

GRAVE LAPSES, SAYS MINISTER

11 juveniles beat up guards, flee correction home

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE DELHI government Thursday alleged "grave lapses" on part of the staff and management of an NGO-run correction home, after 11 juveniles, who had been moved there from other correction homes, allegedly injured private security guards and fled Wednesday night. One of them was caught later. The 11 have been convicted on serious charges ranging from robbery to murder and rape, said police. Delhi Women and Child Development Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam made the observation after inspecting the facility along with the secretary and director of the department. The government has initiated an inquiry into the case. The founder of NGO Prayas, which runs the home, said the juveniles had serious allegations against them, and the director of the home had written to the government over housing them at the facility. The juveniles are in the 16-18 age group, said police. "We received a call about the incident at 7.15 pm. While escaping from the correction home, the juveniles attacked the security in-charge with an iron rod. They also injured three police personnel deployed at the home and broke open the main gate to escape," said a senior police officer. Police said parents of the absconding juveniles were contacted immediately, and one of them, who went back to his home, was caught. He was brought back to the correction home. Efforts are on to trace the others, police said. A senior officer in the Central District said all 11 juveniles were brought to the home over last few days to maintain social distancing among inmates and ensure correction homes are not crowded. They were kept separately, away from the other inmates, under guidelines put in place following the COVID-19 outbreak in the city. "Under the new norms, juveniles in conflict with the law brought to our homes are quarantined for two weeks. They are kept in separate rooms within the same premises as a precautionary measure. Accordingly, these 11 juveniles were also kept

128 cases & 2 deaths in fresh spike

ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

ON THURSDAY, 128 fresh COVID-19 cases and two deaths were reported in the capital. The total cases are now at 2,376 while the death toll has touched 50. Around 808 people have recovered. The health department has collected 5,619 samples from 3.41 lakh residents across the 89 containment zones. Across the capital, the maximum number of cases — over 230 — have been reported from the Central district, said health department officials. This includes 12 people from two families, including a 45-year-old infant, living in the Churiwalan area. The district administration has started tracing their contacts. "As per initial investigation, we found that both families live in the same house. One person has a history of travel to Russia, but we are gathering more information on this," said District magistrate (Central) Nidhi Shrivastava. Four of them, including the infant, have been admitted to Lok Nayak Hospital. Doctors said they are asymptomatic and presently stable. Sources said the fact that some areas in the district, especially in Old Delhi, are congested is a cause of concern. There are six hotspots in the district — Chandni Mahal, Nabi Karim, Burari, Bara Hindu Rao, Nawab Ganj and Sadar Bazar. Recently, the first set of rapid testing kits were used in Nabi Karim on 62 people. All of them tested negative. "The area is under close watch. Regular sanitisation is being carried out and healthcare workers are testing



The central district has seen the maximum number of cases, Amit Mehra

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people in containment zones. We are also carrying out random sampling to see if there is any local transmission," said a senior official from the health department. At Jahangirpuri's H Block, 46 new positive cases have surfaced. An official said the area where the new cases have come up is already a containment zone: "Their samples were collected a few days ago and reports came out on April 21 and 22. They have been shifted to a quarantine facility in Narela." A new case also also cropped up in Model Town Thursday — a teenage girl with no travel or contact history. She is asymptomatic. A sanitation worker with the East civic body also tested positive. She hails from Usmanpur and was working in Dharampura. A senior official said 20 of her family members and three workers who were in close contact with her have been quarantined. Seven doctors and 14 healthcare workers at Babu Jagjivan Ram Hospital have also tested positive.

2 men die at shelter home, officials say both had old illnesses

JIGNASA SINHA NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

TWO MEN who lived in the night shelter on the Yamuna river bank and were moved to a shelter home in Central Delhi's Chabi Ganj have died over the past week. The dead, Sudhir Prajapati (50) and Jaideep (43), had been living in the night shelter at Yamuna Pushta for several years. They were shifted to a Delhi government-run temporary shelter on April 14 after three porta cabins along the Yamuna were burnt down on April 11. The men, along with other daily wagers, slept near the riverbanks for three days before being shifted to shelters in Central Delhi and Rohini. Police said the men were migrant workers. They also said both deaths appear to be "natural". In a video that surfaced online, Prajapati can purportedly be seen at Yamuna Pushta saying: "Someone burnt the night shelter but now they are not giving us food. Please do something. We'll die of starvation. I had my last meal at noon yesterday." The video was recorded by volunteers from an NGO and posted on April 13. N Sharma, director (night shelter) at the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, denied the allegations made in the video. He said, "The DUSIB and the DM of office provided food to over 4,000 men. We didn't stop serving food when the cabins were burnt. The men clashed among themselves and fought over food." DCP (North) Monika Bharadwaj said, "We received calls on Monday and Tuesday about the deaths at the shelter home. We went to the spot. Prima facie, both seem to be natural deaths but we are waiting for post-mortem reports." A senior police officer said the bodies are still at the mortuary and efforts are on to trace their families. Authorities said both men did not have COVID-19 as everyone was screened before they were shifted. At the shelter home, caretakers and volunteers said the two men had been unwell for a while. "We think Prajapati had TB. We used to send them to the hospital for check-ups. Both men, along with other migrant workers from Pushta, were shifted here on April 14 and 15," said Vinod Bhargava, one of the caretakers. District Magistrate (Central) Nidhi Shrivastava also said the men died natural deaths.

Yemen man found abandoned, doc helps reunite him with kin

SOMYA LAKHANI GURGAON, APRIL 23

SEVERAL CUPS of chai, Google Translate, and a doctor's resolve are what helped a 22-year-old Yemen national reunite with his brother late Wednesday night in Gurgaon — five days after he was found lying unconscious on the roadside in Gurgaon's Kadarpur. "Yusuf, Yemen, India treatment, lost passport" — these are the words he furiously typed in Google Translate on Dr Yogender Singh's phone on April 21 as they sat down for tea at Gurgaon's Civil Hospital, where Singh is the casualty in-charge. "This was a breakthrough after four days of not understanding a word of what he said. I then wrote to the Yemen embassy," said Dr Singh. It was on April 18 afternoon when Yusuf was brought to the hospital after being found unconscious on the street. Singh said, "He had no coronavirus symptoms... He was running around and didn't obey any orders. Some staffers thought he had psychiatric issues, but when I met him, I realised that was not the case. It was just a language barrier. He had a scar on his head, so I knew he had undergone neurosurgery," Singh asked various patients

to try and converse with him — in Tamil, Bengali, Kannada, and so on. "It was a failure. Then my assistant told me he only drinks tea and eats biscuits. So I started drinking tea with him several times a day. In three days we became friends. He would give me a thumbs up every time he wanted tea," said Singh. Singh eventually gave a pen and paper to him, and asked him to write something, which the doctor photographed. "I thought it was Urdu, so I sent it to my friends who understand, and he told me it was Arabic. So I went back to him and opened Google Translate on my phone. He suddenly took it and typed his name and the name of his country," said Singh. But emails to the Yemen Embassy went unanswered. It was then that Singh asked his wife, Dr Saroj Yadav, who works at the CGHS dispensary, about seeking help from police personnel who come to her for treatment for help with reaching out to the embassy. Somnath Paruthi, SHO of Greater Kailash police station, who had visited the dispensary, promptly decided to help. "If a doctor can go out of his way to help someone, what excuse do I have? I was amazed by the doc-

tor's will to help, so I sent a policeman to the embassy in Vasant Vihar only to realise it had shifted to Anand Niketan," said Paruthi. Constable Hava Singh then visited the embassy's new address to find only a guard there, who helped him with an official's number. "The SHO put me in touch with the official who told me they had received a complaint about a missing Yemen national from Delhi. I sent them a picture of the patient, which was then sent to the complainant," said Singh. On Wednesday night, when Singh left the hospital, he got a call that the complaint was about Yusuf, and that his brother and translator would pick him up. "They said they only know Medanta hospital in Gurgaon, so I dropped Yusuf off there. I had to find his family; he is a guest in our country who needed help," said Singh. In broken English, the translator told Singh that Yusuf and his brother had come to India for his treatment in February. He was operated on a few months ago and was prone to blackouts. DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said, "The family and the embassy officials have expressed appreciation for the efforts by the doctor couple and Delhi Police. They have gone beyond their call of duty."

60-yr-old dead at care centre: Doctors say he was asymptomatic

ABHINAV RAJPUT & ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

A DAY after a 60-year-old man from Tamil Nadu, Mohamed Mustafa, died at a COVID care centre in Sultanpur, officials said doctors were always present at the centre, and the man had been shifted from Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital because he was asymptomatic. The man was diabetic, doctors at the hospital said. "He was shifted as per protocol as he was asymptomatic. The government has ordered that only patients who are severely ill should be kept at hospitals. As per rules, patients who are shifted to quarantine centers are monitored by a team of doctors there," said a doctor at the hospital. The man had been brought to the centre on April 19 after spending 21 days at the hospital. Fathima Muzaffer, a member of All India Muslim Personal Law Board who lives in Chennai and is coordinating with the family, has alleged that he was diabetic but was not given medicines and food on time. The government has ordered an enquiry into the

incident. District Magistrate Sandeep Mishra denied the allegations and said that the centre was a care centre and not just a quarantine ward. "He did not die because of negligence. Five doctors were on duty at the time of incident and the patient was attended to. He succumbed before he could be shifted to a hospital. Food is being served regularly four times a day to everyone in the centre. All necessary steps as per prescribed protocol are being taken," he said. Around 700 people, officials said, mostly those who had been to the Nizamuddin Markaz, have been kept at the centre. This includes 104 people who are COVID-19 positive. Mustafa was taken to Lok Nayak Hospital after he collapsed at the centre, but he died before reaching the hospital. Fathima, meanwhile, said some activists are planning to go to court to demand that people from Tamil Nadu who are found negative and are stranded in Delhi due to the lockdown be transferred to their home state. "There is a language barrier. We will keep them in quarantine and follow all rules," she said.

HARYANA GOVERNMENT CORRIGENDUM NOTICE and TENDER NOTICE. Includes details of various government tenders and corrections.

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD INVITATION OF BIDS - ITEM WAR (TWO COVER SYSTEM) (TURN-KEY-BASIS). Includes details of a bid for water supply and drainage work.

परिचमाल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि., विकटोरिया पार्क, मेरठ. Includes details of a power distribution company and its services.

9 THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

There should be no need to explain why the United States — the dominant and richest member of the WHO and the IMF and a nation to which the world looks up in times of upheaval — should take the lead in assisting countries the world over.

— THE NEW YORK TIMES

Don't waste the oil crisis

We cannot leverage low and volatile oil prices to our advantage unless we empower traders, free them of bureaucratic control



VIKRAM S. MEHTA

"THINGS FALL APART; the Centre cannot hold, mere anarchy has been loosed on the world."

I started my last article on oil with this quote from W B Yeats. I do so again because I think it is apposite. The centre of the oil market has collapsed and for those engaged in the oil business, it must seem as if anarchy has indeed been loosed upon them.

Earlier this week, people woke up to the headline that the price of the benchmark US crude WTI had entered negative territory. For the non-cognoscenti, this was an extraordinary and incomprehensible piece of information. Why would producers "pay" consumers? Why did they not simply leave the stuff in the ground? For the cognoscenti, the information was also dramatic. But the questions were different. Did this herald an irreversible structural change in the oil market? What might be the geopolitical implications? What specifically does this mean for India?

The collapse in the price of WTI reflected a technical peculiarity of futures trading. Paper traders would normally have had two options. To let their contract expire and take physical delivery or to pass on the contract to someone else. But this was not a normal month. The US was running out of crude oil storage capacity and traders knew they could not "risk" taking delivery. There was no physical space to hold the product. So their only option was to sell the contract. This was not easy as everyone faced the same physical constraint. So, on the last day before the contracts expired, the traders in desperation "paid" to offload their risk. There was no physical transaction. The dramatis personae were paper speculators, not oil producers. The current future price is back in positive territory.

That said, the headline did bring into sharp relief a structural reality. The world (and not just the US) was fast running out of storage capacity. This was because oil production was way in excess of demand. The latter had crashed by almost 30 million barrels a day or mbd (the equivalent of OPEC's entire production) because of the COVID-induced lockdown of transportation and industry. The price of the other crude benchmarks had also dropped but not the same extent — the North Sea Brent fell, for instance, to \$15/bbl, a level not seen since 1999. The reason was that unlike the WTI, which is traded in the US and therefore dependent on US inland storage capacity, the other crudes have access to seaborne storage (oil tankers). This latter capacity is, however, fast filling up and the price of these crudes may also hit historic lows.

So, where are we headed? One clear pointer. Oil prices will be volatile downwards until demand picks up and/or supply is further cut.

Demand will depend on the curve of post-COVID economic recovery. Which letter of the alphabet will it follow? V, U, W, L or I? The last "I" (that is, continuing decline) is, of course, the doomsday scenario. Optimists are looking at V or perhaps U. The epidemiologists might suggest W: An initial recovery, reversed by a second wave of infection followed by a strong and enduring upturn as and when a vaccine is developed.



CR Sasikumaran

Supply will rest on the outcome of further discussions amongst OPEC, Russia and, ironically, the US. OPEC and Russia had earlier this month agreed to cut production by 10 mbd. But clearly, this is not enough and further cutbacks have to be agreed on. The US, too, will have to reduce production. Its companies are currently producing approximately two mbd more than is required by the refineries. The government cannot mandate such a cutback but the market may force it. At current prices, many companies are barely able to meet their production costs.

Whatever the scenario for economic recovery or supply constraints, there is a slim likelihood of crude oil prices reaching the average price levels of 2019 (\$64) over the next 12 months or so. More likely, they will be volatile downwards with \$50 as the ceiling and with no floor.

This "low for longer" price outlook raises two issues for our policy-makers. One, what are the supply risks? And two, what can they do to maximally leverage the advantages of low prices?

One could provide many answers to these two questions but for lack of space, let me make just two points.

First, every oil producer (with no exception) will face a budgetary crisis. Some, like Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait will finance their social and economic commitments by cutting costs, increasing debt and drawing down on their sovereign reserves. Others like Iran, Iraq, Nigeria and Venezuela, who have no such cushion and whose credit ratings are

On the day prices hit negative territory, I wondered whether the trading experts in our oil PSUs had the flexibility to even contemplate 'buying' the WTI futures contract for June, taking delivery, shipping it to India and storing it someplace. I also wondered whether they had the authority to lock in low prices through forward contracts. These were, of course, academic reflections. I know there is a shortage of storage capacity in India and a mismatch between the quality of WTI and the requirements of our refineries.

junk, will confront deepening political and social crises. India should build into its economic plans the possibility that its traditional oil supply routes could get disrupted. And that its diaspora, whose remittances are of significance, could face disproportionate hardship as these economies retrench.

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I am not suggesting we ask our traders to emulate Wall Street. I am merely suggesting this oil market crisis could be made to work to our advantage. We must not waste this opportunity.

The writer is chairman and senior fellow, Brookings India

Leading from the front

India has played an exemplary role in tackling the Covid-19 crisis



HARIVANSH

TRANSCENDING GEOGRAPHICAL boundaries — and every socio-economic and political demarcation — the COVID-19 outbreak has caused huge disruptions globally. It has substantially punctured mankind's vanity.

However, the United Nations secretary-general, António Guterres, was wide off the mark when he termed the pandemic as the greatest test we have faced since World War II. The scourge of nature is far more serious a threat than man-made wars. It is in this context that I see India's role as exemplary. Among the world leaders, Prime Minister Narendra Modi seems to be particularly perspicacious — not only did he ascertain the real nature of the crisis, but he helped to prepare a graded response to it.

A timely response mitigates the effects of a disaster and India has been spot-on in this regard. As Modi pointed out in his message to the nation on April 14, India took "quick and decisive action" and adopted a "holistic and integrated approach" in the absence of which the country's situation could have been drastically different from what it is now.

India has shown remarkable perceptiveness and alacrity in tackling the pandemic: From conducting screenings at airports to visa restrictions, India has been scaling up its response well ahead of time. India, under the leadership of PM Modi, has moved with a meticulously planned roadmap in its fight against coronavirus. Finally, there also came the most difficult decision: Shutting down all movement to stop the spread of the coronavirus. This was an extraordinary decision in many ways. From persuading people to stay at home, to planning for the economic impact of such an unprecedented lockdown — and also implementing it humanely and sensitively. The decision could not have been taken without exceptional leadership skills.

In an appreciable display of democratic ethos, PM Modi directly reached out to the 1.3 billion citizens to seek their mandate. They supported the move and the lockdown has now been extended, again, with full popular support. Further, he also spoke with all the state chief ministers who reciprocated in equal measure, highlighting the cooperative nature of Indian federalism.

Acting in tandem with the Union government, Bihar chief minister and Janata Dal (United) president Nitish Kumar displayed his remarkable aptitude for governance and foresight in educating people about the merits of social distancing. Unlike industrialised states, Bihar is a predominantly rural state with pockets that have some of the highest population density in the world. One misstep could have led to havoc. As of now, the state bears the maximum pressure of migrant labourers from across India and is a veritable communal cauldron. Yet, the behaviour of the people of the state is highly disciplined and admirable. That is an obvi-

ous reflection of the people's trust in the leadership of Nitish Kumar.

I would not hesitate to say that Bihar, with its limited resources and other constraints, is indeed an "outlier state" on most parameters of performance in containing the spread of COVID-19. The recovery rate of patients diagnosed positive is arguably better than many others in the world. The community spread has been effectively contained there, so far. In rural Bihar, a sustained campaign to promote cleanliness and social distancing has made people acutely aware of the pathogen's insidious ways of attacking the human body.

Besides Bihar, other states too have been evolving their response models. We are proud of how the political executive, bureaucracy, medical professionals, health workers, the police and ASHA workers in villages, have combined to do their best in checking the spread of the contagion. The media deserves unreserved appreciation for making people aware of the dangers of the pandemic.

Contrast this with the onslaught of the Spanish flu in 1917-1919 — and the number of deaths then — and you will know the difference. Unlike in the past, India seems to be better placed now and ahead of the curve — not only in evolving a response to the corona menace but to mitigate the plight of its people as compared to Europe, the US, and China. This crisis has foregrounded a unique aspect of PM Modi's humanist approach. His persuading people to remain in sustained lockdown is guided by his impulse of not making human life subservient to economics.

This strategy has been successful so far. The health ministry has estimated that without the timely imposition of the lockdown, COVID-19 cases could have registered a 41 per cent cumulative increase, reaching up to 8.2 lakh cases, by April 15.

The leadership role that India has assumed in dealing with this crisis is now being appreciated across the globe. India has shown the world that it can not only handle this crisis upfront but also provide aid and support to the marginalised sections of society. The government is making all possible efforts to provide relief to the poor and the migrant workers. A relief package of Rs 1.7 lakh crore, aimed at providing a safety net along with insurance cover for frontline medical personnel, is something that is being acknowledged as a template in the collective fight against the virus.

In the true spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means "the world is one family", India has taken the lead in helping the world at this hour of need. India, the largest producer of the drug hydroxychloroquine, has been generously helping many countries with the supplies of this potential cure of COVID-19.

The war against the virus is still raging. But the country has gained great confidence from the exceptional patience of its people, the quick response of public authorities and, above all, from its trust in the leadership. As partial relaxations begin soon, I hope the people embrace more positivity. Amidst all the gloom the world over, this will also not be a small achievement.

The writer is former deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha and JD (U) MP-elect from RS



KRISHNA KUMAR

HOW DOCTORS make sense of their life is hardly a mystery. Their profession gives them a high social status. Regular opportunity to put their knowledge into practice gives them professional satisfaction. In addition, there is personal satisfaction in healing or at least helping people when they are feeling miserable. No matter what branch or type of medical practice they are in, doctors follow a stressed routine and carry on their work, no matter what the circumstances or state of the patient. Surgeons are probably more stressed than general practitioners, but the difference is only of degree. Anyone who sees people in pain and discomfort on a daily basis cannot avoid the feeling that he or she is carrying a burden. The range of human misery a doctor encounters daily and attempts to address by choosing appropriate remedies is vast and therefore, stressful. Doctors who serve in wars are perhaps inspired by the same kind of positive emotions and sense of duty that soldiers have. The injuries suffered by the latter have a rationale — in the idea of the nation and its borders.

No such thing can be said about injuries suffered in a communal riot. It troubles me to think how doctors feel when they face people wounded during a violent riot such as the

Doctors and teachers

They carry on with their duties, no matter what crisis engulfs the world

one Delhi witnessed in the last days of February. A sense of duty alone cannot explain the relentless effort many doctors made to treat people brought in from riot-ravaged Northeast Delhi with wounds caused by guns, knives and fire. Surely, these doctors must have wondered whether their long and demanding training in health and medicine deserved to be utilised in this way.

A riot represents a breakdown of social order. While the police can wait and watch till they are ordered to intervene, doctors and nurses cannot wait. They just get into action when they come across a patient. Nor do they ask anyone why so much violence was unleashed. I am not sure if they have the time, as the rest of us have, to wonder what anyone achieved by letting so much malice get expressed through physical attacks on ordinary people, looting and arson.

When the news of these riots started arriving, one could hardly believe it. My association of February in Delhi is with flower shows. I realise the spring was late this year; nevertheless, I had imagined that there must be a lot of flowers. That a considerable part of Delhi could erupt into bloody fights and arson at this time of the year came as a shock. The other reason why I found the news of ri-

ots in Delhi unbelievable was because in certain matters I trust tradition.

It is a cultural fact that we Indians will do anything we can to put up the best possible front when a guest visits us. That is how we are socialised since childhood. You learn early in life that if a visitor is about to show up, you put out of sight anything that might bring the family a bad name. That the riots could occur when a prized national guest was scheduled to be in Delhi made absolutely no sense. How could this be, you wanted to know. Perhaps it was fake news, I first thought. Soon enough, I had to face reality, and it had many ironies in store. The one I found most difficult to digest was the visitor's wife being taken to witness a special class at a government school. While Northeast Delhi was facing raw hatred and violence, the first lady who accompanied the American president was attending a so-called "happiness" class.

Whosoever was teaching in that class probably has the same immunity that doctors have. Teachers carry on with their duties, just like medical staff, no matter what crisis engulfs the world around them. The only difference is that teachers face questions; doctors don't. A number of my former

students who now teach in Delhi's schools have been asking how to address children's queries about the riots. Some of these are: Why did people become so violent? Why couldn't the police stop them? When will normalcy return?

These are all difficult questions to answer. Moreover, no teacher feels comfortable facing such questions. They know that after a riot as violent as this one, one can anticipate a new normal to descend on the social ethos. For children who witness public violence, directly or indirectly through television, there is no easy or quick fix for inner disturbance. Unlike doctors, who succeed in healing the wounded and burnt, teachers can at best engage and relate, hoping that higher understanding will some day take over. The corona virus has denied this opportunity to Delhi's teachers. They are now being asked to inaugurate the new session and cover the expected syllabus for April by giving e-lessons. The riots have lost what relevance and value they might have had as objects of enquiry and contemplation.

The writer is a former director of NCERT and author of 'The Child's Language and the Teacher'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WISHFUL THINKING

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The test of a nation' (IE, April 23). Even as the writer commends the PM's farsightedness, the tragic migrant crisis continues to unfold. As for the "timely" lockdown, we know it took nearly two months after the first case was reported to announce it. The almost threatening demand for hydroxychloroquine from Donald Trump is what the writer calls India's "crucial role" in the changing global order. The "cooperative federalism" alluded to is only a euphemism for the Centre's chauvinism. Finally, given the stress on it, one wonders if gratitude can replace PPEs for our corona warriors.

Muhammad Ghazali, Patna

RIGHT ORDINANCE

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Govt. changing law to stop attacks on health workers: 5-year jail, Rs 5 lakh fine' (IE, April 23). At a time when the country is fighting COVID-19, attacks on doctors and healthcare personnel are unpardonable. The government's decision to make such attacks a cognisable and non-bailable offence is welcome.

MC Joshi, Lucknow

COVID AND CRIME

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Jail terms on hold, convicts to be tracked via WhatsApp, Google Maps' (IE, April 23). The proposal of keeping jail terms on hold in view of the coronavirus is ap-

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301.

appropriate. And, tracking convicts via WhatsApp and Google Maps is perhaps, the best use one could make of modern technology.

Melville X D'Souza, Mumbai

ONLINE LIMITS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Going back to the new school' (IE, April 23). The school post-pandemic will be very different. Students and teachers will have to adapt to many changes, move on to online learning. But this model also has limitations. Online learning can fill some gaps but cannot replicate all the benefits of a good learning environment.

Aamil Lodhi, Gandhinagar

2 Youth Cong workers held for targeting Arnab

Only one journalist questioned over his work: Kashmir IGP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 23

Two men were arrested in the early hours of Thursday for allegedly trying to attack Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami and throwing ink on his car.

The incident took place in Lower Parel area of central Mumbai around 12.15 am, when Goswami and wife Sanyabrata, also a journalist, were returning home. Both were unhurt, the police said.

The assailants were caught by Goswami's security personnel and handed over to police, who said both are affiliated to the Youth Congress.

Mumbai Youth Congress chief Ganesh Yadav confirmed that the two are affiliated to the organisation but refused to comment further. Congress spokesperson Sachin Sawant said, "They have done it in their individual capacity."

A case has been registered against the duo - identified as Arun Borade and Prateek Mishra

- under IPC Sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) and 34 (common intention).

The Indian Newspaper Society (INS), the Editors Guild of India and the Press Council of India (PCI) have condemned the incident.

Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad sought action against those involved, while BJP president J P Nadda condemned it and targeted the Congress over the incident.

The incident took place hours after at least two FIRs were filed against Goswami by Congress leaders in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, and Nagpur, Maharashtra, accusing him of inciting communal hatred in the Palghar lynching case and making derogatory remarks against Congress president Sonia Gandhi in his TV show.

More cases were filed against Goswami on Thursday by Congress leaders in several states, including Rajasthan, Telangana, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

Goswami, who was given

Arnab moves SC against FIRs

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will on Friday hear a plea by Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami challenging FIRs against him in some states over his remarks on a TV show.

The matter has been listed before a bench of Justices D Y

Chandrachud and M R Shah. The bench will hear it through video conferencing. Advocate Pragna Baghel, through whom the plea was filed, said Goswami is seeking protection from any coercive action on the basis of the FIRs.

ENS

Y-category security in 2016, is protected by two policemen and a private security guard round the clock. They were following him in another car when the alleged attack took place, the complaint says.

In a written complaint to police, Goswami said two men on a bike blocked his car when he reached Ganpatrao Kadam Marg around 12.15 am. The pillion rider allegedly hit the windovpane on the driver's side several times. Realising that they couldn't break through, the "pillion rider removed a liquid bottle from his pocket and threw liquid all over the car on driver's side, where I

was sitting," Goswami stated. He said the duo shouted and abused him in Hindi and made violent gestures.

A police patrolling party reached the spot and took the two to NM Joshi Marg police station. The police said they have obtained CCTV footage from the area and are examining it.

The police said they have obtained CCTV footage from the area and are examining it. The police said the accused, residents of Sion Koliwada in central Mumbai, are unemployed.

During questioning, the duo allegedly said that they were in-

furiated after watching a video clip on social media in which Goswami was seen humiliating Sonia Gandhi and therefore carried out the attack, an officer said. "Mishra was riding the bike. Borade got off and threw ink on the car," the officer said.

Asked how they learnt about Goswami's movements, an investigator said, "The two claim that they knew it."

The initial complaint registered by the police does not refer to political links of the accused. DCP (zone-III) Abhinash Kumar said, "We produced them in court today and sought their custody; we want to verify who they are affiliated with."

Mishra and Borade have been remanded in police custody until April 27.

Nadda tweeted, "Shocking to see Arnab Goswami attacked after Congress CMs publicly threatened him.... Congress shows it is the party that brought Emergency and continues its rich tradition of trampling free speech." Prasad tweeted, "Deeply condemn the violent physical attack.... State Police must take law-

ful action against attackers." Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said every attack on journalists is condemnable, as this is against democracy.

The INS said in a statement, "This act shows how goons belonging to political parties have scant respect for freedom of expression. The INS urges Maharashtra government to take strict action against the offenders."

The Editors Guild of India stated, "Any physical attack, instigation for hate or verbal abuse hurled against any journalist is a reprehensible act."

The PCS stated, "Every citizen, including a journalist, has the right to express their opinion which may not be palatable to many but this does not give anybody the authority to strangle such a voice. Violence is not the answer even against bad journalism."

Objecting to Goswami's remarks on Sonia Gandhi, the Congress on Thursday asked the I&B Ministry to take action against the journalist and his TV channel.

The officer said journalists and 'relevant organisations' are expected to issue statements only after ascertaining the facts'

BASHAARAT MASOOD SRINAGAR, APRIL 23

UNDER CRITICISM over "intimidation and harassment" of journalists following police action against three of them this week, IGP, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar on Thursday said that only one of them has been questioned over his work while the others have been booked for "seditious, incendiary and incriminating texts" and use of "provocative adjectives" on social media.

In a release, Kumar, referring to an article in national daily The Hindu, said, "Only one journalist has been questioned about a journalistic work as only one FIR of instigating people for violence has been registered over an encounter in Shopian at PS (Police Station) Anantnag."

Asserting that police have "always maintained the highest regard for freedom of press", the IGP said journalists and "relevant organisations are expected to issue statements only after ascertaining the facts".

About action against photographer Masrat Zahra and journalist-author Gowhar Geelani, the IGP said the charges against them were not related to their professional work. "... But because they have posted explicitly seditious, incendiary and incriminating texts on social media, challenging sovereignty and integrity of India and attempting to instigate people for violence," Zahra has been booked under the stringent UAPA.

Kumar claimed there were written complaints against Geelani "as he has exposed life of some peaceful and law-abiding citizens to grave risk by posting incriminating and provocative adjectives against them on social media platforms like FB (Facebook) and Twitter".

Police, however, have not identified the charges invoked against Geelani.

The IGP also said that one of the journalists had met him and "accepted mistake".

The FIR was slapped on a story by The Hindu that quoted family members of two militants killed in an encounter as saying the administration had permitted them to exhume their bodies. The encounter was in Shopian and the bodies were buried in Baramulla by police. The story has been denied by police, which said it had only issued the families curfew passes to visit Baramulla for "verification purpose".

On Thursday, Rajya Sabha MP Fayaz Ahmad Mir sent a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, seeking that the charges against the journalists be dropped. The Kashmir Press Club also reiterated its support for the journalists.

PMLA case: 7 years in jail, Rs 2 crore fine for Jharkhand ex-minister

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, APRIL 23

A PMLA court on Thursday sentenced former Jharkhand Minister Enos Ekka, who held several portfolios in the Madhu Koda cabinet, to seven years of imprisonment for misusing his official position to acquire a large number of movable and immovable properties. The court also slapped a fine of Rs 2 crore and directed that properties worth Rs 22 crore belonging to the accused be confiscated.

Special Judge Anil Kumar Mishra said that the accused had projected Rs 22 crore "ill-gotten money" as untaunted. "The convict have been given effect to a serious offence being a public servant and in awarding sentence the caste, class, sex, age, social status etc. of the convict has got no role to play and it is not considered," the court said.

It was alleged that Ekka, in his nomination papers filed before 2005 polls, had mentioned his total assets as amounting to Rs 10.48 lakh, and acquired "huge movable and immovable properties either in his name or in the name of his family members, relatives and associates" after he became minister.

The Vigilance Bureau filed a case against Ekka in 2008 under the Prevention of Corruption Act and several other sections.

The court said that "cash deposits of huge amounts" were found to be in several bank and post office accounts linked to Ekka's family members and construction companies and that the account holders failed to cite legal sources of the fund. "It is found that the said accounts were opened and operated by the account holders when the accused became minister and it is found these deposits/transactions are made through ill-gotten/tainted money," the court said.

Probe was also conducted into vehicles Ekka had purchased in his or his relatives' name.

The Madhu Koda case is the first political case where the ED secured a conviction. In January 2017, a special court convicted Hari Narayan Rai, a former minister, for laundering Rs 3.7 crore earned through corrupt means. The minister was sentenced to seven years of imprisonment.

The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking (BEST) TENDER NOTICE. e-tenders are invited for the supply of following items. (1) Conversion of BEST Passenger Mini AC Buses (Wet lease, Trav. T2) into Mobile Medical units (MMU) & thereafter restoration.

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD ADDENDUM/CORRIGENDUM Extension of Tender Notice. No. 11-1 / F. CWSS to 134 /2020/ SDO/ CE-TN/J / dt : 15.04.2020. Ref : 1. This Office IFB No.11 / F. CWSS to 134 /2020/ SDO/ CE-TN/J dt : 13.03.2020

TAMILNADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION HO: No.12, THAMBASAMUI ROAD, KILPAUK, CHENNAI-600 010. E-TENDER NOTICE. No. : QCZ/011998/2020 Dated : 23.03.2020

H.P. POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED (A State Government Undertaking) HIMFED BHAWAN, PANJARI, SHIMLA-171005. "CORRIGENDUM NO. 1". The due date of Tender sale, submission and opening of bids invited for Tender No. DGMC/19/2020 for "Design Engineering, Manufacturing, Testing of Equipment, Delivery, Storage, Erection, Civil Works, Testing and Commissioning of 132/33 KV, 2x25/31.5 MVA Sub-Station Dharampur District Mandi (H.P.) along with LIL of 132KV Bassi - Hamirpur Transmission Line on Turnkey basis (Complete Package)" has been extended as follows:

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU FISHERIES DEPARTMENT TENDER NOTICE NO. 4 /DB/F.114 N/2020-21 Dated: 22.04.2020. LS FORM (RATE TENDER SYSTEM) (TWO COVER SYSTEM). For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu sealed tenders are invited by the Chief Engineer, Fisheries Department, Nandanam, Chennai - 35, for the following work from the registered Civil Contractors of Govt. Departments.

संचालनालय कृषि, छत्तीसगढ़ कृषि किसान भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर 492002. //अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना// (छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य में प्रधानमंत्री फसल बीमा योजना क्रियान्वयन हेतु 'क्रियान्वयन एजेंसी' का चयन-प्रस्ताव प्राप्ति हेतु संश्लिप्त निविदा) 4. छ.ग. राज्य में मौसम खरीफ एवं रबी वर्ष 2020-21, 2021-22 एवं 2022-23 में "प्रधानमंत्री फसल बीमा योजना" के क्रियान्वयन हेतु भारत सरकार कृषि सहकारिता एवं किसान कल्याण विभाग द्वारा सूचीबद्ध बीमा कंपनियों से तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय निविदा ई-निविदा के माध्यम से आमंत्रित की जाती है। जिसमें संबंधित समस्त शर्तें एवं जानकारी website-http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in में दिनांक 21.04.2020 से देखी जा सकती है। 5. निविदा प्रपत्र एवं दस्तावेजों में दिये गये समस्त शर्तें बीमा कंपनियों को मान्य किया जाना होगा। 6. ई-निविदा दिनांक 06.05.2020 अपराह्न 03.00 बजे तक इत्राज की जा सकेगी। हस्ता/- संयुक्त संचालक कृषि संचालनालय कृषि 80121 छ.ग. रायपुर

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED (A Govt. of India Undertaking) (CIN : L74899DL1974GOI007417) A-11, Sector-24, Noida-201301, Phone: 0120-2412294, Extn. 2220. Ref. No. 04-2021-DAP/02E Date: 23.04.2020 Notice Inviting Global E-Tender. Bids are invited for SUPPLY OF 40,000MT ± 10% FERTILIZER GRADE BULK DI-AMMONIUM PHOSPHATE (DAP 18:46:00) at East Coast of India.

THE H.P. STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED Totu, Shimla-171011 Dated: 23.04.2020 Short Term Tender Notice. H.P. Milkfed invites the online bids on item wise, in electronic tendering system, in 2 cover system for the following item on FOR basis:- 01. Cotton Seed Refined Oil (15 Kg Tin Packaging) = 360 qtls. and Cotton Seed Refined Oil (Branded Loose oil in tanks)

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU FISHERIES DEPARTMENT TENDER NOTICE NO. 3 /DB/F.114 N/2020-21 Dated: 22.04.2020. LS FORM (RATE TENDER SYSTEM) (TWO COVER SYSTEM). For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu sealed tenders are invited by the Chief Engineer, Fisheries Department, Nandanam, Chennai - 35, for the following work from the registered Civil Contractors of Govt. Departments.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU FISHERIES DEPARTMENT TENDER NOTICE NO. 4 /DB/F.114 N/2020-21 Dated: 22.04.2020. LS FORM (RATE TENDER SYSTEM) (TWO COVER SYSTEM). For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu sealed tenders are invited by the Chief Engineer, Fisheries Department, Nandanam, Chennai - 35, for the following work from the registered Civil Contractors of Govt. Departments.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER (10.08.1968 - 23.04.2009) Sashstra Seema Bal fondly remembers and cherishes the valiant act of SI/GD Bhupal Singh who made the supreme sacrifice of his life in the line of duty on this day in 2009. While stationed in Assam he was travelling alongwith his troops when his vehicle came under ambush laid down by insurgents. SI/GD Bhupal Singh bravely retaliated and charged upon the insurgents and alongwith troops chased them back. Unfortunately he got hit in the act and succumbed to his injuries and attained martyrdom.

TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED Kagitthapuram - 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu Ph: 04324-277 001(10 Lines), e-mail: purchase.wp@tnpl.co.in NOTICE INVITING TENDER. Tender No. Material Description Due Date. 192013 Sodium Soap Required for Deinking Plant - 11.05.2020

Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division (MED), Khealani, Doda Gist of e-Tender Notice No. MDKD/TS/2020-21/01 For and on behalf of Governor of J&K State, e-Tenders are invited from the reputed manufacturers/dealers for the below mentioned job:- S. No.: 1. Name of Work: Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Medical Oxygen Gas Pipeline System at Associated Hospital of Govt. Medical College, Doda. Due Date: 28.04.2020

UJVN LIMITED H.O.: "UJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006. Time Extension Notice. Due to unavoidable reasons the Date of Submission & opening of Tender No. PDD-11/2019-20 Rewiring of residential building at Dakpathar colonies, Tender No. PDD-12/2019-20 - Hiring of one no. diesel driven vehicle (Mahindra Bolero Camper/Tata Xenon Crew Cabin with cabin, model 2018 or later) or equivalent for one year & 24 hours with driver, Tender No. PDD-13/2019-20 - Hiring of one no. Diesel driven vehicle Non-AC (Mahindra Bolero Plus/TUV-300 or equivalent model 2018 or later) for one year with Driver and Tender No. PDD-14/2019-20- Repairing and overhauling of 33KV Isolators of 33KV Khara feeder # 4 & 5 is being extended as below:- Last Date for submission of Tender : 08.05.2020 (Up to 16:00 hrs).

HARYANA GOVERNMENT TENDER NOTICE. SR. No. NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH. NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER. OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME). AMOUNT (APPROX.) IN RUPEES. WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH. NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY द्वितीय शुद्धिपत्र 1. निविदा संख्या: MKN/Const./IFL-DNA/T-419150415 2. कार्य का नाम स्थान सहित: Construction of 224 nos. ... Type-II 110 no. ... Type-III & 18 nos. ... Type-IV quarters and other ancillary works at various stations between Phulera to Degana Phulera-Degana doubling. 3. ई-निविदा सामान्य की अतिम तिथि एवं समय: 08.05.2020 के स्थान पर 27.05.2020 at 15:00 hrs होगी। 4. उच्च मुद्दे जोजीय निविदा (निर्माण)-I 404-07/20 मकराना Public Notice It is hereby informed by this notice to all general public that my client Sh. Gander Bhan, aged 66 yrs (App/50/Late Sh. Parik Chand R/o R.N.08/19-1388/11 L Street No.3, Dev Nagar Near Y Block, Ludhiana Punjab-141001, at present residing at W-8, Sakinagar, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-59, has debarred/dismised his wife Smt. Uma Rani and his 4 children namely Ms. Anjali, Mr. Ashish, Mr. Anand, Mr. Arun, Mr. Arushi from his all moveable & immovable properties & assets with immediate effect because of some temperamental differences with his wife and as they are already living separately since last 20 years and for their certain misdeeds causing a lot of problems, defame, humiliation, insecurity, terror for my client and his family. Hereafter anybody dealing with him in any manner whatsoever will be doing so at his/her own cost, risk and responsibilities thereto & my above named client and his family shall not be responsible for any acts, deeds & omissions of above stated persons in any manner whatsoever.

**@ieExplained**
#ExpressExplainedIf there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

How far can someone without symptoms spread the infection?

The signals so far are that some people spread COVID-19 before showing symptoms themselves. Can some also spread the disease without ever showing symptoms? A look at the emerging evidence

ABANTIKA GHOSH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

TWO RECENT figures given out on separate days by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) about people without symptoms testing positive for novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has created fear about the possibility of unsuspecting individuals suddenly falling very sick, and of their infecting others. A look at the evidence and the guidance on asymptomatic cases of COVID-19:

What has the ICMR said on this?

On April 20, Dr R R Gangakhedkar, head of epidemiology and infectious diseases at ICMR, said: "I have explained that 80% people will have infection without symptoms. They will be asymptomatic but if you test them, there is a chance that they will be positive... We need to understand that RT-PCR test comes positive only after a person is symptomatic. People take time to be symptomatic. This means if I test him when asymptomatic, the chances of him/her testing positive are small." This, he said, is a limitation of the test: the closer one is to the point of infection — when the disease is contracted and not manifested — the slimmer are the chances of testing positive. That is also why, he said, India's testing strategy, which banks heavily on whether a person is symptomatic (unless one is in a hotspot with a known history of contact with a confirmed case), does not need any immediate revision.

The following day, after this led to apprehensions, Dr Gangakhedkar clarified that in India, 69% of the people who had tested positive are asymptomatic. "What I said yesterday about 80% people is based just on one study," he said.

What is the evidence on this?

It is now widely understood that around the world, the bulk of the people who get infected will not show symptoms, and will probably not even know that they have contracted the virus unless they are subjected to a serological test at some point and are found to have developed antibodies. Last week, a study from China concluded that 44% of the cases who had contracted the disease had caught it from an asymptomatic person. They estimated that viral shedding, which is when a person infects



Testing at a facility run by municipal authorities in Mumbai. Ganesh Shirsekar

another, starts happening two to three days before the onset of symptoms.

"We observed the highest viral load in throat swabs at the time of symptom onset, and inferred that infectiousness peaked on or before symptom onset. We estimated that 44% (95% confidence interval, 25-69%) of secondary cases were infected during the index cases' presymptomatic stage, in settings with substantial household clustering, active case finding and quarantine outside the home," reported the researchers, including from Guangzhou Medical University and the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Control, at the University of Hong Kong. The study was published in *Nature Medicine*.

But what is "presymptomatic stage"?

The WHO recognises three stages of COVID-19 transmission — asymptomatic, presymptomatic and symptomatic. "Symptomatic transmission refers to transmission from a person while they are experiencing symptoms. Data from published epidemiology and virologic studies provide evidence that COVID-19 is primarily transmitted from symptomatic people to others who are in close contact through respiratory droplets, by direct contact with infected persons, or by contact with contaminated objects and surfaces," the WHO says. The incubation period of the virus ranges between 5-14 days. Presymptomatic

transmission is when a person spreads the disease before symptoms appear, and eventually develops symptoms themselves.

On asymptomatic transmission, the WHO says it "refers to transmission of the virus from a person, who does not develop symptoms. There are few reports of laboratory-confirmed cases who are truly asymptomatic, and to date, there has been no documented asymptomatic transmission. This does not exclude the possibility that it may occur. Asymptomatic cases have been reported as part of contact tracing efforts in some countries."

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is clear that both presymptomatic and asymptomatic transmission of the virus are possible. "The onset and duration of viral shedding and the period of infectiousness for COVID-19 are not yet known. It is possible that SARS-CoV-2 RNA may be detectable in the upper or lower respiratory tract for weeks after illness onset, similar to infections with MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV. However, detection of viral RNA does not necessarily mean that infectious virus is present. There are reports of asymptomatic infections (detection of virus with no development of symptoms) and presymptomatic infections (detection of virus prior to development of symptoms) with SARS-CoV-2, but their role in transmission is not yet known. Based on existing literature, the incubation period (the time from exposure to development of symptoms) of SARS-CoV-2

and other coronaviruses (eg MERS-CoV, SARS-CoV) ranges from 2-14 days," the CDC says.

How does one protect oneself from asymptomatic transmission?

There is no alternative to basic safety practices such as hand-washing, wearing a mask, and social distancing, said Dr Randeep Guleria, AIIMS Director and a respiratory medicine specialist. That is, till such time that a vaccine is found. "This is why universal precautions such as social distancing hand washing are so important. Maintaining distance is very important but stigma only ends up increasing mortality and morbidity. You have to understand that many people, especially given how young our country is, would go through a bit of fever and body ache and not even know that it is COVID."

The question of transmission from an individual who does not show symptoms is also important — while evidence on asymptomatic individuals spreading the disease may be divided, it is more or less accepted that people can spread the disease before they show symptoms.

For how long can a person spread the disease after being infected by the virus?

The reply to this question is commonly assumed to be 14 days. However, as it is a new disease, knowledge about it is evolving. In Kerala recently, a 54-year-old woman tested positive for the virus almost a month after she arrived from abroad, and had been quarantined at home ever since. Health officials told *The Indian Express* that there have been at least a dozen cases so far of people testing positive after having been quarantined for 28 days. On Thursday, Telangana decided to increase the home quarantine period to 28 days, from 14 days. The Union Health Ministry has advocated from the very start that patients should be followed up, at least through community surveillance, for 28 days and not 14 days.

This is also in line with some of the global experiences. In a study last month in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, researchers from Imperial College London estimated that in China the "mean duration from onset of symptoms to death to be 17.8 days and to hospital discharge to be 24.7 days." They also pointed out that all cases were hospitalised there, not so much because they needed hospital care, but to "prevent onward transmission".



One of Brazil's many sugar mills, which are seen as producing more sugar and less ethanol than earlier. That would be bad news for India's farmers and mills. Reuters

How oil price crash impacts sugar, what it means for India

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS & HARISH DAMODARAN
PUNE, NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

IT IS NOT ONLY oil that has tumbled, with prices of West Texas Intermediate grade crude closing at an unprecedented minus \$37.63 per barrel on April 20, before recovering a tad to \$13.78 by Wednesday. On April 21, prices of raw sugar for May delivery at New York crashed to 9.75 cents per pound, the lowest closing for a nearest-month futures contract since the 9.70 cents recorded on June 9, 2008. Even commodities such as corn and palm oil have seen price declines following the slide in crude. A look at the connection:

We know about oil. But why have global sugar prices also collapsed?

All commodities have taken a demand hit from subdued economic activity and lockdowns imposed by many countries to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. But sugar is one commodity that, until quite recently, was on a bull run. Most estimates showed global production in 2019-20 (October-September) to fall short of consumption by 8-9 million tonnes (mt). On February 12, the front-month raw sugar futures contract at New York actually closed 15.78 cents per pound, the highest since May 2017. A drop from that to below 10 cents is rather steep.

One reason for this collapse is the closure of restaurants, weddings and other social functions not taking place, and people avoiding ice-creams and sweetened cold beverages that might cause throat infections. The impact of coronavirus-induced lockdowns on out-of-home consumption and institutional (as opposed to direct household) demand for sugar is obvious. Prakash Naiknaware, managing director of the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories, projects sugar consumption in India alone to dip by 1.5-2 mt in 2019-20, from the normal 25.5-26 mt levels.

Is that the only reason?

Sinking crude prices appear an even bigger factor. The juice from crushing sugarcane can be crystallised into sugar or fermented into alcohol. When oil prices are high, mills — especially in Brazil — tend to divert cane for making ethanol (alcohol of 99%+ purity) that is used for blending with petrol. In 2019-20 (April-March), only 34.32% of cane crushed by Brazilian mills went for manufacturing 26.73 mt of sugar. The rest was used to produce 31.62 billion litres of ethanol. But with oil prices tanking — WTI crude was quoting at \$53-plus two months ago — mills will not find it attractive to divert cane for ethanol. Brazil's mills, which have started crushing (the Indian season is from October), are seen to produce up to 36 mt of sugar and hardly 26 billion litres of ethanol this year.

How will this affect India?

Dip in sugar consumption, together

with higher Brazilian output, is bad news for both Indian sugar mills and cane farmers. Before COVID-19 happened, the Indian industry was expected to export 5.5-6 mt of raw sugar in 2019-20. Mills had already entered into contracts of some 3.8 mt, out of which 3.05 mt have been shipped out so far. With ex-factory realisations from exports at Rs 2,250-2,400 per quintal and the Centre providing a subsidy of Rs 104.48 (it was termed lump-sum assistance towards defraying marketing, internal transport, port handling and ocean freight expenses), the industry's woes from excess stocks were seemingly behind it. This was to be aided both by exports and lower production (26 mt, from 33.2 mt in 2018-19).

The current plunge in world prices, plus Brazil's likely production surge, would upstage these calculations. Naiknaware, however, is counting on Indonesia's increased import requirements and its decision last month to slash the duty on Indian raw sugar from 15% to 5%. Indonesian refiners are projected to import 3.3 mt of raws this year, up from 2.6 mt in 2019. "They buy mostly from Thailand, which is experiencing a bad drought that could lead to its production falling from 14.6 mt in 2018-19 to 9 mt. It opens up an opportunity for us," he says.

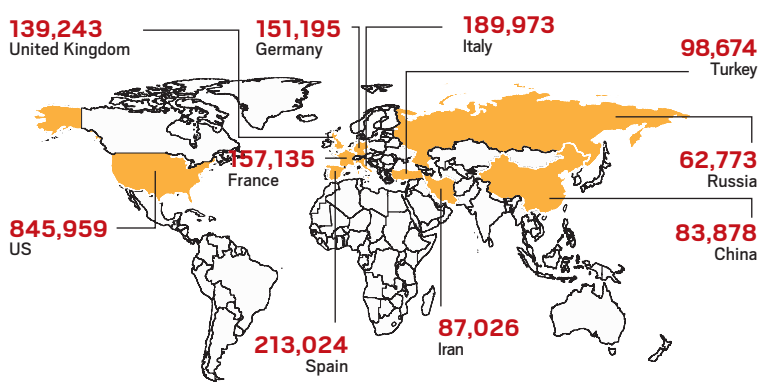
What is the situation with respect to cane farmers?

Exports slowing down and not much domestic lifting of sugar by institutional consumers has significantly undermined the ability of mills to make cane payments. Uttar Pradesh's factories have till now crushed cane worth roughly Rs 32,000 crore in the 2019-20 season, but managed to pay only Rs 16,456 crore. The state government, last week, announced a scheme of mills giving "willing farmers" one quintal each of sugar for the next three months, in lieu of cane payments due to them. Maharashtra mills, too, had paid only Rs 11,310 crore out of their total cane dues of Rs 12,539 crore as on April 15.

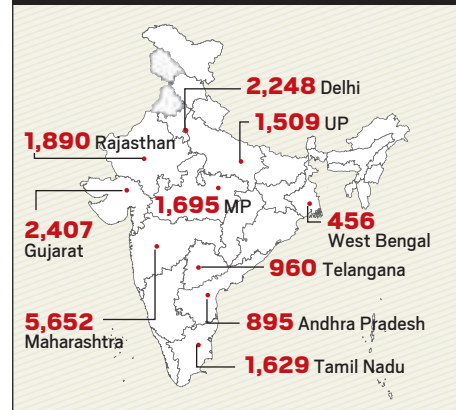
Moreover, the industry's problem is not from sugar alone. The lockdown has reduced offtake of alcohol, be it potable liquor or ethanol for blending with petrol. UP mills, according to the state's cane commissioner Sanjay Bhoosreddy, may produce around 100 crore litres (one billion) of ethanol this season, compared to 51.5 crore litres in 2018-19. But with cars and two-wheelers not running, oil market companies aren't very keen to procure ethanol.

Are other agri-commodities impacted?

Prices of corn, which is also used for making ethanol, fell to their lowest since September 2009 at Chicago on April 21. Likewise, palm oil, again a feedstock for biodiesel, ended 7.5% lower at the Bursa Malaysia futures exchange. Corn prices can, in turn, drag down other cereals, just as palm oil could to soyabean and other oilseeds. They are all ultimately linked to oil, whose prices matter as much to petroleum companies as farmers.

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK
DAILY COUNT OF DEATHS, INFECTIONS**TOTAL CONFIRMED: 2,665,122** **DEATH COUNT: 186,313**

Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11 pm on April 23

Have a question on the COVID-19 outbreak and what you should/should not do? Write to explained@indianexpress.com**INDIA COUNT: 21,700 (686 DEATHS)****TOP 10 STATES****REST OF INDIA**

Andaman and Nicobar Islands	18
Arunachal Pradesh	1
Assam	35
Bihar	148
Chandigarh	27
Chhattisgarh	36
Goa	7
Haryana	262
Himachal Pradesh	40
Jammu and Kashmir	407
Jharkhand	49
Karnataka	443
Kerala	438
Ladakh	18
Manipur	2
Meghalaya	12
Mizoram	1
Odisha	83
Puducherry	7
Punjab	277
Tripura	2
Uttarakhand	46

Union Health Ministry update as of 11 pm, April 23. Some states may have reported higher numbers. Only states and UTs with the most cases are listed above.

4,325 PATIENTS DISCHARGED IN 30 STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES**AN EXPERT EXPLAINS**

Working with lockdown: create green worker pools, not green zones

**BINA AGARWAL**

ALL APPROACHES to easing the lockdown carry risks of infection spikes. How can we minimise the risk while allowing work? The government is following a geographic (zonal) approach. This is a high-risk approach which can also prove ineffective.

A more effective, minimal-risk approach would be to create infection-free worker pools, by a strategic combination of antibody and PCR testing of workers in businesses that open up. Let me explain why.

The government has demarcated three zones: green, orange and red. The green zones

are where no new cases were reported over 28 days since the last case tested negative. The orange zones are those with a few cases, and the red ones have a large number of cases.

The government suggests opening up the green zones first. But these zones may have many asymptomatic cases, that is, infected people with no symptoms. The Delhi government found recently that 25% of those who tested positive had no symptoms. China had 44% asymptomatic cases. These are very high figures.

If green zones are opened and 25% people are asymptomatic carriers, infections will spike. If workers are together in factories, even with social distancing a single asymptomatic carrier can infect others, forcing the entire unit into quarantine. The effort of opening up that factory will be wasted. Moreover, many factories are located in red zones, and supply chains often cut across zones.

For example, Baddi town in Himachal Pradesh is India's biggest pharma hub, and

home to major companies that produce numerous essential drugs for domestic and export markets. It is in a red zone but is being allowed production, with many workers coming from other states. What if the workers bring infection?

A lower risk method would be to create "pools of green workers" (rather than green zones) who are infection free. Hence, if an industry wants to open (and all should be allowed, whether producing essential or non-essential goods) it should first identify its workers. Those who have already recovered from the virus will have some immunity. Give them a green certificate or stamp their arms. Give antibody tests to the remaining workers in that industry. These are blood tests which can identify in an hour if someone has been infected, even if asymptomatic. Some antibodies (IgM) appear a few days after infection and others (IgG) a little later.

Some of those who test positive may still be infectious, others would have recovered.

To identify the recovered, give a PCR test. Those testing negative can join the green workers. Those testing positive should self-quarantine for say 7-8 more days, and then get PCR tested again and cleared. This procedure will create a worker pool who can work without endangering others or themselves. They will not need on-site lodgings, since they will have some immunity, and can come from any zone, including red.

What about false negatives or false positives in antibody tests?

The false negatives, that is, those showing no antibodies even if infected, would be excluded anyway from the green worker pool. On false positives, that is those showing antibodies without being infected, if the PCR test finds them infection free and they have been in self-isolation for 14 days, including them in the worker pool will carry minimal risk. There will still be some risk, since they will lack immunity, but their co-workers with antibodies will have immunity.

The second issue is identifying services and businesses for antibody testing.

Health service workers are already on the priority list. Another priority is industries manufacturing PPE kits, ventilators, oxygen concentrators and medicines, but they should also create green worker pools. Beyond this, any factory or business that has its requisite number of green workers should be allowed to open, whichever zone it falls in, with minimum red tape in granting permission. Given low consumer demand, rather few may initially come forward in any case.

By focusing on green workers and not green zones, we can also minimise the need for housing in work locations, which most businesses lack. But those who want to provide housing can minimise the chance of cluster infections, if they have pre-tested workers.

The third issue is housing migrant workers who may join the work force later but need accommodation now, given continued lockdowns across states.

For them, large spaces (stadiums, convention centres) should be opened up. These allow for social distancing, showers and toilets, community kitchens or even self-organised cooking, virus testing spaces, and parking for transport buses, etc. Many states are using schools and colleges for migrants, but these will be needed when they open, and seldom have stadium-type facilities for a few thousand people.

Basically, we need an effective but low risk strategy to return to work and ease the lockdown. A zonal approach can prove ineffective and carries high risk. The answer lies in creating green worker pools, not green zones, through targeted antibody plus PCR testing, and a generous plan to house migrant workers. We can thus work with the lockdown with minimum risk and maximum effectiveness.

Bina Agarwal is Professor of Development Economics and Environment, University of Manchester

Madagascar soldiers went door-to-door in Antananarivo, doling out sachets of a herbal tea touted by President Andry Rajoelina as a powerful remedy against COVID-19. This herbal tea gives results in seven days," Rajoelina said. "We can change the history of the entire world."

TOP OF THE WORLD



Daniel Pearl

PAKISTAN

SC moved over acquittals in Pearl murder

Karachi/Islamabad: The Sindh government has challenged in the Supreme Court the provincial high court's verdict that acquitted British-born top al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and three others in the abduction and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl in Karachi in 2002. Pearl, the 38-year-old South Asia bureau chief for The Wall Street Journal, was abducted and beheaded in Pakistan in 2002. The government of Sindh on Wednesday filed the challenge before the Supreme Court against the April 2 order of the Sindh High Court, according to Dawn.

AFRICA

Worries as cases jump 43 per cent in a week

Cape Town: Africa has registered a 43 per cent jump in reported COVID-19 cases in the last week, highlighting a warning from the World Health Organization that the continent of 1.3 billion could become the next epicentre of the global outbreak. Africa also has a "very, very limited" and "very, very strained" testing capacity, John Nkengasong, director of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said in his weekly briefing on Thursday. It means that the surge in infections on the continent is likely to be even higher in reality, he said.

BANGLADESH

Shutdown extended as toll rises to 127

Dhaka: Bangladesh has decided to extend the nationwide COVID-19 shutdown for 10 more days until May 5. To curb the spread of the coronavirus, the government initially declared a general holiday on March 26 for 10 days. Later, that was gradually extended till April 25. "The government will extend the nationwide shutdown until May 5," a Cabinet division spokesman told PTI as health-care officials said that the pandemic has spread to the country's 58 of 64 administrative districts, indicating worsening situation of community level infections.

After US freezes WHO funds, China steps in

Chinese govt said it would donate \$30 million more to the global health body; WHO chief says he hopes Trump administration reconsiders freeze on funds

AGENCIES
BEIJING, APRIL 23

CHINA SAID on Thursday it would donate a further \$30 million to the World Health Organization (WHO), which is seeking more than \$1 billion to fund its battle against the coronavirus pandemic that has killed more than 180,000 people worldwide.

The pledge comes about a week after US President Donald Trump suspended funding to the WHO and accused the Geneva-based organisation of promoting Chinese "disinformation" about the virus, which emerged in the central city of Wuhan last year.

"At this crucial moment, supporting WHO is supporting multilateralism and global solidarity," Hua Chunying, a spokeswoman of China's foreign ministry, said on Twitter.

The donation aimed to support the global fight against COVID-19, in particular strengthening health systems in developing countries, she said, adding that China had already donated \$20 million to the WHO on March 11.

On Wednesday, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he hoped the Trump administration would reconsider its decision. "I hope the US believes that



Chinese President Xi Jinping inspects a primary school in Shaanxi Province. AP

this an important investment, not just to help others, but for the U.S. to stay safe also," Tedros said during a virtual briefing.

China had hinted at stepping up its monetary contribution to the UN health agency on April 15. Beijing's response came a day after Trump announced to put a "very powerful" hold on US funding to the WHO, accusing the UN agency of being "very China-centric" and criticising it for having "missed the call" in its response to the coronavirus pandemic.

2.32 LAKH CASES IN CHINA BY MID-FEB: STUDY

Beijing: China could have reported over 2.32 lakh COVID-19 cases by mid-February — more than four times of what was officially announced — if it had followed a broader criterion to count the total number of infections, a study has said. "We estimated that there were at least 2,32,000 infections in the first epidemic

wave of coronavirus in mainland China," said University of Hong Kong researchers.

In the study published in *The Lancet*, researchers said China might have had 2,32,000 cases rather than the official count of about 55,000 by February 20, if a revised definition adopted earlier had been applied throughout. PTI

Hidden outbreaks spread through US far earlier: Estimates

BENEDICT CAREY & JAMES GLANZ
NEW YORK, APRIL 23

BY THE time New York City confirmed its first case of the coronavirus on March 1, thousands of infections were already silently spreading through the city, a hidden explosion of a disease that many still viewed as a remote threat as the city awaited the first signs of spring.

Hidden outbreaks were also spreading almost completely undetected in Boston, San Francisco, Chicago and Seattle, long before testing showed that each city had a major problem, according to a model of the spread of the disease by researchers at Northeastern University who shared their results with *The New York Times*.

Even in early February — while the world focused on China — the virus was not only likely to be spreading in multiple American cities, but also seeding blooms of infection elsewhere in the US, the researchers found.

In five major US cities, as of March 1, there were only 23 confirmed cases of coronavirus. But according to the Northeastern model, there could have actually been about 28,000 infections in those cities by then.

As political leaders grappled in February with the question of whether the outbreak would become serious enough to order measures like school closures and remote work, little or no systematic testing for the virus was taking place. "Meanwhile, in the background, you have this silent chain of transmission of thousands of people," said Alessandro Vespignani, director of the

4.4 MN MORE FILE JOBLESS CLAIMS; TOTAL NOW 26 MN

■ More than 26 million people have joined the ranks of the unemployed over the past five weeks. As many as 4.4 million workers filed for jobless benefits last week

■ State agencies have scrambled to handle the flood of filings as well as a set of federal eligibility rules instituted to deal with the crisis. Panic is widespread among the most vulnerable

■ With government phones and websites clogged and drop-in centres closed, legal aid lawyers are fielding complaints from people who say they don't know where else to turn. NYT

Network Science Institute at Northeastern University in Boston. The model estimates all infections, including those in people who may experience mild or no symptoms.

Other disease researchers said the findings of Dr Vespignani's team were broadly in line with their own analyses. The research offers the first clear accounting of how far behind the United States was in detecting the virus. And the findings provide a warning of what can recur, the researchers say, if social distancing restrictions are lifted too quickly. NYT



CHECK-UP QUEUE

Drivers wait to be checked amid large-scale social restrictions to prevent the spread of coronavirus in Bandung area of West Java in Indonesia on Thursday. Reuters

'Let us not squander what we achieved'

NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK, APRIL 23

CHANCELLOR ANGELA Merkel of Germany on Thursday warned the governors of the country's 16 states against loosening restrictions on public life too quickly, saying that it could jeopardise the nation's ability to keep the spread of coronavirus under control.

"Let us not squander what we have achieved," she said in an address to Parliament.

Germany has slowed the pandemic's spread since residents were ordered to largely remain in their homes starting in mid-March. The country, which has re-



Merkel warned against false sense of security. Reuters

ported more than 148,000 infections and over 5,000 fatalities, has had a steady decline in the number of new cases since April.

After discussions with the chancellor last week, the states al-

lowed smaller stores and, in some cases, schools to begin reopening on Monday under restrictions.

Merkel said she stood by her decisions to impose restrictions, and to allow them to be slowly eased, but cautioned against creating a false sense of security.

"Nobody wants to hear this, but the truth is that we are not living in the final phase of this pandemic, but at the beginning," she said. "We are going to have to live with it for a long time."

But the chancellor also noted that the outbreak and subsequent lockdown was proving challenging. "This pandemic is an imposition on our democracy, because it restricts our existential rights and needs," she said.

Australia to pursue Covid probe at World Health Assembly

KIRSTY NEEDHAM
SYDNEY, APRIL 23

AUSTRALIA WILL push for an international investigation into the coronavirus pandemic at next month's annual meeting of the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organisation (WHO), its prime minister said on Thursday.

Australia wants the WHO to be strengthened and is suggesting introducing inspectors with the power to enter a country to respond more quickly to a health crisis. Australia sits on the executive board of the assembly, which determines WHO policies and appoints the director-general. The assembly is due to meet on May 17.

The coronavirus is believed to have emerged in a market selling wildlife in the central Chinese city of Wuhan late last year. It has spread around the world infecting some 2.6 million people and killing more than 183,000 of them, according to Reuters calculations.

The WHO's response to the outbreak has become con-



Scott Morrison

tentious with U.S. President Donald Trump accusing it of being "China-centric" and suspending U.S. funding.

Diplomats believe the May meeting opens the door for discussion of Australia's call for an enquiry because agenda items already include calls for a "lessons learned" review of health emergencies, and urge members to comply with international health regulations introduced after the 2004 SARS outbreak in China.

"The World Health Assembly is coming up in May. There are opportunities to pursue that matter there and that is our first port of call," Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said. REUTERS

Pak using ISI's system to keep track of suspected cases: Imran

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, APRIL 23

PAKISTAN PRIME Minister Imran Khan disclosed on Thursday that his government was using a system, originally meant to track down terrorists by the spy agency ISI, to trace suspected cases in the country, as the number of the COVID-19 patients rose to 10,927.

"It (tracking system) was originally (meant to trace) terrorists but we're using it to tackle corona," Khan said during the live Ehsaas Telethon to raise funds to support the people worst hit by the pandemic.

He said that "tracking and testing is the only way to reopen businesses". Khan said that efficient tracking and testing of coronavirus infected persons was the only way to reopen the closed businesses in the country.

Khan said that a lockdown for indefinite period was not an option and any decision about the shut down should be for "all Pakistanis and not just the elite".

"The government is looking at the option of smart lockdown to wisely provide relief to the people badly hit by the closure of the country," he said. PTI



Imran Khan

'STOPPING US FROM SEEING OUR CHILDREN IS A CRIME'

'We are in prison': Pain in France's nursing homes exposed

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS, APRIL 23

FOR HER first authorised visit in more than six weeks with her 80-year-old mother, Sabrina Deliry prepared a selection of their favourite tunes, among them Edith Piaf's "La Vie en Rose."

Later, at the Paris nursing home where the mother has been agonising in the solitude of her room, feeling imprisoned and miserable without the sun on her cheeks, the breeze in her hair or her daughter's tender hugs, they listened to the French

songbird together.

Even before many businesses rumble back to life or schoolyards bustle again, France started to allow tightly regulated nursing home visits this week, puncturing a strict no-visitors lockdown that still failed to prevent an ongoing tidal wave of coronavirus deaths among elderly nursing home residents.

For some, seeing their parents again brought joy and relief.

"I know how important it is for her," Christopher Cronenberg said after seeing his 87-year-old mother.

But for others, the visits are



At the Kaisberg nursing home in eastern France. AP

proving bittersweet: Better than nothing, but nowhere close to being enough. After all, how can a few minutes, sat across a table in face masks, make up for so many days apart? Sabrina and Patricia were on the phone to each other minutes after they said goodbye with blown air kisses and the mother trundled back alone to her room in her motorised wheelchair, giving a final wave.

"Stopping us from seeing our children is a crime," she said. "They wait for us to die before sending our children to us." The visit, she said, "makes me want to live again." But the next can-

not come soon enough. "We are in prison," Patricia said.

Sabrina is among those who believes that nursing homes were sealed off not to protect residents but to prevent families from knowing what was happening inside.

"It sickens me," she said. "Those are our parents behind those walls, my mother, our fathers. They have no right to deprive us of them like that." She worries that Patricia, a retired hairdresser who has suffered a stroke, will be even more diminished physically by weeks of being confined to her room.

WWII veteran dies of Covid 100 years after Spanish flu kills twin

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK, APRIL 23

A 100-YEAR-OLD World War-II veteran has died of the new coronavirus a century after his twin brother was killed in the 1918-19 Spanish flu pandemic, US media reports said.

Philip Kahn fought at the Battle of Iwo Jima and helped with aerial surveys after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, *Newsday* said on Wednesday in its online edition. Kahn and his twin Samuel were born in December 1919

and Samuel died of the Spanish flu not long after.

His grandson Warren Zysman said Kahn had been afraid of another pandemic coming along during his lifetime. "It was something he brought up quite frequently," Zysman told CNN. "I would have conversations with him, he would say to me, 'I told you history repeats itself, 100 years is not that long of a period of time.'"

Kahn experienced coronavirus symptoms such as coughing before his death on April 17. "He talked about his brother a lot in the last few days," Zysman said.

13 ECONOMY



GOLD

₹41,705



RUPEE

₹76.06



OIL

\$26.15



SILVER

₹38,100

Note: Spot gold markets shut due to lockdown in major states. *Indian basket as on March 19, 2020

SENSEX: 31,863.08 ▲ 483.53 NIFTY: 9,313.90 ▲ 126.6 NIKKEI: 19,429.44 ▲ 291.49 HANG SENG: 23,977.32 ▲ 83.96 FTSE: 5,763.47 ▼ 7.16 DAX: 10,390.18 ▼ 24.85

International market data till 1900 IST

TRACKING COVID-19 CYBERSECURITY

After Aarogya Setu, tender for wristband to track patients by CPSE causes concern

AASHISH HARYAN & PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

EVEN AS privacy concerns for COVID-19 tracking app Aarogya Setu remain, the Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited (BECIL) — a central public sector enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting — has floated a tender inviting companies to supply devices such as COVID-19 patient tracking tool, online high fever scanning tools and handheld thermal imaging systems.

The requirements and functionalities sought by the CPSE in the three tools raise red flags of surveillance and “severe breach” of personal sensitive data, cybersecurity and legal experts said.

BECIL undertakes supply of specialised communication, monitoring, security and surveillance systems to defense, police and para-military departments, according to the tender document.

The last date of opening of the bids for the three was fixed for April 20.

BECIL did not respond to emailed queries on privacy concerns. Another email which sought to know whether the CPSE had so far received any responses from the bidder and whether it had selected a vendor for these tools did not elicit a response either. Of the three tools sought by BECIL, the most controversial is the COVID-19 patient tracking tool, which could be in the form of a wristband, experts said.

There are 33 requirements that the government mandates the tool must have. The first among them says that it must be an “intelligence investigation platform & tactical tool to detect, prevent and investigate threats to national security,” using call data records, internet protocol detail record, tower and mobile phone forensics data.

“Reading through the specifications of the tracking tool, it is evident that the item, presumably a comprehensive software, goes beyond a healthcare tool and opens up the possibility of mass surveillance,” policy group Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC) said in a statement.

The tracking tool should, among other things, be “advanced analytics and intelligence software that uses telecom & internet data to identify suspect locations, associations & behaviour”. The first two points, legal experts said, indicate in no uncertain terms that the app could be used as a tracking tool if the need be.

“It is sort of like the ankle bracelet for prisoners and

‘BREACH’ OF PERSONAL DATA

■ BECIL, a CPSE under the I&B Ministry, has floated a tender inviting companies to supply devices such as COVID-19 patient tracking tool, online high fever scanning tools and handheld thermal imaging systems

■ The requirements and functionalities sought by the CPSE in the three tools raise red flags of surveillance and “severe breach” of personal sensitive data, experts said

parolees that many countries have... This tool takes one step forward and analyses the data, providing invasive insights into personal lives,” a Pune-based cyber-law expert said.

One of the requirements of the device states that it should be able to geofence an area of interest, such as “meeting place, airport, mosque, railway station, bus stand” and identify all the people present at the said location, the tender document said.

“Many components of the tool included in the tender document go beyond the common requirements of contact tracing and could result in pervasive surveillance,” the SFLC statement said.

Apart from the tracking tool, the Centre has also sought supplies of hand-held thermal imaging system and an online thermal fever sensing system.

For the hand-held thermal imaging system too, the government has specified that the device — apart from being able to take temperatures from a distance of 2-5 metres — should also have a secure digital memory card slot with a capacity of up to 32 gigabytes.

The said device should also have voice annotation recording and text comment feature while capturing an image, and should have an in-built microphone and be big enough to be mounted on a tripod. Though the device will have “an audio alarm for high temperature,” the “high-temperature value shall be adjustable as per user requirement in the real-time scenario”, the tender document said.

The third tool, an online thermal fever sensing system, also has certain controversial requirements such as face detection feature, video and audio recording, a minimum of one month of video footage being recorded, experts said.

INDUSTRY BODIES WORKING ON PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT SNAPSHOT SURVEY

Govt, industry to join hands, map skills with jobs for 22 lakh stranded migrants

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

AFTER REGISTERING details of 22 lakh stranded migrant workers in shelters amid the ongoing lockdown to counter the COVID-19 pandemic, the government plans to collaborate with the industry to find the migrant workers employment by mapping their skill sets to meet the requirement for jobs on the ground.

The process had hit a roadblock as the database for migrant workers registered so far in many states was limited to identification details — name, bank accounts, mobile number, Aadhaar, Ujjwala registration — but lacked details of their skill sets and immediate preceding work experience. This information is critical for the industry to meaningfully map the

The process had hit a roadblock as the database for migrant workers registered so far in many states was limited to identification details but lacked details of their skill sets and immediate preceding work experience

skills and qualifications of workers with the available work opportunities in areas near the shelters.

Attempts are being made to fill up this crucial information gap to feed the available worker pool to nearby industrial units after the requisite testing regimen. “Government has collected information for the migrant workers. But a better approximation of where those workers can fit in can be done only if we have data on their skill sets and where they were employed before they came to stay in the shelter. These questions need to

be added to make it a workable dataset,” an industry source said.

Industry representatives said the details so far are more from the identification perspective and might help in any proposed transfer of benefits by the government, but more granular details will help in getting the workers employed.

Industry chambers such as the Confederation of Indian Industry are already working on a proposal to conduct a snapshot survey across the country to assess the potential work opportunities for these migrant workers after par-

tial relaxation was granted to industry for resumption of work beginning April 20. A senior Labour Ministry official said data has been collected for 22 lakh workers and more work is being done to update the database.

On Wednesday, addressing a FICCI webinar, Labour Secretary Heeralal Samariya had said that the Centre has collected the data of migrant workers from states as well as districts. “... we are trying if there’s work available with factories, builders, how to do matching so that they can be provided employment in nearby places so that work can start in factories ... we are on job, issuing instructions to concerned district administration so that work and relief material can be given,” he had said.

As per the status report submitted by the Home Ministry to the Supreme Court in March end,

states and union territories had set up 21,064 relief camps for food or shelter, with the governments having provided shelter to 6,66,291 persons and food to 22,88,279 persons. This dataset includes details of poor and destitute, stranded migrant workers, workers who need access to food, or workers who reached their destination but were needed to be quarantined.

Though there’s a countrywide lockdown in force till May 3, the government had allowed partial resumption of some industries from April 20. The Centre had also allowed movement of migrant labour between districts within a state, primarily to facilitate the movement of available skill sets to areas where they would be needed if factories and industrial units are to start. The movement of labour between states, however, remains prohibited.

TLTRO 2.0: Banks not keen on NBFC bailout, take little over half of RBI funds

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

BANKS HAVE largely ignored the Rs 25,000-crore targeted long term repo operations (TLTRO) conducted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and bid for only half of the money put by the RBI on Thursday, indicating their reluctance to bail out troubled non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) and micro-finance institutions (MFIs).

Of the Rs 25,000 crore put by the central bank on the TLTRO window on Thursday, banks took only Rs 12,850 crore (for three-year tenor), while there were no takers for the remaining amount. The RBI offers TLTRO funds at the repo rate of 4.40 per cent.

“Banks don’t seem to be keen on giving money to small and medium NBFCs ... many of them are facing liquidity crunch as collections have fallen due to the lockdown,” said a banking source.

There’s already a complaint that banks which had taken funds from the central bank’s TLTRO window earlier had given that money to top-rated corporates, ignoring the claims of cash-starved small and medium units.

Last week, the RBI announced TLTRO 2.0 and the scheme man-

E Partial credit guarantee an option

POOR PARTICIPATION by banks in the TLTRO for NBFCs clearly highlights the banks’ reluctance to lend to mid-size and small NBFCs and MFIs in the current situation. A viable option could be a structure with partial credit guarantee by the government, similar to the PCC scheme launched last year for securitisation. This is likely to ease liquidity challenges of NBFCs

dates that within the total size of Rs 50,000 crore, 10 per cent should be allocated to MFIs, 15 per cent to NBFCs with asset size of Rs 500 crore and below, and 25 per cent to NBFCs with asset size be-

fer three-month moratorium on loan repayments by their customers in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown in the country. However, banks have refused to give the same facility to NBFCs which have taken huge loans from the banking sector.

According to India Ratings, NBFCs with an asset size between Rs 500 crore and Rs 5,000 crore largely belong to ‘BBB’ and ‘A’ rated categories and may have weaker liquidity and other buffers than higher rated issuers. With a large segment of NBFCs’ customer base (both in MSME and otherwise) likely to be significantly impacted by the lockdown, delinquencies could disproportionately rise for these lenders. The RBI may have to revise their strategy to help small and medium NBFCs as banks are hesitant to give funds to them. In the TLTRO 1.0 window, most of the funding was absorbed by public sector entities and bigger corporates.

A top corporate had raised Rs 8,500 crore through an NCD issue earlier this month. Banks have so far mobilised Rs 1 lakh crore from the RBI at repo rate. Many of these corporates are raising this debt to not only tide over short-term liquidity challenges but also strengthen their liquidity buffers.

While collections are falling steeply in the wake of the lockdown, closure of units and job losses, an estimated Rs 1.75 lakh crore debt obligation of NBFCs will mature by June 2020.

The RBI had asked banks, co-operative banks and NBFCs to of-

Prolonged lockdown: Growth may contract by 0.9%, says CII

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

CORPORATE INDIA has expressed fears that the GDP will contract by 0.9 per cent in FY21 if the coronavirus outbreak gets prolonged and the lockdown continues for a long period. “In case of a more prolonged outbreak, where the restrictions in existing hot-spot regions get extended, while new regions are identified as ‘hot-spots’ leading to intermittent stop and start in economic activity, GDP is likely to decline by -0.9 per cent,” the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said.

On Thursday, Fitch Ratings also cut India’s growth projection to 0.8 per cent in 2020-21, saying an unparalleled global recession was underway due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and resultant lockdowns.

In the baseline scenario, GDP is expected to grow at 0.6 per cent on an annual basis as economic

activity is likely to remain constrained due to continuing restrictions on free movement of goods and people beyond the lockdown period, CII said. “This will lead to disruption in supply chains, slow pick-up in investment activity, labour shortages in the short-run and muted consumption demand on account of reduced household incomes,” it said.

In the optimistic scenario, which envisages a faster pick-up post the lockdown period, GDP is projected to register a growth of 1.5 per cent at best, it said.

“Given the extent of the damage to the economy from the disruption to business, the GDP growth in FY21 will likely be the lowest in many decades,” said Chandrajit Banerjee, director general, CII. “The economic costs of the lockdown are rising each passing day with the impact being felt across sectors. The situation requires immediate, across the board intervention from the government,” he said.

As output costs exceed global prices, upstream oil & gas cos seek relief

KARUNJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

UPSTREAM OIL and gas companies are seeking reliefs on taxes and levies from the government as the fall in international Brent crude prices to below \$20 per barrel has hit their profitability. Sources at ONGC and Oil India (OIL) said that top management was in discussions with the Petroleum Ministry seeking relaxations in both oil cess and royalties, as their cost of production exceeds international crude prices.

“ONGC management has asked that oil cess and royalties not be levied when crude prices are below \$45 per barrel,” said a source aware of developments, adding that these should be waived for the duration of the supply glut and demand collapse due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Oil producers are required to pay a 20 per cent oil cess on the price of crude as well as a royalty of 10-12.5 per cent for offshore production of oil.

Another source in the know said that upstream oil PSUs had borne the brunt of providing subsidies to consumers when crude oil prices had reached over \$100 a barrel in 2007 and 2008, and the government should consider an arrangement in which OMCs are asked to purchase crude oil from PSUs at rates above international prices in such situations. “Oil marketing companies (OMCs) could be asked to buy domestic crude production which account for only 20 per cent of crude demand in India at some agreed upon price which is viable for domestic producers,” said the person.

Another source said that OIL was losing around \$10-15 per barrel of crude production and that a relief from the Centre in royalties and oil cess may not be enough to

Crude rallies on faster output cuts

New York: Oil soared on Thursday after major oil-producing nations said they would accelerate planned output cuts. Brent rose \$1.90, or 9.4 per cent, to \$22.28 a barrel by 1553 GMT, while WTI jumped \$4.02, or 29 per cent, to \$17.80. REUTERS

make up for losses, but may help in meeting operating expenses.

“Both gas and crude businesses are incurring major losses, but we are sure the government will take steps to provide relief” said an official at Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), noting that staff at offshore sites were spending stints of over 40 days as against an average of 14 days to ensure uninterrupted supply.

The Centre slashed natural gas prices earlier this month by 26 per cent to \$2.39 per million British thermal units (mmbtu), despite calls from industry that a downward revision from the previous price of \$3.23 per mmbtu would make gas production unviable for some domestic producers.

Ajay Kumar Dixit, CEO of private upstream player Cairn India, told *The Indian Express* that domestic producers needed relief from government levies.

“Companies are getting hammered down heavily. It would take at least couple of quarters for things to normalise,” he said, adding that the Centre should consider waiver or deferment on royalty, cess and profit petroleum.

A spokesperson for the Petroleum Ministry said the government was holding internal discussions about the proposals by upstream companies.

Mobile testing lab to speed up COVID-19 screening

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh Thursday unveiled via video link a Mobile Virology Research and Diagnostics Laboratory (MVRDL) developed by DRDO that will help speed up COVID-19 screening, a statement said.

The first such Mobile Viral Research Lab (MVR) that will speed up coronavirus screening and related R&D activities was developed by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI), the Hyderabad-based laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), in consultation with ESIC Hospital, Hyderabad, the statement said. The MVR is the combination of a Biosafety Level 3 lab and a BSL-2 lab essential to carry out its work.

IndiGo reverses April pay cut for staff keeping in mind ‘govt’s wishes’

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

INDIA’S LARGEST airline IndiGo Thursday reversed its decision announced last month to cut salaries of its employees despite facing financial pressures due to flight restrictions on account of the COVID-19 outbreak, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

In March, the airline had announced across the board pay cuts of up to 25 per cent, citing a “precipitous drop in revenues” that threatened the very survival of the airline industry.

According to company sources, IndiGo chief executive Ronojoy Dutta wrote to the airline’s staff Thursday informing them of the reversal in decision on account of the “government’s

wishes of not reducing pay during the lockdown”. Consequently, the staff will be paid full salaries for the month of April. However, Dutta informed the staff that executive committee members and those above senior vice-president level have volunteered to take the pay cuts for April.

Concurrent with the country-wide lockdown, airlines are not allowed to operate any scheduled commercial flight on domestic or international routes till May 3.

IndiGo’s decision stood out among its competitors in the domestic sector, most of which have either reduced the salaries of employees or have furloughed them.

Airlines — which have a high-fixed cost model — have been trying to reduce costs to survive, given that revenue generation has now been limited to cargo operations for Indian carriers.

Amazon India’s pilot project to give local stores online presence gets ₹10 cr boost

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

ONLINE RETAILER Amazon India on Thursday announced an investment of Rs 10 crore in a pilot programme under which it has onboarded 5,000 local stores selling items including grocery, electronics, apparel, toys and home furnishings.

The investment commitment comes a day after Facebook announced a \$5.7-billion stake purchase in Jio Platforms, alongside an arrangement between its messaging platform WhatsApp and Reliance Retail that will see the new e-commerce platform JioMart accelerate its drive to digitise three crore small grocery stores across the country.

“Over the last 6 months, we have been running a pilot with 5,000+ offline retailers and local shops to bring the benefits of online selling closer to them. Code-

named ‘Local Shops on Amazon’, this program helps customers discover products from local shops in their city (many they already trust and love!) from the convenience of their homes, while helping shopkeepers supplement their footfalls with a digital presence and expand beyond their normal catchment,” Gopal Pillai, VP—seller services, Amazon India, wrote in a blogpost.

These include stores from Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Coimbatore, Surat, Indore, Lucknow, Saharanpur, Faridabad, Kota, Varanasi among others.

“The last few weeks have brought us across an unprecedented challenge. As we focused our efforts to serve only essential products to customers, it was heartening to see how hundreds of retailers and shopkeepers across India, already part of the pilot, played an important role to

help the customers in need,” he added.

As of now, shops enrolled with the programme are only selling groceries and essentials, as those are the only categories permitted by the government, but Amazon expects other categories to pick up once the lockdown is relaxed.

Retail sector analysts are predicting a shift in consumer behaviour in favour of e-commerce even once the lockdown is lifted.

“After the control of the spread of coronavirus and post the lockdown period, spending as well as shopping patterns of consumers are expected to change significantly ... In such times, retailers with presence across retail segments (grocery, apparel, appliances, accessories) as well as who have an omnichannel strategy with presence in both offline and online channels are expected to have a quicker recovery,” CARE Ratings said in a research note.

20-50 DAYS:
CRUDE INVENTORY THAT INDIAN REFINERS KEEP ON AVERAGE TO AVOID DISRUPTION IN OPERATIONS

Crude prices nosedive: As demand slumped due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the prices of global crude oil plummeted from an average of \$55 per barrel in February to:
■ \$33 in March
■ \$20 at March-end

Inventory losses: The mayhem in the oil market meant that by the time crude oil is processed

\$10-20 PER BARREL:
INVENTORY LOSS CAUSED DUE TO RAPID FALL IN CRUDE PRICES

and converted into fuel, the rates have fallen, resulting in inventory losses

9.7 million barrels per day: Record production cut that oil cartel OPEC and its allies agreed to on April 12, in spite of which crude prices have hovered low

Source: Crisil Ratings/PTI



‘Indian refiners stare at ₹25,000 cr inventory loss’

Indian oil refiners may have incurred a ₹25,000-crore inventory loss in January-March period, Crisil Ratings said

14 SPORT



MURRAY TARGETS FRENCH OPEN

Andy Murray has said that he would "definitely" play in the rescheduled French Open in September, if it is able to take place as planned. "I'd definitely play on the clay, if it goes ahead," former world number one Murray told CNN.

Corona impact: IOA misses Asian Games bid deadline

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

INDIA COULD not submit its bid to host the 2030 Asian Games before the April 22 deadline because of the coronavirus pandemic, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president Narinder Batra said. The IOA is now considering to host the 2034 edition of the continental event.

Batra added his organisation had to change its 'priorities after the outbreak of the pandemic and ensure the well-being of its athletes first.' Consequently, the Olympic body could not complete the necessary formalities and secure government guarantees in time. The OCA, on Thursday, announced that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are the only two countries who have submitted a bid. "I wish the two countries the best. We could not complete the formalities after the virus outbreak. We will now aim to bid for the 2034 edition," Batra said.

The idea to host the Asian Games in 2030 gained momentum in 2017, when it was discussed by then sports minister Vijay Goel and former IOA chief N Ramachandran. Back then, the decision was welcomed by the OCA as well. By the end of last year, the IOA had formulated an ambitious plan to host more than one multi-discipline event in this decade. Apart from the 2030 Asian Games, they were also planning to bid for the Commonwealth Games in either 2026 or 2030 and the Youth Olympics in 2026. It now appears that the Youth Olympics, along with the International Olympic Committee's Congress in 2023, are the two events India will be aiming for.

Canadian city Hamilton is among the contenders for the 2026 CWG. India is yet to officially begin its process to submit a bid for the event it last hosted in 2010.

Bitter rivals in fray

Meanwhile, bitter neighbours Qatar and Saudi Arabia will battle for the hosting rights for the 2030 edition of the Asian Games. Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt severed political, trade and transport ties with Qatar in mid-2017, accusing Doha of supporting terrorism and cozying up to regional foe Iran.

I am sure BCCI will be open-minded in helping other countries: Tendulkar

DEVENDRA PANDEY
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

EVERY CRICKETING nation will have its own problems to solve and has suffered due to the absence of international cricket during the lockdown across the world, says Sachin Tendulkar. In an interview to *The Indian Express* the batting great talks about how the game could change because of the pandemic and why everyone should chip in.

Do you think sport will be the same again? There is already some talk about cricket and in particular about the use of saliva in shining the ball.

All these things are going to change, without any doubt. Nobody knows how the ball will respond if there is no shining. I don't think any team has played a game without applying saliva or sweat on the ball. Players will be aware of social distancing and might also be wary of celebrating with high-fives after taking a wicket. What I hear is that stands are likely to be empty when a tournament is played initially. That certainly won't be easy to adjust for the players as they draw a lot of energy from spectators. We will be needing government clearance on whether it's safe to play, of course, first. The most important thing is to save lives.

What do you think should be the role of Indian cricket as the future of several cricketing nations looks bleak? Countries like Zimbabwe, West Indies and even New Zealand and Sri Lanka will find it extremely tough to survive this lockdown and global economic crisis.

Everyone has suffered in this. Some have suffered more, some have suffered less. It would be appropriate if BCCI answers this question and not me as I don't know what BCCI's capabilities and capacity are at the moment. Each country will have its own problem to solve, not only in cricket but overall. After all, BCCI is India. I am sure they (BCCI) will be open-minded in helping other countries if they approach them.

Should the BCCI, with a cricketer as presi-

"Nobody knows how the ball will respond if there is no shining. I don't think any team has played a game without applying saliva or sweat on the ball. Players will be aware of social distancing and they might also be wary of celebrating with high-fives after taking a wicket."



Sachin Tendulkar believes it is better to be safe than sorry when it comes to the coronavirus pandemic. File

dent, play a big role in leading cricket's global fightback?

If you look into other boards, cricketers are in different positions. This is not a cricketing decision; cricketing decisions are taken on-field. This decision is more humanitarian. I am sure rest of the board members will have their views and they too want to help. I feel, at this level, whether you are cricketer or not, at this moment everyone will help. He (Ganguly) is board president and it has nothing to do (with) whether he has played cricket or not. He will take this call as board president.

Not just foreign cricketers, even Indian domestic cricketers might suffer if the money goes out of the game.

Yes. A solution will have to be found. I think right now nobody is thinking about it, everyone is thinking about beating the virus. But I am sure India will be in a position to

help and they too want to help.

(Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic have spoken about helping tennis players who are not among the top 100 and are struggling to survive. Do you think even cricket needs to initiate a dialogue like this?

Everything is up to individuals there (in tennis). Here the rights and whatever it is, there is a board. I think players can manage up to certain extent. I don't know about tennis and what they are looking to do. Each sport or each country will have its own challenges and we would try and help. I am sure BCCI will be in a position to help our cricketers.

Do you think eventually a few top countries will continue to play cricket but mostly franchise cricket will grow more?

Franchise cricket will grow because of its T20 version, the version which is popular among most of the families. T20 is something one can take their family to and the game is over in three hours. Slowly, the game is moving towards that direction.

Are you a bit scared like the rest of us about this virus?

I think it's good to take all possible precautions. If one is negligent or has an attitude of 'nothing can happen to me', that is how it happens. That attitude is unacceptable to me. It is better to be safe than sorry. It all comes down to hygiene. As a UNICEF ambassador, I have been telling people how important it is to wash hands. My company has planned how to continue helping people. And not only till this coronavirus, people have problems at other times as well. I don't want to stop, I want to help people until my last breath.

BCCI proposes new revenue sharing model at ICC meeting

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, APRIL 23

The BCCI wants to lead the post Covid-19 cricket world, as it has laid out the roadmap for the future ICC functioning. It is learnt that during the global body's Chief Executives' Committee (CEC) meeting on Thursday, BCCI secretary Jay Shah proposed a new revenue distribution system that will look after all cricket boards. The CEC meeting, via conference call, was attended by 12 Full Members and three Associates.

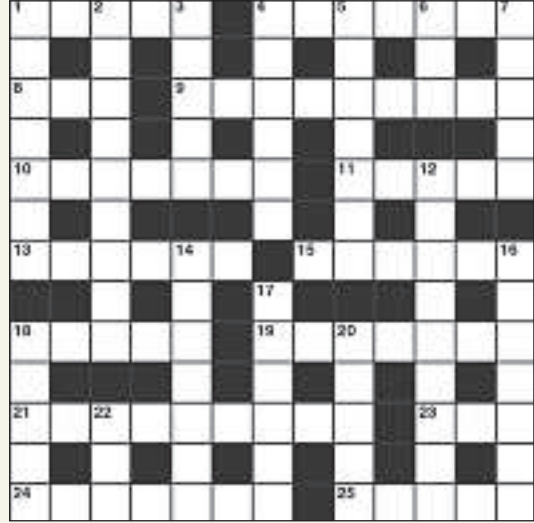
The BCCI has assured the other cricket boards, feeling the pinch of a global economic meltdown, of its support. According to an insider, during the meeting, Shah requested the chief executives of all other cricket boards to roll over the existing structure and draw up a draft proposal for a new revenue distribution model.

The current revenue distribution model for the ongoing eight-year cycle expires in 2023. At the ICC, though, regulations may be made or amended by the "Board of Directors or by any Committee, Sub-Committee or member of ICC Management to whom appropriate authority has been delegated by the Board of Directors". For a special resolution to pass, "more than 75 per cent of the aggregate number of votes" is required, while for an ordinary resolution more than 50 per cent would suffice.

In 2014, the BCCI had joined hands with the England and Wales Cricket Board and Cricket Australia to form the Big Three that had approved a contribution-based revenue distribution system. With the Indian board contributing to more than 70 per cent of the ICC's revenue, its projected share was \$570 million for the 2015-2023 rights cycle. In 2017, when the ICC dismantled the Big Three model, the BCCI's revenue share reduced to a little over \$400 million. But in a post Covid-19 world, almost every other cricket board, especially weaker nations, will need the BCCI's support - series against India for example - to make up for the financial losses.

With the Covid-19 outbreak causing havoc, the CEC all but ruled out any cricket in the near future, while discussing contingency plans for the World Test Championship, T20 World Cup and the 2021 Women's Cricket World Cup.

CROSSWORD 4100



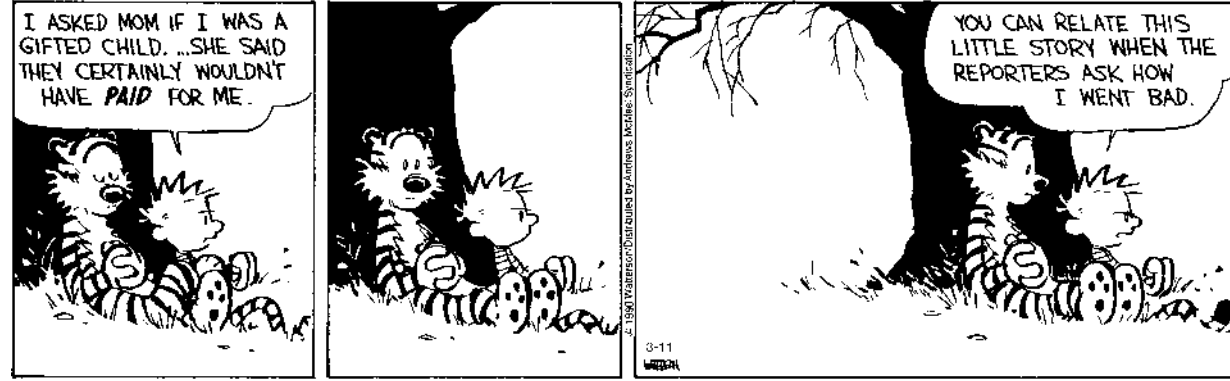
- ACROSS**
- In fact a point of view (5)
 - A cleric angered about being sorted out (7)
 - Manage to stand (3)
 - and 2 Down: Protective device for speedy transport worker (9,9)
 - He is sorry for one who is late (7)
 - Homes in the finest situations? (5)
 - Don't miss a review (6)
 - He flies automatically. Some swear by him (6)
 - See 25 Across
 - Small article produced by an erratic knitter? (7)
 - Want to try? Only too willing! (4,4)
 - Sorcery Japanese women get wrapped up in (3)
 - Dead set about being calmed down (7)
 - 25 and 18 Across: Famous Western stage partnership (5,5)
- DOWN**
- Gang leader (7)
 - See 9 Across
 - Used by a bird of prey in a brutal onslaught (5)
 - Consider changing gear on the way (6)
 - Helping poor relations? (7)
 - Romanian money that is left over (3)
 - Artist when old retires south (5)
 - Having got well, how to get rich (6,3)
 - To prevent overheating use this - not coal, anyway (7)
 - Necessarily involves a silent reformation (7)
 - What people who had designs on eating out did? (6)
 - Drops of water (5)
 - Two in difficulties being pulled along (2,3)
 - Deceive a child (3)

Solutions Crossword 4099: Across: 1 Apprehends, 8 Siren, 9 Leeward, 10 Ukulele, 11 Lydia, 12 Ratify, 14 Ascend, 17 Miser, 19 Etching, 21 Atelier, 22 Fleas, 23 Perversity. Down: 2 Pursuit, 3 Rinse, 4 Holder, 5 Needles, 6 Sward, 7 Advantages, 8 Square meal, 13 Furrer, 15 Evident, 16 Degree, 18 Sheep, 20 Cuffs.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

An existence is a worse negation of life than death itself. - José Ortega y Gasset (10)

DREEO AERYDM
FGLNU INOTPY

SOLUTION: ERODE, FLUNG, DREAMY, POINTY

SUDOKU 4189

Difficulty Level 4s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4188