage and pride, says SHALU AGARWAL



being followed strictly in the areas assigned to her. “We eat while standing outside the gates of the affected colony so that people are safe,” says she.

In another hotspot area of Meerut City, a woman constable Anita is seen scolding people for roaming unnecessarily on the streets. And then, the very next moment, she is video calling her toddler daughter and calming her down. She is serving the public for the last nine years. “We have to be strict as people do not understand the threat. We are standing here in a contaminated area risking our lives and people want to roam outside — I do not understand this,” rues Anita, hinting towards the irresponsible behaviour of people who, despite having the privilege of staying inside their houses, were breaking the rules of the lockdown. “I am concerned about my children as

they are quite young. I have to leave them with my mother-in-law as my husband serves in the Indian Army and is posted outside Meerut.”

These women posted in high-risk areas consider this ‘special-duty’ as an opportunity to serve the people of the country. In the interviews, they admit that they are not afraid of Corona and will keep the honour of the uniform by serving till their last breath. “While talking to my parents, I wanted to tell them how much I missed them but then I remembered why I joined the police services,” shares Sonam whose parents live in Saharanpur while she has been serving as a constable for the last 10 years in Meerut.

Although, these women constables are fearless, but they have their weak moments too. Sharing one such incident, constable Bobby says, “On the very

first day of my posting in the hotspot area, I was scared. As part of our daily routine, my parents called me during noon and I wanted to ask my mother to pray for my health but I had to hold back my nervousness so that they don’t get tensed.”

Be it the police, health or sanitation department, every person serving in the high-risk environment is equally vulnerable and can easily be exposed to COVID-19 but it is about time that the dual roles of women are acknowledged. They carry various responsibilities — devote 12 hours in the hotspot regions, eight hours to household chores and get hardly four hours for themselves. On ground, they are more exposed to sanitation and hygiene challenges than men, yet stand in the line of duty with equal courage, fighting Corona effectively. Salute!

—(Charkha Features)

Share hope and compassion

It is only our good karma which will help us tide over crisis rather than our status or wealth, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Most of us would agree that COVID-19 has turned the world upside down. Everything — how we live, interact with each other, the way we work, communicate and of course, the way we travel — has been impacted. However, inspite of these negative effects, there are many positive ones too, which many of us would have observed while staying under lockdown. It is so wonderful to see that during such disasters, suddenly we all forget our caste, creed, religion, status and come together to focus solely on survival, sharing hope and compassion. We simply do this because we cannot bear to see the misery and suffering of our fellow beings. Hence, their pain becomes ours. Just imagine not being able to be a part of last rites of a loved one or feeling helpless at not getting a hospital bed for him/her. Under such circumstances, when a person who is not even known to us helps us out of the blue, it makes our belief in humanity and spirituality stronger.

It is so ironical that Armed forces across the globe are not fighting each other, but are distributing food, water and medicines to their citizens. From where does this loving humanity arise so spontaneously at a time like this? Today, we have a renewed sense of trust, in every human being and the government, as we continue to part with our wealth and services, hoping that they will reach the needy.

The pandemic as well as other natural disasters that we are witnessing today are, in a way, a reflection of our inner world — mirroring the tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes that continually break out in our mind. The ruthless energy of anger, violence and greed has taken a toll on mankind and mother earth. As we keep exploiting earth’s mineral resources, hack its forests, pollute its water, deplete the soil, we rob it of all its energy. Thus this is nature’s way of telling us that ‘enough is enough’. Since most of us do not realise that mother earth has a heart and she, too, has feelings, we keep on hurting her without any kind of remorse. Just like we express



our love and affection towards our mother, we should do the same with mother earth.

Majority of us thank anyone who gives us something or helps us in some way. But do we do the same with mother earth? How many of us have thanked her for the fresh-air, water, food, sun and many more things that she gives us since the time we were born. How many of us have apologised for inflicting so much pain on her? Many would counter question, how do we do this? Or how do we communicate with nature? Well, the simplest and easiest way to do this is by praying or medi-

tating with positive thoughts which most of us can do. You never know the impact of your pure thoughts. One must not forget that there is a deep connection that we all share with mother earth — a feeling, a knowledge that during times of need, she would certainly come and defend us. Hence, we must realise that natural disasters in particular are a wakeup call as to where we are investing all our energies. Are we too busy giving value to accumulating, hoarding, storing, stockpiling material wealth and possessions, and not giving enough time to the upliftment of the soul. It is quite unfortunate that we need such disasters to bring the world together as one big family. Isn’t it time to be wise and not commit the same mistakes that we have been committing till now? If only our vision would remain the same for all the time — a vision of oneness, embracing all, being non-judgmental, creating harmony in a relationships, so that we can be there for each other no matter what, as a family would be.

So let us all come together as one to support every member of the global human family and start respecting mother nature who is a life-giver. Remember that no status or wealth would ever matter during disasters. The only thing that would matter would be our good karma, which would help us tide over bad situations and carry us forward.

“

There are no great things, only small things with great love. Happy are those.

—Mother Teresa

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HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE UPS DEATH RISK

A significant observational study led by Professor Mandeep AR Mehra, executive director of the Brigham and Women’s Hospital Center for Advanced Heart Disease in Boston, has claimed that treatment with antimalarial drug chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine (taken with or without antibiotics azithromycin or clarithromycin) offers no benefit for patients with Covid-19. The study, published in the journal The Lancet, comes after US President Donald Trump said he is taking hydroxychloroquine to ward off Coronavirus, even though health officials have warned it may be unsafe. “This is the first large scale study to find statistically robust evidence that treatment with chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine does not benefit patients with COVID-19,” said Mehra.

“Instead, our findings suggest it may be associated with an increased risk of serious heart problems and increased risk of death,” he warned.



RESEARCHERS DEVELOP EFFICIENT N95 FILTER

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, there’s been a worldwide shortage of face masks — particularly, the N95 ones, now researchers have developed a membrane that can be attached to a regular N95 mask and replaced when needed.

The filter has a smaller pore size than normal N95 masks, potentially blocking more virus particles, the researcher from King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia, said. According to the study, published in the journal ACS Nano, N95 masks filter about 85 per cent of particles smaller than 300 nm.

SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) is in the size range of 65-125 nm, so some virus particles could slip through these coverings. Also, because of shortages, many workers had to wear the same N95 mask, even though its intended for single use. To help with this, the researchers wanted to develop a membrane that more efficiently filters particles the size of SARS-CoV-2.



PLACENTA INJURY SIGN OF COVID

The placentas from 16 women who tested positive for Covid-19 while pregnant showed evidence of injury, the organ that acts as the gut, kidneys, liver and lungs for a fetus during pregnancy, say researchers.

According to the study, published in the American Journal of Clinical Pathology, pathological exams completed directly following birth found evidence of insufficient blood flow from the mother to the fetus and blood clots in the placenta. The injury seen in the placentas shows abnormal blood flow between the mothers and their babies in utero. The findings could help inform how pregnant women should be clinically monitored during the pandemic.

“Most of these babies were delivered full-term after otherwise normal pregnancies, so you wouldn’t expect to find anything wrong with the placentas, but this virus appears to be inducing some injury in the placenta,” said study senior author Dr Jeffrey Goldstein, assistant professor of pathology from US.



SOCIAL ISOLATION MAY UP HEART ATTACK RISK

Researchers have revealed that people who are socially isolated are over 40 per cent more likely to have a cardiovascular event, such as a heart attack or stroke, than those who were socially integrated.

The study also found that those who are socially isolated are almost 50 per cent more likely to die from any cause.

“We have known for some time that feeling lonely or lacking contact with close friends and family can have an impact on your physical health,” said study researcher Dr Janine Gronewold from University Hospital in Essen, Germany.

“What this study tells us is that having strong social relationships is of high importance for your heart health and similar to the role of classical protective factors such as having a healthy blood pressure, acceptable cholesterol levels, and normal weight,” Gronewold added.



PHONE MEASURES HB WITHOUT DRAWING BLOOD

Researchers have developed a way to use smartphone images of a person’s eyelids to assess blood hemoglobin levels — a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen.

The ability to perform one of the most common clinical lab tests without a blood draw could help reduce the need for in-person

clinic visits, make it easier to monitor patients who are in critical condition, the study, published in the Optica journal said.

“Our new mobile health approach paves the way for bedside or remote testing of blood hemoglobin levels for detecting anemia, acute kidney injury and haemorrhages, or for assessing blood disorders such as sickle cell anemia,” said study researcher Young Kim from Purdue University in the US.





SALIVA BAN ONLY AN INTERIM MEASURE

It will be back to normal once Covid situation under control, says ICC cricket committee chairman Kumble

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

ICC cricket committee chairman Anil Kumble says the recommendation to ban saliva for shining the ball is only an interim measure and “things will go back to normal” once the Covid-19 pandemic is brought under control.

The Kumble-led panel recommended a ban on saliva to minimise the risk of infection. On Friday, the ICC, in its guidelines for resumption of the game, also suggested a bar on the practice.

“...This is only an interim measure and as long as we have hopefully control over Covid-19 in a few months or a year’s time then I think things will go back to as normal as it can be,” Kumble told *Star Sports* show *Cricket Connected*.

“If things get back to normal within three-four months and we are able to stage matches like we used to do in February and March, then these rules won’t apply.

“As long as the medical advisory doesn’t change, the rule will stay,” he added. The legendary former spinner, however, acknowledged the bowlers’ dependence on saliva.

“Of course we all know saliva has been a part and parcel of cricket for so many years. “As bowlers, we used to apply saliva on ball, sometimes for grip also, we applied saliva. But with this disease, it can also be asymptomatic, that is why we deiced to ban it,” he

explained.

There have also been discussions on whether the ICC would allow usage of external substances like wax to shine the ball. Kumble said there were discussions on usage of external substances but .

“Using wax is not allowed, we have never used external substances. We can use sweat. Everyone is talking about (how) it will affect the pacers, grass should be left. Why not leave it dry and play two spinners?” he quipped.

“...If you look back at the history of the game, I mean we have been very critical and we have been very focused on eliminating any external substances coming into the game,” Kumble added addressing the speculation.

He cited the 2018 ball-tampering scandal, which led to bans on Australian cricketers Steve Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft.

“Whether you are literally legalising, if you are looking to do that now which obviously has had a great impact over the last couple of years,” he said.

“ICC took a decision but then cricket Australia took, even a more tougher stance on what happened during that series between South Africa and Australia, so we did consider that,” he said.

‘Saliva ban can enhance skills of bowlers’

PTI ■ LONDON

England captain Joe Root feels the ban on using saliva might improve the skills of the bowlers, who will have to work harder to get something out of the pitch.

ICC must ensure bowling-friendly pitches in Tests: Pathan



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India pacer Irfan Pathan reckons that the ban on using saliva for shining the ball is a significant blow to bowlers and authorities should ensure preparation of bowling-friendly Test wickets to prevent complete domination of the game by the batsmen.

“You will to have make sure that pitches are more suitable to the bowlers than batsmen to negate the

advantage (of not being able use saliva). If you are not able to shine the ball properly, you will not be able to cut the air because of scientific reasons.

“And if you are not able to swing it, the batsman will have it easy because nobody fears just pace, it is the combination of pace and swing that troubles them,” Pathan, one of the best exponents of swing bowling in Indian cricket said.

“It (ban) will affect bowlers a lot in Test matches. It won’t be an issue in white-ball cricket as the bowlers anyway don’t shine the ball after the first few overs, they want to make it soft (to make strokeplay tougher for the batsman).

“But in red-ball cricket, whether you are a fast bowler or spinner, you need to shine the ball. Spinner relies on shine to drift the ball. That will be a big advantage for batsman. The game will become even more batsmen friendly,” said the first Indian pacer to take a Test hat-trick.



Rohit Sharma & Manish Pandey watch other players train during nets BCCI

Rohit to clear fitness test before resuming training

MUMBAI: India’s limited-overs vice captain Rohit Sharma says he has fully recovered from the calf injury that forced him to leave the tour of New Zealand midway earlier this year but the fitness test has been continuously delayed because of the Covid-19 lockdown.

“Before the lockdown happened, I was almost ready to play. That whole week was going to be my fitness test but that’s when the lockdown happened and I had to push back everything now,” Rohit told *LaLiga’s Facebook Live* session on Saturday night.

“Once everything opens up, I have to first go to the centre (NCA) and give my fitness test and once I pass the fitness test, I will be allowed to go and resume my duties with the team.”

The Indian limited overs deputy said he is missing hanging out with his teammates and is looking forward to training with them when things get back to normal.

“Yes, I miss my teammates, hanging around with them and having a banter with them. Although as friends we are trying to stay in touch through the video calls to see what’s one been up to, things like that and we manage that pretty well,” he said.

“When you are playing together, almost from 365 days, we are together for 300 days, we are playing, travelling together, so it’s like a family. So the first thing I want to do is to catch up with all these guys and try hit some balls as soon as I can.”

Mumbai is one of the worst affected by the contagious disease and Rohit said it might take more time for him to resume training.

“I am assuming that those (other) places might open up lot earlier than Mumbai, the city where I stay and which is the most infected. I feel the other guys will send me videos of catching up with each other a lot earlier than I do,” he said. **PTI**

Taylor urges ICC to decide WT20 fate this week



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Former Australia captain Mark Taylor does not foresee the T20 World Cup scheduled in October-November going ahead and wants the ICC to take a decision during its Board meeting this week.

Taylor also feels that if IPL takes place during the window the T20 World Cup was to be held, the Australian players are likely to be cleared by their Board to take part in the cash-rich league in India.

The ICC Board meets on May 28 to discuss a host of issues,

including a revamped schedule and the fate of the men’s T20 World Cup in Australia. “My feeling is the World T20 won’t go ahead in Australia in October as planned. Is it going to be viable to have a world tournament in October or November? The answer to that is probably No,” Taylor, also a former Cricket Australia director, was quoted as saying by

Nine Network.

“It would probably be good (if a decision is made this week). Because then everyone can start planning and we can stop sitting here and saying ‘well ifs, buts or maybes.”

Taylor also said the CA wants to keep BCCI happy so the Australia players are likely to be cleared for the IPL if it happens in October.

Pat Cummins, who was bought for a record amount of ₹15.50 crore in last year’s IPL auction, is among the Australians keen to take part in this year’s competition.

“The Cricket Australia board will want to keep India happy. So they may want to let the players go to India if the IPL goes ahead,” Taylor said.

“Because they want India to come here this summer and play, which will be our biggest summer in terms of dollars. That’s the sort of discussion going on. No doubt.”

Don’t postpone T20 WC in haste: Misbah

KARACHI: The authorities must not postpone the T20 World Cup in haste since the showpiece event is the best product to highlight cricket once activities resume, Pakistan head coach and chief selector, Misbah-ul-Haq has said.

Misbah said though logistics is a huge challenge due to the prevailing circumstances, the authorities must deliberate enough before arriving at a decision.

“The logistics of hosting 16 teams is not easy but the authorities should give it time and wait for a month or more before taking any decision,” Misbah said in an interview to *Youtube* channel.

“Everyone wants to see the T20 World Cup. It would be the best product to highlight cricket once activities resume,” he said.

Misbah also said that their



upcoming tour to England will not be easy for either the players, coaches or anyone as circumstances are not ideal for cricket.

Pakistan & England Boards have discussed a tour by the *Green*

Shirts from July to play three Tests and three T20 matches.

“The idea is to first have one to one training then increase the number of players to groups. We need to get together and train to be prepared for a comeback to cricket.” “It is not going to be easy also getting used to new rules like not applying saliva sweat to shine the ball. I am hoping a three-week camp in Pakistan and then more practice in quarantine in England should get the players prepared.”

The Pakistan coach had no doubt the players will face difficulties adjusting to the new laws and bio-security environment. “We will be taking a group of 25 to 27 players to England because we can’t ask for replacements and we all have to be together from start to end so that no one catches the virus.” **PTI**

IT’S TIMO TIME

Liverpool bound Werner nets hat-trick in Mainz rout

AFP ■ BERLIN

Timo Werner bagged a hat-trick as RB Leipzig routed Mainz 5-0 behind closed doors on Sunday to climb to third in the German league table as the striker moved to within three goals of the Bundesliga’s top-scorer Robert Lewandowski.

It was the 24-year-old’s third Bundesliga hat-trick having also netted three times when Leipzig romped to an 8-0 home win against Mainz last November.

Werner’s treble leaves him on 24 goals, while Bayern Munich striker Lewandowski claimed his 27th Bundesliga goal this season in the league leader’s 5-2 win over Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday.

Leipzig’s victory was the tenth win for the visiting team in 17 matches since the Bundesliga restarted last weekend.

Werner opened the scoring in Mainz after 11 minutes when he converted a low cross.

Yussuf Poulsen then marked his 250th appearance for Leipzig by heading home a Marcel Sabitzer cross on 23 minutes.

The pair reversed roles for the third when Poulsen laid a pass off to Sabitzer who showed great finishing to make it 3-0 at the break.

Werner grabbed his second goal three minutes into the second-half when Kevin Kampl played him into the area.

The visitors

were attacking at will when Kampl had a goal ruled out for offside soon after.

With 15 minutes left, Poulsen’s floated free-kick was met by Werner who volleyed past Mainz goalkeeper Florian Mueller to wrap up his hat-trick.

The win leaves Leipzig third and seven points behind leaders Bayern.

Augsburg also enjoyed an away win with a 3-0 romp at Schalke.

SCHALKE LOSE AGAIN

Heiko Herrlich enjoyed a perfect first Bundesliga game on the touchline as Augsburg coach, a week after he missed the loss to Wolfsburg because he broke quarantine rules to buy toothpaste.

David Wagner’s Schalke continued their slide down the table, falling to eighth following another poor defensive display.

Eduard Loewen, Noah Sarenren Bazee and Sergio Cordova scored as Augsburg moved seven points clear of the relegation

Dortmund waiting on Hummels

DORTMUND: Borussia Dortmund is waiting on the fitness of defensive chief Mats Hummels for Tuesday’s Bundesliga top-of-the-table showdown at home to leaders Bayern Munich.

The 2014 World Cup winner aggravated his Achilles tendon in Saturday’s 2-0 win at Wolfsburg which kept second-placed Dortmund four points behind leaders Bayern. Hummels came off at half-time on Saturday, but Dortmund still hope he can lead the hosts’ defence against his former club Bayern.

“Mats has a problem with his Achilles tendon and we hope he can play on Tuesday,” said



Dortmund sports director Michael Zorc.

“He has had the problem for a while.”

Hummels was treated at Dortmund’s training ground on Sunday and if he is not fit, Emre Can, who replaced Hummels in Wolfsburg, will deputise against Bayern. In the Munich squad,

there are question marks over midfielder Thiago Alcantara and defender Jerome Boateng.

Alcantara sat out Saturday’s 5-2 thrashing of Eintracht Frankfurt in Munich with a groin strain.

Boateng came off late in the second-half with a muscular knock. **AFP**

tion play-off place.

“I’m totally happy,” said Herrlich, whose team host the league’s bottom side Paderborn on Wednesday.

“We’ll be celebrating quietly, because we don’t have much time.

“But we have managed to turn

things around,” he added after Augsburg ended a run of four straight defeats.

Augsburg host Paderborn on Wednesday, the same day Schalke visit strugglers Fortuna Duesseldorf, who occupy the relegation play-off spot in 16th.

Clijsters determined to press on with comeback

AFP ■ BRUSSELS

Kim Clijsters is looking forward to returning to the US Open even though the coronavirus pandemic means that since her second comeback from retirement she has spent more time with her family.

“I’m still motivated,” the four-time Grand Slam winner told a Belgium newspaper on Sunday.

“I hope we can still play this season. But even if we don’t, I intend to keep going,” the Belgian tennis star, who turns 37 in June, told *Het Laatste Nieuws*. Clijsters had spells at number one before and after her first retirement, from 2007-2009.



She had her daughter in 2008. She won the US Open before that break and the Australian Open and two more US titles when she came back. She retired

for a second time after the US Open in 2012. She has since had two sons.

“I always felt I was fulfilled,” Clijsters said in an earlier interview with the *Tennis Hall of Fame*. “After I had our third baby, Blake, I started travelling to tournaments. I did commentary.

“But I still felt more like a player. A little itch started.”

Returning to the tour poses a challenge for a mother of three.

“I’m away a little bit, which turned out to be not so much in the last few months,” she said.

She began her second comeback in February in Dubai, where she lost to Garbine Muguruza in the first round. She

then lost to Johanna Konta in her opening match in Monterrey, the last tournament before the women’s tour shut down at the start of March.

She was in the United States when the tournament in Indian Wells, where she planned to play singles and partner Venus Williams in the doubles, was cancelled.

Clijsters told *HLN* that the break had allowed her to rest her body and allow injuries in her knees to improve.

“If the US Open can happen, I want to be ready,” she said in the *Hall of Fame* interview. “I would also be happy if I had to play on court 18. I don’t have to be out on Arthur Ashe.”

French Open to be pushed to end of Sept

PARIS: French Open director Guy Forget indicated that the clay court Grand Slam may be pushed to the end of September and can spill over into early October.

“The official announcement has not been made yet. It (the French Open) will probably be between the end of September, and the beginning of October,” Forget told French radio *Europe 1*.

“We’ve been working closely with the ATP, the WTA and the ITF to make a global announcement on what the circuit will be like until the end of the year,” he said. **IANS**

Zidane changed my idea about football: Ancelotti

IANS ■ LONDON

Carlo Ancelotti said that French great Zinedine Zidane gave him the chance to move beyond the 4-4-2 formation. Ancelotti managed Zidane when he led Juventus from 1999 to 2001.

“With Zidane, I tried to change my idea about the system. Zidane is the first player who gave me the possibility to change the system and play in a different way,” Ancelotti, who currently manages Everton in the Premier League, told former Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher on *Sky Sports*.

“So when I had Zidane, in the first year at Juventus, I played with a system of 3-4-1-



2, having (Alessandro) Del Piero and (Filippo) Inzaghi up front and Zidane a little bit behind. The second year, I played with a back four but keeping two strikers in front and one No 10 like Zidane.

“Zidane changed my idea about football. I was so focused before Juventus on 4-4-2 and after with Zidane, I changed. I wanted to put him in the best position for him to let him be more comfortable on the pitch,” he added.

Ancelotti would later go on to work with Zidane when he coached Real Madrid and the latter was his assistant manager. Zidane took over from Ancelotti and led Real to three consecutive Champions League titles.