

**OPINION 6**  
THE MYANMAR  
CRISIS LINGERS ON**WORLD 8**  
FLURRY OF DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS  
FUEL IRAN DEAL SPECULATION**AVENUES 10**  
TRENDS IN FINANCIAL  
MANAGEMENT

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# HC holds Centre in contempt

Showcause notice over O<sub>2</sub>; court says 'You can put your head in the sand like an ostrich, but we will not'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Irrked with the Central Government's failure in complying with the directive to supply 700MT oxygen to the national Capital, the Delhi High Court on Tuesday issued a show-cause notice to the Centre for contempt of court and directed the senior-most Government offices to be present in the court on Wednesday.

The unpleasant development has come as a major source of embarrassment for the Centre which is facing criticism from High Courts across the country for its shabby handling of the Covid-19 crisis.

"We direct Central Government to show cause why contempt action should not be taken for non-compliance of our order of May 1 and the Supreme Court order," said the Bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli, adding, "You can put your head in the sand like an ostrich, we will not."

It added that the Supreme Court has already directed, and now the High Court is also saying the Centre will have to supply 700 MT oxygen daily to Delhi right away by whatever means.

"You are part of the city and seeing the situation yourself. No, you don't know. Are you living in ivory towers?" the bench said.

The summoned officers are Sumita Dawara, Government of India Secretary incharge of Industries, and Union Home Ministry's Additional Secretary Piyush Goyal.

Expressing displeasure, the High Court recorded that it



was a matter of fact that till date, oxygen had not been supplied to the national Capital either in terms of the Supreme Court order on 700 MT supply or its order on 490 MT supply. The Bench also observed that Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma tried to misread the Supreme Court's order on supply of 700 MT per day to Delhi by May 3 night.

"We disagree. A plain reading of the Supreme Court order shows that the Supreme Court has directed the Centre to supply by making good the deficit," noted Judges.

"We reject the submission that GNCTD (Delhi Government) is not entitled to receive 700 MT per day in light of existing infrastructure. It pains us that the aspect of supply of oxygen should be viewed in the way is done by the Central Government," added judges.

Covid-19 IN INDIA	
TOTAL CASES:	2,06,16,234 (+3,40,602)
DEATHS:	2,25,489 (+3,103)
RECOVERED:	1,69,01,536 (+3,00,684)
ACTIVE:	34,80,368
MAHA:	48,22,902 (+51,880)
KERALA:	17,01,980 (+37,190)
K'TAKA:	16,90,934 (+44,631)
UP:	13,68,183 (+25,770)
TN:	12,49,292 (+21,228)

## Delhi sees spark of oxygen hope

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In the midst of massive oxygen shortage in Delhi, the Indian Railways delivered 244 tonnes of oxygen on Tuesday and efforts were on by the Central agencies to ease the situation within the next 24 hours.

Several hospitals here continue to grapple with the shortage of medical oxygen, as coronavirus cases continued to spike every passing day. So far nearly five dozen Covid-19 patients have died painful deaths due to shortage of oxygen.

With the Delhi High Court flogging the Centre on daily basis to improve the oxygen supply, and the Supreme Court showing no leniency either, the Centre has no option but to improve the oxygen supply on urgent basis. That should redeem the situation sooner than later and save precious lives.

The Oxygen Expresses will deliver nearly 450 MT of Liquid



A Covid-19 patient receives free oxygen in Tagore Garden provided by Aka Purakh's Army organisation in New Delhi on Tuesday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Medical Oxygen (LMO) to Delhi alone in 24 hours, the railways said.

"Two more Oxygen Express carrying more than 244 MT cumulative of LMO are on its way from Hapa and Mundra and are expected to reach Delhi today itself. With the arrival of two more Oxygen Expresses, Delhi would see nearly 450MT of LMO in 24

hours beginning early hours of 4th May," it said.

"Of the total 382 MT of LMO being delivered today by Railways, nearly 244 MT would be meant for Delhi," it added.



## LOCKDOWN IN BIHAR TILL MAY 15

Patna: Lockdown was imposed in Bihar till May 15 amid a surge in Covid-19 cases with the State facing a positivity rate of around 10 per cent, officials said on Tuesday. The decision for the lockdown, which will come into effect on Wednesday, was taken at the meeting of the Crisis Management Group presided over by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, they said.

# Over 100 babus fall prey to coronavirus

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

The bureaucracy has been hit hard by the coronavirus as more than 100 senior babus, including IAS, IPS IRS and railways officers, have lost their lives to Covid.

The news of the death of senior bureaucrats, like Bihar Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Singh and three of his 1985 batchmates — former CBI director Ranjit Sinha, former Secretary Department of Land Resources Ruolkhumlien Buhiril, and serving Director Dept of Panchayat Raj in Bihar Vijay Ranjan and many more — due to Covid during the second wave of pandemic has rattled the Indian bureaucracy.

President of Uttar Pradesh IAS Association Deepak Trivedi too lost the battle to Covid as did Bihar Additional Secretary Health RS Chowdhury and all within a week. Trivedi was posted as chairman Board of Revenue, UP Government.

"We have lost batchmates in as many days. It's a sad feeling and we are devastated yet ready to fight the pandemic with the same zeal to help our country come out of this problem," said a top IAS officer of 1985 batch. Besides Arun, Trivedi, Sanjeev Gupta

of the same batch from Gujarat cadre succumbed to Covid last week.

Bihar Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Singh is the third IAS officer who died of Covid complications in the State, after Chowdhury and Ranjan.

Apart from these three serving officers, two retired officers, Abhimanyu Singh and Dr Hriday Kant Sinha passed away last month. IAS officers of undivided Bihar cadre, AC Ranjan and MC Subarno, who retired from Jharkhand cadre, too succumbed to the Covid tsunami. Two servicing IRS officers — Rajneesh Arvind and DK Jha — succumbed to the virus on Sunday.

Padam Shri IAS AM Gokhale, who pioneered the setting up Village Development Board in Nagaland, too fell to the deadly virus.



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## Scientists: Double mutant fast replacing dominant N440K variant in South India

New Delhi: The B.1.617 variant of the coronavirus, also known as the double mutant, is fast replacing the N440K variant in south India, scientists at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) said on Tuesday.

Former CCMB director Rakesh Mishra said the double mutant is now a dominant variant in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and now Telangana. After an exhaustive analysis of 5,000 variants earlier this year, the CCMB had found that N440K is spreading a lot more in the southern States compared to the other variants.

# Free ration for 72 lakh people, ₹5,000 for taxi, auto drivers in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a move to provide relief to people amid the raging Covid-19 pandemic, the Delhi Government on Tuesday announced to provide free ration for two months to 72 lakh cardholders and financial aid of ₹5,000 to auto-rickshaw and taxi drivers in the city.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal appealed to all the political parties "to rise above political affiliations and help people irrespective of their class, caste or religion". He said, "Every citizen should stand with each other and try their best to help in getting hospital beds, oxygen or by providing food or extending financial help to the needy. This is the only way India could overcome the current crisis."

Addressing a digital press conference on Tuesday, Kejriwal said, he is hopeful that the situation in Delhi will improve and lockdown will not be needed.

"The 72 lakh ration card holders in Delhi will be provided free ration for the next two months," the Chief Minister said.



"Our decision to provide free ration for two months does not mean that the lockdown will continue for two months. We imposed the lockdown to contain the spread of Covid, and I am hopeful that we will end this as soon as possible," he added.

Further, Kejriwal said, "The Delhi Government provided financial assistance of ₹5,000 to each of the 1.56 lakh auto and taxi drivers during the last year's lockdown and will do so again this time to help them."

The Delhi Government imposed a lockdown in the national Capital to check the spread of Covid-19. However, lockdown creates a financial crisis for people, especially for the poor and daily wage earners who find it difficult to run their homes, he said.

# Modi, Johnson unveil 10-year roadmap to elevate India-UK ties



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his UK counterpart Boris Johnson during their virtual summit on Tuesday PTI

## 1 billion pound pact to strengthen defence, health ties

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI/LONDON

India and the UK on Tuesday gave a boost to their trade ties by announcing a one-billion-pound pact besides firming up a ten-year roadmap for more robust strategic partnership. The two countries agreed to strengthen ties in the fields of defence, security and health care.

These were major take-aways in the virtual summit meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. They unveiled the ambitious ten-year roadmap to elevate India-UK ties.

The high-profile talks took place days after Johnson called off his visit to India last month in view of the coronavirus pandemic. In January too, Johnson's planned trip to India to participate in the Republic Day parade as the chief guest was cancelled following a surge in Covid-19 infections in the

United Kingdom.

Meanwhile, in the talks on Tuesday the two sides declared an enhanced trade partnership, termed as "another big-ticket announcement" by the Ministry of External Affairs.

According to a statement from Johnson's office, "more than 6,500 new jobs will be created around the UK thanks to the one billion pounds of new UK-India trade and investment announced by the Prime Minister today."

The package contains over 533 million pounds of new Indian investment into the UK, which is expected to create more than 6,000 jobs in vital and growing sectors such as health and technology, Downing Street said.

Giving details of the talks, the External Affairs Ministry said the summit has "opened a new chapter" in the Indo-UK ties. It said the launch of an ambitious ten-year roadmap to further broaden ties was a "big deliverable", and five area of cooperation under the roadmap were — people-to-people ties, trade, defence and security, climate and health.

# UP panchayat polls setback for BJP in Ayodhya, Mathura Kashi

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW

Ahead of the crucial Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections to be held in early 2022, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) suffered a major setback in the panchayat elections the counting of which concluded on Tuesday.

Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party (SP) won a comprehensive victory in Varanasi and Ayodhya, while Mayawati's BSP and Ajit Singh's RLD topped in Mathura, three districts that are important to the BJP agenda. There has been a special focus on these three districts during the Yogi



Government's four-year tenure.

"The results of the panchayat elections are a setback for the BJP Government," a senior BJP leader said requesting anonymity.

The election of district panchayat is important because they elect the chairman of the district panchayat. These members are also part of the Electoral College that elects the

## IPL 2021 suspended indefinitely after multiple Covid cases

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A barrage of Covid-19 cases forced the IPL's indefinite suspension on Tuesday, a move that was welcomed by the franchises even as the league's jittery foreign recruits waited for BCCI's plan of action to ensure their return amid some strict travel restrictions.

The decision to postpone the league was announced after SunRisers Hyderabad batsman Wriddhiman Saha and Delhi Capitals spinner Amit Mishra joined the infected players' list, which already had Kolkata Knight Riders' Varun Chakravarty and Sandeep Warrier. The IPL said BCCI will do all it can to ensure that players in the event get back to their homes safely.

Detailed report on P12

# PM speaks to Bengal Guv over post-poll violence by TMC men

## Senior BJP leader moves SC for CBI probe into 'murder, arson, rapes' in State

PNS ■ KOLKATA/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday spoke to West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar over post-poll violence allegedly by the Trinamool Congress workers and deteriorating law and order situation in Bengal as a senior BJP leader moved the Supreme Court for a CBI probe into the "murder, arson and rapes" in the State.

The BJP has decided to hold a nationwide dharna on May 5 against the alleged "pre-

meditated attacks "unleashed" by TMC workers on the BJP.

The Prime Minister called the State Governor even as BJP president JP Nadra flew to Bengal on a two-day visit on a solidarity mission with the BJP workers and their families who were the victims of the alleged TMC offensive.

PM called & expressed his serious anguish & concern at alarmingly worrisome law & order situation. I share grave concerns, given that violence, vandalism, arson, loot & killings continue unabated. Concerned must act in overdrive to restore order," said the Governor in his tweet.

Nadra attacked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, calling her a "symbol of intolerance" and ruthlessness.

The TMC hit back faulting the PM for "taking recourse to political stunts after having failed to handle the pandemic."

## EC asks TMC to move HC for Nandigram recounting

New Delhi: Following Trinamool Congress' demand for recounting of votes in the Nandigram Assembly constituency where Trinamool Congress supreme Mamata Banerjee suffered a close defeat against Suwendu Adhikari of the BJP, the Election Commission on Tuesday clarified that the "only legal remedy is to file an EP (Execution Petition) before the High Court".

# Centre defers JEE Main as Covid rages on

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday postponed the Joint Entrance Examination, Main (JEE Main) scheduled for April end due to the Covid-19 surge. The information was shared on social media by Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank.

This is the second time that the Government had to postpone the JEE main exam. According to the National Testing Agency (NTA) notice, the registration for the May session will be announced later and the rescheduling of the April and May sessions will be done subsequently. Candidates are advised to keep visiting the official website of NTA — jeemain.nta.nic.in for updates.



# Govt working to ease O2 distribution

THREE IAS OFFICERS, MORE THAN 20 CALL CENTRE EXECUTIVES APPOINTED

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has appointed three IAS officers and more than 20 call centre executives to ensure smooth functioning of oxygen supply and its distribution.

“The Delhi Government is working round the clock to improve the distribution network of oxygen in the National Capital. The demand of oxygen in Delhi is that of approximately 976 metric tonnes by 11 May 2021. The Central Government has allocated 590 metric tonnes of oxygen to the Government of Delhi. To ensure that there is no shortage of oxygen, the Delhi Government is working to make sure that the supply chain is robust and efficient,” the office of the Delhi Health minister Satyender Jain said in a statement.

“The oxygen supply touched 450 metric tonnes today and by tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, the supply should touch the range of 500 metric tonnes. The Kejriwal government has been making all the efforts to assist the citi-

zens in this tough time of the COVID-19 pandemic and is working on strengthening the supply chain management of oxygen,” it said.

Oxygen is to be supplied to Delhi from nearby districts such as Roorkee, Panipat and Ghaziabad etc. to make it more robust and time-efficient. At present, the oxygen supply is coming from far off places like mostly from the eastern part of the country resulting in a higher turnaround time, it said.

The Delhi Government is closely coordinating with the officials from the Government of India to meet the desired demand for oxygen in the National Capital. Senior officials from the railway Ministry, IOCL and Concorde have been designated to make a sure undisturbed supply of oxygen to Delhi, it added.

“The government of India provided Delhi with additional seven ISO containers. Delhi Government has also deputed a team of officers to each of the oxygen plant locations. This team will make sure that there are no glitches and any administrative obstacles in the oxygen



Delhi Civil Defence volunteers near mini oxygen plant set up at the Covid Care Centre at CWG Village, in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

supply to Delhi,” it said.

“The barometer to find the severity of the situation is monitored on a daily basis with the help of SOS alerts. One-fourth of Delhi’s oxygen supply is dependent on the cylinders.

To overcome this Delhi Government has decentralized the system and given the powers to the respective DM’s to

ensure smooth functioning,” it said.

The government has also formed teams under the Divisional Commissioners which is closely monitoring and tracking the movements of the tankers.

“The Delhi government is also working to increase the bed capacity within the city to be able to deal with the rising

number of COVID cases. The Government is trying to increase the bed capacity in the Government hospitals from 5200 to 7200 beds.

In terms of vaccinations, the National Capital on 03.05.2021 administrated 89297 vaccines. The first dose of vaccination was given to more than 61000 beneficiaries,” it added.

# Waiting for oxygen supply to increase in city: Sisodia

## OXYGEN PLANT INSTALLED

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Tuesday visited the Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Mangolpuri to review Covid-19 and oxygen supply at the hospital.

Sisodia also met with patients who are undergoing treatment in the covid ward at the hospital. “Our Covid-19 facility at the Commonwealth Games Centre is fully functional and has been catering to Covid-positive patients. This plant was developed based on the orders given by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and with the help of the District Magistrate and our doctors.

“The bed capacity at CWG facility is 500 but we are unable to meet the capacity due to shortage of oxygen. Soon after, we took swift action and installed an oxygen plant in this facility to ensure unabated access of allocated oxygen to patients. The oxygen plant is



now operational and the current occupancy of patients at CWG is 175. We are hoping and waiting for the oxygen supply to increase in Delhi so that all 500 beds at the centre can be occupied,” he added.

The hospital recently installed an oxygen plant imported from France which will help refill at least 80-100 big cylinders daily. This plant will ensure a sustained supply of oxygen for all oxygenated and ICU beds. At present, the hospital has 300 beds in its premises of which 118 beds have been allocated to Covid-19 patients. The deputy CM further said, “To augment the number of ICU and oxygen beds in Delhi, CM Arvind Kejriwal had decided to convert Ramlila Ground into a Covid Care Centre. Health Minister

Satyendra Jain and I visited the Ramlila Ground to take stock of the 500 ICU beds that are being set-up there. I am happy to note that this work is in full swing and we hope it will be ready for citizens within the next week.”

“I take great pride in our doctors, who are tirelessly and relentlessly working towards saving the lives of citizens and emerging as true warriors in our fight against this deadly virus. Delhi Government’s commitment to defeat COVID-19 sees no bounds and we are doing everything in our capacity to reduce this surge. I appeal to our citizens to follow lockdown protocols and get vaccinated as soon as possible. Let us together win this fight against COVID-19,” he said.

# Shopkeepers warned against selling essential items at exorbitant price

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram district administration have warned shopkeepers who are selling essential products at prices higher than the prescribed MRP.

Action is being taken on sellers who are charging more than the MRP, said the administration.

Taking action on one such shopkeeper, the district administration team has issued challan against a food chain store under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on Tuesday.

According to district administration spokesperson, Inspector Rakesh of the District Food and Supplies Controller’s Department got information

that goods are being sold at a price higher than MRP in ‘More Hyper Mart’ located at Sector-48.

The complainant Pramod Kumar told the food supply inspector, that he had purchased peanut oil from a food chain store which had MRP of Rs 220, but it is being sold by Mart for Rs 253.

On this, the team of the District Food and Supplies Controller Department went to the spot to investigate the facts, on which the complaint made by the complainant was found to be correct.

Acting on the complaint, the food chain store was challaned under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

“The lockdown has been imposed to prevent infection of covid-19 from spreading fur-

ther, the public will not be worried for the availability of essential commodities in any way. A team of the District Food and Supplies Controller Department has been appointed to complete monitoring of black marketing in Gurugram. Essential items such as packed company items cannot be sold at rates higher than MRP.”

Yash Garg, deputy commissioner of Gurugram said.

“The district administration will deal strictly with those who involved in black marketing. Buyers should also take care and alert about the rates charged above MRP on the helpline number -9999097004 of the department,” said Garg adding that, to stop such kind of black marketing, the cooperation of the general public is needed.”

# Several private hospitals in G’gram stop operation due to oxygen shortage

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

More than 15 serious Covid-19 patients have lost their lives due to shortage of oxygen supply in small hospitals of Gurugram during the last week.

Despite these circumstances these hospitals regularly raise oxygen crisis issues through twitter or other social media platforms to the district administration to provide oxygen at their hospitals.

According to information, several of them have discharged all patients and shut down their operations, claiming that the district administration and the municipal corporation of Gurugram (MCG) are not paying attention to their repeated

requests for urgent need of liquid oxygen.

Dr Ashok Kathuria, director of Kathuria hospital in old Gurugram said, “Due to shortage of oxygen four covid patients had died in the hospital now we have stopped admission of new Covid-19 patients as we can not risking someone’s life and why we would face families anger without any mistakes on our part”.

Recently, A private hospital in Gurugram Tweeted that the liquid oxygen allocated to the hospital in Gurugram was hijacked by some other hospital. “More than 140 patients lives are in danger,”it tweeted.

Later on the the hospital tweeted saying that they have received about less than one ton of oxygen.

## BLACK-MARKETING OF MEDICINES

# 73 booked for hoarding medicines, 91 arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has registered over 70 cases in connection with hoarding and black-marketing of medicines and medical equipment and arrested 91 people on the charges of cheating people, Delhi Police Commissioner, S N Shrivastava wrote on Twitter.

According to the data, a total of 73 cases were registered. Of them, 49 cases were registered in connection with black-marketing and hoarding and 24 for cheating.

The information stated that police have seized 425 Remdesivir injections, 90 Favipiravir tablets, 213 oxygen cylinders, 225 oxygen concentrators and 82 oxygen flow regulators.

Similarly, 13 oximeters, 18 oxy pumps, two Remdesivir



empty injections, three ambulances, nine open pressure regulators, 213 pulse oximeters, seven gas pipes, seven double gauge regulators and 1,591 other things were seized by police in different raids, the tweet said.

The number of coronavirus cases have been increasing in the national capital. The Delhi Police on regular basis arrest-

ing people for allegedly hoarding or selling oxygen cylinders, Remdesivir injections and other medical equipment at exorbitant prices to the COVID patients.

On Monday, police had said in a statement that they have urged the citizens to call on the Covid-19 helpline number 011-23469900 to report incidents that include overcharging by ambulances, harassment faced at cremation grounds, black-marketing of life saving drugs, oxygen and medical articles, and cheating and fraud in the name of supplying Covid-19 drugs.

Police had also said that 86 Remdesivir vials, 90 favipiravir tablets, 170 oxygen concentrators and other medical items have been released to hospitals for COVID treatment.

# Man held for duping people for oxygen cylinders

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 24-year-old man from Faridabad for allegedly duping people on the pretext of providing oxygen cylinders and Remdesivir injections.

The accused has been identified as Rohit Kumar, a resident of Faridabad. He is a native of Ranchi in Jharkhand, police said.

According to a senior police official, during investigation of a complaint, police found that beneficiary account was in the name of Mohammad Riyaz, a resident of Bapu Park.

“Later, it was revealed that two more bank accounts are being run in the name of Rohit and Shahansah in the same bank with same addresses. On the basis of technical analysis, it was found that one person Sarvesh was in touch with

these persons. During search of Sarvesh and Riyaz, police reached Ismailpur, Faridabad and apprehended Kumar on Tuesday,” said the senior police official.

“During interrogation, he has disclosed that with the help of Sarvesh, he has opened five bank accounts in different banks. He opened account on the basis of his Bapu Park, Kotla address ID,” said the official.

After opening the accounts, he started resigning in Ismailpur Faridabad as per guidance of Sarvesh. He has given his bank cards and SIM to Sarvesh who further use these for cheating purposes, police said.

He has got Rs 40,000 to 50,000 till now for these bank accounts. He has also disclosed to take 2 per cent commission for receiving cheated amount, police said.



A critical Covid-19 patient receives free oxygen in Tagore Garden being run by Akal Purakh's Army organisation on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri

# Cyber helpline number #155260 floated

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To stop the malpractices of cheating people online on pretext of providing them oxygen cylinders and covid medicines, the Delhi Police in last two days has identified 200 mobile numbers, 95 bank accounts, 33 UTR and 17 wallets in coordination with National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) and Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Police said they have blocked several accounts involved in such practices.

According to Chinmoy Biswal, the Public Relation Officer (PRO) of the Delhi Police, a payment of Rs74, 380 was stopped on May 3 by IDBI Bank while two amounts of Rs 11, 000 and Rs 20, 000 were

stopped on May 01by ICICI Bank and PayTM.

“Earlier when the project was in initial stage, an amount of Rs 84,510 was stopped on April 17 by Karur Vyasa Bank while an amount of Rs. 39,001 was stopped by Airtel Payment Bank on April 23 and two amounts of Rs 11,000 and Rs 20,000 were stopped on March 1 by ICICI Bank and PayTM. An amount of Rs 74,380 was stopped on May 3 by IDBI Bank,” said Biswal.

“During the pilot phase itself, the platform has prevented over Rs 20 lakh from ending into the hands of the cyber cheats from where it is difficult to retrieve,” said Biswal.“All these transactions were made by unsuspecting victims looking for Covid medicines, oxygen cylinders etc.

The quantum growth in digital transaction has brought



with it the similar growth in fraudulent transactions too. The fraudsters ask unsuspecting victims to pay in banks with IFSC Code outside Delhi. This is a need to do due diligence and not fall prey by transferring money to a bank at far off places like Jharkhand, Bihar, Bengal and other places,” said Biswal.

Urging people to be cautious and come forwards with such frauds, the Delhi Police said people can report these frauds to the cyber helpline number #155260.

“The call is attended by a

police person and after obtaining minimum mandatory details of the transaction, a token is generated and the beneficiary bank, wallet or merchant is alerted to trace and ‘stop’ the defrauded amount if it is still residing with it,” said police.

“As soon as the concerned bank, wallet or merchant is digitally notified, it stops the flow of the defrauded money and reports back to the platform; in case where the defrauded money has shifted to another financial intermediary, the same is alerted and the plat-

form is intimated of the same. This process is repeated till the alleged amount has either been kept on temporary hold or is reported to have been either withdrawn or consumed by way of delivery of good,” said police.

“After reporting the incident, the complainant is notified by way of an SMS containing the reference number of his complaint and a link to www.cybercrime.gov.in in the website on which a formal and detailed complaint is required to be lodged by the victim within the next 24 hours,” said police.

“Where no such formal complaint is received within 24 hours of calling up the helpline, the money so stopped is released by the intermediary concerned to travel as per the instructions of the beneficiary,” said police.

# Cases of online profile forgery on rise during Covid-19

VIJAY DEO JHA ■ RANCHI

Taking advantage of the worldwide Covid 19 pandemic that has made the majority of people unsecured financially and emotionally and socially isolated, cybercriminals have devised new ways to cheat them.

In the wake of Covid 19 outbreak people mainly depend on social sites to stay connected with their friends and relatives to share their concerns and problems. Cybercriminals are now creating fake profiles of people on social networking sites and seek monetary assistance from their contacts.

In a recent development, cybercriminals even created a fake Facebook profile of Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi. The fake profile identically matched with the official page of office of the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi. Jharkhand Police immediately blocked that account on Monday night.

Ranchi DC Chhavi Ranjan had to post a disclaimer on the official profile about this fake account.

“Here's a fake profile on Facebook that is asking people for money. Requesting everyone to please be cautious and not fall prey to this fake account,” the disclaimer reads.

The office of Ranchi DC woke up after a number of

journalists and common people pointed out that they got a friendship request from this fake profile and the cyber-criminal posing as Ranchi DC is requesting contacts through private messages to pay some money.

While the cybercrime unit of Jharkhand police has been asked to investigate the case; it was revealed that the criminal operating this fake account had sought anything between ₹10,000 to ₹30,000 through Google pay.

In some of the cases imposters personating as Ranchi DC pleaded that he needs money for one of his friends whose daughter is hospitalized.



# Lockdown extended till May 15 in C'garh

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

With most districts not showing sustained fall in Covid-19 cases, the lockdown was on Tuesday extended in Chhattisgarh till May 15. The lockdown at Raipur is till May 17. In Raipur and Durg, however, there will be additional relaxations.

In an attempt to break the virus chain, the lockdown has been further extended, an official communication said.

It said that a new variant or strain has been detected in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, which is of dangerous nature. All the Bastar Division District Collectors have been directed to strictly implement border control, checking/testing and extension of lockdown.

In 26 districts, shops related to the agriculture sector will open along with permission for movement of fertilizer trucks. Only retail provision stores will be allowed on the streets but not malls and supermarkets.

The daily needs and provision stores can make home delivery. Banks, post offices and registry



offices will open with 50 percent manpower while courier services will be for only postal/dak services (No e-commerce). Home delivery of ACs, fans and coolers (without opening shops) and services of electricians and plumbers are allowed.

Petrol pumps, gas agencies, poultry, meat, milk, dairy and dairy products shops, and flour mills can work. Fruits and vegetables can be sold through moving carts. Sunday will see a complete lockdown, except for medical establishments.

Apart from the above relaxations in Raipur and Durg districts, additional easing has been provided to stationery shops, vehicle, scooter and bike repair and puncture repair shops, home delivery by hotels and restaurants, private on-site construction work and laundry

**In all 28 districts, following to remain shut**

Markets will not be open in the 28 districts. Except for home delivery, hotels and restaurants will be out of bound of the public. Marriage halls, malls, clubs, swimming pools, super markets, religious places, coaching classes, schools and colleges (for Students), pan and cigarette outlets, and liquor shops will be shut during the period.

Tourist spots like Telibandha, Budha Talab, Jungle Safari, Barnawapara and all resorts shall remain closed. Mobile eateries, cart vending and roadside eateries not allowed.

Also to shut are barber shops, parks, Mandi - all kinds (except for the designated night time loading/unloading), gyms and all types of assembly/social and community programmes.

Only marriage and funeral functions to be allowed.

## C'garh to take help from US hospital on Covid-19

**Based on their advice, the treatment will be extended to the critical patients.**

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

To ensure better medical health facilities to people Chhattisgarh, the Health Department will take help from doctors of Mayo Clinic in Rochester (US) to treat Covid-19 patients.

And from May 5, a virtual Tele Outpatient Department (OPD) will commence in the state, Dr Subash Mishra, Director, Epidemic Control, said on Tuesday.

Health and Family Welfare Minister T.S. Singh Deo and Dr Priya Sampat Kumar of Mayo

Clinic, Rochester, held talks over providing technical guidance to the state doctors for providing better medical treatment to critical Covid patients.

The local doctors through virtual mode will share medical reports with doctors of Mayo Clinic.

Based on their advice, the treatment will be extended to the critical patients. The doctors and paramedical staff will also be trained by American doctors virtually to provide better medical care to patients, said Dr Mishra.

In another initiative, for other diseases, a free of cost virtual Tele OPD will start on May 5 from Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar Memorial Medical College Hospital, Raipur.

The timing will be from 10.30 to 11.30 am daily except holidays.

## Free masks, sanitizer for mitanins, health workers: CM



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Masks and sanitizer will be made available to all mitanins and health workers free of cost, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced on Tuesday. He was addressing a virtual meeting of

mitanins and health workers from Bastar and Sarguja divisions. The Chief Minister has directed all the District Collectors to ensure free availability of the two commodities to the two sections. Baghel urged all the mitanins and health workers to compulsorily use masks and sanitizers dur-

ing field visits. Even while checking oxygen level and pulse rate of Covid-19 patients, they were told to be careful about their own safety. Baghel appreciated the dedicated efforts of mitanins and rural health workers to save the lives of Covid patients.



Members of Gurunanak Langar Sewa, Mowa, distributed food packets and other eatables to poor people amid the Covid pandemic in front of the Raipur Municipal Corporation headquarters on Tuesday.

Pioneer Photo

## Two doctors held for hospital fire, two wanted

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Police have arrested two doctor members of the management of a Raipur-based hospital where a fire killed six Covid-19 patients last month, police said on Tuesday. A search is on for two other management board members, both doctors.

The fire broke out on April 17 in the Covid ward of the Rajdhani Super Specialty Hospital at Pachpedi Naka in the Tikrapara police station limits.

One patient was charred to death while five others died of suffocation. The Raipur administration had ordered a probe into the tragedy.

Based on the findings, the police arrested Dr Sachin Kumar Mal (40) and Dr Aninday Roy (50),



both of Raipur – for alleged negligence, Raipur Senior Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar Yadav said. He said a search is on for two others, Dr Sanjay Jadhvani and Dr Vinod Lalwani. The police official said a probe into the incident revealed that adequate arrangements were not made in the hospital to deal with



the fire. Experts of the Forensic Science Laboratory, based on the crime scene investigation, have also pointed to some 'negligence', he said. After the incident, the police registered a case under Section 304-A (causing death by negligence) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Now, police have added section 304 (2) too.

## HC tells C'garh to frame new vaccination plan

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh High Court has told the Chhattisgarh government to quash its earlier order regarding prioritizing the vaccination to Antyodaya and BPL card holders and present an alternative vaccination plan by Friday.



The action was taken after the court took suo-motu cognizance on applications filed by JCC-J leader Amit Jogi and four others. Senior Advocate Kishore Bhaduri said a Division Bench of Chief Justice P.R. Ramchandra Menon and Justice Parth Prateem Sahu directed the Chhattisgarh government to frame a new vaccination policy for persons of 18-44 by Friday. Bhaduri said they pleaded that the order of prioritization was 'discriminatory'.

## Everyone must come together to defeat Covid: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday inaugurated a 100-bed Jainam Covid Hospital in the Jainam Manas Bhawan near the Mana Airport here and said everyone needed to come together to defeat the pandemic.

He inaugurated the charitable hospital built in collaboration with the Jain society through video conferencing. The Hospital is well equipped with ventilators, six ICU beds, 42 oxygen beds, a pathology lab and specialist doctors. Baghel said the new hospi-



tal, established with the mutual support of the Jain society and the government, will further strengthen the fight against Covid. The Chief Minister said the rapidly growing infection in the second wave of Covid has presented many challenges across the country. Today, due to better Covid

management, "we have been able to reduce the pace of infection", he said. "We are continuously expanding the facilities, following a strategy of testing and vaccination," he said. He added that with the cooperation of all, "we will be successful in defeating Corona".

## Two held for smuggling diamonds worth Rs 50L

STAFF REPORTER ■ GARIABAND

The Chhattisgarh Police said on Tuesday it had arrested two persons on charges of smuggling 440 pieces of rough diamonds valued at Rs 50 lakhs in Gariaband district.

Speaking to The Pioneer over telephone, Gariaband Superintendent of Police Bhojraj Patel said Subhash Mandal (43) and Ujjawal Chandrakar (30) were both residents of Raipur city.

Acting on a tip, they were caught in the Fingeshwar police station area on



Monday night. Learning that the accused were headed from Gariaband's Chhura town towards Raipur on a scooter (CG-04, KR-4813), the police intercepted them and recovered the rough

diamonds of different sizes. The scooter and two mobile phones were also seized. The accused illegally brought the diamonds in Gariaband and they planned to sell it, Patel said.

## Two missing policemen still untraced

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh Police are yet to locate policemen Manoj Netam and Christopher Lakra who have been missing for one to two weeks. Official sources said Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu has taken a serious note of the matter and told officials on Tuesday to speedily investigate the matter.

Assistant Constable Manoj Netam was posted at the Kodekurse police station in Kanker district while Christopher Lakra, an Assistant ASI, was with the 20th Battalion in Kabirdham district. Netam, last seen at the police station, went missing on April 28. His motorbike was found at Manpur near the Rajnandgaon district border. Lakra has been missing since April 21 from a police camp at the border with Madhya Pradesh.

## CCCI seeks Medical Device Park at Durg-Bhilai, Rajnandgaon

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCCI) on Tuesday urged Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel to establish a Medical Device Park at Durg-Bhilai and Rajnandgaon.

In a joint letter by CCCI President Prakash Sankhla and other office bearers, it was pointed out that during the Covid-19 pandemic the state had witnessed an acute shortage of medical equipment and acces-



sories. If a Medical Device Park is established at Durg-Bhilai and at Tadesara (Rajnandgaon), it would help meet the future needs, promote the concept of

'Make in Chhattisgarh' and also generate employment. The letter states that at present maximum equipment are imported to India. If production is commenced locally, it will

help reduce the prices. The medical equipment and accessories include syringes, drips, implants, surgical equipment, MRI and Ultrasound machines, oxy-metres, surgical beds, CT-Scan, MRI equipment, dialysis machine, PPE kits, X-ray machines, operation theatre tables, ICU beds and more.

The raw material, mainly high-quality steel, is available in the state. At present, the medical device retail market is of Rs 70,000 crores. India is the fourth biggest market for medical devices.



# No legal shield hampers foreign jab makers' entry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government may have opened its doors for the vaccines manufactured by foreign companies like Moderna and J&J to arrest the Covid-19 tsunami, but sources in the Union Health Ministry here said it is not keen to toe the lines of many European countries which have kept these vaccine companies out of the legal ambit of compensation even if there are severe side effects of the shots.

The sources recalled that a few days ago, Pfizer and Moderna had shown interest in providing vaccines in Indian market, but they are having second thoughts because of legal tangle.

The sources further said the Union Health Ministry is not ready to give them any special exception as far as the compensation on adverse event cases are concerned given that the local homemade vaccines manufacturers like Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech too do not enjoy any such privilege.

SII CEO Adar Poonawalla had last year sought protection for vaccine manufacturers against all lawsuits saying "we need to have the Government indemnify manufacturers, especially vaccine manufacturers, against all lawsuits". In fact, Covax and other coun-



tries have already started talking about that. What's happening is when frivolous claims come up, they are blown out of proportion," he had said. However, the Ministry remains non-committal to his demand.

In contrast, Britain, America and other European nations have already evoked a similar law to indemnify the manufacturers during the pandemic in case any patient sue them over serious side effects after taking the jab.

According to the national committee on Adverse Event Following Injection NK Arora, the nationwide campaign does not bind any company to pay the compensation in case of legal case, but Union Health Ministry does not seem to be interested in keeping them out of the legal ambit.

After SII and Bharat

Biotech, the sources said Russia's Sputnik V vaccine might be soon launched in the market. In fact, India has already received 150,000 doses of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine in Hyderabad with the Government stating that "millions of doses" more will come in. Similarly, Pfizer on Monday said that it was in discussions with the Indian government seeking an "expedited approval pathway" for its vaccine.

"Unfortunately, our vaccine is not registered in India although our application was submitted months ago," CEO Albert Bourla said. The Government has also invited Johnson & Johnson (JNJ), and Moderna (MRNA.O) to sell their vaccines here as the third wave of the Covid-19 swept the country more lethal, everyday infecting and killing many.

# More Covid help from abroad pours in

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday received more foreign aid from several countries, including the US, Ireland, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, as hospitals in several States and Union Territories continued to reel under an exponential growth in Covid-19 cases. At least 40 countries have announced medical aid to India so far. Meanwhile, around 40 lakh items, comprising medicines, oxygen cylinders and masks, received in foreign aid have been distributed to 86 institutions and hospitals.

Emergency support continued coming into the nation from varied international locations. Seven tankers each carrying 20 metric tonnes of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) arrive at Mundra Port in Gujarat in the first such shipment of LMO to India. "Further consolidating our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. 7 ISO tankers with 20 MT Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) each arrive at Mundra Port (India). First such shipment of LMO to India. Deeply value the support from UAE. Will help augment oxygen availability," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Twitter.

A special flight from the US brought to Delhi the country's fifth consignment of medical aid comprising 545 oxygen concentrators. The second shipment of medical supplies from Ireland, included two oxygen generators, 548 oxygen



Workers load medical aid onto an Air India plane to be flown, at Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel, on Tuesday

AP

concentrators, 365 ventilators and other medical equipment. "Deeply grateful to our EU partner Ireland for the support which will help add to our oxygen capacities," Bagchi said.

He said an Indian Air Force aircraft carrying 450 oxygen cylinders arrived in Chennai from the United Kingdom.

India also received a shipment of 282 oxygen cylinders, 60 oxygen concentrators, ventilators and other medical supplies from Kuwait. "Deepening our fraternal ties of friendship. Thank Kuwait for shipment of 282 oxygen

cylinders, 60 oxygen concentrators, ventilators and other medical supplies that arrived today," Bagchi said in another tweet.

Between April 24 and May 2, India has received 17 consignments — comprising essential medical equipment such as oxygen concentrators, cylinders of medical oxygen, ventilators and BiPAP machines, bedside monitors, anti-viral drugs, rapid kits to detect Covid-19 virus, pulse oximeters, N95 masks and personal protective equipment among others — from at least 14 countries. France and Italy

are the only two countries that have specified where some of the equipment they supplied will go — the eight French oxygen generation plants are being distributed among hospitals in Delhi, Haryana and Telangana, while the Italian plant will go to the ITBP Hospital in Greater Noida.

Himachal will also get additional 282 oxygen cylinders donated by Kuwait, as per the letter of Union ministry of health and family welfare. Haryana has also been allocated 113 Pulse oximeters which will be dispatched to All India Institute of Medical

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Between April 24 and May 2, India has received 17 consignments

Sciences (AIIMS) at Jhajjar. Besides, 95 oxygen concentrators have been allocated to Haryana. 35 of these concentrators, out of the 150 donated by Taiwan.

Punjab will get 50 out of the 150 oxygen concentrators donated by Taiwan. Taiwan also donated 500 oxygen cylinders, out of which Himachal has been allocated 185 and Uttarakhand 300.

According to the Centre, Taiwan has donated 150 oxygen concentrators of which 50 have been allocated to Punjab and 35 to Haryana.

India has been ravaged by a massive spike in coronavirus infections in the last few weeks and hospitals across the country are facing acute shortage of beds, medical oxygen and other supplies due to rising Covid-19 cases.

# Delhiites gasping for O2 to get relief from DRDO's five plants

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major relief to the national Capital and adjoining areas now gasping for oxygen, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has started the process of setting up five O2 plants in the region.

Similarly, in its relentless operations to ferry much-needed oxygen, an IAF C-17 plane undertook a grueling 35-hour flight and landed in Chennai on Tuesday carrying 37 tons of gas cylinders from Brize Norton, United Kingdom (UK).

The aircraft took off from the Jamnagar airbase on May two evening and had only two halts, one at Norton for loading and turn around and Cairo, Egypt for refueling before returning to its base at 11.30 am on Tuesday. Another C-17 flew 14 hours non-stop to airlift four cryogenic oxygen cylinders from Germany on Monday.

Till date, the IAF has brought in 54 cryogenic containers and 900 oxygen cylinders from outside India (Singapore, Dubai, Bangkok, Frankfurt and UK), clocking over 140 hours of flying.

Giving details of the DRDO efforts, officials said here in order to tackle the surge in COVID-19 cases PM-CARES has allocated funds for the installation of 500 Medical Oxygen Plants across the country. These plants are planned to be set up within three months.

The DRDO through its industries, is setting-up five Medical Oxygen Plants (MOP) within the first week of May in and around Delhi. These are to be installed at AIIMS Trauma Centre, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital (RML), Safdarjung Hospital, Lady Hardinge Medical College and one at AIIMS, Jhajjar, Haryana.

As per schedule, two of these plants reached Delhi on Tuesday and are being

installed at AIIMS and RML Hospitals respectively. These have been supplied by M/s Trident Pneumatics Pvt. Ltd., Coimbatore which is the technology partner of the DRDO and has been given an order of 48 plants. Order of 332 plants have been placed with M/s Tata Advanced Systems Limited and the delivery will start from mid-May. The delivery schedule is being monitored very closely to deliver before the plants time. Sites are being prepared at each hospital in parallel.

These Medical Oxygen Plants are designed for a flow rate of 1,000 litres per minute (LPM). The system can cater to 190 patients at a flow rate of 5 LPM and charge 195 cylinders per day. The Medical Oxygen Plant (MOP) technology has been developed by the DRDO based on the On-Board Oxygen Generation for Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA).

These plants will overcome the logistics issues of oxygen transportation and help the COVID-19 patients in emergency. The Council for Science and Industrial Research (CSIR) has also ordered 120 MOP plants through its industries.

On the ongoing IAF effort, they said besides ferrying oxygen from abroad, its planes within the country have transported 180 empty cryogenic oxygen containers, apart from other relief material like oxygen cylinders, oxygen plant equipment, essential medicines and hospital equipment.

Apart from airlifting its RAMT (Rapid Action Medical Team), the IAF also airlifted medical officers and personnel of the Indian Navy. The IAF has employed eight C-17, four IL-76, 10 C-130 and 20 An-32 aircraft, as well as Mi-17V5 and Chinook helicopters who have together clocked more than 360 hours of flying till date.

# Patel: Tourism Min to focus on promoting offbeat destinations post-Covid

**New Delhi:** Post-Covid, the focus of the Ministry of Tourism will be on promoting offbeat destinations and activities such as eco-tourism, wellness retreats and mountaineering among others, Minister Prahlad Patel said on Tuesday.

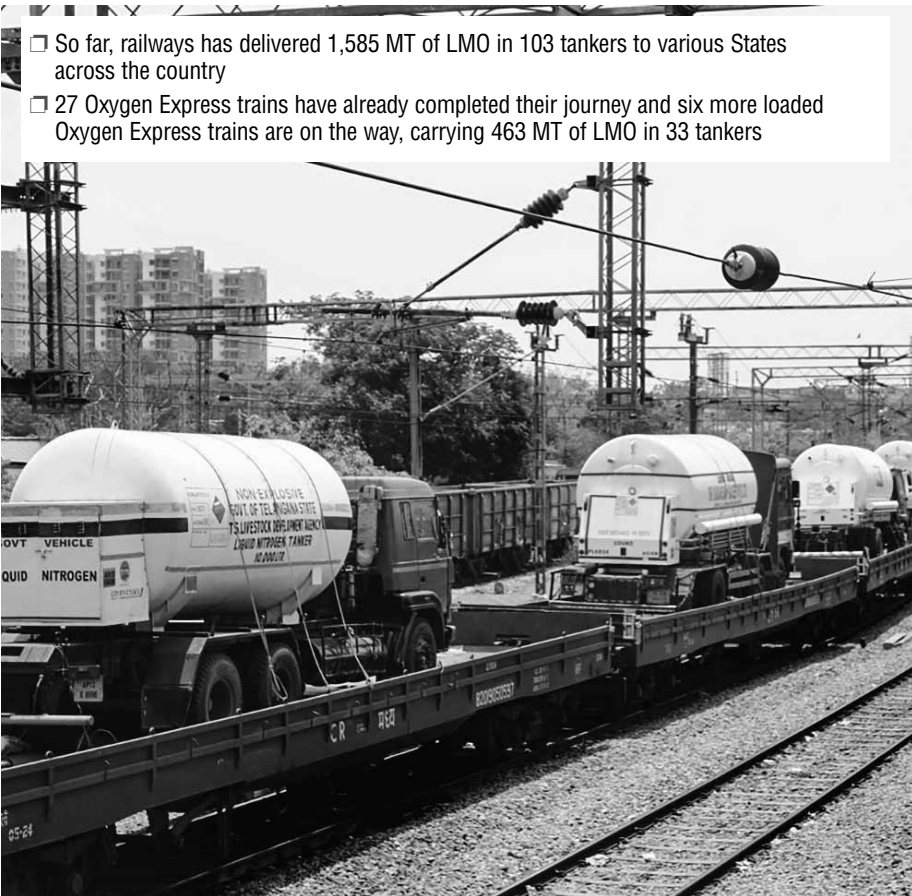
He said this while virtually addressing the G20 Tourism Ministers' Meeting held in Italy, according to a statement issued by the ministry. Patel said India has a strong and vibrant system

of traditional medicines, which provide for holistic healing and the ministry seeks to bring in tourists for this.

He conveyed India's support to the principles for a transition to a green travel-and-tourism economy, submitted by the UNWTO as a further contribution to the policy area of "Green Transformation" for embracing sustainability in tourism.

PTI

# Railways delivers 1,585 MT O2, 6 more Oxygen Expresses on way



IANs ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Railways on Tuesday said that 27 Oxygen Express trains have completed their journey, delivering more than 1,585 metric tonnes of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) in 103 tankers to various states.

A Railway Ministry official said that overcoming all hurdles and finding new solutions, the railways is continuing

its journey of bringing relief by delivering LMO.

"So far, railways has delivered 1,585 MT of LMO in 103 tankers to various states across the country," he said, adding that 27 Oxygen Express trains have already completed their journey and six more loaded Oxygen Express trains are on the way, carrying 463 MT of LMO in 33 tankers.

Two more Oxygen Express to Delhi carrying more than

244 MT LMO are on its way from Hapa and Mundra and are expected to reach Delhi on Tuesday itself, the official said. With this, Delhi would see nearly 450 MT of LMO provided in 24 hours beginning early hours on May 4.

According to the official, of the total 382 MT of LMO being delivered by Railways on Tuesday, nearly 244 MT was meant for Delhi, which is nearly 64 per cent of total load.

# Rahul slams Modi Govt for Covid crisis

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday once again attacked the Narendra Modi Government for its inaction as "many innocent people" continued to lose the battle against Covid and said a crime has been committed against India.

He said the only way to stop the apocalyptic march of the pandemic was an immediate complete lockdown with the protection of NYAY scheme for the vulnerable sections.

"Government of India (GOI) doesn't get it. The only way to stop the spread of Corona now is a full lockdown - with the protection of NYAY for the vulnerable sections. Government of India's inaction is killing many innocent people," he tweeted.

In another tweet, lament-

**On Tuesday, India recorded over 3.57 lakh fresh cases of Covid with 3,449 fatalities**

ing at the government he said, "I just want to make it clear that a lockdown is now the only option because of a complete lack of strategy by GOI. They allowed, rather, they actively helped the virus reach this stage where there's no other way to stop it. A crime has been committed against India."

Rahul Gandhi, who is a Lok Sabha MP from Kerala's Wayanad has been critical of the Central government over the handling of Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

On Tuesday, India recorded over 3.57 lakh fresh cases of Covid with 3,449 fatalities.

# SC strikes down Bengal Housing Regulation Act as 'unconstitutional'

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday quashed the West Bengal Housing Industry Regulation Act, (HIRA), 2017. The top court held HIRA as unconstitutional and repugnant to RERA.

A bench headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said it wasn't open for the West Bengal Government to frame a parallel law when the field was already occupied by a parliamentary legislation, Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 (RERA). Directing to strike down the West Bengal law, the top court observed, "this will prevent chaos." The top court also added that it won't invalidate registration, allotment & past transactions made under HIRA.

# 8 lions Covid +ve in Hyderabad zoo; alert issued

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has issued an alert to all the tiger reserves and zoos across the country as well as lion habitat in Gir in Gujarat in the wake of reports of eight lions being found to be hit by Covid-19 in a Hyderabad Zoo. However, it said there is no cause for worry as there has been no global instance of transmission of pathogens from animals to humans.

Hyderabad's Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) has confirmed the infection among the captive lions. However, not taking any chances, the Union Environment Ministry on Tuesday directed the closure of national parks and sanctuaries as a preventive measure.

Soumitra Dasgupta, assistant director-general of forest (wildlife), said it is not the new mutation that has infected the lions but the old one. "We had a video conference with CCMB officials and they confirmed the diagnosis to us. The problem is we cannot collect throat or nasal swab samples from animals. So, most probably, we will put in place a method to collect scat samples. CCMB is devising that method and guidelines."

SP Yadav, Central Zoo Authority Member Secretary added that analyses of the



samples (of lions) have revealed that the infection was not caused by any variant of concern. "The eight lions have been isolated and due care and necessary treatment have been provided. All the eight lions have responded well to the treatment and are recovering. They are behaving normally and eating well. Preventive measures are already in place for all zoo staff and the zoo has been closed to visitors to avoid minimal external contact," he added.

In Fact, Yadav who is also the head of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) said that an advisory has also been issued to all the Chief Wildlife Warden regarding containing the spread and management of Covid 19 in national park and sanctuaries on April 30th itself to prevent the spread of the virus from humans to animals.

"The officials have been advised to reduce human-wildlife interface. Field functionaries should follow Covid appropriate behavior while people movement should be restricted," said Yadav.

# Centre refutes Opposition's Covid mishandling charges

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Facing allegations of lackadaisical attitude that led to a shortage of medical facilities including oxygen resulting in unprecedented casualties across the States, the Government on Tuesday sought to come clean in the matter.

It issued two clarifications in two days in a row—first stating that it issued order for the vaccine on time, and in another, it said that "it did not waste time in effective allocation and distribution of Covid pandemic relief material."

The Modi Government on Tuesday made a bid to refute media reports that while the first consignment of Covid-19 assistance arrived in India on April 25, the Centre took seven days to frame the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of distributing these life-saving medical supplies.

Calling the allegations

"totally misleading", the Union Health Ministry said that while the Standard Operating Procedure for allocations was issued by it on May 2nd, the work for receipt, allocation and distribution to the States and UTs through the Central and other Health Institutions started immediately as the global community started to support the Government efforts for fighting the global pandemic.

As the world responds to India's Covid SOS, the Government is facing a volley of questions whether foreign aid, including a vast number of oxygen machines and life-saving drugs, is reaching its destination given huge hue and cry over shortage of basic medical facilities in hospitals, resulting in deaths also. However, Government officials admit to "teething problems" in distributing foreign aid.

Similarly, on Monday, it

dismissed allegations that the last order placed with the two vaccine makers (100 million doses with SII and 20 million doses with Bharat Biotech) was in March 2021. It said, in actual, 100% advance of ₹1,732.50 cr was released to Serum Institute of India (SII) on April 28 for 11 crore doses of Covishield vaccine during May, June and July, and was received by them on 28.04.2021. As on date, against the last order of 10 crore doses for supplies of Covishield vaccine, 8.744 crore doses have been delivered till March 3.

Additionally, 100% advance of Rs. 787.50 cr was released on April 28 to Bharat Biotech India Ltd for 05 crore Covaxin doses during May, June and July. As on date against the last order of 02 crore doses for supplies of Covaxin vaccine, 0.8813 crore doses have been delivered till March 5, it said.

# Former-J&K Guv Jagmohan dies at 94; Modi condoles death



IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday condoled the death of former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Jagmohan and described his death as a monumental loss.

"Jagmohan Ji's demise is a monumental loss for our nation. He was an exemplary administrator and a renowned scholar. He always worked towards the betterment of India. His ministerial tenure was marked by innovative policy making. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti," Modi said in a tweet.

Jagmohan passed away on Tuesday morning. He was 94.

He had served two terms as Governor in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir — from 1984 to 89, and then from January to May 1990.

When the BJP's Atal Bihari Vajpayee became Prime Minister in 1998, Jagmohan also served in his cabinet in a variety of portfolios, including communications, urban development and tourism. During the 1990s, Jagmohan had served as a nominated MP in the Rajya Sabha in 1990-96 and won a hat-trick of Lok Sabha elections from New Delhi (1996, 1998 and 1999).



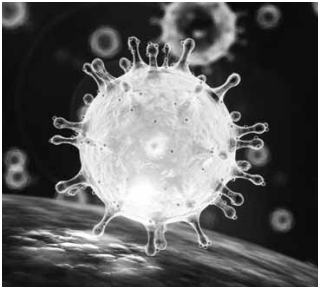
# TN declares new measures to combat Covid

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Even as operations were in full swing for the smooth transfer of power in Tamil Nadu following the landslide win of the DMK over the AIADMK in the legislative assembly election, the number of Covid-19 patients continued unabated in the State on Tuesday.

The Directorate of Health and Preventive Medicine in its release said 21,228 new Covid-19 cases afflicted with Covid-19 were diagnosed till 6 pm Tuesday. The death toll too showed a hike as 144 patients succumbed to the pandemic.

Tamil Nadu Government has declared new measures and curbs to counter the spread of the pandemic. From Thursday, the State



would be in an 'undeclared lockdown' mode as the working hours of markets and shops have been brought down to just six hours.

Provision and grocery shops would be allowed to function from 7 am to 1 pm. Chennai accounted for 6,228 positive cases followed by Chengalpattu (1608) and Coimbatore (1,509).

## Vijayan slams Centre for denying vaccine to State

KOCHI: Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan lambasted the Centre for denying the much needed Covid-19 vaccine to the State despite its plea many times. "Kerala is undergoing a grave situation as the number of patients diagnosed with Covid-19 on Tuesday reached 37,190. The day also saw 57 persons succumbing to the pandemic," said Vijayan in his daily media briefing.

The Chief Minister said that Centre should initiate steps to make Covid vaccine available free of cost to the States. "The policy being pursued by the Centre is wrong and I hope the Prime Minister would initiate steps to rectify the mistakes," he said.

Vijayan, who is an avid reader of international medical journals like Lancet and British Medical Journal, quoted from the latest editions of these journals and said that Kerala was in for more crisis as there were strong possibilities of steep hike

in the number of Covid cases. "After May 12, figures are sure to go up and the Government would take steps to check the spread of the pandemic," said the Chief Minister.

The Kerala Government on Tuesday issued orders restricting the number of personnel in all government offices to 25 per cent. "We want only the essential services to function in the State. People should not come out of their houses unless the situation warrants it. I am asking the people to stay indoors and start wearing masks even when they are inside the houses. All those who come out of their houses should immediately take bath when they come back," said the chief minister.

Ernakulam with 5030 new patients continued to be the leader in the table of Covid-19 cases in the State. The State's Test Positivity Rate in the State is 26.8 per cent, said the Chief Minister. **PNS**

## CPM: Kerala to be epicentre of national secular alternative

KOCHI: A national alternative of secular, socialist and democratic forces against the fascist Government at the Centre will begin from Kerala, according to top CPI(M) leader A Vijayaraghavan. "The unprecedented victory of the Left Democratic Front led by the CPI(M) is a signal in that direction. This victory will set the stage for such a national alternative and we are sure of uprooting the present government," said Vijayaraghavan, who is the CPI(M) acting secretary as well as the convener of the LDF.

Speaking to media at the capital city on Tuesday, Vijayaraghavan said the LDF would observe Friday as the Victory Day. "We want all the households in the State to light torches as part of the victory celebration. The people need not come out of their houses," said the LDF convener.

Vijayaraghavan said the LDF Government would implement all promises it had mentioned in the election manifesto. "The important outcome of th recent election is that we succeeded in closing the account of the communal BJP in Kerala and this should act as a guiding spirit to the rest of the country," he said.

The CPI(M) secretary also said that there was concerted efforts by central agencies and the BJP to sabotage the possibilities of the LDF's return to power. The central agencies were trying to derail all development activities of the State Government. "But the people in the State stood by us and supported us," he said. The swearing-in of the new LDF Government would happen after May 18, said the convener. **PNS**

## Stalin elected DMK's legislature party leader, to meet Governor today

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

M K Stalin was unanimously elected as the leader of the DMK legislature party on Tuesday. This was announced by party general secretary Durai Murugan after a meeting of the newly elected MLAs of the DMK which met at party headquarters in Chennai.

With the election of Stalin as leader of the legislature party, stage is set for his swearing in as Chief Minister. Addressing the media, Murugan said Stalin would call on Governor Banwarilal Purohit on Wednesday morning to stake his claim to form the next government. The swearing in of Stalin and his council of ministers would be held on Friday at the Raj Bhavan, according to a DMK leader.

Meanwhile Chennai saw anti-social elements unleashing attack on Amma Restaurants across the metropolis. Video images of a group of youth destroying the boards displayed in front of Amma Restaurants selling iddli at Re 1 per piece went viral in the social media.

The women working in these restaurants, a dream project of late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa that sell idli, dosa upma and chappatis at Re one apiece were driven out of the restaurants by the youth. They destroyed the pictures of Jayalalithaa which were displayed in the eatery.

By Monday night the Public Works Department officials had removed all the pictures of Jayalalithaa that had adorned the walls of the Secretariat for the last decade.

# Maha Covid deaths rise to 891/day

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after a noticeable drop in the number of fatalities and infections, Maharashtra on Tuesday saw the number of deaths jump to 891 and new infections go up to 51,880, in a clear indication that it might take several more days for the second wave of pandemic to recede in the state.

Twenty four hours after the Covid-19 deaths dropped further to 567 and the daily infections came down 48,621, the situation once again turned grim in the state, as the number of deaths went up by 324 and the infections rose by 3259.

With 891 new deaths, the total number of deaths in the state climbed from 70851 to 71742. Similarly, with 51880 infections, the total number of cases rose from 47,71,022 to 48,22,902.

As 65,934 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March last year went up to 41,07,092. The recovery rate in the state for the first time in several days

rose from 84.7 per cent to 85.16 per cent.

The total "active cases" in the state dropped from 6,56,870 to 6,41,910 cases. The fatality rate in the state stood static at 1.49 per cent.

With 62 fresh deaths, the Covid-19 toll in Mumbai increased from 13,372 to 13,434, while the infected cases went up by 2554 to trigger a jump in the infections from 6,58,621 to 6,61,175.

While Pune accounted for a maximum 1,09,531 "active cases" in the state, Nagpur stood second 64,554, followed by Mumbai with 56,465, Nashik (45605), Thane (45,516), Chandrapur (28,597), Satara (20,744), Ahmednagar (20657), Solapur (20,448), Beed (14,030), Latur (13459), Buldhana (13,106), Jalgaon (12,556), Aurangabad (12,207), Bhandara (9476), Parbhani (9298), Osmanabad (8162), Gondia (8529, Nanded (7878) and Nandurbar (6421).

Of the 2,81,05,382 samples sent to laboratories, 48,22,902 have tested positive (17.16 per cent) for COVID-19 until Tuesday.

Currently, 39,36,323 people are in home quarantine while

30,356 people are in institu-

## Covid positivity rate dropped by 5%: Maharashtra Minister

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In what came as a silver lining in the cloud amid the continued surge in coronavirus fatalities and infections, the Covid-19 positivity rate on Tuesday dropped by five per cent in Maharashtra.

Talking to media persons here, State Health Minister Rajesh Health Rajesh Tope said, "If we analyse the (Covid-19) statistics on hand, we can see the positivity rate going down from 27 per cent to 22 per cent. It is a drop of 5 per cent which is good in the difficult times that we are passing through".

Tope said that of the 36 districts in the state, the number of infections had dropped in 15 districts and cities including Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, all in Konkan region, Nanded, Osmanabad, Latur and Aurangabad in Marathwada region, Nashik, Nandurbar and Dhule in north Maharashtra and Nagpur, Amravati,

tional quarantine.

Bhandara, Gondia and Chandrapur in Vidarbha region.

Tope however expressed concern over the increasing cases in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara in western Maharashtra.

"Already lockdown-type measures are in place. Wherever strengthening of norms is needed, the district administration takes a call," the minister said.

Alluding to the Maharashtra government's efforts to procure Russian vaccine Sputnik, Tope said the state administration was negotiating the price with Russia for the Sputnik vaccines "We have received a good response for our global tendering process," he said. Contesting the reports in a section of media that the testing had come down in the state, Tope said: "If you look at the overall testing in Maharashtra, we are undertaking 2.80 lakh tests per day".

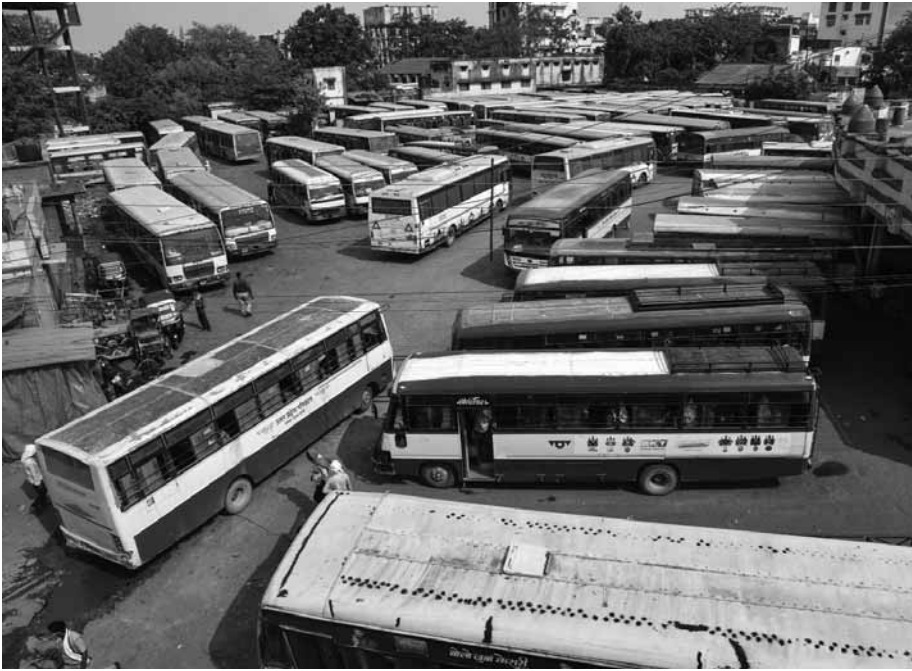
"Our overall percentage of RT-PCR tests is 65 per cent," the Minister added. **PTI**

## Gujarat sees 13,050 new cases, 131 deaths

Ahmedabad: Gujarat on Tuesday reported 13,050 fresh coronavirus positive cases and 131 fatalities, including 23 in Ahmedabad, taking the count of infections to 6,20,472 and the toll to 7,779, the state health department said.

At the same time, 12,121 patients were discharged during the day, raising the number of recoveries to 4,64,396, it said in a release. With this, the state's recovery rate has improved slightly to 74.85 per cent.

Gujarat is now left with 1,48,297 active cases, the department said. At 4,754, Ahmedabad reported the highest number of new cases, followed by 1,574 in Surat. Among other districts, Vadodara reported 943 infections, Jamnagar 727, Bhavnagar 472, Mehsana 459, Gandhinagar 309, Navsari 200, Kheda and Sabarkantha 198 each, Mahisagar 195, Junagadh 176 etc. **PTI**



Buses parked at a depot after a lockdown was imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19 in Varanasi on Tuesday

PTI

## Two LeT terrorists gunned down in Sopore

Jammu: A joint team of security forces Tuesday eliminated two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including a foreign terrorist in Nathipora area of Sopore in Baramulla district. The foreign terrorist identified as Hamas alias Asrar alias Sarria was active since March 2018 in North Kashmir. The local terrorist has been identified as Wasim Ahmed Lone resident of Hatlangoo Sopore.

According to police records, Hamas was also the mastermind of the Sopore terror incident along with terrorist Mudasir Pandit @Maaz dated 29/03/2021 in which two Municipal Councillors and a policeman got martyred. The operation was launched by the joint team of security forces Tuesday afternoon soon after receiving inputs about the presence of terrorists in the Nathipora area.

According to a police spokesman, "during the search operation as the presence of terrorists got ascertained they were given an opportunity to surrender, however, they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter".

In the ensuing encounter, two terrorists of LeT outfit were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter.

As per police records, both the killed terrorists were part of groups involved in several terror crimes including planning and executing attacks on security establishments. Moreover, killed terrorist Hamas

"Arms and ammunition including 01 AK-47 rifle, 01 Insas rifle & other incriminating materials were recovered from the site of encounter", police spokesman added. **PNS**

## J&K extends lockdown in 4 worst-hit dists till May 10

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Tuesday recorded more than 4600 fresh cases of coronavirus and 37 patients succumbed to the deadly virus taking the death toll due to Covid-19 to 2458 and the tally of active positive cases beyond 37,000 cases.

Keeping in view the grim situation on ground zero, the UT administration also extended the lockdown till May 10 across four worst affected districts of Srinagar, Baramulla, Budgam and Jammu.

Meanwhile resolving the issue of availability of oxygen cylinders to patients undergoing treatment in home isolation the UT administration clarified to ensure & facilitate that Oxygen is available to patients genuinely needing it, the government has decided that refilled cylinders will be provided to them after furnishing requisite prescription from a doctor to the control rooms set up at Director Industries Jammu or Divisional Commissioner COVID control room Kashmir.

According to the media bulletin, out of 4650 new positive cases of novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), 1463 were reported from Jammu division and 3187 from Kashmir division, Also 37 COVID-19 deaths have been reported, 25 from Jammu Division and 12 from Kashmir Division.

Moreover, 1878 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals including 631 from Jammu Division and 1247 from Kashmir Division. Srinagar Tuesday recorded 1311 fresh cases taking the tally of active positive cases to 10748.

Similarly, Jammu reported 598 cases taking the tally to 6750 active positive cases,

## US expert Fauci advises India to marshal all resources, including Army, to fight Covid surge

Washington: Terming the situation in India "very desperate", America's top public health expert Dr Anthony Fauci has suggested the Government marshal all its resources, including the armed forces, to immediately build makeshift field hospitals, and urged other countries to help with not only materials but also personnel. Following is the transcript of an exclusive interview of Dr Fauci, by PTI's Washington correspondent:

Q: Can you start with your assessment of the situation in India right now?

Fauci: I think it's quite obvious to everyone that the situation in India is extremely serious. I mean to have the level of infection that they're having right now is, is really quite. I would say. Let me get the right word so that we don't get taken out of context. It's something that is of the highest degree of series, when you have so many people getting infected and the lack of the capability to take adequate care of everyone.

When you have shortages of hospital beds and shortages of oxygen and shortages of supplies that

really becomes a very desperate situation which is the reason why we feel it's important for the rest of the world to help out, to the extent they can, and that India itself can be doing things that I think could address this very emergent situation.

Q: So, the two questions are how and in what way the world can help India right now. And secondly, what are the steps you think India should take to address this situation on a firefighting basis?

Fauci: Well, I think the world can help by supplying India with materials, and perhaps even personnel, but certainly, materials that they need to adequately address it, for example, as you will know.

The US is supplying oxygen support with an initial delivery of over 1,000 cylinders of oxygen, as well as oxygen concentrators and oxygen generation units.

The US is also getting personal protective equipment, as well as supplies to help the Indians, to be able to manufacture vaccines themselves, that would be needed in the rural, so sending rapid diagnostic tests. **PTI**



Police stops people as strict restrictions in night curfew to curb the spread of coronavirus in Agartala on Tuesday

PTI

# Paytm to set up oxygen plants in 12-13 cities

## Mahindra Group rolls out a free 'Oxygen on Wheels' (O2W)

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In two corporate initiatives aimed at boosting the availability of oxygen to cater to the increasing needs of Covid-19 patients, the Paytm Foundation on Tuesday announced that it would set up oxygen plants in 12 to 13 cities, while Mahindra Group rolled out a free "Oxygen on Wheels" (O2W) service to reach the life-saving gas from the manufacturers to the needy hospitals and medical centres.

Paytm Foundation, a philanthropic wing of India's leading digital financial services platform Paytm, announced that it would set up oxygen plants in cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune, Aligarh, Noida and Lucknow. "We will set up Oxygen plants at hospitals. They will cater to the oxygen needs for the patients in the

entire hospital," a Paytm spokesperson said.

Having sourced over 21,000 Oxygen Concentrators, Paytm Foundation said that it would send the life-saving gas to government hospitals, COVID care facilities, private hospitals, nursing homes and Resident Welfare Associations by mid May.

Oxygen plants are devices that produce medical oxygen from ambient air while supplying simultaneously the gas to multiple beds.

The company has currently raised Rs 10 crore from people across the country under its #OxygenForIndia initiative and has mirrored the donation amount making it a total contribution of Rs 20 Crore. Paytm is working in conjunction with other prominent organisations including Elevation Capital and the American Indian Foundation.

The donations collected under the initiative will be used to purchase Oxygen Concentrators and oxygen plants, costing between 50 lakh to 1 Crore each.

Paytm is currently between dialogues with the State Governments and hospitals for affirmation and approval to set up these oxygen plants. The oxygen plants will be provided free of cost to Government hospitals by Paytm Foundation.

"Before economic growth, we need to think about the sustainability of our human forces, the people. While Oxygen Concentrators are good for short term support, we figured out that oxygen plants could provide our healthcare system with larger support. Hence, we decided to direct our donations to build oxygen plants at government hospitals for free," a Paytm spokesperson said.

In a related development, Mahindra Group has rolled out a "Oxygen on Wheels" (O2W) initiative to increase the avail-

ability of oxygen across the country by linking oxygen producers with the hospitals and medical centres in dire need of it.

The O2W is launched in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Chakan, Nashik and Nagpur in Maharashtra with over 100 Mahindra vehicles ferrying oxygen, at the present.

Anish Shah, Managing Director & CEO, Mahindra Group said that discussions were ongoing with the civic administration and government departments to extend this free service to other cities as well, most importantly to Delhi, which is facing an acute shortage.

"Given the overwhelming response in the past 48 hours, we are seriously considering extending this initiative to deliver oxygen cylinders directly to patients' homes," Shah said.

Helmed by Mahindra Logistics, a Mahindra Group company that is partnering

with the administration and local government bodies on this project, the O2W initiative

will involve a large fleet of vehicles and an integrated command and control center.

## GPS devices fitted to 250 O2 tankers

Mumbai: In a joint initiative by the Maharashtra government's Transport Department and state unit of the Federation of Automobile Dealers Association (FADA), GPS devices have been fitted to 250 Oxygen tankers to monitor their movement across the state.

In a development that came after FADA State Chairperson Amar Jatin Sheth met Transport Commissioner Dr Avinash Dhakane, 250 Oxygen tankers were fitted with GPS devices enabling the transport department to monitor it on a single dashboard. The dashboard has been set up in the Transport Commissioner's office and is being monitored 24x7.

The Motherboard (MOBO) has the necessary technological know-how and expertise to deliver the same in a time bound manner. At a cost of Rs 10 lakh, the FADA set up a MOBO which has the technical knowhow and expertise"

We have tried to do our best as this is a small contribution towards enabling the transport department to monitor oxygen tankers movement on a single dashboard," FADA President Vinkesh Gulati said.

Dr Dhakane said that with GPS facility the tankers would move faster and help save more lives.



Police shift violators of Covid-19 safety guidelines to institutional quarantine amid a countrywide spike in coronavirus cases, in Jaipur on Tuesday

PTI



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Sticky wicket

The SP, and even the Independents, are breaching the BJP's citadel in rural UP

The political wind blowing across Uttar Pradesh (UP) may not be very soothing for the ruling BJP. The results of the recent panchayat elections give the first indication of the emergence of a challenge for the saffron outfit in rural UP. The Opposition, led by the Samajwadi Party and Independents, has made significant inroads in the village politics of the State. Though Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath still remains well-entrenched and the BJP continues to enjoy enormous appeal among the masses, one has to keep a close eye on the change in popular perception about the Government in the wake of the COVID-19 surge as it can pose a serious challenge to Yogi's bid to retain power in 2022. Both the BJP and its rivals are claiming victory in the polls, but reports trickling in from the counting booths clearly indicate that the saffron outfit has not done as well as its leaders might have planned while plunging the State into such a massive exercise in the dreaded Corona era. The panchayat elections were being treated as a referendum on the Yogi Government's work. These elections are not contested on any party symbol, but the BJP named its candidates. This was done with the belief that its candidates would win the elections and then the party would go to town claiming its hegemony in rural politics. Sadly for the BJP, the Independents stole the march in the *gram sabha*



polls while the SP exceeded expectations in the district panchayat elections.

Many relatives of the BJP leaders lost to the SP or Independents. Take the case of Lucknow where Sarita, the daughter-in-law of BJP MP Kaushal Kishore lost the district panchayat election in Mohanlalganj. Kishore's wife Jaya Devi is the MLA from Malihabad. Vijay Laxmi, the wife of SP MLA Ambrish, won this segment. The reports from other districts like Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Ayodhya, Kanpur and Kannauj, too, do not augur well for the BJP. In Ayodhya, of the 40 District Development Council seats, the SP won 22, the BJP eight, the BSP four and the rest of the seats went to Independents. In Varanasi, the BJP failed to reach double digits while the SP won 17 seats. In Etawah, the SP swept the polls, winning 18 seats. In Mainpuri, Sandhya Yadav, the niece of SP patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav who contested on the BJP's ticket, lost to the SP-backed candidate by 1,905 votes. In Mathura, the BJP-supported Chanda Devi lost to Devati, an Independent, by over 12,000 votes. The panchayat elections are important as they help gauge the influence of political parties in the rural areas. It is believed that a *gram pradhan* can sway 10-15 per cent votes in any *gram sabha* while the BDC and DDC members can influence the block and district voters, respectively. The DDC chairman is considered the 'first person' of the district. The poll outcome shows that the BJP will have to revise its political strategy while Akhilesh Yadav needs to strengthen his party organisation to replicate this success in the 2022 Assembly elections.

## PICTALK



The Alster Swans are accompanied by boats towards the Outer Alster area in Hamburg, Germany

PTI

## The bubble bursts

Finally, COVID-19 has breached the IPL franchises' 'safe and secure' bio bubble

So, the ongoing edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) has been suspended indefinitely. Officially, they tell us, the reason is that the bio-secure bubble was inexplicably breached and then, before we knew it, the cricketers and support staff started falling prey to the accused virus one after another. Since the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is quite concerned about the "health and wellbeing" of the IPL players, it was left with no option but to suspend the matches. Well, cutting clear of all the jargon that is being thrown at us, and more of it will come our way in the coming days, here's a simpler, possible narrative. The greed of the cricket authorities managing the show — namely the BCCI, the various State cricket Boards and the IPL governing council — is mainly responsible for the current fiasco. Remember, even when the situation wasn't dire last year, they arranged for the matches to be held in the UAE and even roped in a company, renowned globally for its expertise in creating and maintaining bio-secure bubbles.



So, especially this year when the situation has rapidly worsened in terms of the exponentially rising cases and the healthcare personnel and equipment are stretched

thin, what was the need to organise the tourney in India? And that, too, without re-engaging the bio bubble firm which had performed its duties last year with aplomb and finesse. Only because the cricket authorities wanted to save cheap pennies, even though it was crystal clear even before the start of the tournament that COVID-19's second wave, with its more virulent and burgeoning strains and mutants, was a definite risk to everybody associated with the cash-rich league. Another point: Just as they now started contemplating moving all the machinery and paraphernalia from Ahmedabad and Delhi back to the Wankhede and DY Patil stadia in Mumbai, why weren't the authorities content to host all the matches in Mumbai and Pune in the first place; something that would have helped the teams avoid air travel and significantly cut their exposure risk? But, no, the State cricket associations also needed to be kept in good humour with a slice of the profits' pie! Hopefully, the cricket authorities won't plan to resume the IPL in a hurry. In this hour, when our nation needs all possible help from all quarters, let's not get busy listening to the tinkle of silver and neglecting human life. Basically, let it not boil down just to the lure of lucre.

## The Myanmar crisis lingers on

The General has to decide whether to escalate the conflict or seek a temporary pact through a mediated political dialogue



ASHOK K MEHTA

The most effective means of foiling a coup is a counter-coup. In Myanmar, that will not happen as the military is rock solid and led by an officer corps that considers itself elite and the guardian of Myanmar's core values.

As the coup in Myanmar enters its fourth month with multiple centres of resistance taking root, it will take more than an Asean summit and its five-point consensus agreement to unlock the impasse. Senior Gen Ming Aung Hlaing will not ride into the sunset anytime soon. Signs of a third front, after Kachins in the north and Karens in the east have battled central forces, are developing at Meiktila in the central plains after rocket attacks struck the military base there. Meanwhile, the protestors have taken to flash marches that will enable people to disappear before confrontation with the police. The Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) activists are asking people to start non-cooperation campaign by stopping payment of electricity, taxes and repayment of loans.

In its 73-year history, the Myanmar Army has never fought foreigners but its own people in internal wars. The coup has marked the battle lines between an Army led by the Burman-dominated officer corps and a range of opposition forces — the CDM consisting of youth aged 20 or below who have tasted a decade of democracy; the Committee representing National Parliament that has morphed into a National Unity Government. This organised resistance has the potential to explode into a civil war when some of the 20 Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) like Karen or Kachin join the NUG to challenge the Tatmadaw, the primary centre of power. A call has been made by a Karen, General Baw Kyaw Heh, to all ethnic groups to unite to fight the Burmese military dictatorship. This could be a game changer.

The General has to decide whether to escalate the conflict into a bloodier phase or seek a



*modus vivendi* through a mediated political dialogue. Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy had won a clear and outright political victory trouncing the military-backed USDP. It seems inconceivable that the NLD's victory can be set aside by the military on grounds of fraudulent voting. It will be unconstitutional. Can the clock be set back to January 31?

Hlaing is from the Army's elite 77 Light Division. He was the mastermind of the ruthless operations against the Rohingyas in Rakhine in 2017 where this Division was employed. In the 1988 coup, 77 LID was used and 3,500 protestors were killed. But that was 30 years ago. The General's aim is for Myanmar to return to 2011-16 when the USDP was in power and when he took over as the C-in-C in 2011. He does not have much time if he is to return Myanmar to his vision of a disciplined democracy. This goal is a bridge too far even for the Tatmadaw to achieve, especially in 2021. The General has to weigh in the consequences of the coup and preserving the gains the military has secured in the 2008 Constitution. By

THE AIM OF SENIOR GEN MING AUNG HLAING IS FOR MYANMAR TO RETURN TO 2011-16 WHEN THE USDP WAS IN POWER AND WHEN HE TOOK OVER AS THE C-IN-C IN 2011. HE DOES NOT HAVE MUCH TIME IF HE IS TO RETURN MYANMAR TO HIS VISION OF A DISCIPLINED DEMOCRACY

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## KARNATAKA HAS LOST THE COVID BATTLE

Sir — Karnataka's fight against COVID-19 has faced many pitfalls right from the start, with Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa failing to rein in his warring Ministers during the initial days. Then his inability, along with that of the Ministers concerned to evolve a strategy to counter the second wave, explains the lack of strong political leadership in this hour of crisis. Authorities insist that the deaths in Chamara Nagar were not linked to non-availability of oxygen and that the deceased had comorbidities. But the fact remains that all the dead were on oxygen support and it is unlikely that they all succumbed to ailments within 24 hours.

The Government has repeatedly assured that there is no scarcity of medical oxygen but the ground reality is completely different. Many deaths are being reported from across the State due to oxygen shortage, and the hospitals and common man face immense difficulty in procuring oxygen cylinders and concentrators. While Kerala exports surplus oxygen to other States, it is baffling that Karnataka lacks basic facilities like ICU beds, COVID Care Centres, vital medicines or vaccines. The States like Karnataka are responsible for the worsening of COVID-19 crisis — the deaths have become mere numbers for the insensitive politicians.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

## BENGAL VIOLENCE IS UNFORTUNATE

Sir — It's quite unfortunate that violence erupted in West Bengal in the aftermath of the announcement of the Assembly election results in which at least eight people have died. The BJP said that six of its workers were among those killed and that the TMC goons attacked and vandalised several of its offices, including one in Nandigram. Political animosity is the cause of this bloodshed and it's shameful, to say the least. Such incidents are a blot on our democracy and make us wonder whether we are living in a civilised democratic society or a lawless State ruled by barbarism.

That deadly weapons were used in the clashes is a cause for concern. The goonda raj should not be re-established since

## Make vaccine prices uniform



In the absence of a regulated vaccine policy by the Government, the country is in chaos and uncertainty. The Centre should have framed a national policy on vaccine procurement and pricing that should have been applicable across India so as to effectively manage the vaccination drive. Currently, the bulk of the responsibility of vaccination has been passed on to the States and private players. Further, procurement of vaccines from a limited number of manufacturers can result in confusion and conflict of interest among the States and private players. The manufacturers will be lured into maximising the profits by selling the

many more innocent people could lose their lives in the coming days. At a time when the pandemic has devastated the country, political parties should set aside their differences and help the people win the war against COVID-19. We must not fight among ourselves but against the virus. Further, as Mamata Banerjee has been given a fresh mandate, she should take the State towards development and shun violence. All political parties should join hands to mitigate the sufferings of the people.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

## STOP BLACK MARKETEERING OF DRUGS

Sir — During the ongoing second wave of the pandemic, the non-availability of COVID drugs and oxygen is the main issue the country is facing. Mainly due to the hoarding of drugs like Remdesivir, their prices have skyrocketed in the black market. Long queues

vaccines to the highest bidder rather than the State Governments. The bigger States may get preference over the smaller ones.

Further, the Supreme Court has called upon the Centre to revisit its vaccine procurement policy, stating it would "prima facie result in a detriment to the right to public health which is an integral element of Article 21 of the Constitution". In early 2020, it was well known to Indian manufacturers that excessive dependence on a single source could prove to be disastrous. But we have failed to learn valuable lessons. Sadly, our active pharmaceuticals ingredients and raw materials still come from China and America, due to which Indian drug manufacturers are facing adverse circumstances. The idea of allowing other vaccine manufacturers to expand the production capacity by invoking compulsory licence of vaccine technology can cater to the needs of a large and populous country like India. For instance, countries like America, England and Israel have successfully rolled out vaccines in a short span of time as a case in point.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

can be seen at the places selling these in black. Black marketers are charging exorbitant prices from hapless citizens. Though there are contradictory opinions on the efficacy of this drug, hospitals do prescribe it due to its purported benefit on improving mortality.

It is inhuman and criminal if intermediaries exploit the patients at such critical times. The Government should curb it by promulgating an ordinance immediately, categorising hoarding of any medicine or oxygen as culpable homicide amounting to murder, and make the applicable punishment valid for these offences. Considering the gravity of the situation, the Supreme Court may also consider passing *suo moto* orders.

M Raghuraman | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

travelling out of Myanmar, attending the Asean summit, meeting UN envoy Christine Burgene and returning to his citadel, Hlaing has scored a diplomatic victory. Never before has a coup leader been treated with such respect and circumspection. Had he been in Europe, he would have been arrested for alleged genocide against the Rohingyas.

The widespread violence has threatened the economy and encouraged criminal activity. In the 1950s, Burma's per capita income was higher than Thailand's and Malaysia's but today it is at the bottom of the Asean GDP. People have been fleeing from townships like Mandalay, Bago and Yangon into the interiors. A new transnational criminal activity hub — comprising small arms, narcotics and wildlife, coupled with an underground financial system reminiscent of the Golden Triangle of yore — has come up. It is a shame that a country which was the hot favourite of foreign investment and growth is suddenly moving in reverse gear. It is estimated the economy will shrink by 20 per cent in 2021-22. The latest UNDP report paints a grim

picture: That 12 million people could fall into dire economic strait as businesses remain shuttered in a standoff between the junta and the CDM. The hardest hit will be the poor urban populations and the female heads of households will be the worst hit. India has learnt to play ball with more than one power centre in Myanmar. It has welcomed the Asean initiative and will continue to play a constructive role in resolving the current situation through steadfast support of the democratic process. The end of this political process — when it is started, and a UN Civil Protection Force is accepted by the General — will mark a political milestone in conflict resolution. Some Asean leaders are privately suggesting keeping Myanmar out of the grouping till the coup is undone. The consensus brief is either the first step towards reining in the Generals or, more likely, letting them buy time.

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

## SOUNDBITE

A murder case should be initiated against Arvind Kejriwal and his Government for not giving Delhi a robust healthcare system. They even did not complete those hospitals which were initiated by the previous Government.

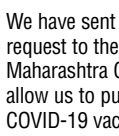


Former Congress MP — Sandeep Dikshit



The Senate Republicans will not support the mega \$4.1 trillion spending package proposed by President Joe Biden.

US Senate minority leader — Mitch McConnell



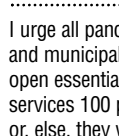
We have sent a request to the Maharashtra CM to allow us to purchase COVID-19 vaccines for 30,000 registered members of the film industry's federation in Mumbai at the earliest.

Filmmaker — Aditya Chopra



Our focus will be on maintaining our fitness levels and avoiding any injuries in our practice sessions.

Indian hockey player — Lalit Upadhyay



I urge all panchayats and municipalities to open essential services 100 per cent or, else, they will face trouble and so will the people of the State. The people will indulge in panic buying.

Goa Chief Minister — Pramod Sawant





## FIRST COLUMN

## CHARITY IS NOT A ONE-STOP SOLUTION

India can encourage philanthropy by incentivising it on a tax and individual level and offering tax deductibility



ANURADHA PRASAD

Philanthropy is not a novel concept in India as Indians most often part with wealth in the name of faith, charity or nation-building. A 2020 Charities Aid Foundation report recounts that “the most popular causes for donation remain the same as previous years: Helping the poor (54 per cent), supporting religious organisations (51 per cent) and supporting children (49 per cent),” in India. Unfortunately, charity in our nation is largely either faith-based, or is a response to a natural disaster or relief effort like the current COVID-19 pandemic. However, it remains insufficient for addressing the longstanding social issues. In this context, philanthropic capital from the private sector has become a lifeline for the development sector over the last few years. According to a 2021 Bain-Dasra Report, private-sector funding was about ₹64,000 crore in 2020, which is almost 23 per cent more than the previous year. The money primarily comes from foreign donors, corporate entities, retail (or crowdfunding), high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) and families. The report highlights that HNW contributions



account for a quarter of all funding. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) donations account for 28 per cent and retail investors or everyday charity account for another 28 per cent. The remaining 20 per cent comes from family philanthropy — the biggest source of growth — that accounts for nearly two-thirds of the increase in funding since 2019. With these numbers in place, it’s not surprising that non-profits in India have directed their energies into unlocking philanthropic capital coming from HNWIs and families. After all, the number of ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWIs) in India will grow 73 per cent in the next five years. It is estimated that the number of UHNWIs will double by 2024. While India prides itself on being home to more than 200 billionaires, the country has also been in the news for topping the world-wide income gap indices.

So, where does philanthropy feature in the larger scheme of things? The easy answer would be that the growing wealth (of a few) in India should automatically translate into more charity. Unfortunately, the reality is not so simple. India still ranks very low on philanthropic giving in comparison to other countries. As per the ‘World Giving Index 2019’, “India was the least generous of the seven South Asian countries in the index, behind its neighbours Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.”

In India, particularly, the concept of giving is an altruistic and value-driven act, rather than an obligation or economically-incentivised. Interestingly, the developed world — particularly the US, has seen a rise in demand for a progressive tax regime by the HNWIs and UHNWIs. Walt Disney and Co heiress Abigail Disney, former BlackRock Inc. managing director Morris Pearl, and Danish-Iranian entrepreneur Djaffar Shalchi are petitioning for higher taxes on the rich to help pay for the billions in new Government programmes made necessary by the pandemic. Alternatively, in India, there has been a shortfall in the overall collection of taxes by the Indian Government.

Another effective method to increase charity is by incentivising it on a tax and individual level. For larger philanthropic donations, the Government can offer tax deductibility. For instance, in the face of the COVID crisis, the US Government increased their allowance for deductible donations of any individual’s annual gross income to 100 per cent from 60 per cent the previous year. Creating a national charity platform or offering major tax breaks for donations is an effective impetus for charity. Perhaps a crucial step would be Government-supported recognition and honour for citizens, incentivised charity, changing the culture and a progressive tax regime.

*(The writer is founder and director, India Leaders for Social Sector. The views expressed are personal.)*

# Fallout of the US troop drawdown will be big

While the Afghans will have to prepare themselves for a possible civil war, the global community must get ready for a renewed and more vigorous threat from extremist Islam



ANIL GUPTA



THE GOODWILL OF THE AFGHANS EARNED BY INDIA SHOULD ALSO BE EXPLOITED BY NEW DELHI TO SOFTEN THE TALIBAN APPROACH TO US. THE EMERGING SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD DEFINITELY TEST OUR POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC METTLE IN THE DAYS TO COME

*The author is a Jammu-based veteran, political commentator, columnist, security and strategic analyst. The views expressed are personal.*

Taliban see themselves as a government-in-waiting, speaks volumes of their plans to overthrow the current regime after the Americans leave. They have already decided to rename the country as the ‘Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.’

“This is jihad, it is worship. We don’t do it for power but for Allah and His law. To bring Sharia to this country. Whoever stands against us we will fight against them,” says Haji Hekmat, Taliban’s shadow mayor in Balkh District. The statement reflects the mindset of the Taliban leadership. However, some elements feel that with the passing of time and change of mindset among many Muslim countries, a group of moderates has also emerged among the Taliban. How much they would be able to influence the new Government or how the new Islamic Government will accommodate them, only time will tell.

India has both, strategic and internal security issues with the American abandonment of Afghanistan. While India’s arch rival in the region, Pakistan seems to be in a win-win situation, India will have to face many challenges. Though,

New Delhi has been included, at Washington’s insistence, in the United Nations’ supervised talks for ensuring intra-Afghan peace, it is not going to make much of a difference, as any positive outcome of the talks is almost ruled out. As and when the Taliban assume power, Pakistan would emerge as a major

player.

While Pakistan will not like any Indian influence in Afghanistan, New Delhi can ill-afford to lose all the goodwill and strategic leverage it has gained through huge investments in its economic uplift. Afghanistan is as strategically important to India as it is to Pakistan.

The major threat that would emerge to India, is the likelihood of the situation as it prevailed in the 1990s and early 2000s in relation to jihadi terror. A pliant Government in Afghanistan will allow Pakistan to continue to adhere to its policy of using terror as an instrument of State policy. To avoid international pressure and the fear of watchdogs, it is likely to shift the terror infrastructure to the badlands of Afghanistan.

Jihadi terrorists who would become surplus to the internal need in Afghanistan may well be diverted across the border by Pakistan, as in the past. The security of the infrastructure built by India, including the alternate road route via the Sistan Baluchistan of Iran and, the Indian personnel deployed there, would be another major concern.

To ensure that the gains made by India are not buried along with the anticipated change in regime post-September, New Delhi needs to formulate and put in place a robust response based on a long-term strategy. Without losing time the Government must appoint a special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation with the mandate to

open communication channels and negotiations with all stakeholders, including the Taliban and the IS. Putting boots on the ground has been opposed by India till now and hopefully New Delhi will stick to its stance hereafter. A greater outreach to strengthen the Afghan forces, including training and equipping them, must continue with increased emphasis on capacity-building.

India would need to leverage its good relations with Iran and Russia to keep Pakistan and Turkey away from harming our interests. The emerging threat from radical Islamists will have to be highlighted to China, since it is very sensitive to such threats in its Xinxiang province.

The goodwill of the Afghans earned by India should also be exploited by New Delhi to soften the Taliban approach to us. The emerging situation in Afghanistan would definitely test our political and diplomatic mettle in the days to come.

While the Afghans will have to prepare themselves for a possible civil war, the global community must get ready for a renewed and more vigorous threat from extremist Islam. The epicentre of the new global ‘Great Game’ may be shifting to the Indo-Pacific or the South Caucasus, but Afghanistan will continue to be the epicentre of global jihadi terror, rejuvenated and resurrected. The US may abandon Afghanistan but it would not be able to abandon its war on terror.

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT

**AFTER A DISCUSSION WITH THE ASSOCIATE MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS, IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO IMPLEMENT THE LOCKDOWN IN BIHAR TILL MAY 15.**  
—BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER  
NITISH KUMAR



**AT LEAST ONE ORDER HAS BEEN COMPLIED WITH. WE HAVE ALL FAILED. ALL OF US FEEL ASHAMED FOR WHAT WE HAVE DONE.**  
—ADDITIONAL JUDGE, PATNA HIGH COURT  
JUSTICE CHAKRADHARI SHARAN SINGH

# Breach of fundamental duties led to the spread of Corona

The top court has asserted that under Article 47, the State shall regard the improvement of public health as among its primary duties. Here, it seems to have failed us

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stipulated certain public health and social measures to contain the spread of the Coronavirus after taking into account the levels of COVID-19 transmission. One of the major measures stipulated is to maintain social distancing and avoid congregations.

There is an obligation on the State to adhere to the measures stipulated by the health watchdog which has also played a vital role in eradicating small pox, polio and so on. As the world, particularly India, witnesses an unprecedented health emergency, it is vital to adhere to the COVID-protocols. Historically, the second wave of any pandemic has proven to be more intensive and dangerous than the first one and India is learning this bitter truth the hard way.

The State has an obligation



CHITTARVU RAGHU

*The writer is a senior advocate in the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana High Courts. The views expressed are personal.*

to protect the health of the people. In this context, the State has to regulate all social and religious events which involve congregations so as to prevent the spread of the virus. Apart from the State, every individual has an obligation to regulate his/her conduct and see to it that their behaviour does not result in any adverse impact on society. We Indians have failed in both these aspects.

Permitting road shows and massive rallies during the conduct of the Assembly elections in various States, particularly West Bengal and allowing the conduct of the Kumbh Mela at Haridwar in the middle of the Coronavirus outbreak clearly demonstrates the same. Consequently on April 15, Uttarakhand recorded its highest upsurge in COVID-19 cases. The Centre was fully conscious of the fact that such large congregations would definitely

spread the virus, but failed to prevent the same. The State ought to have realised that the “Right to Life” guaranteed under the Indian Constitution overrides the rights conferred by the Constitution in relation to a religious activity.

Article 21 of the Constitution mandates that no person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. The Supreme Court has held that the “Right to Life” guaranteed under Article 21 includes within its ambit the right to health and medical care. Article 47 a directive principle of State policy stresses on the improvement of public health and so on.

The apex court had expanded the concept of “Right to Life.” It was held that it derives its life breath from the directive principles of State policy. When the constitution-



al right to manage religious affairs came up for discussion before the drafting committee, the Chairman had proposed to make the said right, subject to public order, morality and health. It was accepted without any debate. This proves the vision of the founding fathers of the Constitution. But we are failing miserably to act in a proper perspective to protect the constitutional rights being enjoyed by us. Lack of preven-

tive measures and the callousness of the general citizens reflect the same.

The State cannot remain a silent spectator when massive congregations, either political or religious, are being organised, which will result in exacerbating the health emergency that we are currently facing. In this context it’s also relevant to examine Article 26 of the Constitution. It contemplates that the freedom to manage religious affairs is subject to public order, morality and health. Therefore, it is not an absolute right. It is conditioned by Article 21 of the Constitution when it relates more particularly in relation to the aspect of public health.

We failed in adhering to the social distancing norms which is a major cause for the spread of the virus. Mahatma Gandhi had said on the aspect of a person’s duty towards society that

“the true source of right is duty.” If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If we neglect our duties and run after rights, they will elude us.

The Supreme Court, too, in the Minerva Mills Vs Union of India case, held that there may be a rule which imposes an obligation on an individual or authority and yet it may not be enforceable in a court of law and, therefore, not give rise to a corresponding right in another person. But it would still be a legal rule because it prescribes a norm of conduct to be followed by such an individual or authority.

The law may provide a mechanism of enforcement. A rule imposing an obligation or duty would not cease to be a rule of law because there is no regular judicial or quasi-judicial machinery to enforce its command. Such a rule would exist despite any problem relating to

its enforcement. Otherwise the conventions of the Constitution and even rules of international law would no longer be liable to be regarded as rules of law.

This shows that an individual plays a vital role in a State and its welfare. Fundamental duties were introduced in part IV A by the 42nd amendment and were based on the recommendations of the Swaran Singh Committee.

The Supreme Court in the Javed Vs State of Haryana case, held that fundamental rights are not to be read in isolation. They have to be read along with directive principles of State policy and fundamental duties enshrined in Article 51A. The top court also asserted that under Article 47, the State shall regard the improvement of public health as among its primary duties. Here, it seems to have failed us.



# China’s UN envoy: Myanmar violence could lead to civil war

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

China's UN ambassador on Monday urged stronger diplomatic efforts to resolve the confrontation in Myanmar since the Feb. 1 military coup, warning that further violence could lead to a chaotic situation "and even a civil war".

Zhang Jun also warned that "any wrong handling" might lead to further tension in Myanmar.

The UN Security Council on Friday strongly backed calls by Southeast Asian nations for an immediate cessation of violence and talks as a first step toward a solution following the military coup in Myanmar that ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her party and reversed years of slow progress toward democracy.

The council again demanded the restoration of democracy and the release of

all detainees including Suu Kyi and condemned the use of violence against peaceful protesters and the deaths of hundreds of civilians.

Zhang, who described Myanmar as "a friendly neighbour", strongly backed diplomatic efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations known as ASEAN and by UN special envoy for Myanmar Christine Schraner Burgener, and expressed hope they would produce results. He said "China is not in favor of imposing sanctions."

"We should really be creating a more favourable environment for bringing the country back to normal and finding a political solution through dialogues among the relevant political parties within the constitutional and legal framework," he said.

Myanmar for five decades had languished under strict



Anti-coup protesters flash the three-finger salute during a rally in Yangon on Tuesday

AP

military rule that led to international isolation and sanctions. As the generals loosened their grip, culminating in Suu

Kyi's rise to leadership in 2015 elections, the international community responded by lifting most sanctions and pour-

ing investment into the country.

The coup took place following November elections,

which Suu Kyi's party won overwhelmingly and the military contends was marred by fraud.

"It's mainly an issue relating to the difference on the election," Zhang said. "The political parties should be able to find a solution on that. So that's why China prefers ... More diplomatic efforts."

"That's why China is working very closely with the relevant parties urging them really to refrain from going extreme, avoiding violence, avoiding casualties, and try to find a solution with dialogue. That's why the council is also now giving full support to the diplomatic efforts of ASEAN," he said.

Zhang was asked whether China was concerned that Myanmar could descend into civil war, given that its military is fighting the Kachin and Karen ethnic minorities, which

maintain their own armed forces, while also confronting pro-democracy protesters — amid reports that civilians, mainly students, are now receiving training in the use of weapons in ethnic areas.

"We do have similar concerns," Zhang said. "We do believe that with diplomatic efforts we can avoid the further escalation of the tension."

"With further escalation of the tension, there will be more confrontation, and with more confrontation there will be more violence, and with more violence there will be more casualties, and then we may go further down the wrong direction," he warned. "It may also mean a chaotic situation in Myanmar and even a civil war."

Zhang said China is also very concerned about the humanitarian impact of the crisis, citing UN envoy Schraner Burgener who pointed to more

poor people losing jobs, civil servants refusing to work to protest the junta, and a brewing crisis of families in and around the main city Yangon "pushed to the edge" for food, going into debt and trying to survive.

In her briefing to the council Friday, obtained by The Associated Press, she also cited a World Food Programme report that the combination of existing poverty, the COVID-19 pandemic and the political crisis have led to a sharp rise in "hunger and desperation," and that within six months up to 3.4 million more people will suffer from hunger, particularly those in urban areas.

In again urging a diplomatic solution, Zhang warned that with further deterioration "definitely a humanitarian disaster or crisis will be inevitable so we do need to try our best to avoid that"

## Flurry of diplomatic contacts fuel Iran deal speculation

AP ■ WASHINGTON

A flurry of diplomatic contacts and reports of major progress suggest that indirect talks between the US and Iran may be nearing an agreement. That's despite efforts by US officials to play down chances of an imminent deal that would bring Washington and Tehran back into compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal.

With the negotiations in Vienna on hiatus, the US and Britain on Monday denied Iranian reports that any agreement was at hand with Iran for a swap of American and British prisoners. Such an exchange could be a confidence-building measure to revive the nuclear deal.

A US return to the deal would be the biggest and most controversial foreign policy initiative in the early months of Joe

Biden's presidency. It would revive a deal that top Biden aides put together during their years in the Obama administration, only to see President Donald Trump pull out and try to prevent the US from ever returning. Rejoining it — and making the concessions required to do so — would enrage Republicans and likely unsettle Israel and Gulf Arab allies.

Even as Secretary of State Antony Blinken and British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab rejected the prisoner swap reports at a news conference Monday in London, senior American diplomats were in the Middle East meeting Gulf Arab leaders. And two of the nuclear deal's biggest proponents in Congress — Democratic Sens. Chris Coons and Chris Murphy — were touring the region.

Those discussions follow a week of top-level meetings in Washington between Biden; his national security adviser, Jake Sullivan; Blinken; his deputy, Wendy Sherman; special Iran envoy Rob Malley; and others with the head of Israel's spy agency and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's top national security aide.

The Israelis are adamantly opposed to any US rapprochement with Iran, which they regard as an existential threat to the Jewish state. At least three separate meetings were held with the Israelis last week, including one Friday with Mossad chief Yossi Cohen at which Biden made an appearance. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Cohen was briefed on the Vienna discussions "and the progress being made there."

## China: US should push N Korea diplomacy, not pressure

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

China's US ambassador expressed hope on Monday that President Joe Biden's policy toward North Korea will give more importance to diplomacy and dialogue instead of "extreme pressure" to try to stop Pyongyang's nuclear program and denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

Zhang Jun said China also hopes the review of US policy will give equal emphasis to both the nuclear issue and the peace and security issue.

"Without tackling the security and the peace issue properly, definitely we do not have the right environment for our efforts for the denuclearization," he said.

The White House said last Friday that Biden plans to veer from the approaches of his two most recent predecessors as he tries to stop North Korea's

nuclear program, rejecting both Donald Trump's deeply personal effort to win over leader Kim Jong Un and Barack Obama's more hands-off approach.

Press secretary Jen Psaki announced administration officials had completed the review of US policy toward North Korea but did not detail its findings.

The Biden administration appeared to signal it is trying to set the stage for incremental progress, in which denuclearization steps by the North would be met with corresponding actions, including sanctions relief, from the United States.

There was no mention of US security guarantees for North Korea or a formal end to the Korean War, both of which had been demanded by the North and considered by the Trump team as part of a larger package.

## Have 'basic manners': China tells top Philippines diplomat after abusive tweet over SCS claims

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Tuesday asked the Philippines to stop the "megaphone diplomacy" over its claims on a reef in the disputed South China Sea and said its officials should have "basic manners" and stop insulting remarks after Manila's top diplomat termed Beijing an "ugly oaf".

Reports from Manila on Tuesday said the Philippines foreign secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr has apologised for using an obscene phrase, demanding China to get out of the Whitsun Reef which Beijing claims as its own.

The Philippines news portal GMA News reported that Locsin Jr has apologised to the Chinese government for spewing profanity in a tweet blasting the presence of Chinese ships in the West Philippine

Sea.

In a separate tweet Locsin Jr, while referring to the news of his apology said, "To my friend (Chinese Foreign Minister) Wang Yi only. Nobody else".

Locsin's outburst came after Manila urged Beijing to recall hundreds of Chinese vessels lingering near Whitsun Reef, part of the South China Sea claimed by both the countries.

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said in a statement on Monday that "China has no law enforcement rights in these areas...The unauthorised and lingering presence of these vessels is a blatant infringement of Philippine sovereignty".

China claims most of the South China Sea. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims.

In a strict rejoinder to Locsin Jr, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin in a statement here said facts have proven time and time again that "megaphone diplomacy" can only undermine mutual trust rather than change reality.

"We hope that certain individuals from the Philippine side will mind basic manners and act in ways that suit his status," Wang said.

He made the remarks in response to a query about a statement issued by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs on Monday, which protested against Chinese Coast Guard vessels' patrols in waters off the Huangyan Island, the Chinese name for Scarborough Shoal.

Wang said the Huangyan Island is China's territory and its adjacent waters are under China's jurisdiction.

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Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer, invites E-Tender bids (Single Packet Open Tender) from Eligible and Experienced Contractors for the following Work.  
**Name of Work:** Comprehensive Maintenance Contract of Signalling and Telecom assets in Stations/Block sections of Jaynagar- Kurtha Railway Line Section of Nepal Railway, including Interlocked LC gates, Manpower deployment and Hiring of vehicles for One Year. **E-Tender Notice No:** KR/CO/SG/Tender/01/21-22, **Dated:** 04/05/2021. **Last Date & Time for Submission of Bids:** 04/06/2021 up to 16:00 hrs. **Estimated Cost of Work:** INR 1,82,31,223/- (Excluding GST etc). For further details please contact Corporate Office: Belapur Bhavan, Sector 11, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai 400614. Tel: 022-27572015-18. Fax: 022-27572420 or visit: [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**  


General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male namely **Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, was found on 28.04.2021 at Angoori Bagh Near Nagpal Dairy.** In this regard **DD No. 54A U/S 174 CrPc,Dt. 28/04/2021** has been lodged at Police Station, Kotwali, Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:

**Name: Unknown, Age: 60-62 Years, Height: 5.5", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Build: Thin, Wearing: White Shirt and Blue Colour Lungi.**

If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.

**SHO**  
**Police Station, Kotwali, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-23977100, 8750870121**

**DP/1153/N/2021**

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
Administrative Building, Sector-8, Noida-201301 (U.P.)  
Website : [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
E-Tenders are invited from firms / contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these website for any changes/amendments / corrigendum etc.  
(A) 1. **06/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/21-22**, Strengthening of Water Supply (Reboring of Tube Well No. - 1/67 and 02/67), Noida. (Erection of New Boring, S/F Pumping Plant, Making Foundation, C/o Pump House, P/L Rising Main and Connection for Tube Well) Noida. **Rs. 79.28 Lacs**  
2. **07/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/21-22**, Strengthening of Water Supply (Reboring of Tube Well in J-Block, Sector-63 for Village- Chhajjarsi and G-Block, Sector-63 for Village-Baholpur) Noida. **Rs. 70.37 Lacs**  
3. **08/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/21-22**, Strengthening of Water Supply (Reboring of Tube Well No. - 8/62 and 12/62, Sector-62), Noida. **Rs. 76.49 Lacs**  
4. **09/DGM(JAL)/AO/SM(JAL)-I/21-22**, Strengthening of Water Supply (Reboring of Tube Well No. - 2/119 and 3/119, Sector-119) Noida. **Rs. 82.32 Lacs**  
The above tenders can be uploaded by date **11.05.2021 upto 5.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date **12.05.2021 at 11.00 AM**.  
**Office: Sector-5**  
**Senior Manager (Jal)-I**  
**Noida**  
**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**

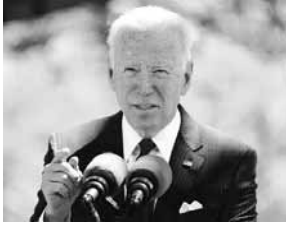
## Biden quadruples Trump refugee cap after delay backlash

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden formally raised the nation's cap on refugee admissions to 62,500 this year, weeks after facing bipartisan blowback for his delay in replacing the record-low ceiling set by former President Donald Trump.

Refugee resettlement agencies have waited for Biden to quadruple the number of refugees allowed into the United States this year since Feb. 12, when a presidential proposal was submitted to Congress saying he planned to do so.

But the presidential determination went unsigned until Monday. Biden said he first needed to expand the narrow eligibility criteria put in place by Trump that had kept out most refugees. He did that last month in an emergency determination. But it also stated that Trump's cap of up to 15,000 refugees this year "remains



justified by humanitarian concerns and is otherwise in the national interest," indicating Biden intended to keep it.

That brought sharp pushback for not at least taking the symbolic step of authorizing more refugees to enter the U.S. this year. The second-ranking Senate Democrat, Dick Durbin of Illinois, called that initial limit "unacceptable" and within hours the White House made a quick course correction. The administration vowed to increase the historically low cap by May 15 — but the White House said it probably would not hit the 62,500 Biden had previously outlined.

## Lankan Parliament postpones debate on China-backed Colombo Port Bill

**Colombo:** The Sri Lankan Parliament on Tuesday postponed a debate on the controversial Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill which was scheduled for discussion on Wednesday.

All party leaders in the House agreed that the debate should be rescheduled as the Supreme Court's determination on the constitutionality of the bill had not yet reached Parliament, officials said.

The USD 1.4-billion Colombo Port City project, expected to play a key role in China's ambitious 'Maritime Silk Road' project in India's backyard, is said to be the single largest private sector development in the island.


China has built the port city on reclaimed sea, adjoining the Port of Colombo.

The Colombo Port City Economic Commission Bill aims to provide for a special economic zone to establish a commission to grant registrations, licenses, authorisations and other approvals to operate business in such economic zones.

As per the schedule on Wednesday, the Supreme Court's determination of the bill was to be read in Parliament by Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena before the House was opened to debate on it. However, the determination has not yet reached Parliament.

The apex court had concluded the examination of the bill on April 23. The Supreme Court has heard 18 petitions filed against the bill by the Opposition parties and civil groups.

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GCSRA intends to engage technically competent agency for **supply, installation and commissioning of PSA Oxygen Plants at various locations in Gujarat.** For this purpose, Bids are invited in the manner prescribed in the Tender Document. The detailed Tender is available on website [www.nprocure.com](http://www.nprocure.com) The last date of submission of the Tender is 5 days from the publication of advertisement. In case of any changes GCSRA will update on its website i.e. [www.gcsra.org](http://www.gcsra.org)  
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**CEO**  
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**INF/147/21-22**

**Office of the Chief Water Analyst (W&S)-II**  
**Delhi Jal Board; Govt. of N.C.T. of Delhi**  
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S. No.	Name of Work	Approximate Value based on Schedule of rates/Item rates/Lump Sum (Rs. in Lakh)	Earnest Money (Refundable) In Rs.	Tender Fee	Date of releasing of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender e-procurement solution.
1.	Deployment of unskilled labour for operation & maintenance of treatment section for different plant under CWA(HP)	Item Rate	59,200/-	500/-	03-05-2021 2021_DJB_203185_1	11-05-2021 At 11.00 AM

Further details in this regards can be seen at <https://delhi.govtprocurement.com>  
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Advt. No. J.S.V. 44 (2021-22)  
**(G. P. Singh)**  
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**9650039741**



## Mexico City metro overpass collapses onto road, 23 dead

**Mexico City:** An elevated section of the Mexico City metro collapsed and sent a subway car plunging toward a busy boulevard late Monday, killing at least 23 people and injuring about 70, city officials said. Rescuers initially searched a car left dangling from the overpass for anyone who might be trapped.

Those efforts were suspended early Tuesday, however, because of safety concerns for those working near the precariously dangling car. A crane was brought in to help shore it up.

"We don't know if they are alive," Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum said of the people possibly trapped inside the car following one of the deadliest accidents for the city's subway system, which is among the busiest in the world.

Earlier Sheinbaum said someone had been pulled alive from a car that was trapped on the road below. She said 49 of the injured were hospitalised, and that seven were in serious condition and undergoing surgery.

## Restrictions easing in US and Europe amid disaster in India

AP ■ TALLAHASSEE, FLA.

Air travel in the US hit its highest mark since Covid-19 took hold more than 13 months ago, while European Union officials are proposing to ease restrictions on visitors to the continent as the vaccine sends new cases and deaths tumbling in more affluent countries.

The improving picture in many places contrasts with the worsening disaster in India.

In the US, the average number of new cases per day fell below 50,000 for the first time since October. And nearly 1.67 million people were screened at U.S. airport checkpoints on Sunday, according to the Transportation Security Administration, the highest number since mid-March of last year.



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed legislation giving him sweeping powers to invalidate local emergency measures put in place during the outbreak. While the law doesn't go into effect until July, the Republican governor said he will issue an executive order to more quickly get rid of local mask mandates.

"I think this creates a struc-

ture that's going to be a little bit more respectful, I think, of people's businesses, jobs, schools and personal freedom," he said.

Las Vegas is bustling again after casino capacity limits were raised Saturday to 80% and person-to-person distancing was dropped to 3 feet (0.9 meters). New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that New York City's subways will begin running all night again and capacity restrictions on most businesses will end statewide in mid-May. And Los Angeles County reported no coronavirus deaths on Sunday and Monday, some of which may be attributable to a lag in reporting but was nevertheless a hopeful sign that could move the county to allow an increase in capacity at events and venues, and indoor-service at bars.



# Serum Institute of India leads cross-sector Indian investments into UK

PTI ■ LONDON

The Serum Institute of India will invest 240 million pounds in the UK to expand its vaccine business and set up a new sales office creating a large number of jobs, Downing Street announced as part of plans for a 1-billion pound India-UK Enhanced Trade Partnership creating around 6,500 jobs in Britain.

The announcement came ahead of a virtual summit between Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and Narendra Modi on Tuesday.

The Pune-based vaccine manufacturer headed by CEO Adar Poonawalla is among a list of nearly 20 Indian companies across sectors such as healthcare, biotech and software services to announce significant investment plans in the

UK this week. It was also revealed that the Serum Institute of India (SII) has started phase one trials in the UK of a nasal vaccine against coronavirus.

“The sales office is expected to generate new business worth over USD 1 billion, 200 million pounds of which will be invested into the UK,” Downing Street said in reference to the company’s plans for the UK market on Monday.

“Serum’s investment will support clinical trials, research & development and possibly manufacturing of vaccines. This will help the UK and the world to defeat the coronavirus pandemic and other deadly diseases. Serum has already started phase one trials in the UK of a one-dose nasal vaccine for coronavirus, in partnership with Codagenix

INC,” it said.

Poonawalla, who is currently in London and had recently hinted at

plans to expand vaccine production outside India, described his meetings in the UK as “excellent”.

“We shall work even harder and strengthen India’s fight against COVID-19,” he said on Twitter.

In the field of healthcare, another Indian investment highlight includes 59 million pounds by biotech firm Global Gene Corp over the next five years. It will create 110 highly skilled jobs in the UK, mostly based in the R&D centre at Wellcome Genome Campus in Cambridge, which is the site of the Human Genome Project.

“I’m very pleased that Global Gene Corp has decided to join the legions of Indian



companies investing in the UK, boosting our healthcare sector and driving economic growth,” Prime Minister Johnson said in a statement.

Sumit Jamuar, Chairman & CEO of Global Gene Corp, said the ambition with the investment is to make an “exponential leap” into the healthcare of the future through genomics –

from discovering the next generation of drugs to precision medicine – a task “even more critical” in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The UK is at the forefront of the genomics revolution with her Genome UK strategy. We are delighted to be investing in cutting-edge capabilities at the intersection of genomics

and machine learning to achieve our vision,” he said.

“In line with Prime Minister Modi’s vision of Ayushman Bharat and National Healthcare Mission, we truly believe that the genomic revolution will have an impact on the lives of billions. Global Gene Corp will make this revolution a reality,” added Invest India CEO Deepak Bagla.

Other Indian investments announced on Monday include Q-Rich Creations at 54 million pounds, creating 667 UK jobs; Wipro at 16 million pounds, creating 500 jobs; 12 Agro at 30 million pounds, creating 465 jobs; Mastek creating 357 jobs; and Sterlite Technologies at 15 million pounds, creating 150 jobs.

Some of the others on the list of Indian investments

include SNVA Ventures at 10 million pounds, creating 200 jobs; Skillmine at 11 million pounds, creating 100 jobs; CtrlS Data Centers at 10 million pounds, creating 100 jobs; Que Processing Services at 10 million pounds, creating 100 jobs; Cron Systems at 20 million pounds, creating 100 jobs; TVS Motors-Norton creating 89 jobs; Prime Focus Technologies creating 70 jobs; Route Mobile at 20 million pounds; and Goila Butter

Chicken at 3 million pounds. Downing Street said the announcement of over 6,500 additional jobs in Britain and 1 billion pounds of new trade with India is based on company commitments and estimates from UK-India exports and investments following extensive engagement from the Department for

International Trade officials.

An Enhanced Trade Partnership between India and the UK, which will

be signed off during the prime ministerial summit, also covers around 20 export deals clinched by British companies.

These include Morningside Pharmaceuticals researching, developing and licencing new pharma products; Polymateria’s biotransformation technology, which enables plastics to become fully bio-degradable, in a deal worth 75 million pounds in UK exports over the next five years; CMR surgical in a deal worth 200 million pounds creating 100 new UK jobs; Kloudpad with critical hardware and software bespoke

data centres, deal worth 15 million pounds; and Vidrona drone surveying equipment and AI technology.

## Centre: 28 States/UTs started lifting grains for free distribution under PMGKAY

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday said 28 States and Union territories have started lifting additional foodgrains meant for free distribution to 80 crore beneficiaries for two months under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY).

PMGKAY has been reintroduced for two months - May and June - to ameliorate the hardships faced by the poor and needy due to various disruptions caused by the resurgence of COVID-19 in the country, it said.

Under the PMGKAY, additional foodgrains are provided free of cost via ration shops to 80 crore beneficiaries registered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

### PMGKAY HAS BEEN REINTRODUCED FOR TWO MONTHS — MAY AND JUNE

In a statement, the Food Ministry said that the state-run Food Corporation of India (FCI) has already positioned sufficient foodgrains in all states and UTs for the successful implementation of the scheme. “Till May 3, about 28 States/ UTs have started lifting from FCI depots and 5.88 lakh tonne of foodgrains have been supplied for further distribution to beneficiaries,” the ministry said. Lakshadweep has completely lifted its May-June allocation, while Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have already lifted 100 per cent of their May month allocation, it

said. The rest of the states/UTs (Punjab, Chandigarh, Goa, MP, Manipur, Nagaland, Odisha and Puducherry) have also been sensitised to immediately start the lifting foodgrains under the PMGKAY and the same is likely to be accelerated in the coming days, it added.

Further, the ministry said the states have also been advised to encourage migrant NFSA beneficiaries for using the facility of portability under the ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ plan.

The cost of free foodgrains distribution under the scheme is entirely being borne by the central government. The additional grains given for free under PMGKAY to NFSA beneficiaries is over and above the existing monthly entitlement of 5 kg grains per person.

## Sensex skids for third day on Covid headwinds

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmark Sensex surrendered early gains to finish in the red for the third consecutive session on Tuesday following brisk selling in front-line stocks.

The grim Covid-19 situation and continued selling by foreign funds has sapped risk appetite, traders said.

After a gap-up opening, the 30-share BSE index succumbed to profit-taking in afternoon trade to finish at 48,253.51, down 465.01 points or 0.95 per cent.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty slumped 137.65 points or 0.94 per cent to close at 14,496.50.

Dr Reddy’s was the top loser among the Sensex constituents, retreating 2.26 per cent, followed by Reliance Industries, Sun Pharma, HDFC

twins, Infosys, M&M and Bharti Airtel.

On the other hand, ONGC, Bajaj Finance, TCS, SBI, Kotak Bank and Nestle India were among the gainers, climbing up to 1.86 per cent.

“Indices lost a percentage on Tuesday as the street punished earnings disappointment in several high-quality mid-caps. Afternoon trade witnessed profit-taking in metals and pharma names as the street exhibited nervousness on regional lockdowns which accentuated the weakness.

“In the broader market, paper stocks were sought after today on hardening pulp prices while coffee producers saw investor appetite,” said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Binod Modi, Head Strategy at Reliance Securities, said the mounting uncertainty led by

rise in second wave of COVID-19 cases weighed on investor sentiment.

While a persistent increase in daily caseload in several states is still a matter of concern, visible modest decline in new cases in many parts like Maharashtra and Delhi offers comfort, he added.

The total tally of coronavirus cases in the country mounted to 2,02,82,833 with 3,57,229 new infections being reported in a day, while the death toll increased to 2,22,408 with 3,449 new fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday.

Sectorally, BSE healthcare, energy, telecom, consumer durables, auto and basic materials indices lost as much as 1.50 per cent, while oil and gas, utilities and capital goods ended with gains.

## Domestic air travel recovery delayed by 3 months: Ind-Ra

Mumbai: Recovery in domestic and international travel has been delayed by three and six months, respectively, due to Covid resurgence, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra). The first two months of 2021 witnessed a solid improvement in air travel, after a steep decline in EBITDAR losses in 3QFY21 as airline operations normalised, it said.

However, late March and April have seen a sharp rise in active Covid cases all across India which has significantly impacted air travel and dented confidence in aviation recovery.

Besides, 2021 has brought three new challenges such as higher fuel expenses as crude prices recover amid a soaring global demand, rising competition intensity amid the possible re-start of operations by Jet Airways, and likely pressure on airline yields as the scramble for market share realignment to pre-Covid period begins.

IANS

## Petrol price up 15 paise, diesel 18 paise after over two-week hiatus

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol price on Tuesday was increased by 15 paise per litre and diesel by 18 paise as state-owned fuel retailers started passing on the increase in international oil prices to consumers after an 18-day hiatus.

Petrol now costs ₹ 90.55 per litre in Delhi, up from ₹90.40, according to a price notification of State-owned fuel retailers.

A litre of diesel comes for ₹80.91, as against ₹80.73 previously.

Rates have been increased across the country and vary from state to State depending on the local incidence of taxation (VAT).

Oil companies, who have in recent months resorted to unexplained freeze in rate revision, had hit a pause button after cutting prices marginally on April 15. This coincided with electioneering hitting peak to elect new governments in five states including West

Bengal.

No sooner had voting ended, oil companies indicated an impending increase in retail prices in view of firming trends in international oil markets.

Despite the concerns about rising COVID-19 cases in India denting demand, crude oil prices in the international market have risen primarily on account of strong US demand recovery and a weak dollar.

Prices have been on a continuous uptrend since April 27, an industry official said adding Dubai crude oil price has risen by USD 2.91 per barrel.

It is expected that the crude oil prices in the international market will remain firm in the near future, exerting upward pressure, he said.

State-owned fuel retailers - Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) -- are

supposed to revise rates daily based on input cost.

The April 15 cut of 16 paise a litre on petrol and 14 paise on diesel was the fourth reduction since March 24. In four reductions since March 24, petrol price was cut by 67 paise and diesel by 74 paise.

This reduction was compared to a Rs 21.58 per litre increase in price of petrol since the government raised excise duty in March last year. Diesel prices had increased by Rs 19.18 a litre.

Central and state taxes make up for 60 per cent of the retail selling price of petrol and over 54 per cent of diesel.

The union government levies Rs 32.90 per litre of excise duty on petrol and Rs 31.80 on diesel.

In Mumbai, the petrol price was hiked to Rs 96.95 a litre on Tuesday from Rs 99.83, while diesel rates were increased to Rs 87.98 from Rs 87.81, the price notification showed.

## SAIL ramps up oxygen supplies for Covid relief

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Steel Authority of India, one of the largest domestic steel producers, has been enhancing its capabilities to supply Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) in the country.

The daily delivery of LMO from SAIL’s integrated steel plants situated at Bhilai (Chhattisgarh), Rourkela (Odisha), Bokaro (Jharkhand), and Durgapur and Burnpur (West Bengal) has been increased from a level of about 500 metric tonnes (MT) in the 2nd week of April to more than 1,100 MT per day currently.

The company has so far supplied around 50,000 MT of LMO. In April, SAIL has delivered more than 17500 MT LMO to 15 states across the country including the states in which the plants are located.

Till date, 14 Oxygen

## CIL says operations slowed down as many employees tested positive for Covid

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Coal India Ltd (CIL) on Tuesday said its operations slowed down on account of more than 5,400 of the company’s employees and their wards across subsidiaries testing positive for coronavirus.

However, offtake rose to 54.1 Million Tonnes (MTs) last month, the company said in a statement.

“Offtake could have been even higher but the pandemic spread afflicted over 5,400 company’s employees and their wards across subsidiaries, including contractual workers, slowing down the operations. Most of them are involved in the frontline output and offtake operations,” CIL said.

Out of the total coal offtake of 54.1 MT, the power sector lifted 42.4 MT or 78.4 per cent of the dry fuel. Non-power sector accounted for the remaining 11.7 MT.

“Despite the setback, coal supplies logged a 3.3 per cent growth compared to a COVID free April of FY’20 while the

growth was even higher at 6.1 per cent against April FY’19 when CIL chalked up its highest ever coal off-take of 607 MT,” the company said.

Drawing growth comparison with April last year would be anomalous because of the near total lockdown then. Nevertheless, a 15 MT offtake increase, in a month, is a good sign signalling demand revival for coal. For the record, the year-on-year growth for April this year was 38.4 per cent, the statement said.

“The key issue is demand has to sustain. If it holds, it bodes well for us in bringing down coal inventory further and increase supplies,” the company said. Meeting any demand spurt from the power sector would not be a problem but transport logistics taking a toll due to the second surge of COVID-19 is a matter of concern, it added. CIL reduced its coal inventory by 12.2 MT in April to 87.2 MT. The company began FY’22 with a record stockpile of 99.3 MT largely due to COVID-prompted tepid demand for the dry fuel.

## New age start-up ‘The Fuel Delivery’ starts operations in Mumbai

IANS ■ MUMBAI

App-based door-to-door fuel delivery service provider, ‘The Fuel Delivery’ on Tuesday announced the launch of its Mumbai operations.

With this service launch, the start-up aims to cater to sectors like real estate (both under construction and occupied projects), hospitals, corporate office parks, schools and institutions, banks, shopping malls, warehouses, and the agricultural sector.

Given the Covid-19 pandemic running through the second wave, it will be a win-win offer for the consumers as they can maintain social distancing norms through contact-less delivery by avoiding long queues at fuel filling stations. The company also recently announced the signing of an ‘All India Business Agreement’ with state-owned oil major, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). The service level agreement allows The Fuel Delivery to offer doorstep delivery of diesel anywhere in India.

## Johnson hails new era in UK-India relations after virtual summit with Modi

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson declared a new era in UK-India relations following a virtual summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which culminated in the two leaders agreeing on a ‘2030 Roadmap’ as a framework for strengthening ties across health, climate, trade, education, science and technology, and defence.

Downing Street said the two Prime Ministers have pledged to achieve a “quantum leap” in the UK-India relationship and that India has elevated the status of its relationship with the UK to a “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership” - the first European country to be granted that status.

An Enhanced Trade Partnership, which had been announced earlier, was reiterated as a starting point to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in future, with an ambition for bilateral trade to be doubled over the next decade.

“The agreements we have

made today mark the beginning of a new era in the UK-India relationship,” Johnson said.

“The UK and India share many fundamental values. The UK is one of the oldest democracies, and India is the world’s largest. We are both committed members of the Commonwealth. And there is a living bridge uniting the people of our countries,” he said.

“In the last week the British people have stepped up in their thousands to support our Indian friends during this terrible time in a demonstration of the deep connection between the UK and India. This connection will only grow over the next decade as we do more together to tackle the world’s biggest problems and make life better for our people,” Johnson added. The ‘2030 Roadmap’, to be published in full by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and agreed between the two sides, includes plans to expand the UK-India health partnership to enhance global health security and pandemic resilience.

**Chaya Shakya**

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a lady namely **Chaya Shakya (along with her daughter namely Khushi, Age: 10 Years), W/o: Ajay Kumar, R/o: C-152, Gali No. 6, Dashrath Puri, New Delhi is missing since 08.03.2021 at about 09:00 PM from her home.** In this regard **DD No. 97A dated 10.03.2021** has been lodged at Police Station, Sagarpur, New Delhi. The description of missing lady is as under:

**Name: Chaya Shakya, Age: 32 Years, Height: about 4'9", Face: Oval, Complexion: Fair, Built: Fat, Wearing: Yellow Colour Saree and Slipper in Feet.**

If anyone has any information about this missing lady and her daughter please inform P.S. Sagarpur, Delhi.

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

**SHO**  
**Police Station, Sagarpur, Delhi**  
**Ph: 011-28522653, 9873853985**

**DP/557/SW/2021**

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Ali Hassan, S/o Ajij Gul, R/o 243, Rain Basera Deepa Ghat, Near Monstery Market, Delhi, Age about 75 years, Height 168 CM, Complexion Shallow, Face Round, Normal Built, Wearing Sky blue colour shirt was found dead in Aruna Asaf Ali Government Hospital, Delhi on 22.04.21.** In this regard a DD No. 18-A dated 22.04.21 U/S 174 Cr.PC has been lodged at PS Civil Lines, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved at Sabzi Mandi Mortuary, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this male deceased may be kindly inform to the undersigned.

**SHO**  
**PS: Civil Lines, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-23815444, 23817100**

**DP/1151/N/21**

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**

**MECHANICAL DIVISION SRINAGAR (MED).**

☎ **Fax No: 0194-2497053** ☎ **email: [xenmds@gmail.com](mailto:xenmds@gmail.com)** ☎ **website: [www.medkashmir.org](http://www.medkashmir.org)** ☎

**ADENDUM No. 03**

**Subject:** 1. Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of complete sprinkler irrigation Equipment including HDPE pipe/LLDPE network for Saffron Crop cultivated area at bore well No. 13, 79, 104 & 109 under implementation of National Mission on Saffron..

2. Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of complete sprinkler irrigation Equipment including HDPE pipe/LLDPE network for Saffron Crop cultivated area at bore well No. 52, 94, 105 & 110-A under implementation of National Mission on Saffron.

**References:** 1.This office eNIT No. MDS/TS/2021-22/e-tendering/09 Dated : 08.04.2021 under tender ID: 2021\_PWDJK\_122130\_1

2. This office eNIT No. MDS/TS/2021-22/e-tendering/07 Dated : 07.04.2021 under tender ID: 2021\_PWDJK\_122024\_1

3. This office corrigendum No. 01 issued vide No: MDS/TS-/403-07 Dated: 22.04.2021

4. This office addendum No. 02 issued vide No: MDS/TS /506-10 dated: 27.04.2021

In view of representation received through mail dated 27-04-2021 and in line with Agriculture order No.: DAJ of 2021; Dated: 01/2021 issued by Mission Director, PNKSY, J&K UT, “Nimbus, Rajasthan” and “Aditya Build Mart, Jammu” makes are included in the list of acceptable make in addition to the makes already mentioned in the original NIT.

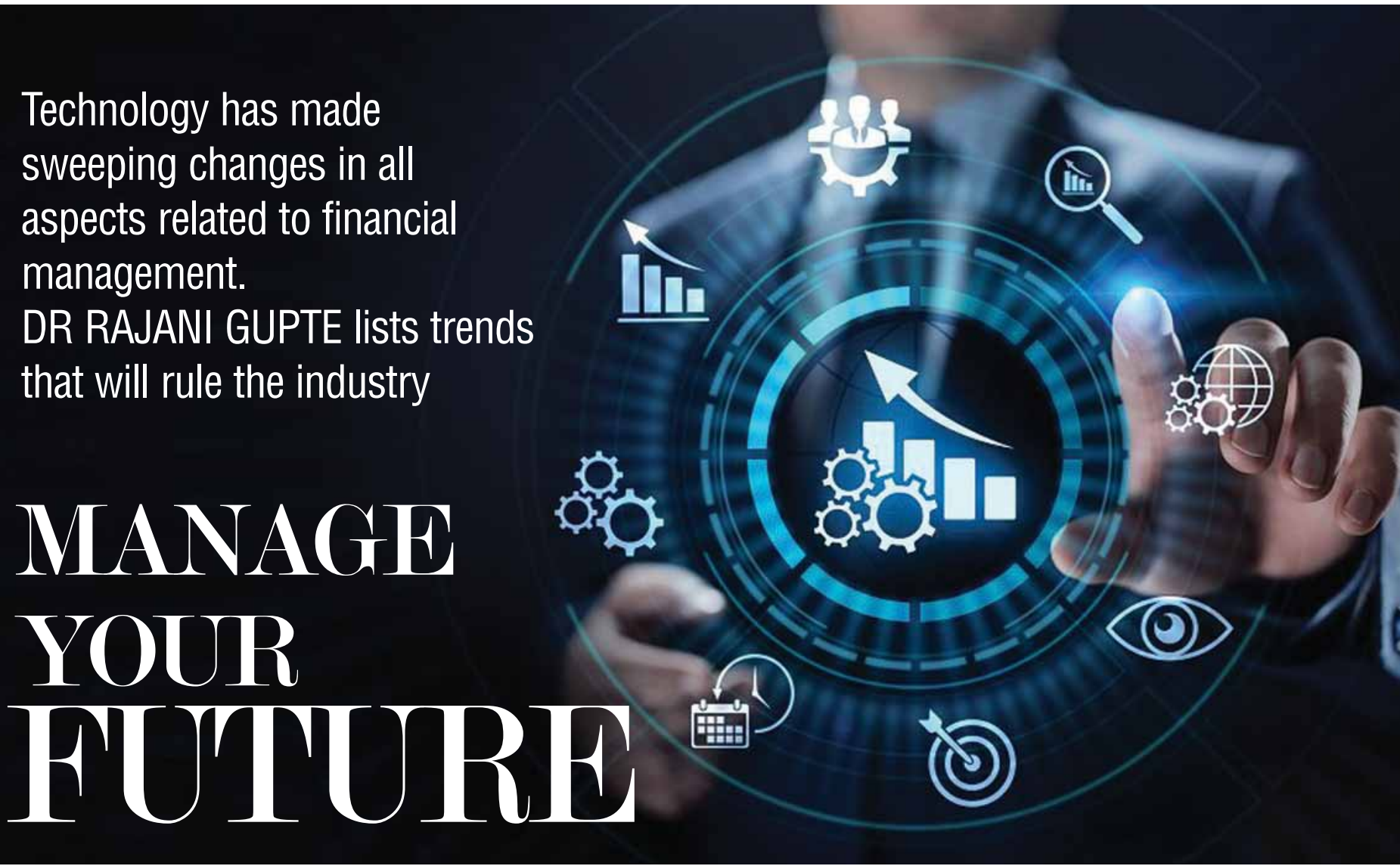
All other terms, conditions, technical specifications and pre-qualifications of the original of the NITs shall remain same.

**Sd/- (Er. Rajesh Sharma)**  
**Executive Engineer**  
**Mechanical Division Srinagar**

No. MDS/TS/579-83  
Dated: 03.05.2021

**No. DIPK/1251/21 Dated: 04.05.2021**





Technology has made sweeping changes in all aspects related to financial management. DR RAJANI GUPTA lists trends that will rule the industry

# MANAGE YOUR FUTURE

One functional area that is sought after by several MBA students is Financial Management. In the recent past technology has made sweeping changes in all aspects related to managing money and financial management. Here are a few emerging trends in Financial Management, which can't be ignored — and B School must focus and impart knowledge in these areas in order to create an efficient workforce which is future ready.

**Fintech:** Today the influence of digital technologies on finance is palpable and digital banks, wallets, blockchain tech, and more are becoming a reality. Digital finance is the term used to describe the impact of new technologies on the financial services industry. It includes a variety of products, applications, processes and business models that have transformed the traditional way of providing banking and financial services. To remain relevant in the future understanding all aspects of fintech and knowing how it is altering the landscape of financial services can help in creating an efficient workforce.

**Financial Analytics:** Financial analytics helps in shaping up business

goals. Any organisation can improve the decision-making strategies of business by getting deeper insight about the financial status of its business and improve the profitability, cash flow and value of its business. Data Science and Financial analytics is being used in many financial institutions including insurance companies, banks to understand the consumer to reduce losses by eliminating below zero customers, to increase cross-sale and to measure the lifetime value of a customer. Financial analytics is an important area which must be studied by tomorrow's force which can deal with financial management.

**Artificial Intelligence in Finance:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a powerful tool that is already widely deployed in financial services. It has great potential for positive impact if companies deploy it with sufficient diligence and care. AI is being implemented by banks to assess risks, detect and prevent payments fraud, improve processes for anti-money laundering (AML) and perform know-your-customer (KYC) regulatory checks. Artificial intelligence is leading the front of the digital transformation strategy in finance today

**Financial analytics helps in shaping up business goals. Any organisation can improve the decision-making strategies of business by getting deeper insight about the financial status of its business and improve the profitability**

and its role is going to grow bigger in the future. Adept proficiency in AI is mandatory for an efficient workforce of tomorrow.

**Financial Fraud Detection:** Modern financial institutions face the growing threat of fraud in its different and ever-changing ways. Fraud detection is a set of activities undertaken to prevent money or property from being obtained through false pretences. Fraud detection is applied to many industries such as banking or insurance. Data mining is used to classify, cluster, and segment the data and it helps in automatically finding associations and rules in the data that may signify interesting patterns, including those related to fraud. Experts use such intelligence systems to encode expertise for detecting fraud in the form of rules. This area is gaining importance and is an emerging trend in the study of finance management for creating an efficient workforce.

**Machine Learning in Financial Management:** Today machine learning algorithms are used to automate trading activities and provide financial advisory services to investors. Machine learning can analyse millions of data sets within a short time to

improve the outcomes without being explicitly programmed. Supervised learning, Un-supervised learning, Semi-supervised learning, and Reinforcement learning is an emerging trend in the study of finance management and the future workforce can be efficient if they develop expertise in this domain.

**Blockchain-based modes of transactions and financial services:** A financial system underpinned by blockchain offers many opportunities for the accountancy profession in the near future. Blockchain technology is a decentralised, distributed, and public ledger that is used to record transactions across many computers within a network.

In the finance industry, this underlying technology allows the transfer of currency with confidence that the transaction is secure and reliable. Block chain is for sure an emerging trend in the study of financial management and will have a tangible impact across several financial services. The future workforce must certainly be proficient and develop expertise in this domain.

The writer is Vice Chancellor — Symbiosis International University

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

**Keep on going, and the chances are that you will stumble on something, perhaps when you are least expecting it. I never heard of anyone ever stumbling on something sitting down.**

**— Charles F Kettering**

## Admissions open at CVRU

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Dr CV Raman University (CVRU), which is a part of the esteemed AISECT Group of Universities (AGU) and is situated in the Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh, has announced that the admission process for the 2021 academic session is now open. In the light of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the university has taken the admission process for its undergraduate, post graduate and diploma courses for the year online.

All the facilities and services related to the admission process have been made available online, including virtual campus tours on the university's YouTube channel and live chats with counselors. Students can submit the application form as well as deposit their fees online with the help of enabled websites and portals.

Interested students can gather more information regarding the admission process and the university on this link : <https://www.cvrump.ac.in/>.

The dates for the Pan-India AISECT Joint Entrance Exam (AJEE) that is required for admission to certain courses in the University will be announced soon.

## UG, PG courses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sanskriti University, Mathura is inviting online applications for Admission to Diploma, Under Graduate, and Post Graduate Programmes in Engineering, Management & Commerce, Education, Special Education, Humanities & Social Sciences, Pharmacy, Agriculture, Fashion Designing, Law and Legal Studies, Yoga and Naturopathy, Tourism & Hotel Management, Medical & Allied Sciences, Basic & Applied Sciences, Ayurveda, Unani, and Nursing courses.

**How to apply:** Applicants seeking admission are required to fill an online application form available on [www.sanskriti.edu.in](http://www.sanskriti.edu.in). The submission of the application form can be done online or in-person at the university by depositing ₹1,000.

For online submission, use the link <https://www.sanskriti.edu.in/register>. The admission prerequisites will be in accordance with the various regulatory bodies as amended from time to time.

**Admission process:** Applications for academic year 2021-22 are open to applicants who have passed or will appear for the qualifying examinations under the higher secondary (10+2) from any recognised Board of education such as AISSCE/IB/ICSE/CBSE, or equivalents.

For admission to Diploma programmes, students are required to have passed the Class X examination from any state or central board like CBSE/ICSE.

**Last date to apply:** June 30, 2021.

## Top EMT courses to go for

Healthcare is a very profound and ever growing profession that can pave the way to multiple directions. Amidst the rising fear of the pandemic, the prominence of various healthcare services has further increased manifold. In lieu of the increasing focus towards healthcare services and facilities, individuals are showing an increased inclination towards health-related courses. Out of the many, EMT —Emergency Medical Technician course is often preferred by the professionals in order to develop the necessary skills needed to be applied on the scene of an accident or injury & en-route to the hospital to promote outcome of speedy recovery.

To help the aspirants with the ongoing changes and to make them EMT experts, many institutes have introduced multiple long-term and short-term EMT courses. Here is the list of Top 5 EMT Courses in India.

**Henry Harvin:** Ideal for students of Higher Secondary and Graduates who aspire to manage hands-on emergency situations, India's leading Edtech Company — Henry Harvin offers the best career oriented course in the field of Paramedics and Healthcare. The course focuses on developing the necessary skills required to act in basic emergency lifesaving situations. Delivered by highly qualified healthcare professionals with over 15+ years of working experience, the course spans over 6 months and offers the experience of industry projects during the tenure of the course. The course helps students to Gain knowledge about Anatomy and Physiology and Get Acquainted with Medical Terminology & Medical Ethics, acquire Knowledge about Infection control and Biomedical Waste Management, get familiar with Patient Communication and Patient Assessment, learn comprehensively about Trauma Care Emergency and Deliver Emergency Medical Support to Patients Upon successful completion, all partic-



ipants are awarded an Emergency Medical Technician Course Certification as well as become a part of the Elite Paramedical Academy of Henry Harvin\* & join the 3,00,000+ strong Alumni Network Worldwide.

**Institute of Paramedical Science & Management:** The Emergency Medical Technician course offered by IPISM gears up the students to assess the condition of the patients and determine the necessary course of action before taking them to the hospital. This diploma course spanning over a period of 12 months to 18 months also prepares the participants to respond to the emergencies arising out of casualties like criminal violence, natural disasters, fires, air and land accidents, etc. An applicant needs to have passed Class 12th to be eligible for the course. On successful completion, every participant is awarded a Diploma in emergency Medical technician.

**Indian Institute of Emergency Medical Services:** This course is designed to instruct a student to the level of Emergency Medical Technician-Basic, formerly the EMT-Ambulance, who serves as a vital link in the chain of the health care team. It is recognized that the majority of Prehospital emergency medical care will be provided by the EMT-Basic. This includes all skills necessary for the individual to provide emergency

medical care at a basic life support level with an ambulance service or other specialised service. Specifically, after successful completion of the program, the student will be capable of performing the following functions at the minimum entry level. After pursuing this course, Emergency Medical Technicians are capable of providing out of hospital emergency medical care and transportation for critical and emergent patients.

**Tech Mahindra Foundation – Smart Academy:** The EMT course is an HSSC certified course to train students in emergency lifesaving procedures & and provide pre-hospital critical care. As part of this course, students are trained to respond quickly to emergency medical situations and provide pre-hospital critical care to patients. The classroom programme supplemented with practical training, as well as on-job-training equips a student to handle all kinds of critical and emergency situations such as accidents, burns, heart failure etc. In the course duration of 12 months, the course includes classroom training, coursework, clinical training and soft-skills training. The Emergency Medical Technician course is ideal for Class XII students and graduates who wish to manage hands-on medical emergency situations.

**Vivo Healthcare:** The Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course provided by Vivo Healthcare is designed to train healthcare professionals in basic emergency lifesaving procedures. After the successful completion of the course, the institute provides all the aspirants with an accredited EMT certification. This EMT Basic Level – 1 is a 2 months training programme prepares professionals to get necessary skills and training to respond in basic emergency lifesaving situations. The course covers theory and simulation training for 240 hours and offers Hospital and Ambulance Internship of 120 hours.

## Reset your career

An MBA can give your career the kick-start that you have been waiting for. Here's how

While we quickly climb the ladder as a fresher with sheer dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm to reach the middle management position, it becomes a little tricky to jump to the next level. Many professionals feel stuck as mid-level managers for years together waiting for a promotion, some are even convinced that they have touched the ceiling in their career graph.

So, what is it that brings careers to a standstill? Essentially, entry into the top management and senior positions requires a different kind of skill set, which sometimes can't be learned by just doing what a certain job profile requires. Apart from the job function, one needs to have a fair amount of knowledge about all aspects of business from strategy, leadership, and communication to operations, marketing, and management. This is where an MBA comes into picture — in fact, MBA is the key that can help acquire these skills and open the door to leadership roles.

**Improving career prospects**  
An MBA can give your career the much-required kick-start that you have been waiting for. While MBA offers many advantages to advance your career to the next level, let's take a look at some prominent ones and how they can transform your career:

■ **Developing leadership and management skills:** MBA programmes



lay a major thrust on improving one's leadership capabilities, management skills, decision making, communication and out-of-the-box thinking, all of which are critical skills for senior management positions. Equipped with these competencies, you are geared up to take on bigger responsibilities and roles that are more evolved than your existing profile. Organisations also recognise professionals with MBA degrees as valuable assets and consider moving them up the ladder.

■ **Networking:** An MBA classroom includes professionals from various functions, industries and job profiles. Not only does this huge diversity present a great opportunity for interaction and learning, but it also serves as an enormous networking platform. Making contacts with fellow students and lecturers opens up new job prospects for participants in the program.

■ **A route to career transition:**

Mid-level professionals often realise that their career goals do not match with their current job profile or their skillset matches another job profile better. An MBA degree is a great way to change your career path and take on a job that you feel best matches your strengths and liking. As an MBA programme focuses extensively on managerial and leadership skills, it also prepares professionals who want to undertake their entrepreneurial journey.

■ **Placement opportunities:** While an MBA degree helps you climb the hierarchy level in your current company and gives you the opportunity to re-negotiate your salary, it also opens up doors to new organisations. With most programmes offering placement opportunities near the end of the program, you have more options to choose from, both in terms of job profiles and salaries.

Another important aspect is the mode of MBA that you select. For example, an Executive MBA programme is a perfect option for working professionals as it offers the flexibility to continue working while preparing to move up the ladder. Reputed institutes provide flexible study options like classes over the weekend, webinars, online discussions, and assignments, etc., which can help you study as per your convenience and availability.

—By Great Learning

## CS exams postponed

Taking cognisance of the Covid-19 situation, The Institute of Company Secretaries of India, has decided to postpone its examinations for Foundation Programme, Executive Programme (old and new syllabus) and Professional Programme (old and new Syllabus) scheduled to be held from June 1, 2021 to June 10, 2021.

The new schedule of the examination will be released after reviewing the situation and receiving the directive/guideline from the relevant departments of the

Government, issued from time to time.

Revised time table for the said examinations will be issued and hosted on the website of the institute [www.icsi.edu](http://www.icsi.edu) in due course of time.

Contemplating the severity of Covid-19 situation, CS Nagendra D Rao, President, the ICSI said: "ICSI has time and again considered health & safety of all its stakeholders paramount. Hence, in the interest of all, the institute has decided to postpone the June, 2021 CS Examinations."

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the present times, the unemployment rate in India is quite high despite the availability of resources and opportunities. The pandemic's occurrence last year deteriorated the already unbalanced hiring scenario as many professionals lost their jobs while the others were constantly striving to deliver more than their capabilities so as to reduce the chances of their firing. However, what is often not noticed is that from the organisational perspective, the major reason for

taking such a huge step of asking the performing employees to move on is that they do not possess the required skill set or traits to cope up with sudden events and the changing times.

This is where upskilling has stepped in and has become a blessing in disguise for the candidates who are worthy enough to stay but might have to bear the brunt of being fired owing to the gap in their skill set. Intellipaat, one of the leading online professional training courses and certification platforms, highlights the concept of upskilling being the need of the hour

and its relevance in the pandemic times via its report.

The firm via its survey also suggests that technological advancements and the awareness levels amongst the professionals have further given the required push to the concept of upskilling in post-pandemic times. Hence companies are investing their time, efforts, and finances all the more to train their employees with new skills and the employees prefer to gather new skills to improve their productivity. The survey was conducted during April 2020 to April 2021.

## Upskilling is need of the hour

## Lending a helping hand

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi-based human resource professional has taken the onus to help migrant standalone students seeking to pay for quarantine facilities in the country's capital.

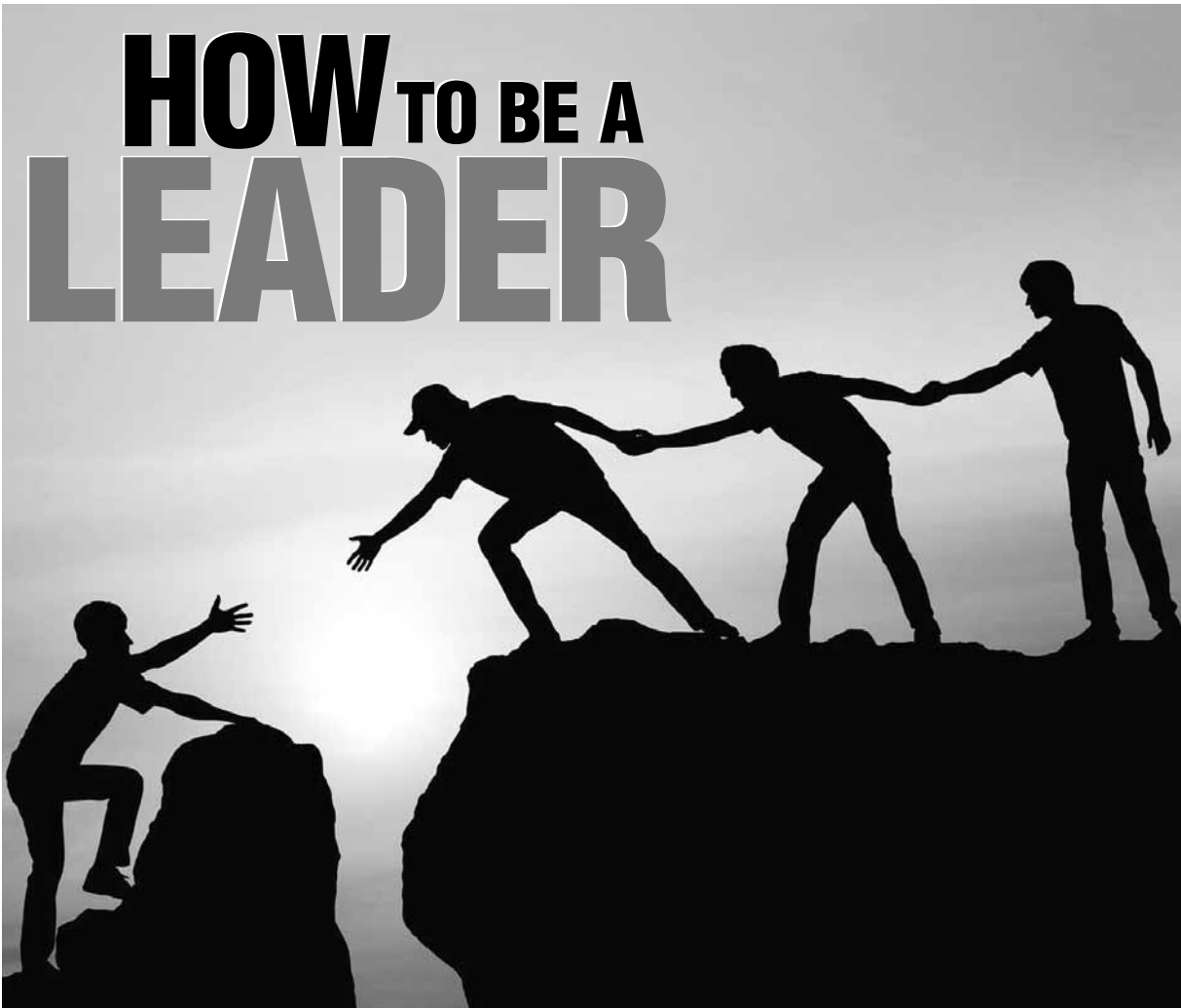
Manish Mishra, a 33-year-old who runs a small human resources management firm has committed to transfer ₹2,000 to help each of such students overcome the tough times in this corona crisis starting from May 1 to May 11. All students requiring this exigency financial can send information like Aadhar Card,

Covid report, doctor prescription etc & short note of crisis to [bharat-manishmishra@gmail.com](mailto:bharat-manishmishra@gmail.com). Till date more than 510 students have received this help on details sent.

Understanding the pain and plight of the migrant cash-starved students, who may have to shift to quarantine facilities in this pandemic, Manish Mishra, said: "I am not a large corporate house. Even if 1000 people in a population of 1.30 billion gather courage and motivation to undertake small philanthropic activity, India will come out of this crisis faster."



The raging pandemic has hit the economy in many ways. In such a situation, a company needs a leader who has the ability to execute plans and can help the organisation ride the wave, says DR RANA SINGH



an opportunity. Execution skills differentiate the leader from all others.

**Effective communication skills:** Another trait of the best leaders is to communicate effectively and persuasively if talking in front of a large number of internal or external stakeholders. The leaders who have fear of public speaking should get rid of this fear or anxiety at the earliest by consistent practice. The written and verbal communication of the leaders makes a phenomenal difference in motivating and retaining competent and skilled professionals in modern times.

Communication is developed by consistent exchange of verbal or non-verbal ideas and information among all groups of internal and external stakeholders.

**Clear vision:** Being a leader, clarity of vision must be there which is fruitful for the company's growth and future. The leaders are expected to be confident, optimistic, motivated, enthusiastic, and be an unending source of inspiration for the employees. If you are thinking of making the changes in your surrounding atmosphere, the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the organisation must be clear, along with the envisioned ultimate results to be achieved with

**A leader is expected to be clear about the need, choice and essential actions in life. Clarity in the vision, mission, goals and objectives will give the path to think about the future goals and actions to be taken**

the concerted efforts and why the change is required.

As we know, an empty mind is considered to be the devil's workshop; therefore the leader is expected to engage the empty minds in meaningful works and assignments with focus on creativity and innovation. A leader is expected to be clear about the need, choice, and essential actions in life. Clarity in the vision, mission, goals and objectives will give the path to think about the future goals and actions to be taken.

**Learning:** If a leader is not aware of the surroundings and is not updated with the new topics, many things may go out of control. Great leaders always know about their strength of leadership qualities, and have the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and have the optimal blend of knowledge, skills and competencies to work smartly and grasp the opportunities in changing times and circumstances. Having a desire to learn new things will always make the leader develop social and emotional intelligence which will contribute to decision-making as a leader.

The writer is Vice- Chancellor, Sanskriti University

## 'Learning needn't be compromised'

There are several institutes in the country offering courses in collaboration with international universities. This ensures that quality education is imparted to students, says DR JITIN CHADHA

As scientists, doctors, Governments and policy makers across the globe work to better understand the virus and tackle the consequences we are facing as a result of it, we need to ensure that education and learning does not get compromised. In the process of getting accustomed to this new normal, it has been crucial that we keep abreast with the changes and the demands these uncertain times present us with. Reworking traditional concepts of what education has meant in the past is more important than ever before as we embark on our journey forward.

Studying abroad is an avenue several students in India opt for. With the current travel restrictions, lockdown impositions and a plethora of other regulations, going abroad may not only seem like a daunting task but also appear out of reach. The unpredictability of these times may lead to a certain hesitance and apprehension regarding enrolling in an international university. Nonetheless, this should not translate into students having to alter their higher education plans and their career trajectories.

There are institutes in the country that offer courses in collaboration with leading international universities. This ensures that the quality of the education being imparted to the students is benchmarked against the best in the world. As global education is credit based, credits from these universities are accepted in any international university world over.

Following UG programme from India, students can apply to international universities for higher education having already fulfilled the credit prerequisites needed for their masters. In addition to this, due to the transferable credit structure, students can also decide to do a certain duration of the programme from India and the rest of it from the affiliated university abroad, offering a blended learning that is an amalgamation of the best features of both the worlds. By partnering with international universities, these institutes offer degrees that are recognised



Dr Jitin Chadha  
Director, Indian Institute of Art and Design

globally.

The courses are designed by faculty who are experts in their domains to ensure that students get the same kind of exposure, learning and develop similar skills that will hold them in good stead in the future.

The UG programmes normally span three to four years. Students can do their first year online from home and subsequently go on to pursue the rest of their course abroad. As an increasing number of people get vaccinated and the situation comes under control, travel restrictions will ease, visa application centres will open up and students will again have an opportunity to head outside the country to study.

International universities have also taken into consideration the situation that is afflicting people across the world and have taken several measures to accommodate students coming from countries that are heavily affected by the COVID-19. Most universities especially in Europe are still accepting international applicants. There is an increased flexibility in the way the courses are being planned and implemented.

Backed by a technology-driven transformation, the logistics sector has in recent years emerged as a leading contributor to the economy as well as a major employment generator. The sector in India is estimated to be a \$200 billion industry with a contribution of over 14 per cent to India's GDP. The post COVID economic transition has further boosted the growth of the sector while accelerating a digital transformation across the logistics chain — from warehousing to supply chain management right to the last mile delivery. As per an assessment by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) last year, logistics was among the five top employment generating sectors in the post

COVID economy in India (the others being tourism and hospitality, construction, information technology and telecom).

Interestingly, the pandemic and its aftermath have served to transform the logistics sector from a supporting service sector into an essential one. With the growth of e commerce penetrating down to smaller towns and a large number of businesses shifting to online selling, the demand for efficient logistics services has surged over the past year. This has also given a major push for value addition, automation, resource optimisation, digitization and adoption of best practices for the logistics space.

**Surge in high skilled specialised jobs**

## MIND IT

While the need for optimising logistics costs and resources was always high, the post COVID environment has made it indispensable for logistics service providers to improve the predictability of the supply chain and make the entire logistics process transparent and trackable. The need for establishing automated warehouses, ushering in system upgradation in the entire supply chain and instituting enhanced navigation facilities is driving the next phase of growth of the logistics sector. The need to digitise and automate processes has

generated a growing demand for professionals with specialised skills such as digital adoption, data analysis, AI know how and automation, to name a few.

In the post COVID world, delivery providers have in many places toyed with the idea of robotic or drone deliveries of food and medicines. At the same time, as demand for same day or next day deliveries rises, the last mile delivery apparatus is being upgraded with tech-enabled solutions to optimise resources, predict order volumes and ensure route optimisation.

**Surging job opportunities in the logistics space:** Here are a few career opportunities that will find increasing resonance in the logistics space in the coming years:

**AI Professionals:** The use of Artificial Intelligence backed tools is enabling the logistics sector save time and costs by automating a series of manual tasks while helping optimise resources across the supply chain. AI Professionals are therefore in high demand to herald new algorithmic solutions, automated systems and predictive models for guiding the dynamic processes that are the need of the time.

**Data Analysts:** Like many other fields, Big Data and predictive analysis is

presenting a huge opportunity in the field of logistics, supply chain management and last mile delivery as well. Effective predictive analytical solutions helps service providers predict order volumes and analyse the behavioural patterns of customers. Similarly, predictive analysis allows logistics applications to achieve route optimization and streamline processes across the supply chain. Already, E commerce companies are leveraging Big Data is a major way to achieve better targeting and customisation of their selling approaches. Professionals with data analysis skills are therefore likely to be a major draw in the logistics space.

The writer is Hemant Chandra, CEO, Pickup, an enterprise-focused last mile delivery startup



versity will be considered for this award.

**Application deadline:** It is November 15, 2021.

**Applications are invited for academic merit Awards** at the State University of New York College at Plattsburgh. Students of all nationalities are welcome to apply.

**Eligibility:** The students must be first-year applicants. The students must not be enrolled in any nursing programme.

**Supporting documents:** Submit: A letter of recommendation; High School transcripts; English Proficiency test; Bank Affidavits and Statements as evidence for financial support for the first year; Personal Essay for 250 words on questions related to SUNY.

**Admission requirements:** The students must have attained a minimum SAT score of 440 to be admitted to the university.

**Language requirement:** Submit the following English language proficiency test scores: TOEFL paper – 490 or higher; TOEFL Internet – 57 or higher; IELTS Academic – 5.5 or higher; British 'O' Level English Pass – E or higher; PTE (Pearson Test of English) – 45 or higher; Duolingo English test – 87 to 104

**How to apply:** The students must either register through the SUNY Application or the Common Application to complete the application process.

The students who are successfully accepted by the uni-

Applications are invited for Honjo International Scholarships available for foreign students to attend a graduate school at a Japanese university.

**Eligibility:** Must have been born after March 31, 1984. The student applying for the master's must have been born after March 31, 1989. Enrolled as of April 2021 or currently applying for the academic course starting from April 2021 at a graduate school in Japan. Have a strong will to serve in his home country after graduation. Have a deep understanding of international friendship and goodwill and must attend the events organised by the foundation and take part in the network as an alumni member. Must speak Japanese.

**Supporting documents:** Academic transcript (Japanese or English), Research Plan, A recommendation letter from the supervisor, Documents that prove admission.

**Admission requirements:** Have a previous degree.

**Language requirement:** Applicants from outside the home country will often need to meet specific English language/other language in order to be able to study.

**How to apply:** Submit an online application and upload the required documents.

**Application deadline:** It is October 31, 2021.

### CONTENT WRITING AT VAMOS DIGITAL

Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month  
Link: [internshala.com/i/bbb98b](https://internshala.com/i/bbb98b)  
Deadline: May 12, 2021

### HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AT SHUTTL

Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹8,000-₹10,000 per month  
Link: [internshala.com/i/85cae3](https://internshala.com/i/85cae3)  
Application deadline: May 11, 2021

### DATA ENTRY AT GAN STUDIO

Location: Work From Home  
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month  
Link: [internshala.com/i/8ffb10](https://internshala.com/i/8ffb10)  
Deadline: May 12, 2021

### WEB DEV AT THEDIGITLERS

Location: Amritsar, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Ludhiana  
Stipend: ₹15,000 per month  
Link: [internshala.com/i/06d463](https://internshala.com/i/06d463)  
Deadline: May 13, 2021

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (SALES) AT OCTANONE ORANGE TECHNOLOGIES

Location: Ranchi  
Stipend: ₹10,000 per month  
Link: [internshala.com/i/556e4e](https://internshala.com/i/556e4e)  
Deadline: May 8, 2021

### FRESHER JOBS PRODUCT ASSOCIATE - SCIENCE AT OPEN DOOR EDUCATION

Location: Remote  
Stipend: ₹3-₹4.8 lakh per annum  
Link: [internshala.com/i/15561e](https://internshala.com/i/15561e)  
Deadline: May 28, 2021  
Skill(s): MS-Office, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology

### FULL STACK DEVELOPER AT DAILYKI

Location: Delhi, Gurugram, Bengaluru  
Stipend: ₹5 lakh per annum  
Link: [internshala.com/i/f21e5c](https://internshala.com/i/f21e5c)  
Deadline: May 26, 2021  
Skill(s): Node.js, PostgreSQL, GitHub, ReactJS, Git Bash

## INBRIEF

### NEW TECHNIQUE TO DETECT NVC

Innovators at the Indian Institute of Technology Mandi have invented a method to simultaneously study the variations in nerve functions and brain blood flow associated with brain disorders like Ischemic stroke. The invented method helps in locating and classifying damaged sites (lesions) in the brain, brought about, or leading to neurological diseases.

The team's invention is based on the fact that intricate interactions between nerve cells (neurons) and blood vessels (vasculature), called the NeuroVascular Coupling (NVC) that regulates blood flow in the brain. Timely detection of NVC is critical for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of such diseases.

"Our method uses a multi-modal brain stimulation system to differentially stimulate different components of the neurovascular unit (NVU) and observes the resultant electrical nerve signals by EEG (electroencephalography) and blood flow by near Infrared spectroscopy (NIRS)," explained Dr Chowdhury.

The results of this study led by Dr Shubhajt Roy Chowdhury, Associate Professor, School of Computing & Electrical Engineering, IIT Mandi, has

### ACCOLADES FOR FLAME UNIVERSITY

The FLAME University has been certified as a Great Place to Work for the year 2021-22. The certification

recognises the university for building a high trust and performance culture. For an organisation to get certified,

70% or more of its employee respondents should rate the organisation as a Great Workplace by Institute.

The theme for this year conclave was — The Future Workforce Reset-2021 and Beyond. The event gave students a chance to interact with the speakers and the esteemed audience, giving them an opportunity to experience industry trends up close and making them industry ready.

### HR CONCLAVE AT JK BUSINESS SCHOOL

### NATIONAL ADMISSION TEST

The Vidyamandir Classes (VMC) is holding the National Admission Test (NAT) online on May 9, 16 and 30, 2021 for 2021 batch. Besides holding the self-assessment test, VMC also rewards the toppers with a scholarship of up to ₹40,000. Students appearing for the exam can register latest by May 29, 2021.

This test is an online nationwide test conducted

to help students assess their current preparation level in comparison to their goal of cracking IIT/JEE & NEET 2021. The VMC treats NAT as an entrance exam conducted to grant admission to the aspirants in the institute.

To curb formation and spread of covid chain the Government has announced suspension of all offline coaching classes. Brij Mohan Gupta, Co-founder, Vidyamandir

Classes, said that the onset of the deadly second wave has compelled people to rethink of different ways to resume the new normal life. He highlighted that on the bright side, it has helped the institute in gaining perspective and enabling the future generation in honing their abilities from home. For more information on NAT, students can visit the website [www.vidyamandir.com](http://www.vidyamandir.com).

### ADMISSION-CUM-SCHOLARSHIP TEST

The FIITJEE's CURATE — admission cum scholarship test is scheduled May 16, 2021 for Students of Class XI (JEE Main & JEE Advanced 2023 Aspirants). The test will be conducted in proctored online mode. It will help students to know their grasp on fundamentals and check conceptual knowledge.

Students can get to know their relative performance vis à vis their peers at the national level. The test will also provide students to get an external evaluation of their IQ specifically for JEE Main & JEE

Advanced. Students can get to know their strengths and weaknesses and areas that may require specific attention. The test will evaluate students' raw potential on the basis of which they may be selected to pursue studies at FIITJEE & get a chance to cultivate their potential to succeed in JEE Main & JEE Advanced.

The last date of registration is May 14, 2021. Students can collect the application forms either from the nearest FIITJEE centre or visit: [www.curate.fiitjee.com](http://www.curate.fiitjee.com) for online registration.

### SENSOR TO DETECT ANTI MICROBIAL POLLUTANTS

The Indian Institute of Technology Madras and the UK researchers have developed a paper-based sensor that can detect antimicrobial pollutants, which induce antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in water bodies. This sensor works on a see and tell mechanism making

it effective. Scientific community across the world are focused on AMR, which could possibly become a world-wide health crisis involving deadly pathogens. Water bodies are the major source for the dissemination and transfer of AMR. Monitoring is the

key to assess the current situation of AMR in India. The research was led by Professor S Pushpavanam, Institute Chair Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, and Dr. T Renganathan, Associate Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering.



# IPL CALLED OFF



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Premier League was on Tuesday suspended indefinitely after multiple Covid-19 cases were reported in its bio-bubble, ending a month-long relatively smooth run for cricket's most glamorous and cash-rich event in the middle of a raging pandemic.

"The tournament has been suspended indefinitely. We will try to conduct the event in the next available window but this month is unlikely," league chairman Brijesh Patel said.

The announcement came after Sunrisers Hyderabad's wicketkeeper-batsman Wriddhiman Saha tested positive for Covid-19 along with Delhi Capitals' veteran spinner Amit Mishra. Hours after the postponement, CSK batting coach Michael Hussey also tested positive for the dreaded virus.

"...We will take stock if we can find a suitable window later during the year. It could be September but these are all speculations. As of now we are not conducting it any further," BCCI vice-president Rajiv Shukla said.

On Monday, Chennai Super Kings bowling coach Lakshminarayanan Balaji along with Kolkata Knight Riders bowlers Sandeep Warrier and Varun Chakravarthy had also returned positive results.

The spread of infections had led to postponement of two IPL games earlier.

The league organisers also issued a formal statement and said that safety of its play-

ers and staff is paramount.

"The Indian Premier League Governing Council (IPL GC) and Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in an emergency meeting has unanimously decided to postpone IPL 2021 season, with immediate effect," the statement read.

"The BCCI does not want to compromise on the safety of the players, support staff and the other participants involved in organising the IPL. This decision was taken keeping the safety, health and well-being of all the stakeholders in mind," it added.

The IPL said BCCI will do all it can to ensure that players in the event get back to

— RAJEEV SHUKLA  
(BCCI VICE-PRESIDENT)

their homes safely. IPL features stars from England, Australia, and New Zealand among other countries.

"These are difficult times, especially in India and while we have tried to bring in some positivity and cheer, however, it is imperative that the tournament is now suspended and everyone goes back to their families and loved ones in these trying times," the IPL stated.

"The BCCI will do everything in its powers to arrange for the secure and safe passage of all the participants in IPL 2021."

The tournament began on April 9 and ran smoothly before KKR's Covid-19 cases caused the initial jitters on Monday. The tournament final was planned for May 30.

There was cause of concern in Delhi too as a few groundsmen at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium tested positive even though DDCA chief Rohan Jaitley asserted that "none of the groundsmen on duty" were among the infected.

## REMAINING MATCHES IN SEPT?

According to *Cricbuzz*, an official said that the board could look at the September window after England's tour of India is complete and before the T20 World Cup scheduled in India for October-November.

"A September window is being considered. By then the England-India series would be over and the foreign players would be ready for the T20 World Cup. That small window is being explored," said a franchise official who is in know.

## We'll find way to send back foreign players: IPL chairman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

IPL chairman Brijesh Patel on Tuesday said the BCCI will "find a way" to send the league's foreign recruits back to their respective countries after the event was suspended indefinitely due to a Covid-19 outbreak in its bio-bubble.

"We need to send them home and we will find a way to do that," Brijesh told *PTI* when asked how will the foreigners return home but did not elaborate beyond that.

The foreigners involved in the lucrative league are concerned about returning to their respective countries due to travel restrictions.



"CA is in direct contact with the BCCI as they work through plans to ensure the safe accommodation and repatriation of Australian players, coaches, match officials and commentators back home to Australia."

— CRICKET AUSTRALIA

"The players are in a relatively safe environment and those within affected teams are in isolation. We'll continue to liaise with the BCCI, the ECB and New Zealand Government authorities in terms of managing their situation."

— NEW ZEALAND CRICKET

"CSA has made contact with all of the relevant franchises to ensure the expedited travel of all South African players and support staff back to our shores. Those travelling back to South Africa will undergo home quarantine in line."

— CRICKET SOUTH AFRICA

imposed in the wake of a deadly resurgence of the pandemic in India.

The BCCI had assured foreign players of a safe return earlier as well.

The IPL had 14 Australian players left, after three pullouts a few days ago, along with 10 from New Zealand and 11 Englishmen. South Africa had 11 players in the league, which also featured nine West Indians, three Afghans and two from Bangladesh.

In a joint statement, Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers Association said they respect their Government's decision to suspend flights operating out of India due to the Covid surge here and will not seek exemptions for its players stuck in the country ravaged by a deadly second wave of the pandemic.

"CA is in direct contact with the BCCI as they work through plans to ensure the safe accommodation and repatriation of Australian players, coaches, match officials and commentators back home to Australia."

tion of Australian players, coaches, match officials and commentators back home to Australia.

"CA and the ACA respect the decision of the Australian Government to pause travel from India until at least May 15 and will not seek exemptions."

They further stated, "CA and the ACA thank the BCCI for their efforts and cooperation for the safe repatriation of all participants at the IPL."

Reacting to the big BCCI move, Cricket South Africa said it is in contact with its players who will need to home quarantine on arrival from India as per the World Health Organization recommendations. "Those travelling back to South Africa will undergo home quarantine in line with the current World Health Organization recommendations," it said in a release.

"CSA and the South African Cricketers Association (SACA) are in contact with all players and are assured of their safety and comfort in their respective locations."

CSA said it supported the BCCI decision of suspend the league keeping in mind the current situation and thanked the Indian board for looking after its players.

"CSA supports the decision to put the health and safety interests of all involved in the tournament first and foremost and has made contact with all of the relevant franchises to ensure the expedited travel of all South African players and support staff back to our shores."

New Zealand Cricket expressed faith in BCCI's ability to handle the situation.

"The players are in a relatively safe environment and those within affected teams are in isolation," read an NZC statement posted by *ESPNcricinfo*. "We'll continue to liaise with the BCCI, the ECB and New Zealand government authorities in terms of managing their situation — but at this juncture it's too early to discuss potential options."

## Oz players, support staff might fly off to Maldives

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With their country shut for all those flying from India, the now suspended IPL's Australian contingent, comprising players, support staff and commentators, is expected to head to Maldives before taking a connecting flight for home.

There are 14 Australian players along with coaches and commentators who might now take a detour as the Australian Government has imposed strict sanctions for people returning from India.

"A mass exodus of Australian players, coaches and support staff to the Maldives is the expected remedy to a dilemma created by the postponement of the 2021 IPL and the current closure of the Australian border to citizens



currently in India during its rampant Covid-19 outbreak," *ESPNcricinfo* reported.

"There are close to 40 Australians in the IPL bubble comprising players, coaching staff and commentators," it added.

"The likes of Pat Cummins, Steven Smith, Glenn Maxwell,

Ricky Ponting, Simon Katich and company are expected to join commentator Michael Slater, who had already headed to the Maldives as a temporary post..."

Premier pacer Pat Cummins, who is contracted with KKR, called the situation unprecedented.

"Once we flew out of Australia we knew we'd signed up for 14 days quarantine coming home so you feel a bit further from getting home, but when the hard border shut no one has ever experienced that before," Pat Cummins told *The Back Page* on *Fox Sports*.

"(It has) added a bit of anxiety for the Aussies over here but we signed up to play the tournament until the start of June so hopefully it all reopens on May 15 and we can get back," Cummins added.



'Daddy, come home'

New Delhi: Australia opener David Warner shared an emotional message sent to him from his family back home after IPL 2021 was postponed indefinitely on Tuesday. Warner took to social media to share the message with his followers.

"Please daddy, come home straight away. We miss you and a lot and love you. Love from Ivy, Indi and Isla," the message in Warner's post read. **PNS**

## BCCI set to incur losses of over ₹2000 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI stands to lose over ₹2000 crore of the broadcast and sponsorship money earmarked for this year's Indian Premier League which was indefinitely postponed on Tuesday.

"We would be losing anything between ₹2000 to ₹2500 crore for the midway postponement of this season. I would say something in the range of ₹2200 crore will be closer to accurate estimation," a senior BCCI official told *PTI*.

The 52-day 60-match tournament would have concluded in Ahmedabad on May 30. However, only 24 days of cricket were possible with 29 completed games before the virus halted proceedings.

The biggest loss for BCCI is the money it gets from *Star Sports* for the broadcast rights of the tournament.

## Players' payment would be based on duration

In case players are available only for a part of the tournament, the salaries are paid on pro-rata basis which means "assigning an amount to one person according to their share of the whole."

However, a senior player said that pro-rata is only

applicable when a player voluntarily makes himself available for only a part of the tournament based on the matches available.

In this case, the organisers have halted the event so the franchises are likely to pay for at least half of the season.

Star has a five-year contract worth ₹16,347 crore which is ₹3269.4 crore per year. If there are 60 games in a season, the per match valuation comes to approximately ₹54.5 crore.

If Star pays per match, then the amount for 29 matches would be ₹1580 crore approximately out of what would have been ₹3270 crore for a full tournament. This

means a loss of ₹1690 crore for the Board.

Similarly, mobile manufacturers *VIVO*, as tournament's title sponsors, pay ₹440 crore per season and BCCI is likely to get less than half of that amount because of the postponement.

Add to it, associate sponsor companies like *Unacademy*, *Dream11*, *CRed*,

*Upstox*, and *Tata Motors*, who pay in the range of ₹120 crore each. Some subsidiary sponsors are also there.

"Slash all the payments by half or a bit less and you will be reaching a loss in the range of 2200 crore. The actual losses could be much more but this is a back of the hand calculation for the season," the official said.

The loss of a substantial amount of money will also reduce the central revenue pool for the season (the money that BCCI distributes among eight franchises) to nearly half.

The official, however, didn't divulge how much each franchise would lose due to the suspension of the tournament.

"It is difficult to say what kind of sponsorship and co-sponsorship money they earned this season as the economic climate has been pretty hostile," he said.

## T20 World Cup set for UAE shift

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

This year's T20 World Cup is set to be moved from India to the UAE with the BCCI

acknowledging that none of the participating teams would be "comfortable" coming here because "a third wave" of Covid-19 cases is expected at

the time of the event.

While a final decision will be taken in a month's time but it is understood that even the Indian cricket board is jittery

about holding the 16-team tournament in October-November after the ongoing IPL had to be suspended because of multiple Covid-19 cases inside the bio-bubble.

It is learnt BCCI officials have had very recent discussions with some of the top decision-makers in the central Government and a shift to the UAE has been more or less agreed upon. The dates of the marquee competition, which was planned across nine venues, have not yet been finalised.

"The suspension of IPL within four weeks is an indicator that it's not really safe to host a global event of that magnitude at a time when the country is fighting its worst health crisis in last 70 years," a senior BCCI source privy to development said.

"There is a chance of a third wave hitting the Indian shores in November. So while BCCI will remain the hosts, the tournament will probably shift to the UAE," he added.

Health experts have warned of a third wave in India in September.

The dire situation in India, where a daily addition of over 3 lakh new cases has continued

for the past many days, has shaken most of the member boards and the ICC is unlikely to take a risk with safety of International cricket teams.

"You can be rest assured that most of the top nations wouldn't like to tour India within next six months unless the situation comes to normalcy. The players and their families would be very wary to travel if they are in the middle of another surge."

"So expect BCCI to agree with shift of tournament to UAE," another source also chipped in.

He said IPL's suspension after a string of positive cases has made the officialdom very jittery of taking any more risks.

"The IPL in India was a platform to prove to the world as well as participating nations that it is safe to host a tournament even when the second wave is hitting its peak."

OTHER SPORT

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### HALEP KNOCKED OUT

MADRID: World No 3 Simona Halep was dumped out of the Madrid Open, losing 4-6, 7-5, 7-5 in the round of 16 to Elise Mertens.

### 4 INDIANS IN 'THE HUNDRED'

NEW DELHI: The BCCI has granted NOCs to four Indian women cricketers, including T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur, to play in the inaugural 'Hundred' tournament in the UK.

### BFI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEAD

NEW DELHI: The Boxing Federation of India's Executive Director R K Sacheti died on Tuesday after battling Covid-19. He was 56.

### INDIA'S MATCHES POSTPONED

LAUSANNE: India's upcoming FIH Hockey Pro League away fixtures against Spain & Germany later this month have been postponed due to the international travel restrictions.

### SEVILLA'S TITLE HOPES DENTED

SEVILLE: Sevilla's chances of winning La Liga could be over after they suffered a 0-1 defeat by Athletic Bilbao on Monday night.

### WEST HAM STAY IN TOP 4 HUNT

LONDON: West Ham maintained their bid for a place in next season's CL as Michail Antonio scored twice to beat Burnley 2-1.

### 26-PLAYER SQUADS FOR EUROS

LAUSANNE: UEFA said on Tuesday it would allow expanded 26-man squads at Euro 2020.

### PARMA RELEGATED

TURIN: Parma were relegated from Serie A on Monday after a 1-0 defeat at Torino. Agencies



## Mourinho takes Roma job

Rome: Jose Mourinho is back.

The Portuguese manager, who was sacked by Tottenham Hotspur in late April, will return to the touchline next season after being introduced as the new manager of AS Roma, the Serie A club announced on Tuesday.

Mourinho agreed to a three-year contract and will officially take charge ahead of the 2021-22 campaign.

"After meetings with the ownership and Tiago Pinto, I immediately understood the full extent of their ambitions for AS Roma," Mourinho said.

"It is the same ambition and drive that has always motivated me and together we want to build a winning project over the upcoming years."

"The incredible passion of the Roma fans convinced me to accept the job and I cannot wait to start next season."

Mourinho will replace Paulo Fonseca, who will leave at the end of the season after two years in charge. **AP**



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**Notice**

Pursuant to the Notification S.O. 1630 (E) dated 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 wherein the Central Government has declared every Saturday as a Public Holiday for Life Insurance Corporation of India, all policy holders and other stake holders are informed that w.e.f. 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2021, all offices of Life Insurance Corporation of India will work from Monday to Friday.

Starting 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021, Office hours from Monday to Friday would be 10:00 AM to 05:30 PM. For details please visit [www.licindia.in](http://www.licindia.in).

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