

EDITORIAL Forcing industry to pay wages during lockdown imperils MSMEs' survival SC right in scrapping Andhra's 100% quota, but has been allowing breach of 50% cap LOSING GROUND Facebook's big Jio deal portends a bruising time for SoftBank-backed Paytm FULL DISCLOSURE Google will require proof of identity from all advertisers

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TRACKING CORONAVIRUS

HIGHEST SINGLE-DAY SPIKE IN CASES

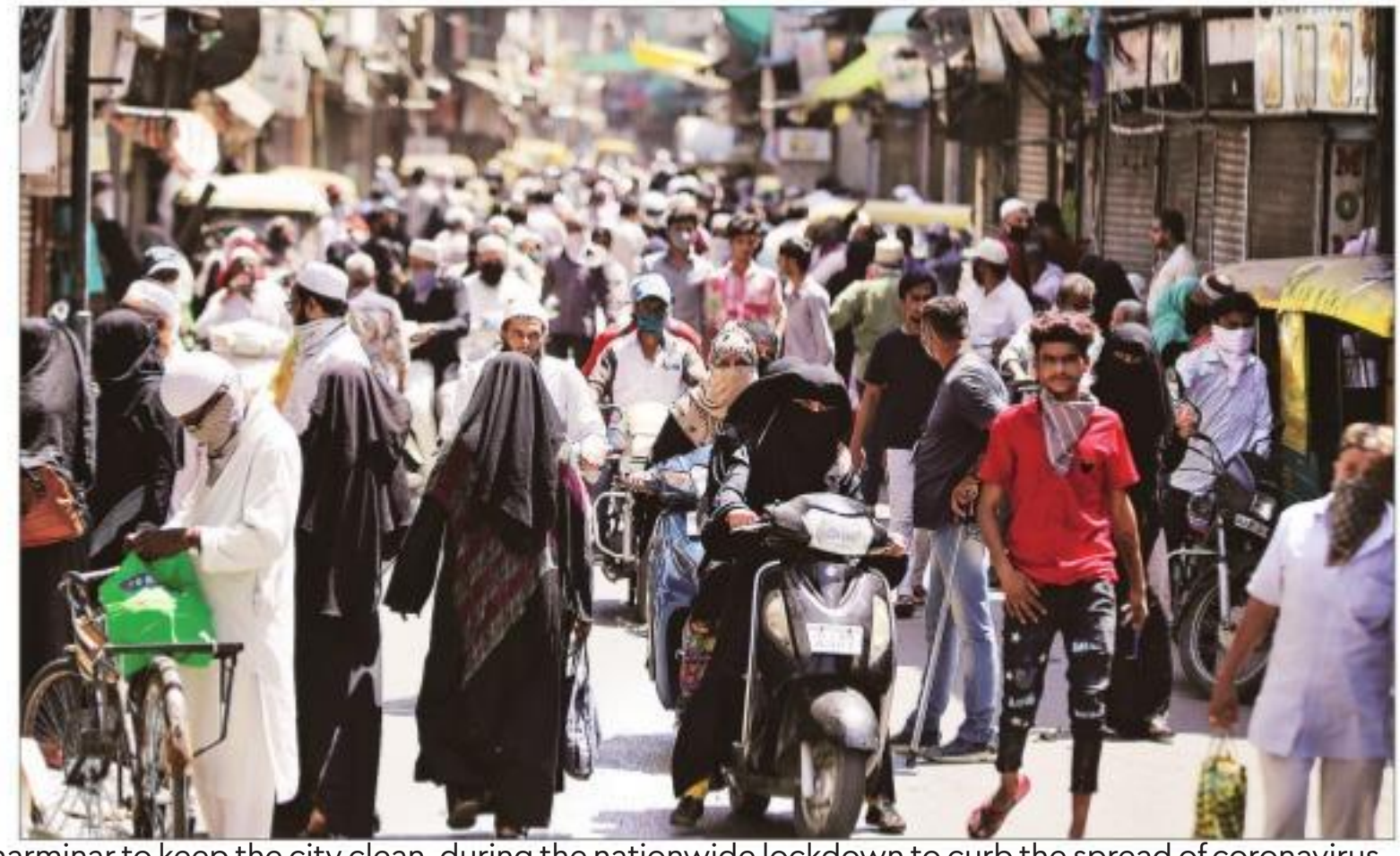
Centre sets up four more teams to monitor districts, says without lockdown, cases would have hit 1 lakh

ABANTIKA GHOSH, DEEPTIMAN TIWARY & KARISHMA MEHROTRA New Delhi, April 24

ASTHE COUNTRY reported the highest daily jump in COVID-19 cases, with 1,752 infections recorded in the last 24 hours, the government Friday said that it will set up four more Central teams, this time to cover Ahmedabad, Surat, Hyderabad and Chennai. Gujarat, Telangana and Tamil Nadu have together recorded over 5,000 cases. According to the Health Ministry's latest figures, the country has recorded 23,452 cases so far, including 4,813 recoveries. Referring to these numbers, Dr VK Paul, NITI Aayog member (health), said that had there been no lockdown, the total number of cases would have been around 1 lakh. Dr Sujit Singh, director of the National Centre for Disease Control, said that currently 9.45 lakh people are under community surveillance for suspected contact with positive cases. "Our weekly doubling time (of cases) has increased from 4.2 on April 6 to 8.6 on April 20," he said. And, in a video conference with state health ministers and officials, Union health minister



Sanitation workers take a pledge in front of the historic Charminar to keep the city clean, during the nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus, in Hyderabad on Friday.



(Right) Muslims through a market on the eve of the holy fasting month of Ramzan, in Ahmedabad on Friday

COVID-19 UPDATE 23,452 TOTAL CASES 723 DEATHS SO FAR 1,752 NEW CASES

Dr Harsh Vardhan said that stage three (community) transmission, when the source of infection is not easily traceable, has been avoided so far. In a statement, meanwhile, the ministry of home affairs (MHA) said that apart from the new Inter-Ministerial Central Teams (IMCTs), the one that is already monitoring Mumbai and Pune will also cover Thane.

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Lack of SOPs in states a hurdle for export units

FE BUREAU New Delhi, April 24

EXPORTERS HAVE TOLD the commerce ministry that most units are yet to resume operations, as many states haven't yet issued standard operating procedures, reports FE Bureau in New Delhi. Also, states like Karnataka, TN and Telangana have not quite provided relaxations despite the government's directive on partial lifting of lockdown from April 20. Giving its feedback to commerce secretary Anup Wadhawan, the FIEO has said manufacturing couldn't start in certain "green zones" as well, as firms supplying components to them are located in the red zones.

Detailed report on Page 2

₹1-lakh-cr fund soon to help clear dues to MSMEs: Gadkari

FE BUREAU New Delhi, April 24

THE GOVERNMENT IS weighing a proposal to set up a revolving fund of ₹1 lakh crore to inject liquidity into small businesses by banks under official credit guarantee to fight the Covid-19 pandemic, MSME and transport minister Nitin Gadkari said on Friday, days after industry raised similar demand for a relief. Speaking at an ASSOCHAM webinar, the minister said the fund will be used to clear dues owed to small businesses by state-run entities as well as industries. The Centre itself and assorted agencies owned and managed by it are esti-

mated to owe nearly ₹5 lakh crore to corporate India and some state-run agencies like FCI. A significant portion of these dues are owed to MSMEs. Also, the big private companies owe large amounts to MSMEs.

Continued on Page 2

MHA silent, Yogi plans return of stranded migrants

FE BUREAU Lucknow, April 24

DAYS AFTER HE sent buses to the Delhi border to bring home stranded migrant workers, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath Friday directed officials to draw up a plan for the return of UP's migrant workers in a phased manner from other states where they have completed 14 days of quarantine, report Maulshree Seth and Deeptiman Tiwary in Lucknow and New Delhi. The MHA officials remained silent on whether UP's decision to bring home its migrants from other states was in consonance with national lockdown guidelines.

Detailed report on Page 3

Polio vaccine could beat corona: HIV co-discoverer

FE BUREAU New Delhi, April 24

DR ROBERT GALLO, of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, who is credited as a co-discoverer of HIV, believes the oral polio vaccine (OPV) can be repurposed as a tool in the fight against Covid-19. In an interview with journalist and author Walter Isaacson for veteran American journalist Christiane Amanpour's show on PBS, Dr Gallo said that the vaccine has been documented to provide protection against a number of viral and bacterial infections other than poliomyelitis, including flu.

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Pune's Serum Institute all set to make under-trial corona vaccine

FE BUREAU Pune, April 24

THE SERUM INSTITUTE OF India (SII), which has partnered with the University of Oxford, has started work on manufacturing a vaccine for coronavirus. The SII has started the work even as Oxford University on Thursday started clinical trials of the vaccine it has developed. Once the clinical trials are over and successful, SII will release its vaccine. If the clinical trials by Oxford are not successful then the loss will be of SII. Some limited clinical trials will be done by SII also. "SII will be manufacturing the vaccine in anticipation of clinical trials succeeding by September-October in the UK," Adar Poonawalla, CEO, Serum Institute, said. Currently, SII is awaiting regulatory approval from the government (ICMR and DBT) and once it gets the same, maybe in two weeks' time, it expects to start production of 2-3 million doses by end of May, Poonawalla said. Serum institute will be investing its own money for manufacturing the vaccine. Poonawalla, is hopeful of support from the government and from organisations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, for manufacturing the vaccines in the country.

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GOVT PANEL FOR DELAYED START TO NEW COLLEGE SESSION, SEPT INSTEAD OF JULY

P12

Blip in Gujarat cases: High-risk but zero or single co-morbidity

SOHINI GHOSH Ahmedabad, April 24

A VULNERABILITY PROFILE analysis by the Gujarat health department of the 112 who have died of coronavirus in the state until Thursday has found a growing proportion of casualties among patients who may be high-risk but with no known co-morbidity or those with a single co-morbidity. High-risk patients are defined as those above 60 years or below five years of age and pregnant women. While more than 50% of last week's deaths were of patients categorised as high-risk along with multiple co-morbidities, this week, a larger number of fatalities involve high-risk patients without any co-morbidity or high-risk patients with a single co-morbidity. Of the total deaths, 43 (38%) so far have been of patients with a single co-morbid condition, while 51 or nearly 45% of those with multiple co-morbidities.

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FIXED-TERM EMPLOYMENT House panel for defining job tenures, adding safeguards

Vetting IR Code, the committee warns FTE could promote 'hire and fire' policy

SURYA SARATHI RAY New Delhi, April 24

THE FACILITY OF fixed-term employment (FTE) — which was first introduced in the garment sector driven by the seasonality of export orders in October 2016, and extended to all sectors in the 'central sphere' including the labour-intensive agriculture, mining and ports in March 2018 — could "lead to exploitation of workers and promote (an undesirable) 'hire and fire' policy", the parliamentary standing committee on labour has warned. The FTE policy, as defined in the Code on Industrial Relations (IR Code) to which it is proposed to be subsumed, implies that it can be used (by employers) to replace the pre-

sent and future permanent vacancies into a flexible contract on a regular basis, the panel said, and called the move "highly inappropriate and inapposite". Basically, the panel, headed by Biju Janata Dal MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, is concerned about two aspects of the FTE policy. First, the lack of a minimum tenure for FTE so as to guarantee a certain degree of job security to the workers concerned; secondly, the absence of an explicit clause mentioning the conditions under which and the areas where the employers can secure nod for FTEs from a designated authority. It is not clear at this stage whether the panel's views would impel the government to make the necessary changes in the Code and address its concerns.

Continued on Page 2 'Our report tries to balance interest of workers and industry', Page 2

FUND BLUES Templeton debacle to hit investors very hard

CHIRAG MADIA Mumbai, April 24

INVESTORS COULD LOSE a big chunk of the ₹25,800 crore worth of assets held in the six debt schemes that Franklin Templeton is winding down. With no redemptions possible, investors will have to be satisfied with whatever amount the fund house is able to recover by liquidating the investments. While Franklin may be able to recover the money from the better-rated companies, financial experts pointed out the portfolios have several dud investments. "Fund managers have bought junk in their chase for high yields," observed an expert. The debacle at Franklin could lead to redemptions from other debt schemes.

Continued on Page 2 More reports on Page 10

TOUGH TIMES L&T loses ₹12,000-cr revenue in lockdown

SHUBHRA TANDON Mumbai, April 24

THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST engineering and construction firm, Larsen and Toubro, has lost revenue worth ₹12,000 crore during the month-long lockdown till now, its CEO and MD SN Subrahmanyam is understood to have told the top management. Sources said that the company has been doing a series of webinars across sections of employees and communicating its steps to help the community at large to overcome the crisis and also about the impact the lockdown is having on its operations. The company has a monthly billing of around ₹12,000 crore but because of the lockdown which began on March 25 which led to stoppage of work, the same has taken a hit. Additionally, Subrahmanyam is understood to have said to the top management that the company is already spending ₹500 crore on a monthly basis for the upkeep of 1.5 lakh migrant workers staying at camp sites provided by L&T. These workers work on L&T's sites and projects and they are being paid in full apart from being provided boarding and food. The company will bear this cost till the lockdown is there and operations do not return to normal.

Continued on Page 2

ALARMING! Trump's bleach idea sparks warnings

KRISTEN V BROWN & JUSTIN SINK San Francisco/Washington, April 24

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP returned to the lectern Thursday after a government scientist's presentation about studies showing that sunlight, humidity and disinfectants kill the coronavirus on surfaces — in some cases within seconds. What Trump suggested next later sparked warnings from doctors and manufacturers of household cleaners. Bill Bryan, an undersecretary at the homeland security department, told reporters during the White House's daily task force briefing that research had shown bleach could kill the virus in saliva or respiratory fluids in five minutes and isopropyl alcohol could kill it even more quickly. "The disinfectant knocks it out in a minute. One minute," Trump said in response to the presentation. "Is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside?" He said it would be "almost a cleaning. It gets in the lungs and does a tremendous number on the lungs".



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Continued on Page 2

'CONSPIRACY, FRAUD' Loan diverted to firm run by top executives, including auditor

KHUSHBOO NARAYAN Mumbai, April 24

THE SLEW OF allegations against Cox and Kings, as reported in The Indian Express Friday, uncovered in its forensic audit, relate to falsifying records, attempt to siphon off funds, bogus sale and debt default. Add to this list: Forgery, conflict of interest and criminal conspiracy. Part of the loan given by Yes Bank to Cox and Kings subsidiary was allegedly diverted to a firm run by the company's



senior executives, including its internal auditor. This firm, in turn, used that money to buy a stake in a Government-promoted financial institution, show records of a



probe by Yes Bank and the resolution professional appointed by the National Company Law Tribunal. Cox and Kings was one of Yes Bank's top borrowers when co-founder Rana Kapoor was heading the bank. Yes Bank had an exposure of ₹2267 crore to Cox and Kings.

Records of the probe, conducted after Kapoor's exit from Yes Bank, show that a firm promoted by Cox and Kings, Ezeego One Travel and Tours, allegedly "siphoned" ₹150 crore it borrowed from Yes Bank and invested it in Redkite Capital. This was done in two tranches between January 2018 and March 2019 through non-convertible debentures (NCDs). Redkite Capital, set up in 2010, is owned by four firms controlled by Anil Khandelwal, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Cox and Kings; his father, Om Prakash Khandelwal; Naresh Jain, the internal auditor of Cox and Kings; and the Jain and Khandelwal family. Redkite, records show, used the ₹150 crore raised from Ezeego to acquire a controlling stake of 32.81% in a government-promoted financial institution, Tourism Finance Corporation of India (TFCI), between February and March 2019 after the approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Continued on Page 2

Economy

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020

Quick View

ICEA warning on mobile phones

AN ESTIMATED 4 crore mobile phone users in the country are expected to be without handsets due to faults and breakdowns by May-end, if restrictions on the sale of handsets and spare parts continue, the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) said on Friday.

CARE sees GDP growth at 1.1%

CARE RATINGS ON Friday said the country's GDP growth is likely to decline to 1.1% in the current financial year 2020-21 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Most export units yet to restart

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 24

EXPORTERS HAVE told the commerce ministry that most units are yet to resume operations, as many states haven't yet issued standard operating procedures (SOPs). Also, states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have not quite provided relaxations despite the home ministry's directive on partial lifting of lockdown from April 20.

Giving its feedback to commerce secretary Anup Wadhawan, the Federation of India Export Organisations (FIEO) has said manufacturing couldn't start in certain "green zones" as well, as firms supplying components to them are located in the red zones.

In some cases, exporters, who had already piled up adequate stocks before the lockdown, want the inventory to be cleared before starting fresh production, given a crash in demand. Similarly, in many auto clusters, manufacturing hasn't started as the distribu-

Lack of SOPs in states remains a hurdle

tion channels have not been opened yet, FIEO director general Ajay Sahai said.

"A lot of MSMEs are unable to open their factories as they lack the liquidity to purchase raw materials and other inputs," Sahai said.

With key markets—the US and the EU—battered by the Covid-19 and over a half of their orders cancelled, Indian exporters are facing an unprecedented crisis. Merchandise exports crashed as much as 35% year-on-year in March, as the impact of the pandemic started to bite.

With a half of their orders cancelled now and the nationwide lockdown extended up to May 3, exporters warn of a much steeper decline in both outbound and inbound shipments in April. Merchandise exports, which had already contracted by 1.5% y-o-y up to

February, ended the last fiscal with a 4.8% fall to \$314.3 billion.

Ravi Sehgal, chairman of the engineering goods exporters' body EEPC India, said inadequate liquidity and logistics are the major challenges for companies to restart production. Getting workers from their homes to factories when public transport remains shut is an expensive affair. Similarly, transporting goods has been a gigantic task. "While the central bank has announced steps to ease liquidity in the system, banks remain risk-averse. So loans to exporters at reasonable rates remain inadequate," Sehgal said. Engineering goods is the largest export segment, accounting for roughly a fourth of the country's outbound shipments.

As such, many important industrial townships - including Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Bhopal, Indore, Kanpur and Agra - continue to be in the so-called red zone, the leading exporters' body said.

INTERVIEW: BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB, chairman, parliamentary standing committee on labour

'Our report tries to create a balance between interest of workers & industry'

In a big boost to proposed labour reforms, the parliamentary standing committee on labour has asked the Centre to make it part of the Industrial Relations Code 2019 that firms with up to 300 employees can fire people or close down units without prior consent of the government. In an interview to FE's Prasanta Sahu, the panel's chairman and BJD MP, Bhartruhari Mahtab, said that the Rajasthan experience of giving such freedom to firms has resulted in more permanent jobs. Edited excerpts:

The industry was asking for a higher threshold for firms to have freedom to retrench workers and/or shut down. There was a demand from the industry that the limit should be raised to firms with 300



employees. There was also a demand from the trade unions side that the limit should be at 100 as they feared increasing threshold will lead to large-scale retrenchments. The Centre was of the view that it should left to respective state governments to fix the cap. In our view, leaving the matter to states to decide will lead to complications as different states might adopt different policies.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

Nitin Gadkari, Union minister

We have informed state governments and collectors that we have opened up all national highways and till yesterday (Thursday), about 55-60% transport movement had started. I hope, we would soon be able to normalise it.

Why did the panel not favour fixed term employment (FTE) as suggested in the Code?

A number of stakeholders like trade unions were opposed to FTE. The central government was of the opinion that FTE is the norm of the day and should be open ended. Instead of keeping it open ended, we have suggested to keep it

to two terms as is happening in China.

The minimum and maximum tenure of the term should be specified in the law itself. Rajasthan, which has implemented the 300-employee norm, has generated more employment of permanent nature. Therefore, on balance, we recommended that the cap in this regard should be 300 and not 500 (as demanded by some industries).

Will the panel's suggestions address the concerns of various stakeholders?

This is a balanced report. It looks into the interest of the workforce to a very great extent. It also helps the industry to maintain good relations with workforce. I think our report will be appreciated by both by the industry, the labour force and the government.

From the Front Page

Alarming! Trump suggests inject bleach to kill virus

ON FRIDAY morning, the maker of Lysol and Dettol, Reckitt Benckiser, issued a statement that "under no circumstance" should its disinfectant products be administered into the human body, through injection, ingestion or any other route. The company said it was issuing the guidance after it was asked whether internal administration of disinfectants "may be appropriate for investigation or use as a treatment for coronavirus", amid recent speculation and social media activity.

Warnings were echoed by doctors and researchers. Bleach is a toxic chemical, and inhaling it could damage the lungs.

"Inhaling chlorine bleach would be absolutely the worst thing for the lungs," said John Balme, a pulmonologist at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, and a professor of medicine at the University of California San Francisco. "The airway and lungs are not made to be exposed to even an aerosol of disinfectant."

"Not even a low dilution of bleach or isopropyl alcohol is safe," Balme said in a telephone interview. "It's a totally ridiculous concept."

Bryan said that new US research showed the coronavirus doesn't last as long on door handles and other non-porous surfaces when it's exposed to sunlight, higher temperatures and humidity.

He suggested that offered practical tips for many Americans, including "increasing the temperature and humidity for potentially contaminated indoor spaces" in order to kill the virus on surfaces. At a temperature of 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit and 80% humidity in the summer sun, for example, the research showed the virus would last just two minutes on a porous surface. Dry environments Bryan said, may require "extra care".

Trump has previously expressed interest in whether summer weather would end the outbreak of the virus, suggesting in February that warmer spring temperatures could eliminate cases by this month.

Trump appeared intrigued by the research after Bryan's presentation.

"Suppose we hit the body with a tremendous ultraviolet or just very powerful light," Trump said, following Bryan's presentation. "I think that hasn't been checked but you're going to test it." **BLOOMBERG**

Polio vaccine could beat corona: HIV co-discoverer

CHUMAKOV AND Gallo say, apart from inducing production of antibodies against the poliovirus, OPV activates other

aspects of the immune system, including innate immunity that makes people resistant to a clutch of viral and bacterial infections. In clinical trials conducted in the 1970s during the outbreak of seasonal influenza, OPV was found to have shielded more people from seasonal influenza than some flu vaccines do.

Dr Gallo and Dr Chumakov briefly talk about research showing non-specific protection from vaccines such as BCG, measles and other live attenuated (weakened) vaccines. In his interview, Dr Gallo makes it clear that he isn't certain of the duration for which the innate immunity from OPV may offer protection against SARS CoV-2, but estimated that it could do so for 1-2 months. While SARS CoV-2 and poliovirus are both RNA virus, Dr Gallo said that he wasn't sure if this could play a role in OPV conferring temporary immunity against SARS CoV-2. He spoke of the possibility of a double-blind trial of OPV as a response measure to SARS CoV-2 kicking off soon at two locations, Mt Sinai Hospital, New York, and the Institute of Human Virology at University of Maryland.

Pune's Serum Institute all set to make under-trial corona vaccine

THE VACCINE will be manufactured out of SII's Pune plant where an existing plant has capability to handle the manufacture of this kind of a vaccine. If successful, the capacity to make the vaccine will be ramped up to 5 million doses by October and to 10 million doses six months later.

L&T loses ₹12,000-crore revenue in lockdown

URGING THE top management to rise up to the challenge, Subrahmanyan said that once the lockdown is lifted, everyone's efforts need to double up to try and bridge the revenue gap. However, given the strong ₹3.1 lakh crore of order book, the company has revenue and execution visibility of nearly three years, he is understood to have said.

He further said that since oil situation in West Asia will lead to issues there, the company must look at growing businesses in other geographies, especially Africa.

Also, there is a possibility that some of the company's clients will face financial issues, while there might be others who would want to accelerate certain critical infrastructure projects, so the management must be ready to identify those opportunities, sources said.

He also told the management that they must look after and be accommodative towards MSME vendors as they are critical partners for L&T.

A mail sent to L&T to seek responses remained unanswered till press time.

Earlier, in a letter written to employees late last month Subrahmanyan said that the company has constituted Covid-19 Response Teams (CRT) for the businesses. "These teams comprise senior management team of the respective businesses. A Decision Response Team (DRT) has been tasked with monitoring all directives issued by the Central or state governments or local bodies so that uniform policy decisions may be communicated to all of you," he said in the letter.

Assuring employees that the tough times will pass, Subrahmanyan further said, "As they say - tough times don't last forever, tough people do. I am confident that we will get past this crisis, and re-emerge stronger for having overcome one of the gravest crisis of our lives."

'Conspiracy, fraud': Loan diverted to firm run by top executives, including auditor

THE OFFICIAL spokesperson of RBI said the regulator does not comment on individual entities.

Probe records show that Ezeego did not disclose its first investment of ₹80 crore in Redkite Capital in January 2018, in its audited balance sheets of that financial year.

Significantly, the second tranche of investment of ₹70 crore was done by Ezeego on March 30, 2019, after it had defaulted on its loan payment obligation to Yes Bank. The bank that has an exposure of ₹945 crore to Ezeego reported the company account as fraud to the RBI in February 2020.

TFCI, a listed non-banking financial company (NBFC), was set up in 1988 by IFCI as an All India Financial Institution for funding tourism projects following the recommendations of the National Committee on Tourism set up with the backing of the Planning Commission.

Apart from Redkite Capital, the other shareholders of TFCI include IFCI (0.67%), LIC (3.73%), Oriental Insurance Co (1.07%), Tamaka Capital (Mauritius) (3%) and Koppara Sajeve Thomas (5%). General public holds around 30.74 per cent of TFCI.

Significantly, TFCI is also one of the lenders of Cox and Kings.

The bankrupt travel firm owes about Rs 100 crore to TFCI, according to data obtained from the Registrar of Companies (RoC).

This loan was given to Cox and Kings before Redkite Capital became the majority shareholder of TFCI.

Records show that Redkite, immediately after acquiring the majority stake in TFCI, pledged shares of TFCI (as col-

lateral) to raise Rs 85 crore from lenders.

Yes Bank has now alleged that Ezeego "indulged in criminal conspiracy" with Redkite and other connected entities with "an intention to cheat" the bank and "fraudulently" siphon off the money loaned to Ezeego.

Apart from this, Yes Bank has alleged that Ezeego One diverted about Rs 85 crore from a Rs 450-crore term loan given to it in June 2017 and submitted a forged end-use certificate with the bank.

Both Redkite Capital and Naresh Jain, in an email response, said they had not received any communication from Yes Bank and were not aware of any allegations made by the bank.

"We vehemently deny the allegations... We have maintained high governance standards in our transactions," they said.

When contacted, a spokesperson from Yes Bank declined to comment.

Detailed emails to Ezeego and Ajay Ajit Peter Kerkar, the promoter of Cox and Kings, did not elicit any response.

Coax and Kings was sent to bankruptcy court in October 2019, after it defaulted on payments. While the promoter group owns 12.20 per cent shares in the company, the public owns the remaining 87.80 per cent.

The travel and tour company owes Rs 5,500 crore to banks and financial institutions.

Last month, Ajay Ajit Peter Kerkar was summoned for questioning by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), in connection with the money laundering case against Kapoor.

Kapoor, currently lodged in jail, is accused of taking kickbacks in lieu of granting loans to several companies that have now defaulted on repayments.

(Tomorrow: How audit reports, bank accounts were allegedly forged)

Templeton debacle to hit investors very hard

ALTHOUGH SENIOR fund managers on Friday attempted to play down the event pointing out the amount was a small fraction of the total debt investments with mutual funds of ₹15 lakh crore.

Mutual funds have been in trouble over the past year over defaults with SEBI frowning upon measures such as standstill agreements with borrowers saying the regulations did not permit them. The regulator had also observed that mutual funds should not depend totally on credit rating agencies but should do their own assessments.

As cash flows weaken and balance sheets become more stressed there are increasing chances of companies not being able to repay loans. On average, rating agencies are

downgrading 20 companies a day due to their weakening financials. Franklin said in a statement on Thursday, the action was limited to the schemes which have a material direct exposure to the "higher yielding, lower rated credit securities" that have been most impacted by the ongoing liquidity crisis.

Blip in Gujarat cases: High-risk but zero or single co-morbidity

AHMEDABAD MUNICIPAL Commissioner Vijay Nehra warned on Friday that the city alone was looking at 8 lakh cases by May 31 if its doubling rate of coronavirus cases remains at the existing four days, hitting the 50,000 mark by May 15.

In an analysis of deaths across the state released on April 20, Principal Health Secretary Jayanti Ravi said more than half the deaths till then (35 of 67) were of high-risk patients with multiple co-morbidities.

Ravi said, "We found that 35 of the deaths or 52.23% were patients categorised as high-risk and had multiple co-morbidities, 21 deaths that is 31.34% were high-risk patients with a single co-morbid condition, four deaths were of high-risk patients with no co-morbidity and seven deaths were seen in patients neither categorised as high-risk nor had any co-morbidity."

In an online press briefing, Nehra said they were confident that by the time this phase of the lockdown ends on May 3, Ahmedabad would have increased its doubling rate to 7-8 days. This would lower case projections to 10,000 by May 15 and 50,000 by May 31 for the city.

"On April 17, Ahmedabad had 600 cases, which doubled to more than 1,200 on April 20, that is within three days. At present, the case doubling rate is four days, and if this remains, the city will have 50,000 cases by May 15 and 8 lakh cases on May 31," the Municipal Commissioner said.

On Friday, Ahmedabad reported 151 new cases and seven deaths, taking the total number of cases to 1,638. Out of these, 105 have been discharged while 74 have died. Out of the 1,459 active cases, 1,440 are stable and 19 on ventilator.

For Gujarat, while the doubling rate stood at nearly four days on April 17, with 1,108 cases, on April 21, with 2,216 cases, the rate has slowed down to doubling in six days.

Fixed-term employment: House panel for defining job tenures, adding safeguards

GOVERNMENTS HAVE been less than enthusiastic in

responding to serious policy shifts proposed by House panels vetting draft Bills which were prepared in the first place by the executive in concurrence with those in the highest echelons of power.

"The Committee express serious apprehensions at the flexibility provided to employers under the FTE to engage workers/employees on a fixed term period as per their requirement. Such flexibility has been envisaged without lucidity and coherence in the definition of Fixed Term Employment... The Committee, therefore, impress upon the ministry to incorporate protective and pre-emptive provisions in (the Code) explicitly mentioning the conditions under which and the areas where the employers can secure FTE from a designated authority. In short, the Code must specify that FTE shall be strictly based on objective situation so as to dispel and allay any sort of misgivings and misinterpretation," the parliamentary panel said. It added: "...with a view to avoiding the manipulation of the concept, a maximum tenure, say not (more than) than two terms, as has been adopted by some countries like China, be incorporated unequivocally in the Code. In view of the fact that repeated renewals (of contracts) would make it easier for the employers to retrench a worker on the expiry of the contract, it becomes imperative to put a cap on the number of renewals of contracts under FTE so as to make it foolproof and immune to manipulation."

FTE became part of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 in March 2018. The Act is also set to be subsumed in the proposed IR Code along with the Trade Unions Act, 1926 and the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

Of course, the panel appreciated that workers/employees engaged under the FTE would get, unlike the contract labours, wages, allowances and other benefits including statutory benefits on par with the permanent employees and that there would be no discrimination between a fixed-term employee and a regular employee. It also welcomed the policy that persons appointed under the FTE can raise industrial disputes.

During the consultation stage, the labour ministry said that the FTE provision was introduced keeping in mind the interest of both workers and employers since FTE provides the employers flexibility to engage workers on a fixed-term period as per the requirement, while at the same time, such workers would get all benefits equivalent to a permanent workers. FTE workers/employees are entitled for all the benefits (except retrenchment compensation as termination of service as a result of completion of the tenure of FTE would not be considered as retrenchment) which are available to perma-

nent employees.

In his deposition before the panel, the labour secretary said that prescribing minimum and maximum number of years as well as terms/tenure for FTE is "not desirable as it would defeat the very purpose of introducing FTE".

When the panel asked whether FTE workers would get permanent placement after the contract period was over, the secretary said,

"Even the Supreme Court has ordered that where there is a perennial nature of job, it should not be filled up by the contract workers. That provision is already there. So, we should insist that where there is permanent nature of job, the vacancy should be filled up only by a regular employee." The ministry, however, made it clear that the intention of FTE was not to do away with or discourage permanent jobs.

The committee, however, recommended to the labour ministry to reintroduce a proposal it withdrew from the IR Code to allow factories, mines and plantations employing up to 300 people - against 100 now - to retrench/layoff workers and/or shut shop without government approval. In the final draft, the labour ministry retained the number at 100, but left to the states to decide on raising the cap.

Tracking coronavirus: Highest single-day spike in cases

"THE SITUATION is especially serious in major hotspot districts or emerging hotspots like Ahmedabad and Surat (Gujarat); Thane (Maharashtra); Hyderabad (Telangana); and Chennai (Tamil Nadu). These teams would use expertise of the Centre and augment state efforts to fight and contain spread of COVID-19 effectively," the MHA statement said.

Official district-wise data shows that Ahmedabad and Surat are the worst-hit among the new areas under IMCT surveillance.

Between April 1 and 22, the figures show that infections in Hyderabad and Chennai grew 10 and eight times, respectively. At the same time, it grew 40 times in Ahmedabad and Surat. Thane's growth was relatively moderate at 23 times during this period.

Of these new cities, Surat has seen the largest spike in cases, from 48 to 338 between April 19 and 22.

As of April 1, the figures show, Hyderabad was on top among these cities, with 44 cases, and Chennai close behind, with 37. But over the three weeks, the two cities maintained a steady line, reaching 472 and 303 cases, respectively, on April 22.

Ahmedabad started out with 33 cases on April 1, and maintained lower numbers than Chennai and Hyderabad till April 12. But by Friday, it had eclipsed every district except for Mumbai, with 1692

cases and 69 deaths.

The government had earlier deputed IMCTs to hotspots in West Bengal, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and MP. In Bengal, the move sparked a political firestorm with Central teams accusing the state of non-cooperation and the TMC government accusing the Centre of fighting with states.

On Friday, the MHA statement said: "These teams would make on-spot assessment of situation and issue necessary directions to state authorities for its redressal and submit their report to the Central Government in the larger interest of general public."

The Health Ministry's figures, meanwhile, show that 37 people died in the last 24 hours, taking the total toll to 723. A total of 5,41,789 samples were tested till Friday morning.

Dr Paul, who heads the empowered group on a medical emergency management plan, said that "had there been no lockdown, a reasonable estimate is that we would have now been at around a lakh cases... we would have been on the doubling time of three days".

He said that "the good effects will keep showing till the first or second week of May... If we look at the three-day average, the doubling time is 10 days".

₹1-lakh-cr fund soon to help clear dues to MSMEs: Gadkari

"WE WILL insure this fund, with the government paying the premium. We will come up with a formula for sharing the interest burden..." he said. The proposal will be sent to the Cabinet for clearance after the finance ministry gives its clearance, he said.

Gadkari also said he had asked labour minister Santosh Gangwar to utilise the ₹80,000 crore lying with the Employees State Insurance Corp (ESIC) to address the crisis faced by the MSMEs amid mounting pressure on these small businesses to pay April salaries. This proposal, too, will have to be ratified by the finance ministry and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), he said.

In March, Gadkari had said government and private undertakings owed MSMEs almost Rs 6 lakh crore, and that the government was working on an action plan to ensure the payments were cleared in three months. MSMEs, which were already witnessing severe liquidity constraints even earlier, saw their fortune plummet further after the Covid-19 outbreak.

The government is also planning to redefine MSME, based on their annual revenue by replacing the existing definition that relied on self-declared investment on plant and machinery. This will align them better with the GST regime, besides ensuring ease of doing business, he said.

Yogi plans return of stranded migrants, home ministry silent

MAULSHREE SETH & DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
Lucknow/New Delhi, Apr 24

DAYS AFTER HE sent buses to the Delhi border to bring home stranded migrant workers, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday directed officials to draw up a plan for the return of UP's migrant workers in a phased manner from other states where they have completed 14 days of quarantine.

Uttar Pradesh chief secretary R K Tiwari told *The Indian Express*: "Chief minister has directed today that a plan be prepared. No estimated number (of such migrant workers) is available at present, but it could be lakhs. That is why a plan has to be prepared to bring back such people in a phased manner. Ultimately, these people will have to reach their destination."

He said the task is not easy because they also have to ensure social distancing while bringing them back, and arrange for their quarantine in the state.

Additional chief secretary



Awanish Awasthi said: "Chief minister has asked us to prepare a workplan on how to bring back workers from other states where they have completed 14 days of quarantine. He has asked senior officials to prepare a list of such people so that there's coordination with other states."

He said officials will have to work on "how to bring these people to the borders of the state, how to quarantine them for 14 days and how to sanitise shelter homes and quarantine centres."

Lists will be drawn up and sent to state governments so they can ensure screening and testing, and make arrangements to send people home.

According to an official statement of the state govern-

ment, such people will be brought to the borders of respective states and from there, they will be sent in buses to the districts. They will be quarantined for 14 days in their districts where shelter homes and quarantine centres will be vacated and sanitised.

The workplan will include operation of community kitchens at these shelter homes. After 14 days, they will be sent to their homes with ration and told to undergo home quarantine for another 14 days.

At the review meeting Friday, it was also decided send senior administrative officers, a police officer and a senior health officer to each of the 18 high-risk districts. The officers will camp in the districts and monitor lockdown measures, medical facilities and arrangements at shelter homes. They will send a daily report to the Chief Minister.

In New Delhi, officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs remained silent on whether UP's decision to bring home its migrant labour hands from other states was in consonance

with national lockdown guidelines that the MHA had issued on April 15.

The MHA was also silent when states extracted students from Kota in Rajasthan even though the JDU-BJP government in Bihar protested, telling the Centre that this action was in "utter violation of guidelines issued by the MHA".

Under the April 15 guidelines for Phase II of the lockdown, movement of people across the country is prohibited, the only exceptions being those engaged in essential services or those included in the exempted category. On April 19, the MHA issued a detailed standard operating procedure for movement of migrant labour for work within a state. It, however, said there could be no inter-state movement of labour.

There was also a faceoff between Kerala and the Centre over certain relaxations allowed by the state for movement of people within the state. The MHA told Kerala that the guidelines could be made more stringent by the state, but not diluted.

5% fiscal deficit would require new Act by states: Fin panel chief

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 24

EVEN THOUGH MANY hard-pressed state governments have asked the Centre to raise their fiscal deficit limit to 5% of GSDP from 3% now, 15th Finance Commission chairman NK Singh said such a change would require a new law at state level and central government consent.

An expeditious option, Singh said, would be for states to invoke an "escape clause" to breach their FRBM mandated fiscal deficit target by half a percentage point, giving them flexibility to respond to economic shocks similar to the option available to the Centre.

"By the way, 5% fiscal deficit would be in disregard of the state FRBM Acts. So, that will require a new Act and the new Act will require approval from the Centre," Singh said after the meeting of its advisory council here.

PM: Self-reliance biggest lesson from pandemic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, April 24

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC has taught the country "to be self-reliant and self-sufficient" and not look for solutions abroad, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told grassroots leaders on Friday as he stressed that every village, district and state should be able to provide for its basic needs.

Applauding people for their grit in fighting the Covid-19 outbreak, Modi said "the collective power of the villages is helping the country move forward" and complimented the rural India for its simple and motivating mantra of *do gaz ki doori* to popularise social distancing.

The slogan given by the rural India "showed the wisdom of the people", he said. The prime minister said skills and knowledge of people are put to test during the time of a crisis, but India's villages have displayed the best of their efforts to fight the pandemic.

Notwithstanding the limited resources at its disposal, India has taken the challenge proactively and showed its resolve to move forward with new energy and new ways, he said.

The prime minister was interacting with gram panchayat heads and members to mark Panchayati Raj Divas on Friday. The programme was scheduled to be held in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh but was held by a video bridge following the coronavirus-induced lockdown.

"This pandemic has thrown at us new challenges and problems which we have never imagined, but it also taught us a very good lesson with a strong message. It has taught us that we have to be self-reliant and self-sufficient. It has taught us that we should not look for solutions outside the country. This is the biggest lesson we have learnt," he said.

"Every village has to be self-sufficient enough to provide for its basic needs. Similarly, every district has to be self-sufficient at its level, every state has to be self-reliant at its level and the whole country has to be self-reliant at its level," he said.

Every gram sabha, every block and every district need to be self-reliant for its basic needs, he added.

Prime minister interacted with gram panchayat heads and members to mark Panchayati Raj Divas

Modi said the government worked hard in trying to provide self-sufficiency to villages and making gram panchayats stronger.

"With its simple mantra of *do gaz ki doori* (maintaining distance of two yards), rural India has described social distancing in simple words, villages have showcased the best of their principles, traditional values to fight coronavirus," Modi, who used a *gamcha* as face mask, said.

Applauding people for observing lockdown rules, he said it is because of them, the entire world today is talking about how India has responded to the Covid-19 outbreak.

"Covid-19 is a huge crisis for the world but people of India have shown grit in this fight. We are fighting this and we are moving ahead with new ideas to tackle the virus," Modi asserted.

The death toll due to Covid-19 rose to 718 and the number of cases to 23,077 in the country on Friday, according to the Union health ministry. Heads and members of gram panchayats from across the country shared their experiences in handling the crisis and conveyed to the prime minister that people are religiously following the lockdown.

During the interaction, a gram panchayat member of Jammu and Kashmir said amid this crisis respect and suspect for the people should go hand in hand to ensure that spread of the virus is checked.

Modi also told them Covid-19 is a unique virus, it doesn't enter homes of the people on its own, "it is you who can bring it home then it spares no one". He asked a gram panchayat representative from Cachar in Assam whether people of the state were angry as Bihu festival could not be celebrated due to the lockdown, which came into force on March 25 and has now been extended till May 3.

The representative said people understood that the decision was taken in larger good. A gram panchayat head from a village near Pune in

Maharashtra gave a similar reply when Modi asked whether people were unhappy with him.

In his concluding remarks, Modi stressed that there was a need to ensure that people get correct information and are not swayed by rumours and misinformation.

He said well-cooked food should be consumed. He also said certain spices and home-made 'kadha' (an ayurvedic home remedy) are good to develop immunity. He stressed that a body with strong immunity can help remain strong and healthy.

Modi said, "Coronavirus pandemic has really changed the way we work" He said earlier such programmes were held where people used to meet in person. But now events are being held via video conference, he said.

While urging people to maintain personal hygiene by washing hands regularly and covering the face with home-made masks like *gamcha*, he also pitched for downloading the Arogya Setu application for mobiles. "It is like your body guard," he said.

The government had on April 2 launched the mobile app to help people assess themselves the risk of getting infected with coronavirus and alert authorities if they have come in close contact with a person infected with the deadly virus.

Talking about various initiatives taken by his government for development of villages, Modi said there was a time when less than 100 gram panchayats were connected to broadband and now over 1.25 lakh gram panchayats have it.

Modi also launched e-Gram-Swaraj portal and mobile app to make the operations of gram panchayats digital.

He also launched the Swamitva Scheme on the occasion, which provides for an integrated property validation solution for rural India.

Complete lockdown in Chennai from tomorrow

FE BUREAU
Chennai, April 24

AMID CONCERNS THAT the small Covid-19 hotspots are emerging in its major cities, the Tamil Nadu government on Friday announced a four-day complete lockdown in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai, starting Sunday. It also imposed a similar near-curfew in Salem and Tirupur corporations, between April 26-28.

In a statement, the chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswamy said there will be a blanket ban on all other works except extremely essential services in these areas. Of course, in all other areas of the state, existing restrictions would continue to be in place.

The stricter lockdown measures in select cities are in the wake of increasing number of Covid-19 cases in the state, especially in the urban areas. Chennai city itself

has 400 Covid-19 cases, as of April 23, as the state had a total number of 1,683 cases.

The decision to tighten the lockdown norms in the five municipal corporations comes after recommendations by doctors and public health experts during a review meeting chaired by the chief minister on Friday. "Though the spread of the disease has come under control in rural areas, the chances of it spreading in cities is high. During the meeting it was clear that only if the restrictions are made more stringent, the spread of the disease can be brought under control in cities," said the statement.

Small shops which sell vegetables and fruits will not be allowed to function in these areas. Groceries, vegetables and fruits will be available in the mobile shops that have already been arranged by the city corpora-

tions. All other shops and supermarkets which were given permission to function earlier will not be allowed to function, too. Those working in the IT sector have been told to work from home. No other private firms will function.

The statement said that stringent restrictions will be brought in containment zones during this period. These areas will be disinfected twice daily. Movement of people in other areas in these cities will be fully restricted. If anyone flouts the ban, in addition to their vehicles being confiscated, strict action will be taken, it said.

Restaurants functioning in these areas are allowed to deliver food at the homes of the customers and accept orders through phone calls. The Tamil Nadu government had earlier permitted the public to go to restaurants for buying food parcels during the lockdown period.

Union housing secretary assures realty sector of all assistance

THE REAL ESTATE sector can expect more relief and revival measures in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, Union housing and urban affairs secretary Durga Shankar Mishra said on Friday. He was delivering the keynote address at a webinar, organised by the Kerala state council of the Feder-

ation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) to discuss the issues confronting the real estate, housing and construction sector following the outbreak.

Mishra said steps would be taken to speedily implement the RBI's packages and credit facilities. He

urged the real estate community to resume construction as soon as possible utilising the benefits of the packages announced by the Centre and the RBI. He assured that the government would provide the necessary support to address all pending issues arising out of Covid-19 to

bring back growth.

PH Kurian, chairman of RERA, Kerala, announced that the concessions would be announced for projects registered with the RERA. The RERA would consider allotting more time to pay for projects currently under construction without penalty.

Kurian said all the builders in Kerala should register their projects with the RERA. The state has already initiated steps to ensure the availability of construction materials and labour for the construction sector, special secretary LSGD K Biju said. The government estimates that 30% of

workers from other states will remain in Kerala even after the lockdown. Precautions have been taken to prevent supply chain disruption as there is a special situation in Kerala where many construction equipment need to be sourced from other states.

—FE BUREAU

Life after ventilators can be hell for coronavirus survivors

MICHELLE CORTEZ & OLIVIA CARVILLE
New York, April 24

HER FEVER HIT 105 degrees. In her delirium, Diana Aguilar was sure the strangers hovering over her, in their masks and gowns, were angels before they morphed into menacing aliens. As a doctor prepared to slide a ventilator tube down her throat, all she remembers thinking was: "I cannot breathe. I have no air. I give up, I give up."

Aguilar, in the throes of Covid-19, was starting her 10-day descent into ventilator limbo. The mechanical device to which her tube was attached is coveted for its ability to push life-saving oxygen deep into damaged lungs. Yet it also is feared and reviled for the damage it inflicts — and for the slim odds of survival it affords. Aguilar wasn't aware of any of that, yet she sensed this could be the end. She whispered her goodbyes to her husband, son and daughter, none of whom were anywhere nearby, and then she prayed to God in her native Spanish.

"You're going to be fine," a voice reassured her. "Start counting now; one, two, one..."

The voice belonged to an anesthesiologist, the last she heard before drifting off. Diana was diagnosed with Covid-19 on March 18, the day she arrived in the emergency room at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset in Somerville, New Jersey. The virus had already been ravaging her body for weeks, infecting the tiny cells in her lungs

that deliver oxygen to her blood. She was struggling to breathe, and every inch of her body ached as she felt it failing. And then came the intubation, a last-resort intervention to save her life. It's an awful moment for each of the many thousands of patients who are estimated to have undergone the procedure.

Most will not survive: Studies suggest more than two-thirds die while on ventilators.

As the cases of Covid-19 infection soar, already approaching 900,000 Americans, more and more patients are going through the same dreaded treatment. The lucky ones pull through, but their journey back to health is long and perilous. Doctors are only now learning about the challenges ahead for people who arrive at the hospital so breathless and low on oxygen that a ventilator, many believe, is all that's standing between them and death.

"Mechanical ventilation is a life-saving intervention," says Hassan Khouli, chair of critical care at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio. Yet even when patients survive, "some of them will continue to be profoundly weak," he says. "It can get to the point where they can't perform daily activities — shaving, taking a bath, preparing a meal — to the point they could be bedridden."

Some people never fully recover, says Michael Rodricks, medical director of Somerset's intensive-care unit. And those who do often must relearn basic skills such as walking, talking and swallowing. Just a few weeks ago, when the success of social-dis-



tancing strategies was far from assured, various models estimated that the US, with about 63,000 of the devices available across the country, would fall dramatically and tragically short of the numbers needed. At one point, it was estimated that New York City alone may need 40,000 ventilators. Auto manufacturers agreed to work with medical-device makers to ramp up emergency production. And as makeshift hospitals sprang up in New York's Central Park and in conference centers and gymnasiums across the country, plans were hatched to put two patients on a single ventilator to double capacity.

Now there's good news: It appears that US hospitals will need fewer than 17,000 devices to treat Covid-19 patients, according to one widely used model. What the final numbers will look like as the virus continues its

march across the country is anyone's guess. But there's little doubt there will be thousands of ventilator survivors once the pandemic is over. And the quality of their lives is still an open question.

When Aguilar, 55, woke up in intensive care at the end of March, she found her wrists tied to the bed frame. That, she later learned, was to stop her from tearing out the tube that ran down her throat all the way to her lungs. It was connected to a mechanical ventilator that had been breathing for her for 10 days as she lay in a medically induced coma.

A nurse slowly peeled the tape off her face and, with a flick of her wrist, yanked out the tube. Aguilar had made it through the most harrowing phase of her Covid-19 gantlet. Nurses and doctors lined the hallway outside her room in the 361-bed regional

medical center, located halfway between Trenton, New Jersey, and New York City. When she looked up through the glass window, they started cheering and chanting. "Yay, Diana! You made it!" she remembers hearing.

"They were jumping and clapping, and everybody was so happy," she says. "I didn't know I had all these people waiting for me, waiting to see how I'd do."

She hadn't yet fully grasped how close she had come to death and the long odds she had just beaten. The cheers were also because many of the patients with whom she shared the ICU eventually were rolled out in body bags. Here's why: The lungs are dynamic, delivering inhaled oxygen into the blood supply in seconds. If they aren't working, the damage is swift. A person can go from healthy to dead in fewer than six minutes.

She also didn't know that her husband, Carlos Aguilar, was in the room next to her. While Diana was sedated as the machine helped her breathe, Carlos had grown ill with the same virus. A few days earlier, he'd been admitted to the hospital.

And hours after Diana regained consciousness, Carlos, 64, was sedated so doctors could slide a tube down his throat as his breathing worsened.

When a person inhales, oxygen flows through the trachea, down branches that divide again and again, to end in 600 million tiny buds of air sacs known as alveoli. The oxygen passes easily through their walls, just one cell thick, and into the blood stream, where it fuels the rest of the body.

Coronavirus and the inflammation it causes is like slime, clogging up the intricate system.

One of the most troubling aspects is the virus's ability to penetrate deep within the lungs, burrowing into cells and churning out viral particles.

—BLOOMBERG

WAPCOS LIMITED
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WAPCOS LIMITED requires Manager (Finance) for ongoing projects. Interested candidate may please visit our Website www.wapcos.co.in at career option for details and profoma. Further amendments, if any, shall be displayed on the official website only.

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UTTAR HARYANA BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM
CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

SR. NO.: 1.
LETTER/ MEMO NO. & DATE: CH-SPL-I/XEN/R-APDRP/F-114 dated 20.04.2020
NAME OF DEPT./BOARD/CORP/AUTH: Chief Technology Officer
OLD REFERENCE/NIT/TENDER NO.: NIT No. 30/IPDS/RT-DAS/2020 Reg. Appointment of an agency for implementing the Real Time Data Acquisition System.
NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM: Date of closing of online e-tender 11.05.2020 upto 13.00 Hrs. Opening date of part-1 of proposal on web portal 12.05.2020 at 16.00 Hrs.
WEBSITE OF THE DEPT./BOARD CORP/AUTH: www.uhbvn.org.in
NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL: 9317545907 seprojoints@uhbvn.org.in

80701/HFY

11.56 lakh members added to ESIC scheme in February

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 24

A LITTLE OVER 11.56 lakh new subscribers joined in the social security scheme run by Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) in February, 2020. This is second lowest in the 2019-20 fiscal after the addition of 11.36 lakh members in April, 2019.

In other previous months of 2019-20, the number of new subscribers joining in the scheme ranged between 12.19 lakh and 14.70 lakh. In January this year, 12.19 lakh new members joined the ESIC scheme, according to the payroll data of the corporation.

The report also showed that during the period from September 2017 to February 2020, around 3.75 crore new subscribers joined the ESIC scheme. It said 83.35 lakh employees registered during the September 2017-March 2018 period. The number of such employees joined in the scheme during the April, 2018-March, 2019 period stood at 1.5 crore.

The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948 is applicable to establishments employing 10 or more people earning up to ₹21,000 a month.

U.P. Power Corporation Limited (Govt. of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking) Shakti Bhawan, 14-Ashok Marg, Lucknow-226 001

PROCUREMENT OF POWER ON SHORT-TERM BASIS THROUGH TARIFF BASED COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCESS
(Revised guide lines for short term procurement of power notified by the Ministry of Power vide resolution dated 30-03-2016) Tender Specification No.56/DEEP-Portal/SPATC-155/2020

Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL), a Govt. of Uttar Pradesh Enterprise, incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 and having its registered office at Shakti Bhawan, Ashok Marg, Lucknow - 226001 intends to buy Firm Power, for the period 15.05.2020 to 30.06.2020 under Short Term basis. Trading licensees/generators/state utilities/CPPS/ Distribution licensees/SEBs, across the country may offer power, from one or more than one source subject to condition that offers from each source shall not be less than 50 MW, as per the details given below:

Period: 15.05.2020 to 31.05.2020
Duration (Hrs): 19.00-24.00
Quantum (MW): 350
Submission Of EMD BG in the Office of CE(PPA), UPPCL: 05.05.2020 at 17.00 hrs
Submission of RFP-Bid (Non financial Bid & IPOs): 05.05.2020 at 17.00 hrs
Opening of RFP (Non financial Bid): 06.05.2020 at 12.00 hrs
Opening of IPO/ Start of e-RA: 08.05.2020 at 12.00 hrs/ 08.05.2020 at 14.00 hrs
Period: 01.06.2020 to 30.06.2020
Duration (Hrs): 19.00-24.00
Quantum (MW): 500
Submission Of EMD BG in the Office of CE(PPA), UPPCL: 05.05.2020 at 17.00 hrs
Submission of RFP-Bid (Non financial Bid & IPOs): 05.05.2020 at 17.00 hrs
Opening of RFP (Non financial Bid): 06.05.2020 at 12.00 hrs
Opening of IPO/ Start of e-RA: 08.05.2020 at 12.00 hrs/ 08.05.2020 at 14.00 hrs
"Request for Proposal" Activation of Event shall take place on 27-04-2020 and RFP are to be submitted on e-bidding portal (DEEP) in two parts i.e. "Bid Part-I (Technical Bid)" & "Part-II (Financial Bid)" respectively. The link for e-bidding portal is www.mstcecommerce.com and is also available on the website of Ministry of Power (www.powermin.nic.in) and PFC Consulting Limited (www.pfcindia.com). Bidders are requested to familiarize the above said revised guideline carefully before submitting the offer. The Bidder shall be required to submit EMD by the date mentioned above, in the Office of CE (PPA) UPPCL, Lucknow, for the maximum capacity offered @ Rs. 30,000 per MW per month on RTC (30 days, 24 hrs.) basis and same shall be reduced on pro-rata basis in case bids are invited on hourly basis of offered capacity in the form of Bank Guarantee/e-bank guarantee issued by any Nationalized/ Scheduled Bank. The e-tender will be received and opened on the dates mentioned above. The offers received after the date & time mentioned above shall not be considered. In case of holiday, the offer shall be received/opened on the next working day at the same time respectively. The undersigned reserves the right to reject all or any bid without assigning any reason thereof. Sd/-CHIEF ENGINEER (PPA-II) UPPCL संख्या: 105- ज.स./सकलिन/2020-13-ज.स./96

Companies

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020



RETURN OF SURPLUS TO SHAREHOLDERS

Akhil Gupta, chairman, Bharti Infratel

Since we do give dividend, I don't think we have too much scope for buyback but if ever there would be, we would actively consider it. I will ask my tax people if they feel buyback is a better option, we have no problem. Our theory is whatever is extra, we would like to return to shareholders, be it by way of dividend or buyback

Quick View



Tata Steel gets nod to issue securities of up to ₹5,000 crore

TATA STEEL'S board on Friday approved issue of additional debt securities of up to ₹5,000 crore in the form of non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on a private placement basis in one or more tranches, the company said in a stock exchange filing. The funds from the issue will be primarily deployed towards repayment of debt and general corporate purposes.

Indus merger: VIL, Bharti Infratel extend long stop date

VODAFONE IDEA (VIL) and Bharti Infratel have agreed to further extend the long stop date related to the merger of Indus with Bharti Infratel, from April 24, 2020 to June 24, 2020. VIL holds 11.15% equity stake in Indus. This is to complete the remaining conditions precedent, including the pre-closing adjustments, according to a stock exchange filing.

Airtel selects Ceragon to help expand 4G network

BHARTI AIRTEL has selected Ceragon to expand its 4G network capacity and support rural expansion. Airtel is looking to increase its network capacity to address growing demand for broadband amid a sharp rise in data consumption across India. Airtel is also looking to increase 4G network capacity in urban areas and expand its coverage in rural regions, as well as prepare for its future evolution to 5G.

Ashok Leyland ups stake in Hinduja Leyland Finance

HINDUJA GROUP flagship Ashok Leyland on late Thursday informed the stock exchanges that it has acquired 3.36% more stake in its subsidiary Hinduja Leyland Finance (HLFL). The company said that it has acquired 1,57,96,406 shares of HLFL, aggregating to 3.36%, at a share price of ₹119 each. Following this, the company's shareholding in its subsidiary increased from 65.45% to 68.81% now.

L&T wins three dedicated freight corridor packages

A STRATEGIC business unit of L&T Construction's Transportation Infrastructure, in consortium with M/s Kyosan Electric Manufacturing Co of Japan, has won three packages from Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (DFCCIL). The works are spread across 442 route km and 638 track km.

TKM sets norms for dealers post lockdown

AS PART of its efforts to help dealers navigate the impact of Covid-19, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on Friday announced a 'Dealer Operations Restart Guideline' to kickstart operations post lockdown. This charts out directives for TKM's dealer network, shedding light on safety protocols for the respective facilities and staff, along with recommendations for customer interface during sales and after-sales services.

MRF commits ₹25 crore towards fighting Covid

TYRE MAJOR MRF on Friday said that it has committed ₹25 crore towards fighting Covid-19 pandemic. The support would be in the form of contribution to the PM-CARES Fund at the central level, and support to various state governments where the company's factories are located.

Spintly raises ₹1.9 crore in pre-Series A funding

SPINTLY, AN IoT Platforms in India, has raised ₹1.9 crore in a pre-Series A funding round. This investment will be used to scale up sales, marketing and research activities to accelerate customer acquisition and market penetration.

ICRA DOCUMENT

Tata Power, JSW Steel among cos applying for loan moratorium

Piramal Enterprises also on list of 320 companies from across sectors that have applied for moratorium on term loans or working-capital interest

SHRITAMA BOSE
Mumbai, April 24

TATA POWER, PIRAMAL Enterprises and JSW Steel are some of the large companies that have applied for loan moratorium on term loans or working-capital interest, showed a list of such companies released by rating agency Icr.

The list consists of 320 companies from across sectors such as textiles, food processing, healthcare, metals, travel & tourism, finance, hospitality, real estate, power, roads & tollways, gems & jewellery and tea production.

In the travel and hospitality segments, two of the applicants are Air India Express and TajGVK Hotels & Resorts. Among financiers, Centrum Financial Services, CreditAccess Grameen, Indostar Capital



Finance, Spandana Spoority Financial and Piramal Capital & Housing Finance have sought moratorium, as have power producers like Jindal Power and SKS Power Generation (Chhattisgarh) and Tata Power Renewable Energy. Among realtors that have applied for a moratorium are Sobha, Prestige Estates and Embassy Property Developments. Kalyan Jewellers has also asked for a moratorium.

Icra put out the list as part of the disclosure requirement specified by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). The document lists the entities rated by the agency that have sought a moratorium on payments from their lending institutions as part of the Covid-19 regulatory package announced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on March 27 and where the

approval from the lending institutions was received either after the original due date or is still pending to be received.

"As highlighted by ICRA in one of its earlier publications, missed payment by these entities even in the case of pending formal approval from the Lending Institutions prior to the original due date, is not considered an instance of Default," the rating agency said in the document, adding that non-recognition of default in these cases is as per the guidance provided by the Sebi circular.

"However, it may be noted that for the entities that are yet to receive an approval for the moratorium from their Lending Institutions, if the same is not received in due course, ICRA would review its stance on default recognition," Icr said.

SAIL faces cash flow problems; inventory piles up to 2 million tonne

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 24

AS DOMESTIC SALES dried up in view of the lockdown to contain the Covid-19 pandemic, state-run steelmaker SAIL is facing cash flow problems amid piling up of inventory, which touched 2 million tonne on Thursday.

"Yes, certainly cash flow is a problem as there are no sales in the domestic market and we are depending only on the cash flow which we are getting from our debtors," SAIL chairman Anil Kumar Chaudhary told a news channel.

Chaudhary, however, exuded confidence of a pick-up in demand once the lockdown is lifted.

Though sectors like automobile and engineering may take time to recover, he said, he remained bullish on the construction and infrastructure sector in the short term, which would take care of its inventories.

"There is no outlet in the market, particularly in the domestic market, and when the production is going on, may be at a 50% level, some inventory has to happen. Today, we are sitting on an inventory of close to 2 million tonne, as of yesterday. As far as (strain on) working capital is concerned, I think it is there for every company, the cash flows are in difficulty. Our fixed cost is around ₹1,500 crore per month," he said.

Chaudhary said steps taken by the government like waiver of the fixed-demand charges from the power company came handy for SAIL in the present trying times.

To tide over the liquidity crunch, Chaudhary had in a written message



Though sectors like automobile and engineering may take time to recover, SAIL's chairman said, he remained bullish on the construction and infrastructure sector in the short term, which would take care of its inventories

addressed to employees on April 16 asked them to review each expenses going forward and conserve cash, follow-up rigorously with the customers to promote sales and realise outstanding dues. They were also asked to focus on production at the least possible variable cost.

SAIL is also sitting on a huge debt. According to Bloomberg, as on September-end, 2019, the PSU had ₹48,181.35 crore, up from ₹41,433.88 crore as on March-end 2019.

Talking to the news channel, Chaudhary, however, said that debt was not a problem for the company at the current stage.

Jan-Mar smartphone shipments up 4%; April-June to see big decline: Counterpoint

RISHI RANJAN KALA
New Delhi, April 24

SMARTPHONE SHIPMENTS IN India rose a modest 4% y-o-y to around 31 million units in January-March this calendar year (CY) as the quarter witnessed launches and promotions during the first two months, while the nationwide lockdown in the last week of March due to the Covid-19 outbreak impacted shipments, Counterpoint Research said.

"January and February shipments grew annually due to new launches and aggressive promotions. However, a steep annual decline in March (-19%) due to Covid-19 outbreak restricted overall quarter growth to just 4%," the research firm pointed out.

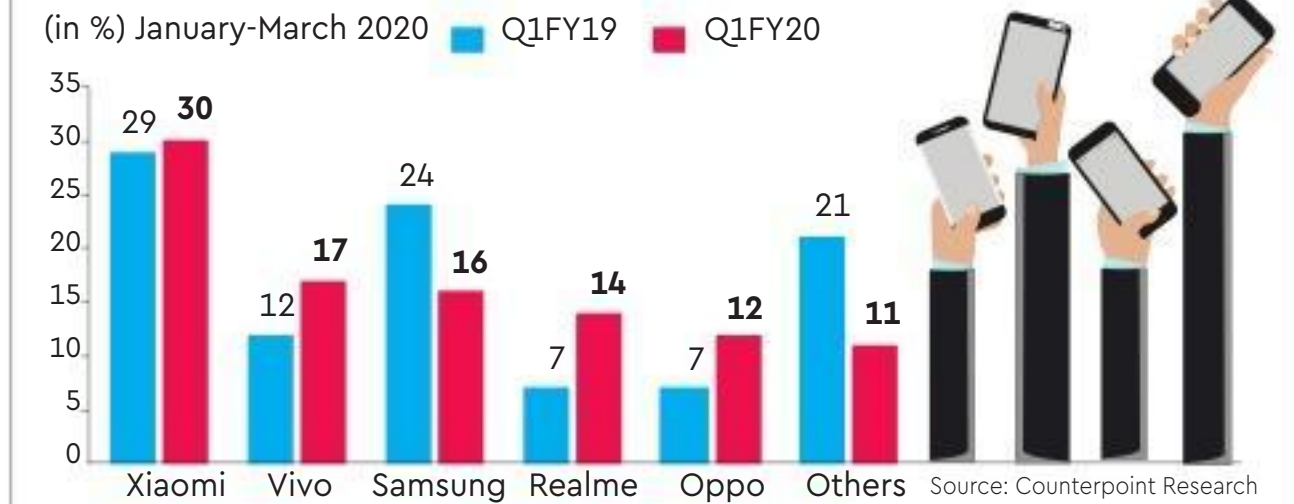
Since the country is in lockdown till May 3, Counterpoint Research explained that any signs of recovery will likely only start from July-September 2020 onwards. "As a result, we are estimating that overall smartphone shipments will decline by 10% for the full calendar year," it added.

The second quarter (April-June) will see a major decline in numbers as the lockdown due to Covid-19, which commenced on March 24 and is likely to end on May 3, has severely impacted production, supply and sales across the country.

Senior research analyst at Counterpoint Research Prachir Singh said, "Covid-19 effect on India was relatively mild until mid-March. However, economic activities declined as people save money in expectation of an extended period of uncertainty and an almost complete lockdown. Almost all smartphone manufacturing has been suspended".

Further, with social distancing

Smartphone brands' market share



The nationwide lockdown in the last week of March due to the Covid-19 outbreak impacted shipments, Counterpoint Research said. It explained that any signs of recovery would likely only start July-September 2020 onwards

norms, factories will be running at lower capacities even after the lockdown is lifted. Consumer demand will have a larger impact on smartphone sales, as people will focus on saving and therefore limit discretionary purchases.

"As entry-level smartphone consumers will be the worst-hit by the lockdown, the demand for the entry-level smartphones will decline in the near-term. We believe demand will shift to the second part of the year. Even if the situation stabilises by mid-year, people may hold-off purchasing until the festive season," Singh anticipated.

While the smartphone market registered an annual growth in Q1, the feature phone market saw a decline of around 24% y-o-y during the same period implying consumers are transi-

tioning to smartphones. Chinese brands are gaining momentum in the feature phone market, reaching a combined 33% share of total feature phone shipments, up from 17% in Q1 2019. Itel is the principal brand driving this change.

Shilpi Jain, a research analyst at the company, pointed out that for original equipment makers (OEMs), a lot of work will be required to restart operations once lockdown is lifted.

"This will range from managing existing inventory across all distributors and retail touch points as well as supporting retailers sell-through older inventory. Also, if the lockdown is lifted in phases starting with green zone areas, OEMs will have to align their channel and sales strategies to drive sales in these non-affected areas," she said.

Considering people are dependent on smartphones as a primary mode of communication during the lockdown, the company said it should be an essential item and sales should be allowed through online channels or at least adopting an online-to-offline (O2O) model. This is happening in Europe and the US, where online channels still remain in service.

Top 7 cities have inventory of 78,000 unsold apartments: Anarock report

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 24

THE TOP SEVEN cities across the country have an inventory of 78,000 unsold apartments worth close to ₹66,000 crore, with almost half the number being in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and Pune, real estate consultancy Anarock said.

A report by Anarock Property Consultants reveals that out of the total unsold stock of over 6.44 lakh units in the top seven cities as on March 2020, nearly 12%, or around 78,000 homes, are ready-to-move-in, which is worth about ₹65,950 crore.

Anarock chairman Anuj Puri said, "Of the total unsold ready stock, MMR and Pune together have around 35,200 units, which are collectively worth ₹37,550 crore. This accounts for 57% of the total value of ready unsold homes across all top 7 cities."

In terms of break-up, the MMR has the maximum ready stock of nearly 19,200 unsold homes, followed by Pune (16,000 units), Delhi-NCR (15,600), Bengaluru (10,100), Chennai (9,400), Kolkata (5,300) and Hyderabad (2,400).

Although construction activity is completely halted all across, first-time homebuyers are at an unprecedented advantage

Real estate scenario

Unsold apartments (ready-to-move-in)

Region/city	Unsold apartments	Value (₹ cr)
Mumbai	19,200	26,150
Pune	16,000	11,400
Delhi	15,600	10,720
Bengaluru	10,100	7,150
Chennai	9,400	5,880
Kolkata	5,300	2,860
Hyderabad	2,400	1,870

Source: Anarock Property Consultants

The top seven cities across the country have an unsold inventory worth close to ₹66,000 crore, with almost half the number being in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region and Pune

to negotiate good deals on ready-to-move-in options and simultaneously benefit from all-time-low interest rates of 7.15-7.8%, he added.

The Covid-19 lockdown has accelerated technology-led homebuying in India, making it possible to inspect properties

online as well as negotiate and finalise deals. Virtual site visits are now a firm reality and a large chunk of the property selection and purchase process can now be done digitally, Puri noted.

"Some states are now also mulling the introduction of e-registration of property documents, thereby completing the entire value chain. This is necessary since physical site visits are unlikely to pick up quickly even after the lockdown ends, as both buyers and sellers will remain wary," he added.

Despite the nationwide lockdown, Anarock said it closed the digital sale of 240 homes worth ₹214.6 crore and 62 office spaces collectively worth ₹37 crore.

NCLT asks Delhi Gymkhana Club to reply to corporate affairs ministry's allegations

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 24

THE NATIONAL COMPANY Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Friday asked the Delhi Gymkhana Club to reply to the ministry of corporate affairs' (MCA) allegation by May 8. It has scheduled the matter for further hearing on May 13.

Alleging that the club was being run in a manner which was oppressive and prejudicial to public interests, the ministry of corporate affairs moved a plea under Sections 241 and 242 of the Companies Act, seeking to take over the management of the club. The ministry of corporate affairs also demanded that no new member should be inducted into it during the pendency of the appeal.

"Our lawyers attended the NCLT proceedings on Friday through video conferencing. A relief was given to us to prepare the case till May 13," said the club's president Lt Gen Dewan Rabindranath Soni, PVSM, VSM (Retired).

Soni said the club needed time to respond to the MCA plea since it got a copy of the MCA's petition through e-mail only on April 22. The petition has over 5,000 pages in 20 volumes.



Alleging that the club was being run in a manner which was oppressive and prejudicial to public interests, the MCA moved a plea under Sections 241 and 242 of the Companies Act, seeking to take over the management of the club

A senior MCA official said the NCLT had also asked the club to submit any rejoinder to its reply by May 11.

Delhi Gymkhana Club is one of the oldest clubs in India.

FB's India deal signals rough time for Paytm

SoftBank-backed company has been losing ground to rivals with deeper pockets

SANKALP PHARTIYAL & NUPUR ANAND
New Delhi/Mumbai, April 24

FACEBOOK'S \$5.7-BILLION investment in Reliance promises to be the biggest headache yet for SoftBank-backed pioneer in India's digital payments market Paytm, which has been losing ground to rivals with deeper pockets.

Facebook's WhatsApp, which has been working on gaining regulatory approval for payments services in India, is gearing up for a full rollout of those services by June, according to a source familiar with the matter.

The deal with Reliance, announced on Wednesday, will give WhatsApp an inside track on payments for Reliance's retail unit, which aims to serve tens of millions of small shops across India. It will also be able to link up with Reliance's telecoms business, which has taken the market by storm since its launch in late 2016. WhatsApp itself has an enormous presence in India with more than 400 million users.

"If someone would have lost sleep as the Facebook-Reliance deal was announced, it must be Vijay Shekhar Sharma," said a second source, referring to Paytm's founder. The source,



File photo of a vendor weighing vegetables next to an advertisement of Paytm at his roadside stall in Mumbai. REUTERS

who has close ties to both Reliance and Paytm, declined to be identified to protect business interests. Compared to other major players in India's digital payments markets, Paytm is seen as more vulnerable to attack, already on the backfoot amid contest from Alphabet's Google Pay and Walmart's PhonePe.

While having previously attracted investments from the likes of Japan's SoftBank, China's Alibaba and US-based Berkshire Hathaway, it lacks its own wells of capital for funding, putting it at a disadvantage. Paytm also remains unprofitable, with its parent firm reporting a loss of over \$500 million in the year ended March 2019. Launched a decade ago as a platform for mobile recharging, Paytm grew quickly after ride-hailing firm Uber listed it as a quick payment option. Its swell further in 2016 when a ban on high-value currency notes spurred digital payments. But it underestimated the

impact of a state-backed digital payment system that was rolled out in 2016. On that network, Google Pay and PhonePe together accounted for nearly 80% of 1.31 billion transactions in January. Paytm was a distant third with about 10%, according to data from payments firm Razorpay. India's digital payments market is expected to more than double in size to \$135 billion in 2023 from 2019 levels, according to a study by PwC and industry lobby group Assocham.

Individual market share can, however, be difficult to assess. Paytm has branched out into services including insurance and gold sales, movie and flight ticketing, and bank deposits and remittances. Paytm declined to comment. Paytm has long seen the threat posed by WhatsApp, and when the messaging service launched a trial of its payment services in early 2018, Sharma accused Facebook of "cheap tricks". —REUTERS

Stressed firms under IBC find it hard to stay afloat

MITHUN DASGUPTA
Kolkata, April 24

THE GOVERNMENT MAY have decided to insulate fresh defaulters from insolvency proceedings for six months, but stressed companies that are already facing resolution under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) are finding it difficult to mop up resources to remain afloat.

Insolvency professionals that FE spoke to said cash flow of such firms has been badly hit in the aftermath of the Covid-19 outbreak and the lockdown. This will not just threaten their continuance as a going concern, but also impact value maximisation of stressed assets. While interim finance from lenders could save the day for some of these stressed assets, given the risk-aversion among bankers, raising funds would be a gigan-

tic task for many. "RPs managing the entities under the insolvency process are facing tight cash-flow situation which has further aggravated due to current lockdown impacting their operations. So, it is going to be a challenge for them to manage operations and keep them as going concerns. The situation would also impact value maximisation of the corporate debtors," insolvency professional Sumit Binani told FE.

"The RPs can get interim finance from the lenders to deal with the situation. But, I have not seen many cases where interim finances have been disbursed. However, considering the existing situation, banks may think of approving it," Binani said.

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday cleared a proposal to promulgate an ordinance to

Interim finance from lenders could save the day for some of the stressed assets

suspend insolvency proceedings against new defaulters for six months, with the prospect of several companies turning bankrupt looming large in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak. However, proceedings in the insolvency cases that were already admitted earlier would remain unaffected by the latest move. Notably, as on December 31, 2019, there were around 1,960 ongoing CIRP matters in the country.

Dhaivat Anjaria, a resolution expert, said, "For cases currently under CIRP, resolution professionals face the challenge of adapting to the dynamic uncer-

tainty posed by the environment. On one side, they must maintain operations as a going concern with frugal workforce and funding. Additionally, they need to reassess value drivers for the business based on diverse industry and market scenarios that could potentially emerge during the year. Undoubtedly, all of these have compounded the challenges."

According to Daizy Chawla, managing partner, Singh & Associates, it will be easy for entities which are not under CIRP to survive due to their reputation and credit worthiness, but for corporate debtor, it will be difficult to survive as lenders/vendors will not be inclined to help. "The option left with IRP/RP is to receive interim finance from

lenders or any third party with the permission from committee of creditors," Chawla said.

"The stance of the Indian law is hard timelines as 180, 270 or 330 days for resolution, and one year for liquidation. However, as everyone knows, the present scenario is not only stressed for funds, it is also very low on investment appetite. Hence, pursuit of hard timelines at this stage may not only lead to practical difficulties, it may also cause much lower value realisations, leading to a loss to all stakeholders. In any case, we expect the proposed abatement of insolvency filings to be accompanied by extension of existing timelines for resolution too," resolution expert Vinod Kothari told FE.

Mylab joins hands with Shaw's Syngene to meet rising demand for testing kits

PUNE-BASED MOLECULAR diagnostics company Mylab Discovery Solutions has joined hands with Kiran Mazumdar Shaw's Syngene International, a global contract research organisation, to meet India's rising demand for RT-PCR Covid-19 testing kits. This is an effort to reduce dependency on imports and increase the use of indigenous materials in the kit.

Biocon CMD Kiran Mazumdar Shaw said the partnership would produce truly indigenous

Covid-19 testing kits. This collaboration with Syngene will help Mylab secure a steady supply of indigenously made raw materials, meet the demand of RT-PCR based Covid-19 test kits in the country and reduce uncertainties.

Mylab had recently got funding from Serum Institute of India (SII) and Abhijit Pawar to scale up manufacturing operations. SII CEO Adar Poonawalla said the partnership with Syngene International would

reduce Mylab's dependency on international raw materials and would further strengthen India's self-reliance in fighting the pandemic.

Mylab Discovery Solutions MD Hasmukh Rawal said leaders of Indian biotechnology industry had come together and were leading by example. With their help, the country would not have to depend on other countries to test its citizens for the disease, he added. —FE BUREAU

DELHI JAL BOARD
(Govt. of N.C.T. of Delhi)
OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (C) DR. VIII
Yamuna Vihar Sewage Treatment Plant (Adjoining Dr. Ambedkar College) Delhi- 110094
Phone: 011-22813593 Email: eecdr8@gmail.com
PRESS NIT NO.1- (2020-21)

S. No	Name of work	Estimated Contract Value (ECV) Amount put to tender (Rs.)	Earnest Money (EMD) (Rs.)	Tender processing Fee Non Refundable (Rs.)	Date of Release of Tender/ Tender id.	Last date/time of receipt of tender
1	Consultancy service for the work of Construction of 7 MGD WWTP at Sonia Vihar and 12 MGD WWPS at Rajiv Nagar along with other associated / allied appurtenant work, on Design, Build and operate basis at Sonia Vihar Water Treatment Plant along with ten years Operation & Maintenance.	Lump Sum	2,09,900/-	1000/-	22.04.2020-2020_DJB_190294.1	29.05.2020 upto 3.00 P.M

PRESS NIT NO.-2 (2020-21)

S. No	Name of work	Estimated Contract Value (ECV) Amount put to tender (Rs.)	Earnest Money (EMD) (Rs.)	Tender processing Fee Non Refundable (Rs.)	Date of Release of Tender/ Tender id.	Last date/time of receipt of tender
1	Providing/Laying/Joining 250 MM dia. Internal Sewer Line in Radha Vihar and Ziauddinpur in Gokulpur AC-68.	2,60,08,718/-	5,20,200/-	1500/-	2020_DJB_190297.1 dtd. 22.04.2020	29.05.2020 upto 3.00 P.M

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govt.procurement.delhi.gov.in>

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Sd/-
Advt. No. J.S.V. 11/2020-21 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (C) DR. VIII

ICICI PRUDENTIAL MUTUAL FUND
TARAKKI KARENI

ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Limited
Corporate Identity Number: U99999DL1993PLC054135

Registered Office: 12th Floor, Narain Manzil, 23, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi - 110 001.
Corporate Office: One BKC, 13th Floor, Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai - 400 051.
Tel.: +91 22 2652 5000, Fax: +91 22 2652 8100, Website: www.iciciprurf.com, Email id: enquiry@icicipruamc.com
Central Service Office: 2nd Floor, Block B-2, Nirlon Knowledge Park, Western Express Highway, Goregaon (E), Mumbai - 400 063. Tel.: 022 2685 2000 Fax: 022 26868313

I. Notice to the Investors/Unit holders of ICICI Prudential Medium Term Bond Fund (the Scheme)

Notice is hereby given that ICICI Prudential Trust Limited, Trustee to ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund has approved declaration of the following dividend under the dividend option of the Scheme, subject to availability of distributable surplus on the record date i.e on April 30, 2020*:

Name of the Scheme/Plans	Dividend (₹ per unit) (Face value of ₹ 10/- each) [#]	NAV as on April 23, 2020 (₹ per unit)
ICICI Prudential Medium Term Bond Fund		
Quarterly Dividend	0.1864	10.7661
Direct Plan - Quarterly Dividend	0.2109	11.3237
Plan B - Quarterly Dividend	0.1774	10.6492

\$ The dividend payout will be subject to the availability of distributable surplus and may be lower depending upon the extent of distributable surplus available on the record date under the dividend option of the Scheme.

Subject to deduction of applicable statutory levy.

* or the immediately following Business Day, if that day is a Non - Business Day.

Dividend will be paid to all the unit holders/beneficial owners whose names appear in the register of unit holders/Statement of beneficial owners maintained by the Depositories, as applicable under the dividend option of the Scheme, at the close of business hours on the record date.

It should be noted that pursuant to payment of dividend, the NAV of the dividend option of the Scheme would fall to the extent of dividend payout and statutory levy (if applicable).

II. Corrigendum to Notice no. 013/04/2020 dated April 22, 2020

With reference to the aforesaid notice regarding BHARAT 22 ETF, the sector weight cap was inadvertently stated as 25%. The same should be read as 20%.

All other provisions of the aforesaid Notice remain unchanged.

For ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company Limited
Place : Mumbai Sd/-
Date : April 24, 2020 Authorised Signatory
No. 014/04/2020

To know more, call 1800 222 999/1800 200 6666 or visit www.iciciprurf.com

As part of the Go Green Initiative, investors are encouraged to register/update their e-mail id and mobile number to support paper-less communications.

To increase awareness about Mutual Funds, we regularly conduct Investor Awareness Programs across the country. To know more about it, please visit <https://www.iciciprurf.com> or visit AMFI's website <https://www.amfiindia.com>

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

MIRAE ASSET Mutual Fund

NOTICE CUM ADDENDUM NO. 16/2020

THIS NOTICE CUM ADDENDUM SETS OUT THE CHANGES TO BE MADE IN THE STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ("SAI"), SCHEME INFORMATION DOCUMENT ("SID") AND KEY INFORMATION MEMORANDUM ("KIM") OF ALL THE SCHEMES OF MIRAE ASSET MUTUAL FUND ("MAMF")

NOTICE is hereby given further to our notice cum addendum dated March 22, 2020 wherein it was stated that no physical transactions shall be accepted at the collection centres / branch offices of the AMC and the Investor Service centres ("official points of acceptance") of the Registrar and Transfer Agent i.e., KFin Technologies Pvt. Ltd ("RTA").

In amendment to the above, investors may note that physical transactions shall be accepted from April 27, 2020 at the Registered & Corporate Office of the AMC situated at 606, Windsor Bldg, Off C.S.T Road, Kalina, Santacruz (E), Mumbai - 400098. Investors may further note that in view of the current COVID-19 crisis, the AMC shall endeavor to deposit the payment instruments (accompanying with the application form) with the Bank on a best effort basis and that the AMC shall not be liable for any delay in the same.

All other collection centres / branch offices of the AMC and RTA shall continue to remain closed till further notice.

This notice cum addendum forms an integral part of SAI, SIDs and KIMs of the Scheme(s) of MAMF, as amended from time to time. All the other terms and conditions of SAI, SIDs and KIMs of the Scheme(s) will remain unchanged.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of **MIRAE ASSET INVESTMENT MANAGERS (INDIA) PVT. LTD.** (Asset Management Company for Mirae Asset Mutual Fund)

Place : Mumbai Sd/-
Date : April 24, 2020 AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY

MIRAE ASSET MUTUAL FUND (Investment Manager: Mirae Asset Investment Managers (India) Private Limited) (CIN: U65990MH2019PTC324625).
Registered & Corporate Office: 606, Windsor, Off CST Road, Kalina, Santacruz (E), Mumbai - 400098.
☎ 1800 2090 777 (Toll free), ✉ customercare@miraeeasset.com 🌐 www.miraeeassetmf.co.in

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

IndiGrid INDIA GRID TRUST ("IndiGrid")
(An Infrastructure Investment Trust registered with Securities & Exchange Board of India vide Registration No. IN/InvT/16-17/0005)

Principal Place of Business: F-1, The Mira Corporate Suites, 1 & 2, Ishwar Nagar, Mathura Road, New Delhi 110065
Tel: +91 84509 96408 | **Compliance Officer:** Swapnil Patil;
E-mail: complianceofficer@indigrd.co.in; **Website:** www.indigrd.co.in

NOTICE TO UNITHOLDERS

NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to the Regulation 22 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014, as amended (the "InvT Regulations") and all other applicable Regulations of the InvT Regulations (including any statutory modification(s) or re-enactment thereof for the time being in force) and subject to other applicable laws and regulations, the Investment Manager on behalf of India Grid Trust (the "IndiGrid") on April 9, 2020 sent an e-mail of Postal Ballot Notice dated April 8, 2020 to the Unitholders whose e-mail addresses are registered with the depository participant(s) and for Unitholders whose e-mail addresses are not registered, SMSs, wherever Mobile Numbers are available, being sent by KFin Technologies Private Limited (KFinTech) for seeking their consent on the agenda items listed in the said Notice (along with the explanatory statement thereto). Please treat this notice as our attempt to reach all our unitholders who have missed or not received other communication on this subject matter and intend to participate in Postal Ballot. Considering the COVID-19 outbreak, the IndiGrid seeking unitholders approval through Postal Ballot instead of convening extraordinary general meeting. Further, due to country wide lock-down followed by supply chain disruption and labour demobilisation, we were unable to send physical postal ballot notices to our unitholders hence we urge all unitholders to use e-voting facility and cast their valuable vote.

Please note that:

- Details of the process and manner of e-voting along with the user ID and password was provided over e-mail to Unitholders who have registered their e-mail addresses.
- For Unitholders who have not registered their e-mail addresses or have not received any communication regarding this postal ballot for any reason whatsoever, may obtain the user ID and password by sending a request at support.indigrd@kfintech.com, complianceofficer@indigrd.co.in or contact M/s. KFin Technologies Private Limited (formerly Karvy Fintech Private Limited) ("KFinTech") at 040 33215204 / +91 94946 10485 (between 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.) or the IndiGrid at +91 89658 56088 (between 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.).
- The Unitholders can opt for e-voting. Alternatively, the Unitholders can cast their vote by sending e-mail to the Scrutinizer narasimhan.b8@gmail.com from their registered e-mail address.
- The e-voting period commenced on Friday, April 10, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. (IST) and ends on Saturday, May 9, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. (IST). The e-voting module shall be disabled for voting thereafter. Once the vote on resolution(s) are cast by the Unitholders, the Unitholders shall not be allowed to change it subsequently.
- The voting rights of Unitholders shall be in proportion to their Units of the Unit capital of the IndiGrid as on the cut-off date i.e. Friday, April 3, 2020.
- The documents referred to in the Postal Ballot Notice and Explanatory Statement are uploaded on website of IndiGrid. The Postal Ballot Notice, Explanatory Statement and other supporting documents are also submitted with BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited and the same are available on their websites.
- The Board of Directors of Investment Manager has appointed Mr. B Narasimhan failing him, Mr. C Venkataraman, Practising Company Secretaries, as the Scrutinizer for conducting the Postal Ballot voting process (e-voting) in a fair and transparent manner.
- The Result of the Postal Ballot will be announced on or before Monday, May 11, 2020 and shall be placed on the website of the IndiGrid at www.indigrd.co.in and KFinTech at <https://evoting.karvy.com> and shall also be communicated to BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited, where Units of IndiGrid are listed.

For India Grid Trust
By Order of the Board
Sterlite Investment Managers Limited
(as the Investment Manager to India Grid Trust)
Sd/-
Swapnil Patil
Company Secretary & Compliance Officer
Mumbai, April 24, 2020

Head Office :
"Lokmangal", 1501, Shivajinagar, Pune-05

CORRIGENDUM

Please refer to our earlier notice published on 13.03.2020 inviting Proposal from Eligible bidders for SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRADE FINANCE SOLUTION, RFP No. 042020. Last date for Pre-bid queries, bid submission, Pre-Bid meeting and opening of eligibility bid & technical bid has been revised due to COVID-19 pandemic situation. The corrigendum & revised dates are available on Bank's website <https://www.bankofmaharashtra.in> in the Tenders Section.

Deputy General Manager, Information Technology

TATA POWER DELHI DISTRIBUTION LIMITED
A Tata Power and Delhi Government Joint Venture

TATAPOWER-DDL
Regd. Office : NDPL House, Hudson Lines, Kingsway Camp, Delhi 110 009
Tel : 66112222, Fax : 27488042, Email : TPDDL@tatapower-dli.com
CIN No. : U40109DL2001PLC111526, Website : www.tatapower-dli.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
April 25, 2020

TATA Power-DDL invites tenders as per following details:

Tender Enquiry No. Work Description	Estimated Cost/EMD (Rs.)	Availability of Bid Document	Last Date & Time of Bid Submission/ Date and time of Opening of bids
TPDDL/ENG/ENQ/200001216/20-21 Meter Reading & Bill Distribution.	65.57 Cr./ 16.76 Lacs	28.04.2020	20.05.2020/1300 Hrs 20.05.2020/1330 Hrs

Complete tender and corrigendum document is available on our website www.tatapower-dli.com → Vendor Zone → Tender / Corrigendum Documents
Contracts - 011-66112222

GUJARAT ENERGY TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD.
H. O. Sardar Patel Vidyalay Bhavan, Race Course, Vadodara - 390 007

e-TENDER NOTICE INVITING TENDERS OF GETCO CORPORATE OFFICE, VADODARA
GETCO: www.getco.gujarat.com Dept-GOG: <http://guj-epd.gov.in>

Tender Notice No. ACE:Proc:TN-01-20-21

[A] PROCUREMENT : (1) ACE(Proc)/E-2764/22KV & 66 KV CT-PT /2020-21 (2) ACE(Proc)/III/E-2781/SRI/2020-21 (3) ACE(Proc)/E-2774/III/Various SF6 Breakers/2020-21 (4) ACE(Proc)/III/E-2782/BP/2020-21

[B] LINE : GETCO/TR-III/TL/220KV/S&E/2454 : Supply & Erection of Balance work of 220KV D/C Vadavi - Sanand DFCC line with ACSR Zebra Conductor - 30.54 km on turnkey basis.

[B1] LINE : GETCO/TR-III/TL/400KV/S&E/2459 : Supply & Erection work of L1LO of both circuits of 400KV D/C Fedra (Pachchham) - Dhoera SIR 'AA' line to Dholera Solar S/S - 9.666 Km with Twin AL-59 (61/3.50) conductor on 400KV M/C towers on turnkey basis

[B2] LINE : GETCO/TR-III/TL/400KV/S&E/2460 : Restoration of location no.206 (DT-0) of 400KV D/C Charanka-Velodra line near village-Totana under Patan Tr. Division of Melsana Tr. Circle

[C] S/S : GETCO/EPC/220/132KV Sankhari S/S/175 : Design, Engineering, manufacturing, supply, erection, testing and commissioning of 220/132KV Substation with Equipment & material on EPC basis at 400KV Sankhari S/S.

[C1] S/S : GETCO/EPC/220KV Rajula/177 : Supply, Erection, Testing and commissioning of 220 KV & 66kV equipments, & materials on EPC basis excluding civil works for 220KV Rajula (Sintex) substation

[D] CIVIL : GETCO/CE (Proj.)/SE/CJ/ CTN- 02/ 20-21 / For Civil Works : 220KV Jamnagar S/S Ta.Jamnagar Dist.Jamnagar under Jamnagar TR Circle(R&M)

[D1] CIVIL : GETCO/CE (Proj.)/SE/CJ/TN-75/19-20. TCN-01/20-21/ For Civil Works (1) 66KV Chandrani (Ambapar) s/s Ta: Anjar Dist. Kutch (2) 66KV KV Godha s/s TA: Lakhani Dist: B.K. (3) 66KVKV Shihra(Khanpur/Telmar) s/s Ta: Kapadvanj Dist: Nadiad (4) 66KV Khakhisar s/s Ta: Tarapur Dist: Anand (5) 66KV Kathoda s/s Ta.Matar Dist.Nadiad (6) Tower pile foundation 66KV D/C lchharpur-Vesu (II) line Navsari Circle. Above Tender are available on web-site www.getco.com & www.getco.gujarat.com (for view and download only) & <https://getco.nprocure.com> (For view, download and on line tender submission).

Note: Bidders are requested to be in touch with our website till opening of the Tender. "Energy Saved is Energy Generated" Addl. Chief Engineer (Procurement)

FORM NO.CAA.2
[Pursuant to Section 230(3) and rule 6 and 7] BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL KOLKATA BENCH Company Application No. CA (CAA) No. 254/KB/2020

In the matter of: The Companies Act, 2013 ("the Act")
And
In the matter of: A petition made under Sections 230, 232(1) of the Act.

In the Matter of:
1. CIMMCO LIMITED, an existing company within the meaning of the Act, having its Registered Office at 756, Anandapur, EM Bypass, Kolkata - 700107, within the aforesaid jurisdiction.
CIN: L28910WB1943PLC168801
PAN: AAAC3147K
And
In the Matter of:
2. TITAGARH CAPITAL PRIVATE LIMITED, an existing company within the meaning of the Act having its Registered Office at 756, Anandapur, EM Bypass, Kolkata - 700107, within the aforesaid jurisdiction.
CIN: U01122WB1994PTC138832
PAN: AAACF3929L
And
In the Matter of:
3. TITAGARH WAGONS LIMITED, an existing company within the meaning of the Act having its Registered Office at 756, Anandapur, EM Bypass, Kolkata - 700107, within the aforesaid jurisdiction.
CIN: L27320WB1997PLC084819
PAN: AAABCT1377F
PAN: AAACF3929L

Notice and advertisement of notice of the meetings of shareholders and creditors
NOTICE is hereby given that by an Order passed on 22nd April, 2020 the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Kolkata Bench ("NCLT") has in modification of its order dated 19th February, 2020 permitted the respective meetings of the Equity Shareholders and Secured and Unsecured Creditors of TITAGARH WAGONS LIMITED (originally scheduled on 30th March, 2020) to be conducted through video conferencing on Wednesday, 29th April, 2020 for approving the Scheme of Amalgamation of Cimcco Limited (Applicant No. 1) and Titagarh Capital Private Limited (Applicant No. 2) with Titagarh Wagons Limited (Applicant No. 3) or "the Company". The proposed resolution is given in the Notice dated 21st February, 2020 sent to all the shareholders and creditors together with explanatory statement and documents listed therein. The Notice that the meetings scheduled on Monday, the 30th March, 2020 had to be postponed due to lockdown announced to combat COVID-19 was advertised by the Company in "Financial Express" and "Ajkaal" on 28th March, 2020.

In pursuance of the said order, the following separate meetings will be held on 29th April, 2020 through video conferencing:

Meeting of Titagarh Wagons Limited	At	Meeting ID	Pass Key
Equity Shareholders	4.00 PM	2522140	0022
Secured Creditors	5.00 PM	2522219	0222
Unsecured Creditors	5.30 PM	2522491	2222

For joining the meeting: download and install Lifesize Video Conferencing from Application Store or Google Play on your mobile or from browser (Google Chrome/Internet Explorer) on your laptop/desktop, open the application and select "Join as a Guest", type your name, client ID/Folio No, click "Join" and thereafter enter your relevant Pass Key 29th April, 2020. However if they cast their vote via telephone and mute the microphone when not talking in case of any assistance required for joining the meeting by video conferencing please call 9051575100 or 9073980265. For receiving effective assistance please download and install AnyDesk remote assistance software with proper internet connectivity.

The e-voting by all the shareholders/creditors will be exercised only after joining the meeting by video conferencing for which members to keep handy the Client ID/Folio No. and No. of shares held by them and creditors: the amount receivable by them.

The said meetings by video conferencing are being conducted in compliance with the applicable provisions of the Act and General Circulars No. 14/2020 dated 8th April 2020 and No. 17/2020 dated 13th April 2020 issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India (MCA Circulars). A copy of this Notice as well as Notice dated 21st February, 2020 shall be available on the web site of the Company: www.titagarh.in and of the stock exchanges viz. www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com. The members who are holding shares in physical form or members/creditors who have not registered their email addresses with the Company can cast their vote through e-voting system only at their respective meetings by filling up a simple form by clicking www.titagarh.in/e-voting. The members/creditors who have not registered their email addresses with the Company can get the same registered by emailing to investors@titagarh.in or enward.ris@kfintech.com, 24 hours before the meeting. The said email is required to be sent by the first holder mentioning folio number, number of shares held and name of the first holder registered with the Company preferably including his/her mobile number.

As the remote e-voting provided to the members/creditors closed on 29th March, 2020, the members/creditors who have already cast their votes through the said facility are welcome to attend the meetings. For the inspection of documents pertaining to the proposed resolution to be passed at the meeting, the same will be treated as valid. Please note that as per the MCA Circulars the facility of appointment of proxies will not be available for the meetings on 29th April, 2020. However corporate members/creditors can appoint their representative by sending authority letter and board resolution by email to investors@titagarh.in 24 hours before the meeting. No attendance slip is required for the meetings. For inspection of documents pertaining to the proposed resolution to be passed at the meeting, please click <https://titagarh.in/other-information>

Sd/- Sd/- Sd/-
Kuldip Mullick Rahul Poddar Ritoban Sarkar
Chairperson appointed by NCLT for the meeting of Unsecured Creditors Chairperson appointed by NCLT for the meeting of Secured Creditors Chairperson appointed by NCLT for the meeting of Equity Shareholders
Kolkata, the 24th April, 2020.

Opinion

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020

SELF-RELIANCE

Prime minister of India Narendra Modi

The global Coronavirus pandemic has created an unprecedented crisis but it has also given important messages ... The most important message from this pandemic is that we need to be self-reliant



Don't force industry to pay wages during lockdown

Growth was already slowing before the corona outbreak; forcing industry to pay full wages imperils MSMEs' survival

THE CENTRE USING the Disaster Management Act to order all establishments, including industries, to pay full wages to their workers regularly for the period they are under lockdown, apart from restraining landlords from seeking rent for a period of one month from workers renting their premises, is a draconian step. State governments have followed suit, with Delhi talking about action against landlords for insisting on rent from students and workers, and Maharashtra reiterating the Centre's stand on payment of wages. The intent could be to limit the economic pain from the lockdown for the vulnerable classes, but this is an abdication by the State of its responsibility to ensure people's well-being during a raging pandemic and seems not to be mindful of the pain of MSMEs as well as small commercial establishments—even before the corona outbreak, the Indian economy was not doing too well, and now, with every likelihood that economic activity may not be back to the pre-corona normal for a long time, most experts don't see signs of a stable economic recovery any time soon. So, with no money coming in, how are shops, MSMEs, etc, to find the money to pay regular and full wages to their employees? Indeed, for many, the wage bill, at a time when they are shut or are functioning in a very limited manner, could mean the difference between having to close down permanently and staging a recovery over a period.

Thanks to such myopic policy decisions, with a clutch of companies rightly fighting back, the government will now have to dedicate resources to fighting legal battles while these could have been used elsewhere. Two firms, Nagreeka Exports Ltd and Ficus Pax Private Limited, and a Ludhiana-based association of MSMEs have petitioned the apex court seeking quashing of the Centre's order. The order, as the petitions claim, seem to violate Articles 14 and 19 of the Constitution, which relate to the right to equality before the law and the right to do business. Moreover, as the Nagreeka petition highlights, expecting a business-as-usual scenario from corporates is inequitable when the government is deferring payment of the entire salaries during lockdown—Maharashtra and other states governments announced this last month. It also points that the clutch of government orders violate Section 25C and 25M of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, which deal with payment of 50% wages when a worker is laid off and exception to lay-off workers during a natural calamity.

To be sure, the government must act to ensure that the survival of daily-wagers/low-wage earners is not imperilled in the middle of the pandemic because of loss of wages. And, the private sector, including small establishments and MSMEs, can be reasonably expected to pitch in. But, this can't be coercive. Strong-arming MSME players, already impacted by the lockdown, will imperil the recovery of the industry that will be crucial to kickstarting growth after the pandemic. With even the parliamentary standing committee on labour saying that employers should not be forced to pay full wages during a natural calamity—"which often result in closure of establishments for a considerably long period without the employer's fault"—the government must pay heed. If India is to recover from this crisis, it must ensure that policies don't leave the private sector, especially the MSMEs, floundering.

Solve quota-cap riddle

SC scraps 100% quota, but has okayed breach of 50% cap before

GIVEN HOW POLITICAL parties have banked on expanding reservation to consolidate support among sections of the electorate, the Supreme Court (SC) rejecting an Andhra Pradesh gubernatorial order from 2000 that mandated 100% reservation for scheduled tribe members for teaching jobs in scheduled areas is a significant step forward. A five-judge SC bench clarified that the 50% cap, set by the apex court in *Indra Sawhney* (1992), with only extraordinary circumstances allowing a breach, could not be violated since there was no extraordinary situation warranting this. It also said that the gubernatorial order didn't stand the test of the provisions of Schedule V of the Constitution, and that the 100% reservation, apart from junking considerations of merit, violated the rights of other reserved groups.

Since 1992, governments—both the Centre and the states—have been liberal in their interpretation of "extraordinary situation", and have used various legal provisions to protect policies that breached the 50% cap; for instance, some states have used the Schedule IX shield to protect state laws that expanded reservation beyond 50%. Maharashtra recently enacted a legislation to give reservation benefits to Marathas. On the other hand, the Centre created a 10% quota for people from economically "weaker" sections. Against such a backdrop, the SC, in its judgment in *Chebroli Leela Prasad Rao*, points out that reservation was envisaged to help address social disparities and economic backwardness of certain sections of the population within a few decades, but "gradually, amendments have been made, and there is no review of the list nor has reservation come to an end. Instead, there is a demand to increase them (reservations)..." It even notes that it is tough for any elected government to have the political will to meet the challenges that arise from reservation.

While the judgment will likely have far-reaching consequences—the Centre's EWS quota has been challenged before a three-judge bench—the crux of the problem is how the judiciary has interpreted reservation and related aspects. For instance, in the current case, despite *Indra Sawhney* and *K Krishnamurthy* (2010)—this had also reiterated that the 50% cap can't be breached—the Andhra Pradesh High Court had ruled in favour of the government order. Similarly, the Bombay HC upheld the Maratha reservations despite reservation quota exceeding the 50% limit in 2019. A fair share of the blame, however, must rest with the SC itself—in 1994, in *Ajay Kumar Singh*, SC ruled on reservations at the highest levels of education, which *Indra Sawhney* proscribes. Indeed, there are many other reservation-related judgements where the SC has either read down its earlier judgments or has completely side-stepped these. For instance, SC, in 2018, upheld one part of the *Nagaraj* judgment saying that reservations can't be allowed to affect efficiency negatively, while, in another judgment, it said that "it is necessary to liberate the concept of efficiency from a one-sided approach which ignores the need for and the positive effects of the inclusion of diverse segments of society on the efficiency of administration". Unless the apex court lays down its opinion with some degree of certitude, reservation will likely continue in perpetuity.

Choked REMITTANCES

Covid-19 and its impact on remittances will leave 800 million households in LMIC more vulnerable

THE WORLD BANK has announced that around 800 million households dependent on remittances in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) will be badly hit due to the economic slowdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Bank projects global remittances to fall by a fifth in 2020, to \$445 billion, which will result in vulnerable households getting affected. In most LMICs, remittances play a key role in mitigating poverty and battling hunger. Research has also shown that this leads to reduction in incidence of child labour in poor households.

India, which received the highest remittances in 2018 (\$79 billion), will see a dip of 23% in flows in 2020. Given some regions within the country rely heavily on remittances—especially states like Kerala, Bihar and Punjab—the post-Covid impact in these areas is likely to be very high; more so, with the need to enforce lockdowns. Kerala's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) success has a lot to do with the high remittance flows from migrant workers. The fall predicted could seriously endanger the sustainability of the gains made, given the global economy will take some time to recover from the corona-hit. The world, without doubt, needs social distancing and lockdowns to blunt the pandemic's impact, but, the collateral losses will be large. Global and multilateral institutions and national governments need to come together to make sure that the loss of income is offset through cash-and-kind support. Else, the human cost of trying to beat corona could outweigh the costs of the disease itself.

● COVID CRISIS
RISK HAS A KNOWN PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTION. FOR UNCERTAINTY, THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTION IS UNKNOWN. COVID-19 MAKES US CONFRONT UNCERTAINTY, NOT RISK

A stark choice

BIBEK DEBROY

Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the PM
Views are personal



THERE IS RISK and there is uncertainty. Since the days of Frank Knight, economists have differentiated the two. Risk has a known probability distribution. For uncertainty, the probability distribution is unknown. Covid-19 makes us confront uncertainty, not risk. In either event, agents maximise expected payoffs. For risk, there is a given probability distribution that can be used by everyone. For uncertainty, there is a subjective probability distribution, which can, and does, vary from individual to individual. How do I devise this subjective probability distribution? Through information and experience I already possess. There are various rationality assumptions used by economists. They are often violated. Otherwise, behavioural economics wouldn't have taken off. Typically, given a situation, when your decision doesn't agree with mine, I say you are irrational. However, with uncertainty, the problem may not be with rationality assumptions, but with differences in subjective probability distributions. Because of Covid-19, there is a certain risk of getting infected. Let us call this the infection rate—total infections divided by total population. Do I know what this infection rate is, for India, or any other country for that matter? I don't. I am not being pedantic. To the best of my knowledge, no country has done universal testing.

No country has done universal testing for a proper random sample either. ICMR has told us more than 75% of Indian patients will be asymptomatic. Who do we test? Those who show symptoms, those who have been in contact with confirmed patients, and those who suffer from severe respiratory diseases. Most countries do something similar.

In other words, when I work out an infection rate based on those tested, there is a sampling bias. This isn't a proper infection rate. To the best of my understanding, the only country where we have had something like a random sample is Iceland. There, the infection rate was 0.8%. There are similar caveats about the death rate. If I mechanically divide India's Covid-19 deaths by its total number of confirmed cases, I will get a death rate just over 3%. The global figure is a little less than 7%. But, neither of these is a death rate for the total population, since only those with severe symptoms are included in infection numbers. Thus, 3% or 7% are over-estimates. In a controlled environment like Diamond Princess, death rate as a ratio of total passengers, and not those infected, was less than 0.4%. The true infection rate and true death rate are not alarming numbers.

What does this have to do with differential subjective probability distributions? There are slices in India's population pyramid, with rural/urban and other spatial differences too. Consider two extremes. (a) There are those who are globalised in information access and morbidity. Life expectancy is 80+ and there are lifestyle diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure. This morbidity increases possible death rates, and thanks to globalised access to information, certainly increases perceptions about death rates, making

them out to be higher than they are. Some of them have fixed incomes, regardless of what happens to lockdown. Therefore, if you think in terms of maximising expected payoffs with a subjective distribution, high probability is attached to loss of life and low probability to loss of livelihood. I have simplified, but you get the general idea. (b) Contrast this with someone whose life expectancy is 60, without a fixed income stream and whose health concerns are tuberculosis and water-borne diseases, not Covid-19. Nor is access to information that globalised. High subjective probability will be attached to loss of livelihood and low probability to death from Covid-19. Both (a) and (b) reflect subjective probabilities. Neither is "irrational". There is tension between (a) and (b). (a)-types would like lockdown to continue indefinitely, until the long tail of the infection curve tapers off, perhaps beyond September. (b) Types would like lockdown to be eased soon, with necessary restrictions in hotspots. There is indeed tension between lives and livelihood. Even if health outcomes and information access are like (a)-types, but income is contingent on growth, preferences

There is tension between two types—those who would like lockdown to continue and those would like it to be eased soon

might mirror the (b)-type. Public policy needs to balance such differential individual preferences. This used to be the aggregation issue of the once fashionable, and somewhat esoteric, social/collective choice theory. Doing injustice to that entire literature and reducing it to column-type language, if preferences are heterogeneous, one set of individuals imposes its choice on the rest. (a)-types disproportionately influence policy. This determination of aggregate preferences is a dynamic process. Therefore, sooner or later, (b)-types contest this, and as lockdown is prolonged and livelihood costs mount, discontent surfaces, as it has across a range of countries. There were also welfare economics notions that pre-dated social choice theory, such as compensation principles of Kaldor, Hicks and Scitovsky. The point can be made using those stereotypes of (a) and (b). Specifically, (a)-types need to compensate (b)-types for their losses. To state it starkly, livelihood losses suffered by (b)-types need to be compensated by the government through redistributive measures and this has to be financed by higher taxes imposed on (a)-types. The right question for (a)-types is not whether they want lockdown to continue, but whether they are willing to pay a Covid-tax to support lockdown extension.

This is meant to be a caricature, but it illustrates the public policy dilemma. Note that without growth revival, tax-paying capacity of (b)-types is limited and with job losses, some (a)-types become (b)-types. The choice is starker.

The trade cure for the global economy

To ensure a sustained recovery from this crisis, and the development of a more resilient and inclusive global economy, trade finance must occupy a permanent place on the global agenda

VICTOR K FUNG

Chairman of the Fung Group
Views are personal

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has sent the world into perilous, uncharted territory from which no country will emerge unscathed. Over half of the global population is under some form of lockdown. All economies, rich and poor, are falling into recession and can limit the fallout only by working together.

China—the pandemic's first epicentre—offers insight into the need to work together. The months-long lockdown of Hubei province, together with strict movement restrictions across the country, caused a nearly 40% drop in year-on-year industrial profits in January and February. Factories began to reopen in March, but have faced order cancellations, postponements, and payment delays, as overseas buyers struggle to cope with the pandemic's effects.

So, even as public health is recovering, the speed of China's economic recovery will depend at least partly on the rest of the world. Given how deeply interconnected the global economy is, this will be true for every country: even as the pandemic is controlled at home, disruptions elsewhere in the world—and, potentially, additional waves of outbreaks—will impede recovery.

Global supply chains tell a similar story. Even before the pandemic, supply chains were absorbing the impact of two years of trade disputes between China and the US. Now, they are dealing with a combination of production stoppages, transportation disruptions, and plummeting global demand. The World Trade Organization estimates that global trade may fall by as much as 32% this year. Meanwhile, unemployment is skyrocketing in many economies: in the last four weeks, a record 22 million unemployment claims have been filed in the US alone.

It is high time we recognised how irrevocably connected and interdependent the world has become. No country can win on its own, despite what some may think. As the world confronts a severe recession and humanitarian catastrophe, nationalist political posturing is the last thing anyone needs.

The only way to minimise the pandemic's fallout is with solidarity: to protect their own people, national governments must collaborate to develop solutions that benefit all people. The first step is to remove protectionist tariffs and other trade barriers, thereby ensuring that critical goods—especially medical supplies and equipment, and food and other essentials—are delivered wherever they are needed. Nobody is safe until everybody is safe.

Solidarity also means protecting jobs, incomes, and livelihoods everywhere. Among other things, this demands practical measures to keep small and medium-size enterprises afloat—a point that the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) recently underscored. SMEs account for a significant share of jobs in most major economies, and provide many of the goods and services we use daily. To ensure that a general slowdown does not cause lasting structural damage, these firms must be protected.

But, the imperative extends beyond propping up existing firms long enough to return to business as usual. As we chart a pathway out of the Covid-19 crisis, we should aim to create a better future, shaped not by competition, with countries weaponising the trade and other ties that underpin shared prosperity, but by mutually beneficial cooperation.

As we work to revitalise multilateralism, we must also reshape it in a way that recognises and reflects the many dimensions of global interdependency. This means, first and foremost, ensuring open and sustainable global trade, which is a proven means of enabling all countries—large and small, rich and poor—to achieve economic growth and alleviate poverty. Trade also underpins global peace and stability, by giving everyone a stake in the same world system.

Establishing such a system requires more than removing the tariffs,

administrative impediments, and "behind the border" measures that encumber the movement of basic consumer products, industrial goods, and especially technology. Countries must recognise that either we all win—with people everywhere gaining access to the tools they need to improve their quality of life, develop industries, and innovate—or we are all worse off.

That means drastically improving access to trade finance, especially in the emerging economies, where there is a funding gap of over \$1 trillion. Insufficient trade and investment finance hits SMEs especially hard, hampering their ability to expand or innovate in good times, and to survive in bad times. That is why the ICC has called on banks to boost bridge funding to companies to mitigate the worst effects of the Covid-19 crisis, and allow companies to continue to trade through a financial shortfall.

But, much more needs to be done. While boosting trade finance during the 2008 global financial crisis helped to catalyse the global recovery, progress has since stalled. To ensure a sustained recovery from this crisis, and the development of a more resilient and inclusive global economy in the longer term, trade finance must occupy a permanent place on the global agenda.

Reviving multilateralism and ensuring open trade are entirely achievable objectives. They require no new laws or additional resources, only commitment and solidarity. The payoff—equitable and sustainable development—would be massive. Humanitarian aid has long proved critical in times of crisis. Now, in the midst of a crisis gripping the entire world, all of us must recognise the importance of "humanitarian trade".

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Protecting doctors

Apropos of the editorial "Protecting the healers" dated (April 24) that an amendment to the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 via an ordinance was needed to protect the protectors from the protectees in this time of the pandemic was no great tribute to our country and our collective consciousness. It was proof that we are yet to evolve into a fully civilised society. It meant that we are still mired in ignorance and prejudice to be anywhere near attaining the status of a society capable of scientific thinking. It is inexplicable that even the terrible cost being exacted by the pandemic in death and suffering does not seem to have had any perceptible impact on aggressive human behaviour. The context in which the healthcare workers came under persistent attacks made the violence all the more inhuman. The medical fraternity must be deified for surging to the frontline to fight the pandemic at great risk to their lives when it is threatening the entire civilisation. The very nature of the work they do renders them more vulnerable to contracting the highly infectious virus. They do a wide range of tasks from taking throat swabs, administering intravenous medicines and inserting catheters to testing body fluids in a seamless flow in addition to handling the patients in close proximity. It is not possible for the medical staff to maintain physical distancing from patients; personal protection equipment (PPE) is the only safeguard. A lamentable destitution of ordinary human feelings alone would explain the attacks on doctors, nurses and paramedics when they are doing their best to save us from a formidable bio-threat. It was inconceivable that local residents in Meghalaya's Jhalupara and Chennai obstructed the interment of dedicated and renowned doctors who succumbed to Covid-19 in the line of duty and denied them dignity in death. Dr Pradeep Kumar's narrative of how he buried his friend Dr Simon Hercules in the face of mob protest moved us to tears. We owe them a big salute. Here is mine. — G David Milton, Maruthancode

● Write to us at feletters@expressindia.com

Designing minimum income guarantee

Transfer amounts should also be linked to CPI. While PM-KISAN covers only farmers and is much more expensive and exclusive, such a transfer would avoid narrow coverage, also avoiding inclusion/exclusion errors



ILLUSTRATIONS: ROHINIT PHORE

SANTOSH MEHROTRA, RAKESH RANJAN & ANJANA RAJAGOPALAN

three pre-requisites for an unconditional MIG to the poor were not in place: appropriate identification of poor; bank accounts with every poor household; beneficiaries who could be biometrically authenticated. Today, they are in place, and the idea is administratively feasible.

Why is a MIG-type cash transfer for the poor needed, especially now?

The latest NSS All India Debt and Investment Survey (2013) shows over 70% rural population has one or more outstanding loans. Nearly 74% of farmer households were in debt in 2013 (up from 50% in 1993), as opposed to 64% of non-farmer households (up from 43%). The incidence of indebtedness by asset-class indicates that 19.6% of the bottom decile (by assets) of rural households and 22% of next higher decile are indebted; as are 9.3% and 14.6% of the lowest two deciles in urban areas for the bottom two deciles. These debts heavily constrain expenditure on non-essentials, especially manufactured goods, reducing effective demand for these, leading to low investment in manufacturing. Thus, never-ending debts also have macro-economic consequences.

The strong case for MIG derives from the fact that the poor rarely accumulate assets. They need cash to meet consumption as well as contingency needs; they rarely borrow for productive purposes.

Non-routine consumption can push them further into debt and poverty.

Any attempt to identify beneficiaries of MIG based on incomes is a risky exercise in any economy with an extremely high share of informal workforce. Congress's NYAY design, thus, was inappropriate. India's reasonably robust Socio-economic and Caste Census (SECC) is useful for identifying households with one or more of seven deprivations, which provide a much better indicator than 'income'.

The SECC provides data for all 24.49 crore households. Of these, rural households are 17.97 crore, and 6.52 crore are urban. Of rural households, 7.07 crore households fall under the automatically excluded category. After this exclusion, the first category of rural households for MIG should be those automatically included in SECC (15.9 lakh households), fulfilling any of the five parameters of inclusion.

The second category includes rural households with more than one deprivation. There are 5.36 crore such households with over one (of seven) deprivation: one or less rooms, kucha walls and roof; no adult member in the household between age 18-59; female-headed with no adult male member; a differently-abled member with no other able-bodied adult member; SC/ST households; no literate adult above 25; and landless households with most of their income from manual labour.

The third category includes those that face just one deprivation. The fourth cate-

gory consists of those that do not report deprivation in any of seven parameters, (given that deprivation parameters are not comprehensive), but are also not well-to-do enough to be automatically excluded (exclusion parameters are more comprehensive). Such households are nonetheless vulnerable and should be included for targeted income transfers.

MIG could offer cash transfers in no case higher than ₹8,000 per annum. Automatically included rural households with highest vulnerability should be eligible for ₹8,000 per household annually; rural households with multiple deprivation to receive ₹6,000 annually; rural household facing just one criteria of deprivation to receive ₹4,000 annually; while rural non-excluded households considered for deprivation, to be offered ₹3,000 annually. Also, in the case of urban areas slum households, ₹3,000 per household has been proposed. This proposed scheme covers 60% of rural households and 20% of urban households and does not cost over 0.28% of GDP (or ₹56,900 crore pa).

Given limited coverage of schemes in urban areas, we propose an additional category of urban households for better targeting of transfers in urban areas based on Census data. We consider homeless urban households and transfer of ₹8,000 per annum. While ₹6,000 per single-elderly household is proposed, we enhance it to ₹8,000 for households with two elderly members (both over age 60). For households with more than one differently-abled person ₹8,000 pa per household, and for remaining differently-abled, ₹6,000 could be allocated. Female-headed households and aged above 50 could be allocated ₹6,000 per household.

These additional vulnerable categories, comprising 25.9% of urban households, entails an additional cost of ₹10,628 crore, or 0.05% of India's GDP (2019-20). This scheme covers 46% of urban households and 60.64% of rural households (as before), at a total cost of ₹67,528 crore, i.e., 0.33% of India's GDP.

Transfer should also be linked to CPI. The expenditure is comparable or less than MGNREGA's (₹60,000 crore) and PM-KISAN's (₹60,000 crore). While PM-KISAN covers only farmers and is expensive and exclusive, our proposal avoids narrow coverage and inclusion/exclusion errors.

Income transfer of ₹6,000 per annum per household (assuming household size of 5) is equivalent to 20% of household's annual expenditure (2011-12, the last year for which NSS consumption expenditure data is available) of the bottom decile among rural household (14% in urban areas). Such an amount would not cause a leftward-shift of the labour-supply curve but reduce their vulnerability. With such low fiscal cost, MIG should not constrain expenditure on public health, education, or infrastructure, increases in which are critical to India's structural transformation.

Safety first

SOHAM D BHADURI

Mumbai-based doctor & editor of the journal 'The Indian Practitioner'

Punish attacks on doctors, but also focus on dispelling corona fears

THE GOVERNMENT'S PROMULGATION of an ordinance to punish violence against health personnel by amending the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 is welcome. Maharashtra, Punjab, Odisha, West Bengal, and Telangana already have similar state-level acts which make violence against healthcare workers cognizable and non-bailable. In mid-2019, spurred by a spate of violence on junior doctors, the Union health ministry proposed a nationwide law with an enhanced imprisonment quantum of up to 10 years, which was put on the backburner due to opposition from the home ministry. Earlier in 2019, a private member bill seeking the same was tabled in Lok Sabha. The fresh ordinance appears to be another simple knee jerk response.

Considering the grave situation, where the health workforce can face rapid attrition due to fear of violence in addition to the disease itself, we must think of strong preemptive instruments in addition to the ordinance.

A long-standing demand of doctors has been to deploy armed personnel in hospitals. However, their sheer number – with more than 10,000 hospitals just with the government – has hitherto rendered it infeasible. Considering that Covid-19 dedicated facilities are a manageable number deploying armed personnel in such violence-prone settings is both feasible and warranted. It is crucial to extend the same to ambulances, and depending on capacity to lower-level facilities.

Armed personnel accompanying field workers into the community can greatly jeopardise trust and community cooperation. To address this would require an examination of how healthcare violence during the pandemic differs from healthcare violence in normal times.

Deficient (public) or extortionate (private) health services incapable of meeting acute needs of an ordinary patient is the commonest aetiology for healthcare violence. This leaves little room for effective communication. In the case of the current pandemic, a distorted perception of risk posed from the visiting health worker, and the possible tribulations of being isolated or quarantined, are major drivers of violence.

The current pandemic has seen unprecedented efforts at risk communication across the levels of governance. IEC strategies to deter healthcare violence, which also address distorted ideas about risk from health workers and assuage fears about corona management, will need to be conspicuously integrated into our overall Covid-19 risk communication machinery. There is every reason to earmark funds for anti-violence communication within the budget for risk communication.

Traditionally, our response to laws failing to arrest healthcare violence has been to simply increase the quantum and severity of punishment the next time. The current ordinance is of a similar nature and does not address the critical question of effective implementation. There has been little consciousness about laws even among police personnel.

Apart from creating widespread awareness of the ordinance and its provisions, the most important measure for empowering the ordinance will be to set glaring precedents by speedily trying malefactors. Apart from greatly amplifying the deterrence power of the ordinance, it would instil confidence among health personnel.

DATA DRIVE

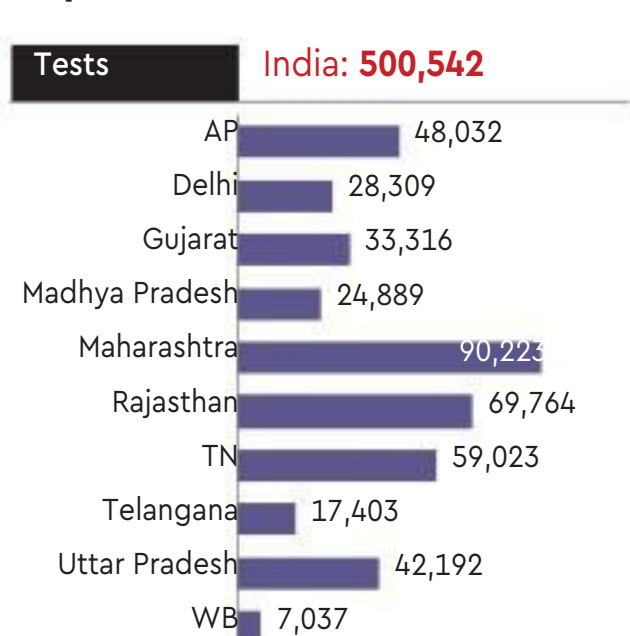
Covid-19: States show wide variation

EIGHTY-FOUR DAYS after India first reported its coronavirus case, the country breached the 20,000-mark on April 22. While India has been able to flatten the curve, state-wise performance has been disparate. Maharashtra has the highest incidence with over 6,000 cases; Mumbai accounts for two-thirds of these. Close in tow is Gujarat, where cases have been galloping fast. The rate of positive cases in the state was 7.2%, with a death rate of 4.3%; India average is 4.3% and 3.2%, respectively. But India still lags other nations as far as testing is concerned. West Bengal, which has the tenth highest number of confirmed cases, has been testing 71.3 people for every million, whereas the India average is 369.7. Delhi so far has the highest rate at 1,530 people for every million. As we draw nearer to May 3 – this is when the government's second lockdown is to end – states will have to test considerably more for a clearer picture to emerge.

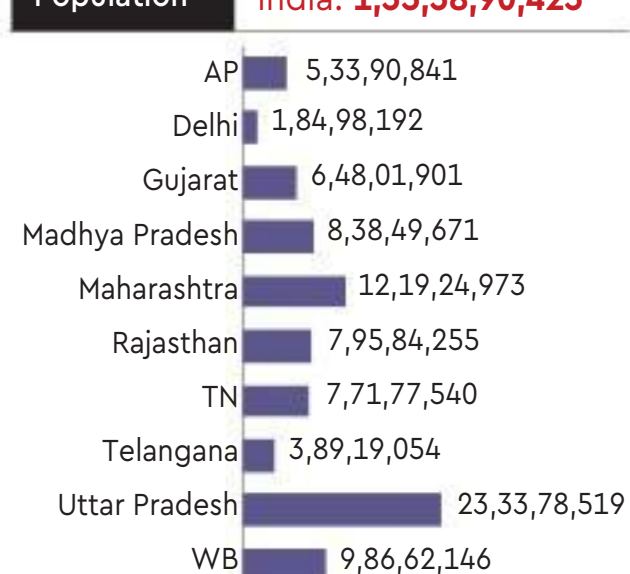
Top-10 states with confirmed cases (in %)



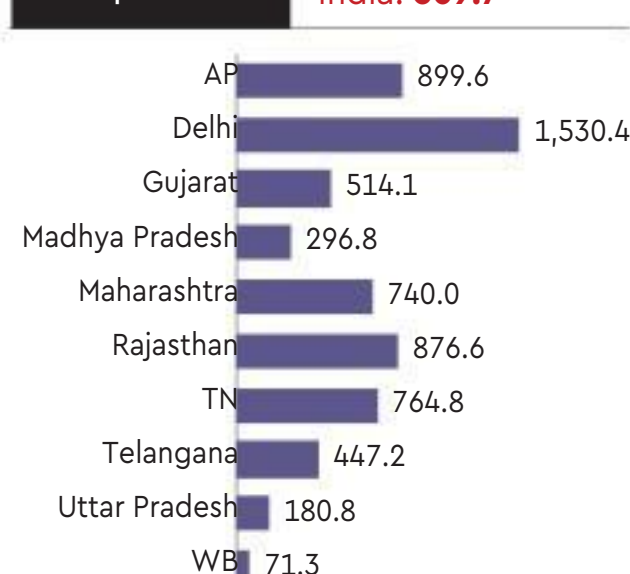
Tests per million for top-10 states



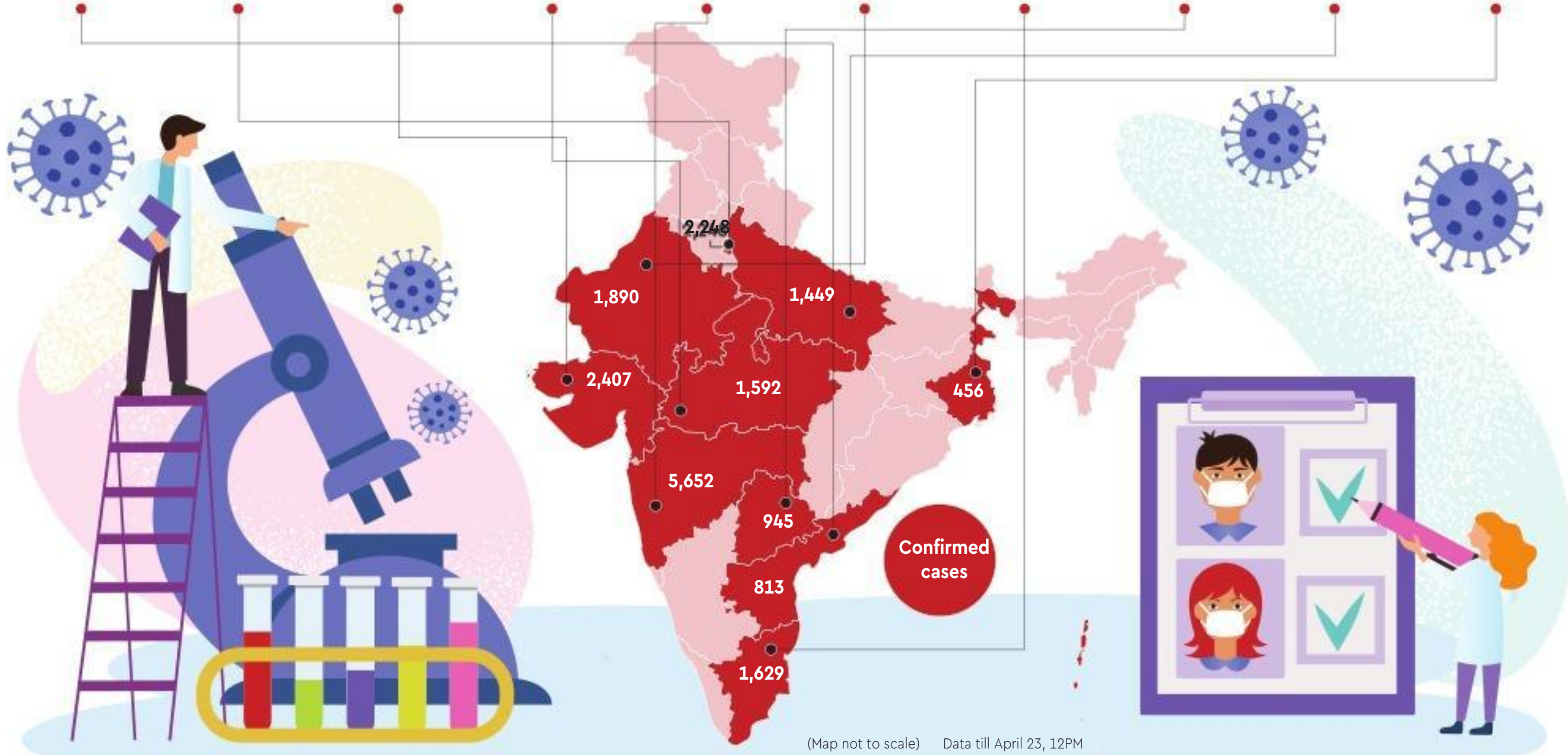
Population India: 1,35,38,90,423



Tests per million for top-10 states India: 369.7



Source: MoHFW, UIDAI



India crosses 20,000-mark

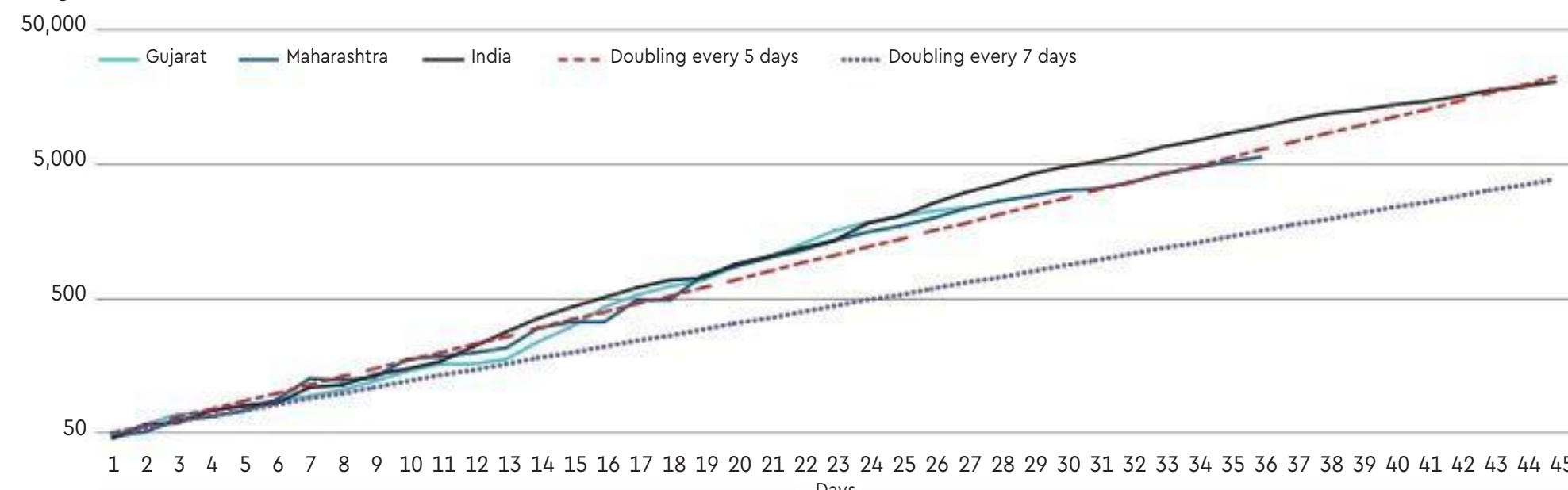
CONFIRMED
21,393
Rate: 4.3

DEATHS
681
Rate: 3.2

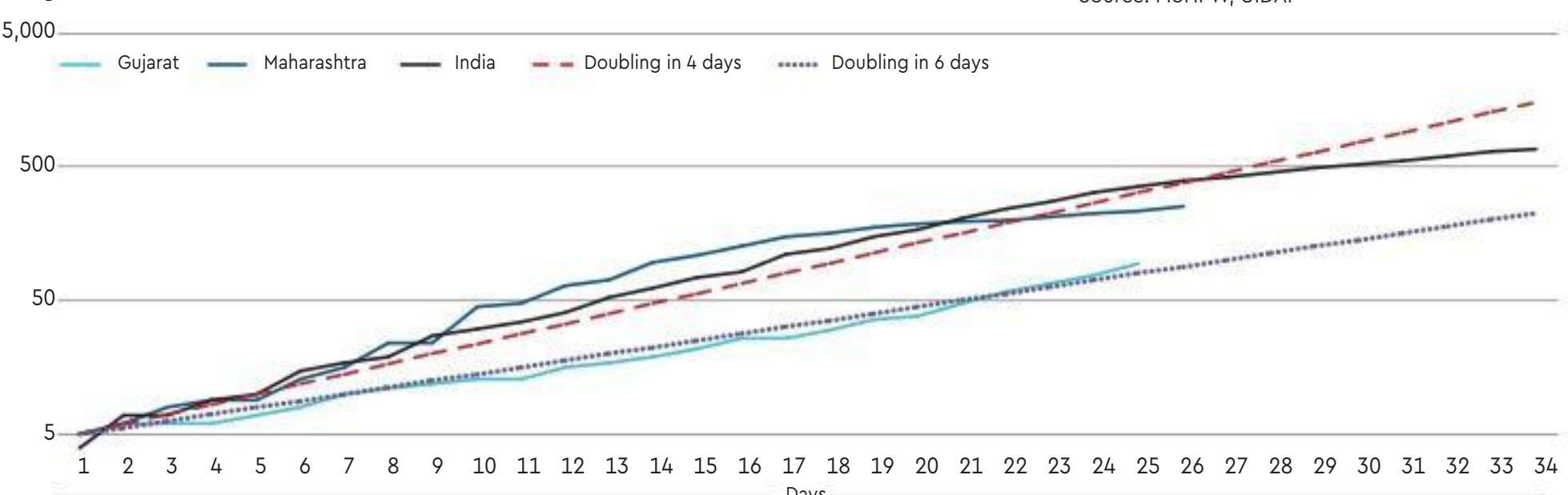
TESTS
5,00,542

RECOVERIES
4,258
Rate: 19.9

Days since 50 cases



Days since five deaths



International

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020



INNOVATION TO BEAT ENEMY

Bill Gates, former CEO of Microsoft

During World War II, an amazing amount of innovation, including radar, reliable torpedoes, and code-breaking, helped end the war faster. This will be the same with the pandemic.

BATTLING THE PANDEMIC

World leaders launch WHO plan for corona, US opts out

EU commission chief says that the objective at a global pledging effort in early May would be to raise \$8.10 billion to ramp up work on prevention, diagnostics and treatment

REUTERS Geneva/Zurich, April 24

WORLD LEADERS PLEDGED on Friday to accelerate work on tests, drugs and vaccines against Covid-19 and to share them around the globe, but the United States did not take part in the launch of the World Health Organization (WHO) initiative.

French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa were among those who joined a video conference to launch what the WHO had billed as a "landmark collaboration" to fight the pandemic.

The aim is to speed development of safe and effective drugs, tests and vaccines to prevent, diagnose and treat Covid-19, the lung disease caused by the novel coronavirus - and ensure equal access to treatments for rich and poor.

"We are facing a common threat which we can only defeat with a common approach," WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said as the virtual meeting got under way.

"Experience has told us that even when tools are available they have not been equally available to all. We cannot allow that to happen."

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that the objective at a global pledging effort in early May would be to raise 7.5 billion euros (\$8.10

MAPPING THE VIRUS

Global cases
2.7 million

Deaths exceed
191,000

- Europe grapples with lockdowns as cases drop and economies reel
- Mnuchin asks for equity stakes in exchange for \$17 billion aid
- Gilead sinks after latest data leak on virus drug trial
- FDA warns on Trump-touted drugs
- Trump muddles virus response while public support slides
- Germany sees economy shrinking up to 7%

The US virus death toll has surpassed 50,000, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. More than 3,000 deaths came in the last 24 hours, and there are now over 870,000 confirmed cases nationwide

The World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund asked nations to stop imposing or intensifying export and other trade restrictions and to lift those put in place because of the coronavirus pandemic

US Vice-President Mike Pence says he thinks the US coronavirus outbreak could be over by the nation's Memorial Day holiday on May 25

As the world's 1.8 billion Muslims begin observing the holy month of Ramadan, traditionally a time of dawn-to-dusk fasting, festivities and communal prayer, the global pandemic is changing the celebration this year in equally unprecedented ways

Spain recorded the smallest number of new coronavirus deaths in nearly five weeks, as the nation remains on almost-total lockdown due to the outbreak. The number of fatalities rose by 367, the fewest since March 21

UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak is considering 100% guarantees on loans to help small companies weather the coronavirus crisis, a person familiar with the matter said, in what would be a significant U-turn for the government

billion) to ramp up work on prevention, diagnostics and treatment.

"This is a first step only, but more will be needed in the future," von der Leyen told the conference.

Macron said: "We will continue now to mobilise all G7 and G20 countries so they get behind this initiative."

And I hope we'll manage to reconcile around this joint initiative both China and the US, because this is about saying: the fight against Covid-19 is a common human good and there should be no divi-

sion in order to win this battle."

Ramaphosa, chairman of the African Union, warned that the continent - with its generally poor standards of health care - was "extremely vulnerable to the ravages of this virus and is in need of support".

Leaders from Asia, the Middle East and the Americas also joined the videoconference, but a spokesman for the US mission in Geneva had earlier told Reuters that the United States would not be involved.

"There will be no US official participation," he said in an email reply to a query.

Google to ask advertisers to prove their identity

THE NEW YORK TIMES April 24

IN AN EFFORT to fight off fraudulent or misleading online ads, Google will require that all advertisers across its sprawling network prove who they are and where they operate, the company said in a blog post on Thursday.

The names of the companies or people behind ads, as well as their countries of origin, will begin appearing on Google ads this summer, starting with several thousand advertisers a month in the United States before expanding worldwide. The measure, which could take years to implement, is designed as a defense against businesses and individuals who misrepresent themselves in paid online promotions, Google said.

The move comes as Google tries to tamp down misinformation and scams related to the coronavirus pandemic.

It expands a 2018 verification policy focused on political advertisers serving election ads.

Broadening the policy will "help support the health of the digital advertising ecosystem by detecting bad actors and limiting their attempts to misrepresent themselves," wrote John Canfield, who handles ad integrity for Google, in the blog post.

In the past, Google has cited predatory behavior by companies that trumpet pay-



The move comes as Google tries to tamp down misinformation and scams related to the coronavirus pandemic

day loans, bail-bonds services and third-party tech support, often banning ads outright. In September, Google said that it had taken down more than 3.2 billion ads that violated its advertising policies in a year, or more than 100 bad ads per second.

Under the new policy, Google will suspend the accounts of advertisers that do not provide proof of identity, including W9 forms, passports and other personal identification and business incorporation files. Previously, Google had requested basic information, like names, but did not require documentation.

China's cases could have been 4 times official tally

BLOOMBERG Hong Kong, April 24

CORONAVIRUS CASES IN China may have been four times higher than officially reported numbers, according to a study published in the Lancet medical journal.

Infections would have been 232,000 in China as of February 20 if the calculation of cases confirmed by "clinical diagnosis" had been applied throughout the outbreak, the Lancet reported.

That compares to the 55,508 cases announced at the time by the country's National Health Commission, according to the report.

Measurement of infections can change significantly as a virus spreads, more information becomes available and testing evolves and increases. The study's authors said seven versions of the coronavirus case definition were used by the NHC in China from January 15 to March 3 and changes should be considered when estimating growth rates.

A change of methodology that included cases diagnosed with CT imaging scans, alongside the previous method of nucleic acid testing kits, led to the addition of nearly 15,000 virus cases in a single day.

Quick View

AmEx quarterly profit plunges 76%

CREDIT CARD ISSUER American Express said on Friday it would cut spending by nearly \$3 billion in 2020 after its quarterly profit sank 76% as it set aside more money to brace itself against a wave of potential delinquencies. "In light of the current environment, we are aggressively reducing costs across the enterprise," said AmEx CEO Stephen Squeri.

US durable goods orders slide most since 2014

US ORDERS FOR durable goods declined in March by the most since 2014 as the coronavirus and slumping oil prices reverberated through the manufacturing sector. Bookings for goods meant to last at least three years dropped 14.4%, after rising a revised 1.1% in February, Commerce Department data showed Friday.

Intel drops forecast on 'significant' uncertainty

INTEL WITHDREW ITS full-year sales forecast, citing "significant economic uncertainty" caused by the pandemic. The company's shares fell more than 5% in late trading. The world's largest semiconductor maker reported a 23% jump in first-quarter revenue and better-than-projected profit, bolstered by demand for chips that run the laptops and server companies need to keep people working from home.

Nestle sees best sales growth in five years

REUTERS April 24

NESTLE CHIEF EXECUTIVE Mark Schneider warned on Friday against reading too much into the company's first-quarter results, which marked its best quarterly growth for nearly five years as customers stockpiled food to deal with shutdowns.

"It is important not to get carried away by the strong organic growth," Schneider told an analyst call after Nestle posted a 4.3% increase during the three months to the end of March.

The situation remained "highly volatile" he said, with significant ups and downs across categories and regions. Nestle would not be able to forecast the financial impact of the Covid-19 epidemic on its business, Schneider added.

Sales in North America and Europe were particularly strong in March, helping to drive an overall rise of 4.3% in the first three months of the year, the fastest quarterly growth in nearly five years and above analyst expectations for a 3% increase.

In North America, Purina Pet care sales rose by a double-digit percentage while Nescafe and Coffee Mate drinks had high single-digit increases. Consumers also grabbed more DiGiorno and Hot Pockets frozen meals, giving some respite to the business that has struggled recently.

In Europe, Middle East and North Africa, most categories of Nestle product won market share, the company said. Maggi noodles and plant-based products from its Garden of Eatin' brand did well, though water sales declined as fewer people ate out.

"A majority of markets, particularly in North America and Europe, saw significantly increased growth in March, par-

HIGHLY VOLATILE



■ It is important not to get carried away by strong organic growth, says CEO Mark Schneider

■ Nestle posted a 4.3% increase during the three months to the end of March

■ Analysts at Jefferies said Nestle was outperforming rivals, trading at 24.8 times forward earnings

tially supported by consumer stockpiling," Nestle said in a statement.

Nestle shares were 1.4% higher in early trading on Friday, outperforming the Swiss blue-chip index.

Analysts at Jefferies said Nestle was outperforming rivals, trading at 24.8 times forward earnings compared with 20.9 times for Unilever and 14.5 times for Danone. Unilever said on Thursday its underlying sales remained flat in the first quarter. Unilever has a bigger exposure to emerging markets where the coronavirus hit earlier, triggering stringent lockdowns that curbed consumer spending.

Sanofi CEO says coronavirus vaccine question isn't when, but how much

BLOOMBERG London, April 24

THE HEAD OF one of the world's biggest vaccine companies says Europe needs to wake up to the challenge of manufacturing enough coronavirus shots to halt the pandemic.

As others squabble over the timing and details of how to develop such a vaccine, Sanofi CEO Paul Hudson points further ahead to the continent's ability to produce enough to meet demand.

"There is less concern about finding a successful vaccine than there is about making the volumes needed," Hudson told reporters on Friday. "The biggest untold story in Europe right now is the one about the number of doses."

Sanofi is working with rival GlaxoSmithKline Plc to develop a vaccine against the new coronavirus, racing against other pharma giants such as Johnson & Johnson as well as nimble biotechs such as Moderna Inc. Most of them aim to deliver a shot sometime next year.

Apple says 'no evidence' iPhone mail flaw used against users

REUTERS April 24

APPLE SAID ON THURSDAY it has found "no evidence" a flaw in its email app for iPhones and iPads has been used against customers, and that it believes the flaw does "not pose an immediate risk to our users."

San Francisco-based cybersecurity firm ZecOps on Wednesday detailed a flaw that it said may have left more than half a billion iPhones vulnerable to hackers.

Zuk Avraham, ZecOps' chief executive, told Reuters he found evidence the vulnerability was exploited in at least six cybersecurity break-ins. Avraham said he found evidence that an attacker was taking advantage of the vulnerability as far back as January 2018, but that he could not determine who the hackers were.



The US may be in a position to vaccinate first, according to Hudson, thanks to the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, a government agency that backs vaccine development. There's no similar coordination in Europe.

"We don't want to get to next summer and not have enough vaccines for Europe," Hudson said.

Sanofi has made proposals to major countries and the European Commission to address the manufacturing challenge, he said, without elaborating.

China tells TikTok owner to remove its WFH app

BLOOMBERG Hong Kong, April 24

CHINESE REGULATORS ORDERED ByteDance to temporarily suspend downloads of its nascent Slack-style office app after discovering content from banned sites like Facebook and Twitter, dealing a blow to the startup's broader internet ambitions.

The Cyberspace Administration of China informed TikTok's operator it must take down its Feishu office collaboration tool from major domestic app stores for about a month, people familiar with the matter said. That was punishment for a feature that allowed users to browse posts from foreign platforms via a newsfeed function, the people said, asking not to be named because the decision hasn't been made public. It's unclear when the actual takedown will ensue, they added.

The decision deals a blow to ByteDance's ambitions while casting an

France to test if nicotine can help treat Covid-19

RESEARCHERS IN FRANCE will test whether nicotine could be used to treat Covid-19.

"It's an interesting possibility," Health Minister Olivier Veran on France Inter radio. "We'll know more soon."

Doctors at the Pitie-Salpetriere hospital in Paris observed that few Covid-19 patients hospitalised were smokers. They also speculated that the new virus may involve receptors in the body that respond to nicotine.

To investigate whether nicotine might have some protective mechanism, they will conduct clinical tests using patches, including one on health-care workers.

—BLOOMBERG



unwanted spotlight on Feishu, which became popular during the pandemic as a work-from-home alternative. Feishu was intended to spearhead a foray into China's enterprise software market, which has skyrocketed since Covid-19 pushed millions of workers out of offices.

Feishu — a mash-up of Slack, Skype and Google Docs — competes in China against similar offerings from Alibaba and Tencent.

SELECTIONS FROM



IN 2010 THE Netherlands' Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries, which is financed by the government, sent Cees van Casteren to Bolivia. His mission was to help Bolivia's vintners break into Europe. It was a tough assignment. Back then, Bolivia's main winemakers—Kohlberg, Campos de Solana and Aranjuez, all family-owned—competed fiercely to sell cheap wine to a tiny protected domestic market. The intoxicating export for which Bolivia is famous is cocaine.

priests made wines there in the 16th century. The modern industry started in the 1960s, when the Kohlbergs brought vines from Europe to make wine to relieve a family member's heart condition.

Bolivia's vineyards in the Andean region of Tarija are among the world's highest, at 2,000 metres (6,500 feet) above sea level. Intense sunshine gives grapes' skins more tannin and wide daily temperature swings increase the acidity of their juice. That makes tannats, malbecs and cabernet sauvignons "fresh", and "spicier" than lower-altitude wines, says Mr van Casteren, one of 394 "masters of wine".

But putting them on European tables has not been easy. The first step was to bring the feuding families together to agree on how to spend the Dutch aid and to come up with a shared brand for Bolivian wines. "They wouldn't even sit together at the same table," says Mr van Casteren. No one showed up to

THE AMERICAS HIGH VARIETALS

Bolivia's other intoxicating export—fine wine

A newcomer to tipples' top table

the first meeting he called. Eventually, they forged friendships on tours of European vineyards.

Bolivian vintners cannot compete against Argentines and Chileans as mass producers for a global market. The cost of planting a hectare of vines is 20% higher than in Mendoza, Argentina's top winemaking region, says Luis Pablo Granier, a co-

owner of Campos de Solana. Bolivian vineyards have one-third of Mendoza's yield per hectare. Bolivia is landlocked, so freight costs are high. An overvalued currency makes the Bolivians less competitive. So the families agreed to make better wines. Prodded by Mr van Casteren, they bought oak casks for ageing and upgraded irrigation systems. Prizes followed.



Big sales and high profits have not. Bolivia's producers are too small to attract interest from European distributors and cannot themselves afford to market and distribute. To expand they would need to buy more land. But arable land in Tarija suitable for irrigation is scarce and expensive. Bolivian vintners have planted just 4,000 hectares (10,000 acres), a fraction of

Argentina's 220,000 hectares of vineyards.

They hope that locals will develop more of a thirst for the good stuff. Bolivia's 11m people drink just 14m litres (3m gallons) of wine a year, a 20th of consumption in Belgium, which has the same number of people. Before Covid-19, the National Association of Winegrowing Industries predicted volume would grow by 7% a year. Bolivian producers are protected by tariffs on imports of up to 40%. But those encourage contraband wine, especially from Argentina. A third of wine consumed in Bolivia is smuggled through the southern border.

The temptation is to go down-market, especially after the economic shock from covid-19. But the Bolivians are loth to give up their newly won reputation for quality. "We've realised that is where our strength is," says Mr Granier. Now they have to convince oenophiles at home and abroad.

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Motobahn

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020



OUR WAY TO SERVE

Parag Satpute, MD, Bridgestone India

We've reached out to hospitals by supplying over 10,000 Personal Protective Equipment, have provided 1,65,000 meals to stranded migrant workers, and provided 3,744 truckers with emergency survival kits inclusive of grocery and personal safety items and hygiene products for 15 days.

What all goes into designing a car brand logo?

The art of car logo design: Building a high-octane signature for your brand. A distinct, instantly recognisable logo can help a company set itself apart



Pratap Bose

THE WORLD OVER, designing cars holds a special kind of mystique, but what goes behind designing an appealing logo for your vehicle selling business plays a large role in attracting and creating customers for a company. Automobile companies often take several measures while designing car logos that define their brand's persona. These measures broadly include audience research, defining a mission for the brand, as well as identifying the various personalities of their consumers.

Brand is, as brand does

Several automotive manufacturers have recently changed their logos to represent a more fluid and adaptive personality for their brands. This approach is inspired by many factors, some of which include adapting to latest trends, highlighting the significance of a particular business unit, repositioning of a brand or making customers feel more connected to the larger corporate brand.



In general, for SUVs, a logo's heaviness is communicated through parameters such as thickness and width of the letters. For a premium hatch, the logo typeface can be visually lighter

represent a more fluid and adaptive personality for their brands. This approach is inspired by many factors, some of which include adapting to latest trends, highlighting the significance of a particular business unit, repositioning of a brand or making customers feel more connected to the larger corporate brand.

There are several elements that go into the concept designing of a car logo. In terms of capturing nuances, the design of a logo accounts for even smaller components such as the outer rear-view mirror (ORVM) as well as the overall ethos of the brand. In effect, the logo has to represent the personality of the parent brand, and

that of the product. Hence, at one level, the logo is a distillation of the design of the product and its personality.

Elements that matter

One of the primary considerations to keep in mind is the brand's design philosophy. At Tata Motors, for example, the tenets of the IMPACT Design 2.0 philosophy and 'premium tough' form the backbone of product logo designs across the passenger and commercial business units, respectively. Additionally, details such as typeface, colour and finish, and potential technology to be used play a vital role during conceptualisation. For instance, the

logo could have a single finish or elaborate colour accents. This has been used effectively in the case of limited or special edition products, such as the Nexon KRAZ, wherein the impact of corporate font was heightened by the use of colour.

Tech breathes new life into design

The technology that goes into designing a logo can strongly determine the quality of the product. For instance, a technique called 'injection moulding' is known to yield higher quality results in the finished product. On the other hand, while using techniques such as the 'polyurethane dome sticker' is cost effective and speedier, but yields a lower quality end-product. Therefore, the combination of art and technology is an integral part in design storytelling and the delivery of the finished product—factors that contribute to the product's overall appeal.

Sketching the future while staying relevant

Just as the design of an automotive product evolves with time so as to remain relevant, so does the design of logos. In recent times, several automotive manufacturers have adopted flatter logos. This evolution is catalysed by factors such as minimalism as the new design trend and the brand's adaptation to the digital age. For instance, logos of the new Tata SUV range have been

designed to look modern and progressive so as to visually associate with the car. The slightest variation in the design of a logo can dictate novel interpretations into the persona of a car. For example, in case of the Harrier, the logo's heaviness is communicated through parameters such as thickness and width of the letters. Such parameters make this logo suitable for an SUV with a large road presence. On the other hand, for a premium hatch such as the Altroz, the logo typeface is visually lighter than the Harrier's. Apart from these new, understated typefaces, additional sophistications have been introduced through carefully calibrated spacing between the letters.

Keeping in mind that today's consumers can learn about a business through wide-ranging opinions across the internet, a brand's identity has never been more important. The logo design of a brand is crucial to a company's identity as it reflects internal values, positioning and contributes to the overall reputation of the brand, while adding personality to its products. Sporting a distinct, expressive and instantly recognisable logo can help a company set itself apart from its competitors, while creating a powerful legacy in the market—one that commands a substantial amount of consumer attention.

The author is VP, Global Design, Tata Motors

● A NEW LOTUS

Now, an everyday car from Lotus

The British company is gearing up to build a car you can drive every day



Phil Popham during the unveiling of the all-electric Lotus Evija (file photo)

CHRISTOPHER JASPER

LOTUS CARS, KNOWN for low-slung racers that wedge drivers into a tightly honed cockpit, is working on a new, entry-level model that will provide enough interior space for every-day use.

The as-yet unnamed car, destined to be the company's last combustion-engine model, will be priced between 55,000 pounds (\$67,000) and 100,000 pounds, chief executive officer Phil Popham said in an interview. It'll take design cues from the all-electric Evija hypercar that the UK firm bills as the world's most powerful auto.

The barbell-like pairing of the \$2-million Evija with the more modestly priced basic auto defines Lotus's strategy under Chinese owner Geely Group. Like other performance carmakers, it is seeking to ramp up volumes by providing more accessible choices that will appeal to regular drivers, while offering wealthy aficionados a chance to spend big on highly profitable limited-edition dream cars.

But unlike rivals such as Aston Martin and Lamborghini that have opted for sport-utility vehicles, Lotus will first produce an accessible sports car—though one with enough interior space to be compatible with every-day use. That's a departure from models like the wedge-shaped

Unlike Lamborghini and Aston Martin that have opted for SUVs, Lotus will first produce an accessible sports car—though one with enough interior space to be compatible with every-day use

Esprit, driven underwater by film spy James Bond, that have typically been trotted out only at weekends or on the track. Production will restart next month at Lotus's plant in Hethel, England, as soon as the UK lifts its coronavirus lockdown, Popham said. A factory extension is being built to house the new model, which will be unveiled late this year or early in 2021.

Lotus plans to lift volumes from around 1,600 cars a year towards the 5,000-unit limit of its facilities, said Popham, who added that with Geely's clout, the plans won't be held back by any hit to sales from the coronavirus.

"It's not as if we have to generate all the money ourselves to invest in our future," the CEO said, suggesting that future options could include an SUV, crossover, cruiser or sporting saloon. "Our focus now is on sports cars, but we do think the brand has the potential to move into other segments; Geely has expertise in areas such as electrification and autonomous driving."

Lotus is consulting with its owner on resuming production once the UK lockdown lifts—possibly as early as May 11, Popham said—in light of Chinese group's own experience. Geely's early input meant it invested 400,000 pounds in work-from-home preparation and has managed to keep half its 1,400 staff working.

The Evija will enter assembly before the year's end, according to the CEO. Only 130 of it are due to be built, and deposits have been taken on all production due in the second half, he said. Sales have slowed following the lockdown, with US and European promotional tours curtailed.

BLOOMBERG

The Evija could possibly be the most exclusive car in the world. It's claimed to be the most powerful car ever to enter production (about 2,000bhp); the lightest EV hypercar ever (1,680kg); the fastest EV (maximum speed of more than 320kph); and a range of 400km on the WLTP combined cycle.



KOTAK INSTITUTIONAL EQUITIES

● E-SPORTS

Swapping real life racing for virtual one

Mahindra Racing confirm D'Ambrosio and Wehrlein for Formula E Esports



FE BUREAU

TODAY, MAHINDRA RACING drivers Jerome D'Ambrosio and Pascal Wehrlein will swap real life racing for virtual racing as they line-up for Round 1 of the ABB Formula E Race at Home Challenge. Jerome and Pascal will take to the virtual Hong Kong E-Prix track on April 25 for the opening race of this new eight-week Esports competition, which is the first major fundraising initiative in Formula E's partnership with the UNICEF. Among other things, it aims to keep children around the world safe, healthy and learning in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

The #64 and #94 drivers, respectively, will participate in a one-lap qualifying session, which follows the Formula E championship's four group format, with each group consisting of six drivers. The race takes the format of a 'Race Royale' battle; after lights out on the race, one driver will be eliminated after every lap until there are 10 drivers remaining to battle it out in one final 'sprint to the finish' lap to determine the winner. The race points system will be the same as the championship uses; 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 distributed to the top ten, with one point awarded to the driver with the DHL Fastest Lap and one point to the driver who qualifies in Julius Baer Pole Position.

Following the temporary postponement of the 2019-20 season, the eight-week ABB Formula E Race at Home Challenge blends together the real and gaming worlds, Jerome said. "We might not be back trackside just yet, but that doesn't mean it's going to be any less competitive. It should be a lot of fun for fans to watch from their homes."

Pascal added that it's a challenging time for everyone. "I'm pleased that we can be putting on a good show for fans watching at home as well as the event raising funds for a very worthy cause. It will be great for us drivers to be racing regularly again, and even though it's virtual racing, it will still help keep us sharp for when we go back to real life racing."

Viewers can watch all the action on the Formula E website, Facebook, YouTube and Twitch accounts.

Investor

● AUROBINDO PHARMA RATING: BUY

USFDA decision dispels key overhang

Prospects for US business remains strong; TP raised to ₹824 from ₹578; 'Buy' retained; re-rating likely after VAI for Unit IV

AUROBINDO PHARMA (AUROBINDO) announced the USFDA has classified its injectable manufacturing facility Unit IV as VAI (Voluntary Action Indicated). Unit IV is an important injectable plant with dependence on future growth as it contributes ~18% of US sales (~9% of total sales). This removes the key overhang from the stock as Unit IV was issued 14 observations and is a critical plant for the company with 46 ANDAs pending for approval.

We remain positive on the stock considering its track record of continuously growing US generic business, wide product portfolio for US market, maintenance of margin profile even in challenging times and focus on deleveraging of balance sheet. Reiterate **Buy** and expect re-rating with key overhang behind us.

Unit IV classified as VAI: The VAI status means USFDA has accepted the company's response to the observations. Now



the company has to implement these additional measures on its own. USFDA had earlier inspected this facility in Nov'19 and issued 14 observations. This plant was later classified as VAI in Feb'20; however, VAI status was immediately rescinded. Final VAI status after getting 14 observations in an injectable unit provides confidence in company's compliance mechanism.

US business to maintain growth momentum: Aurobindo has been able to consistently grow its US generic business, especially over the last 3-4 years when peers reported a decline in a challenging

environment. We expect 5.9% revenue CAGR in US business over FY20e-FY22e led by 11.9% CAGR in injectables. We believe Aurobindo is well placed to monetise US opportunity given wide product basket of 181 pending ANDAs, huge manufacturing capacities and no significant product concentration risk.

Outlook: We expect Aurobindo to register 8.3% revenue and 12.1% PAT CAGR over FY20e-FY22e with Ebitda margin hovering around 20-21%. The company's focus has been on FCF generation and debt repayment in the recent past. We expect annual debt reduction of



\$150-200 mn over next two years which would bring net debt to Ebitda down to 0.2x by FY21e and 0.0x by FY22e.

Valuations and risks: We raise target P/E (x) to 14x from 10x with clearance for unit IV, improving growth visibility and deleveraging of balance sheet. Considering attractive valuation of 10.9x FY22e EPS, we maintain **Buy** with a revised TP of ₹824 based on 14x FY22e earnings (earlier: ₹578). Key downside risks: regulatory hurdles, currency volatility, and delay in US launches.

ICICI SECURITIES

● COLGATE-PALMOLIVE (INDIA) RATING: ADD

Present crisis a chance to raise market share

FY21/22e EPS down 14/9% due to Covid-19 impact; TP cut to ₹1,485; 'Add' retained as valuations are reasonable

WE BELIEVE THE Covid-19 event presents a solid opportunity for CLGT to start regaining some of the market share lost over the past few years. Patanjali, having just completed a large acquisition, would have its hands full amid a weak demand backdrop. We bake in the Covid-19 impact for CLGT (more a derivative impact of a weaker economy) and cut our FY2021e and FY2022e EPS forecasts by 14% and 9%, respectively. **Add** stays with a revised fair value of ₹1,485/share (₹1,600 earlier).

Renewed intent meets invigorated actions

FY2020 was an eventful one for CLGT as the new CEO stepped up efforts to gain back some of the ground the company lost in the past few years. The new CEO has been quite categorical about higher focus on volume growth and market share. With

portfolio gaps no longer a drag, we believe this signalled the right intent.

The company undertook several measures to back the renewed market share focus - (i) re-staged a couple of large brands in the portfolio; (ii) expanded naturals range; (iii) launched a wider portfolio in the kids segments; and (iv) expanded the Palmolive portfolio after a long time. In addition, the company remained aggressive on brand investments (encouraging though results yet to be seen).

9-14% cut in FY2021-22e EPS

We expect short-term pressure on sales on account of the immediate and derivative impact of Covid-19. We have cut our FY2021e and FY2022e revenue forecasts by 12% and 9%, respectively; we now bake in flat revenues in FY2021e followed by a bounce-back (+16%) in FY2022e. Our FY2021e zero revenue growth assumption factors in a volume decline of 1% and a mix-driven realisation improvement of 1% in the toothpaste portfolio. We have factored in a sharper 5% volume decline in the non-toothpaste part of the portfolio.

Margin prognosis stays strong - we have trimmed our operating margin



Key changes to estimates (as per Ind-AS), Colgate, March fiscal year-ends, 2020-22E

	Revised			Earlier			Change (%)		
	2020E	2021E	2022E	2020E	2021E	2022E	2020E	2021E	2022E
Net operating revenues (₹ mn)	45,849	45,850	53,378	46,786	52,117	58,414	(2.0)	(12.0)	(8.6)
Ebitda (₹ mn)	12,493	12,920	15,292	12,808	14,867	16,862	(2.5)	(13.1)	(9.3)
Ebitda margin (%)	27.2	28.2	28.6	27.4	28.5	28.9	—	—	—
Net income (₹ mn)	7,941	8,337	10,122	8,183	9,695	11,114	(3.0)	(14.0)	(8.9)
Recurring EPS (₹/share)	29.2	30.6	37.2	30.1	35.6	40.9	(3.0)	(14.0)	(8.9)

Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities estimates

assumptions only marginally and are building around 140 bps cumulative Ebitda margin expansion over FY2020-22e on the back of (i) benign RM intensity; (ii) moderation in adspend intensity in FY2021e; and (iii) aggressive productivity improvement measures in response to Covid-19-induced pressure on topline.

Maintain ADD
Our DCF-based fair value stands revised down to ₹1,485/share. Attractive long-term prospects and reasonable valuations (38X FY2022e) EPS) keep us positive. **Maintain Add.**

Markets

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020

EXPERT VIEW

For investors, the message I want to send out is that the outcome is not good, but we believe this is the right thing to do. We would return maximum value to investors and many of you would be angry and disappointed, but I request you to judge us on the basis of how we return the money eventually

— Vivek Kudva, MD, Franklin Templeton Group (India & CEEMEA)

Money Matters

G-SEC

The benchmark yield rose due to selling pressure



The rupee depreciated on global cues

0.51%



The euro rose against the dollar

0.28%



'NBFC and MFIs' funding gap to further increase to ₹15k-25k cr'

FE BUREAU
Mumbai, April 24

AS BANKS ARE unlikely to grant moratorium for their NBFC and MFI exposures and following a weak response to targeted long-term repo operations (TLTRO), Acuité Ratings on Friday said that the funding gap for the non-banks is expected to further increase to ₹15,000-25,000 crore.

"A 50% response in the first tranche of bids for RBI's TLTRO 2.0 indicates that banks are hesitant to take fresh exposures to the sector, particularly to small and mid-sized NBFCs including MFIs, at this juncture," the rating agency said. Hence, the refinancing window of ₹50,000 crore through government financial institutions such as Sidi assumes significant relevance, it added. As collections from borrowers are likely to be limited in the April-May period, the lack of alternative funding lines would have serious implications for the sustainability of the NBFC sector.

On analysing the top 11 retail NBFCs in India, the estimated funding gap for the companies in Q1 FY21 stands at ₹10,000-20,000 crore with the expectation of moratorium availability from banks. Meanwhile, without a moratorium or partial moratorium from banks, the funding gap will rise further to ₹15,000-25,000 crore. The gap for the aggregate sector, including MFIs in Q1 will be much higher at around ₹50,000-60,000 crore based on broad estimates, the rating agency said.

Following the risk aversion in the banking sector, it said that fresh funding or refinancing to the NBFC sector from TLTRO 2.0 is unlikely to exceed ₹10,000 crore unless there is a significant change in the banks' response in the second tranche.

NO LONGER LOW-RISK

₹25,800-cr investments at risk as Franklin Templeton shutter six debt schemes

FE BUREAU
Mumbai, April 24

APPROXIMATELY ₹25,800 CRORE worth of investments are at risk with Franklin Templeton winding down six of its debt schemes on Thursday. Investors will not be able to redeem their investments nor will the fund house take in any fresh investments.

Explaining the decision, Franklin Templeton Group (India & CEEMEA) managing director Vivek Kudva said, "This was not an easy decision for us and the parent also, as it will have an impact on the brand, franchise and so many things." The fund house took pains to explain to investors on Friday that the teams managing other schemes were different even as the management was evaluating its entire portfolio of investments. The members of the Association of Mutual Funds in India took pains to explain that this was not an industry-wide phenomenon.

Debt schemes of mutual funds for long have been seen as low risk, but shuttering six schemes and leaving investors in a lurch will impact investor sentiment. While admitting that these funds should have provided on-demand liquidity, the management of Franklin Templeton said that it had decided to "wind up" the schemes to preserve the value of the portfolio that was getting eroded due to redemptions and mark-to-market losses amidst market illiquidity.

Kudva further said, "For investors, the message I want to send out is that the outcome is not good, but we believe this is the right thing to do. We would return maximum value to investors and many of you would be angry and disappointed, but I request you to judge us on the basis of how we return the money eventually."

The fund house attributed the decision to close the funds on redemption pressures, mark-to-market losses and illiquid market

Details of debt schemes of Franklin Templeton

Scheme Name	Type of the Fund	AUM (₹ cr)	Top holdings
Franklin India Low Duration Fund	Low Duration	2,399	10.75% Greenko Clean Energy Projects 2020; 9.60% Renew Power Feb 26, 2021; Ess Kay Fincorp 2023; 9.40% Small Business Fincorp Sept 28, 2020; Renew Solar Power 2022
Franklin India Ultra Short Bond Fund-Retail Plan	Ultra Short Duration	9,728	9.45% Vedanta Aug 17, 2020; Edelweiss Rural & Corporate Services Nov 29, 2021; JH Financial Credit Solutions July 23, 2024; 8.35% Bharti Airtel March 20, 2021; 9.00% Indostar Capital Finance 2023
Franklin India Short Term Income Plan-Retail Plan	Short Duration	5,726	10.25% Shriram Transport Finance March 25, 2024; Adani Rail Infra April 28, 2023; 9.50% Piramal Capital & Housing Finance April 15, 2022; 11.90% Rishanth Wholesale Trading Oct 20, 2023; 11.50% SD Corporation 2022
Franklin India Credit Risk Fund	Credit Risk	3,559	10.25% Shriram Transport Finance April 26, 2024; Coastal Gujarat Power Aug 27, 2028; 9.90% Shriram Wholesale Trading Oct 20, 2023; Piramal Enterprises May 15, 2020; 10.32% Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Aug 16, 2026
Franklin India Dynamic Accrual Fund	Dynamic Bond	2,564	10.25% Shriram Transport Finance April 26, 2024; Adani Rail Infra Mar 28, 2023; 10.15% Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Jan 20, 2023; 9.31% Tata Motors Sept 29, 2023; 11.25% India Shelter Finance Corporation 2026
Franklin India Income Opportunities Fund	Medium Duration	1,880	8.25% Piramal Capital & Housing Finance 2027; 9.90% Coastal Gujarat Power Aug 27, 2028; 9.90% Shriram Transport Finance June 21, 2024; 11.50% Rivaaz Trade Ventures Mar 30, 2023; 9.85% DCB Bank 2028

*Net Asset Value-Growth Source: Value Research and Franklin Templeton; AUM as on April 22, 2020; Returns as on April 23, 2020; Holdings as on 31 Mar, 2020

conditions caused by the novel coronavirus pandemic. The fallout of this event is expected to also impact the parent of Franklin Templeton negatively. The schemes closed down by the fund house include -- Franklin India Low Duration Fund, Franklin India Dynamic Accrual Fund, Franklin India Credit Risk Fund, Franklin India Short Term Income Plan, Franklin India Ultra Short Bond Fund and Franklin India Income Opportunities Fund.

Details of the winding up process will be communicated to existing unitholders of the funds impacted by this decision at the earliest. The funds will continue to publish their net asset values daily, and investors will not be charged any investment management fee

on these funds, going forward. Units of the funds will no longer be available for purchases and redemptions.

"Mutual funds have been facing unprecedented liquidity challenges in this situation and while it is absolutely necessary to address the spread of the contagion, it is causing significant issues for the liquidity in the markets," said Sanjay Sapre, president, Franklin Templeton - India.

According to the Franklin Templeton MF, some categories of funds which have been closed down have direct exposure to higher yielding securities across the credit rating spectrum and the security rated below 'AAA' have been most impacted by the ongoing liquidity crises in the market.

All debt funds are not at risk, say MF CEOs

FE BUREAU
Mumbai, April 24

BOSSSES OF LEADING mutual funds, under the aegis of the industry body, came out in full force to assure investors that debt schemes were not at risk, even as Franklin Templeton shuttered six of its debt schemes. Three mutual fund CEOs — Nilesh Shah of Kotak Mahindra Asset Management, Milind Barve of HDFC AMC and A Balasubramanian of Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC — came out to calm frayed investor nerves. All three CEOs said that many measures had been taken by the RBI and the regulator would provide more liquidity support if needed so there was no cause for worry.

There was a degree of anxiety around credit risk funds, Barve said, and the name of the fund seemed to suggest that almost the entire portfolio of credit risk funds were toxic or had poor quality of credit.

"This is far from the truth. For most of us who are managing credit risk funds, almost 20-30% of the credit risk funds comprises of 'AAA' rated papers and cash. Apart from that investments, these credit risk funds also have another 30-50% in AA and AA+. So basically, if you look at so called credit risk funds the actual profile and underlying investments in these funds is of high quality," Barve said.

Shah of Kotak AMC said that the maturity of Kotak's funds should not have any impact on normal operations due to an isolated event of winding down at one mutual fund. He said that a bulk of the assets of the industry were in non-credit risk funds, which account for more than 90% of the industry's assets under management (AUM). The credit quality of that portfolio is superior as confirmed by an independent rating agency, said Shah.

Even in credit risk funds, which account for 5% of total debt AUM, there are conservative and aggressive credit risk funds. Not all the credit risks have similar credit profiles. In fact, a majority of the credit risk has better quality assets, higher



Nilesh Shah of Kotak AMC said that the maturity of Kotak's funds should not have any impact on normal operations due to an isolated event of winding down at one mutual fund

cash balance and better liquidity profile.

Terminating Franklin Templeton's decision to wind down six funds as unprecedented, Balasubramanian said that what happened on Thursday was something that 'generally does not happen'. He said the mutual fund industry manages close to about ₹15 lakh crore in fixed income. The schemes in discussion on credit were only about 2-3% of the overall MFs debt portfolio. In general, these investments have high credit rating as well as high liquidity.

"The way industry has been managing the risk both by individual fund houses and guided by Sebi as well as Amfi as a body, the management of portfolio construction has been solid. The industry size of close to ₹15 lakh crore comes on the back of the fact that industry has been managing credit portfolio quite efficiently over the period time. One isolated incident should not be considered negative for the debt funds and that should not extrapolate that there is an issue with everyone," he said.

BoB to raise ₹13,500-cr additional capital

FE BUREAU
Mumbai, April 24

THE BANK OF Baroda board on Friday approved raising of additional capital of up to ₹13,500 crore, the lender informed stock exchanges through a release.

Out of the total amount, the bank will raise ₹9,000 crore by way of common equity capital through various modes, including qualified institutional placement (QIP). The remaining ₹4,500 crore will be raised by way of additional Tier-1 and Tier-2 capital instruments with an inter-changeability option, the bank said in the release. The public sector lender plans to raise the total amount till March, 2021. However, it has specified that window remains open beyond the timeline of March, 2021, in case needed.

The bank had earlier raised ₹3,397 crore through Additional Tier-1 (AT1) bonds in December quarter of 2019. The capital adequacy ratio of the bank remained above regulatory threshold level at 13.98%, as on December 31, 2019. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) threshold of capital adequacy ratio is 11.5%. FE reported earlier that Bank of Baroda has sanctioned ₹606 crore to 4,598 borrowers under Covid-19 emergency credit line till



April 19.

Earlier on April 7, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)-controlled IDBI Bank announced raising upto ₹7,500 crore in the current fiscal. The borrowing plan of IDBI Bank included AT1 bonds up to ₹3,000 crore, Tier-2 bonds of up to ₹3,500 crore and infrastructure bonds up to ₹1,000 crore by way of private placement during 2020-21. Similarly, public sector lender Bank of India declared in February to raise around ₹1,500-2000 crore through QIP.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced in the Budget that public sector banks could tap capital markets for funds. The FM said a few among them (banks) would be encouraged to approach the capital market to raise additional capital.

Rupee drops by 40 paise against dollar on FPI outflow concerns

THE RUPEE ON Friday depreciated by 40 paise to settle at 76.46 against the US dollar due to fears of capital outflows after Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund suddenly closed its six debt fund schemes.

Weak domestic equities and a strengthening greenback overseas also weighed on the local currency.

Forex traders said market sentiment weakened after a potential antiviral drug for coronavirus reportedly failed its first trial. The rupee opened lower at 76.30 at the interbank forex market and then fell further to 76.47 before closing at 76.46, down 40 paise over its last close. The rupee had settled at 76.06 against the US dollar on Thursday.

The rupee witnessed strong fallout again due to likely overseas outflows from local stocks amid some uncertainty after Franklin Templeton Fund closed six schemes, Jateen Trivedi, Senior Research Analyst (Commodity & Currency) at LKP Securities said. Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund voluntarily decided to wind up its six debt schemes citing redemption pressure and lack of liquidity in bond markets due to coronavirus pandemic.

— PTI

ANALYST CORNER

◆ GDP decline to impact Titan, 'sell' with TP of ₹738

GOLDMAN SACHS

WE SEE SIGNIFICANT impact to Titan's earnings growth over the next couple of years with our macro team lowering FY21 India GDP growth forecast to -0.4%. We believe Titan's discretionary categories will likely see a greater impact from the GDP decline, and hence further cut our FY20-23 EPS by 7-10% (FY21/22 EPS down 40%/33% since February). Consequently, we cut our 12 month target price to ₹738 (from ₹803), implying 21% downside (vs -10% average for our coverage) and downgrade Titan to sell from neutral.

Key reasons for our downgrade is only 35% of jewellery demand, mainly wedding related, is relatively resilient. However, the discretionary portion of Titan's jewellery sales (~65%) and its watches business are likely to see a more sustained impact on demand. Slower store adds across Titan's categories due to impact of social distancing, weak demand and potential cashflow

challenges at franchisee partners. Lower returns due to weak sales growth. We also expect lower margins for Titan as it faces negative operating leverage with relatively low gross margins. Valuation looks demanding with Titan trading at FY22P/E of 49X against FY20-22E EPS CAGR of 7.0% compared to our coverage average of 42X and 11.2% respectively.

Risk-reward skewed to downside: Our bear case valuation implies -49% downside from current levels vs +12% upside in our bull case.

Our bear case assumes a sharper impact on footfalls in the near term and weaker market growth. Although we assume 200bps market share gain over the next four years in our bear case, we believe it will not be sufficient to offset the negative impact of the declining market.

Our bull case assumes a sharp recovery in demand once the nationwide lockdown is lifted. We forecast FY20-23E EPS CAGR of 12%/0%/27% in our base/bear/bull case.

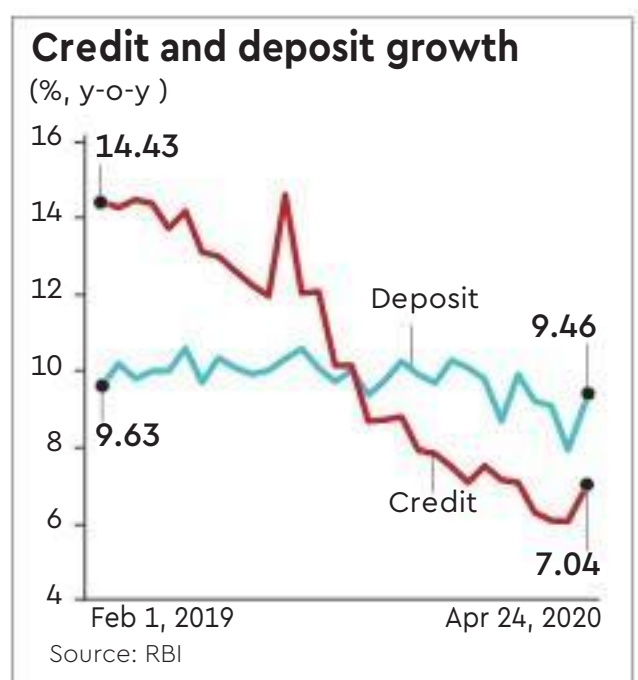
Non-food credit growth rises to 7.04% Y-o-Y

FE BUREAU
Mumbai, April 24

NON-FOOD CREDIT GROWTH in the banking system for the fortnight ended April 10 rose to 7.04% y-o-y, while outstanding loans fell marginally compared to the previous fortnight. The figure grew 14.2% during the corresponding period last year.

During the previous fortnight, the non-food credit growth came in at 6.06%. After the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cut its policy repo rate by 75 basis points (bps) on March 27, a number of banks and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) followed by cutting their lending rates. The lenders also provided emergency credit lines and other facilities to borrowers to help them tide over the economic impact caused by the Covid-19 lockdown, which started on March 25. Outstanding loans to companies and individuals extended by scheduled commercial banks stood at ₹102.85 lakh crore as on April 10.

The central bank had also urged lenders to keep credit flowing to various sectors. "Banks and other financial institutions should do all they can to keep credit flowing



to economic agents facing financial stress on account of the isolation that the virus has imposed," the RBI said in the minutes of the latest monetary policy committee meeting.

Meanwhile, deposit growth in the banking system rose to 9.46%, up 153 bps from 7.93% in the previous fortnight. The rise in deposits comes after a fall in the deposits growth during the fortnight ended March 27 following the Yes Bank crisis.

Jefferies drops HDFC Bank in rejig after holding it since 2011

NUPUR ACHARYA
Mumbai, April 25

JEFFERIES HAS REMOVED India's most valued lender HDFC Bank along with ICICI Bank from its Asia ex-Japan long-only portfolio on concern the world's biggest lockdown may trigger a negative credit cycle for the nation.

"This continuing lockdown is, unfortunately, making it ever more inevitable that India will suffer" a negative consumer lending cycle, Chris Wood, head of equity strategy, wrote in his 'Greed & Fear' note to clients. "There is also a growing risk of increased forbearance on local lenders, as there is for lenders everywhere."

Jefferies will now hold only one private Indian bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, while adding local drugmaker Cipla to its list.

HDFC Bank had been in the Jefferies portfolio since June 2011 and has risen 282% in the period, the note said. The lender has declined 27% this year amid a widespread selloff that has pushed a gauge of banking stocks to slump 39%. Jefferies pick, Kotak Mahindra, plans to raise about \$1 billion with a new share issue in a move that will strengthen its capital buffers and reduce the stake held by its founder.



The exclusion of the two banks will reduce Jefferies weighting for private Indian banks in its fund from eight percentage points to three, the note said. The group has also removed HDFC Life Insurance from the portfolio, cutting its exposure to the nation's non-bank financial stocks.

By adding Cipla, Jefferies is buying into a 'manufacturer of Greed & Fear's favoured hydroxychloroquine' among other drugs, Wood said. The shares have jumped more than 25% so far this year. Jefferies also added a one percentage point weighting to Reliance Industries in its fund after Facebook said it will spend it will buy about 10% of the Indian conglomerates digital assets.

— BLOOMBERG

◆ Havells a structural growth story aided by market share

JEFFERIES

HAVELLS HAS CORRECTED ~30% year-to-date. While near-term demand could be impacted by lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic and challenging macro, the medium-term catalysts remain robust. We view Havells as a structural growth story, aided by a varied product array, strong brand equity and market share, new launches, multi-channel distribution (150,000 retailers), net cash B/S (~₹16 billion in FY20e) and sturdy return ratios (RoCE ~25%, RoE ~20%). Lloyd is amidst a revamp as well, with many corrective steps. Buy.

India's Covid lockdown could impact discretionary spending, construction & projects. We pencil a subdued FY21e (on a weak FY20e base), with max impact in Q1FY21 (20-25% of annual sales). Refer Exh 20 for earnings sensitivity. Electricals value-chain is mainly domestic (copper is key RM). Industry participants are alluding

to an existing inventory stock, which could clear once demand resumes (strong summer in India).

A near-term catalyst could be festive season (Q3).

Havells' key moat is a diversified product mix with market leadership across most categories (Exh 2,3). B2C mix is 70-75% now (Exh 10-13). Key medium-term drivers would be strong industry opportunity (Exh 5-9), impetus to housing, infrastructure, rural electrification, low organised penetration across many categories (Exh 4), market share gains, new launches and entrenched distribution.

Havells has consistently launched a slew of products (Exh 14,15) - Water heaters (2012), small appliances (2013), pumps (2013), air coolers (2016), water purifiers (2017) and personal grooming (2018).

Research and development spend is at ₹790 million in FY19 (+35% y-o-y) was ~1% of sales. Havells expects R&D spend to grow to 3% of net sales.

SHUTTING OF DEBT FUND SCHEMES Markets snap upward streak, financials slide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, April 24

SNAPPING A TWO-SESSION rising trend, the BSE Sensex tumbled 536 points on Friday as finance and bank stocks slided after Franklin Templeton MF suddenly closed six debt fund schemes, catching investors off guard.

A depreciating rupee and negative global cues added to the gloom, brokers said. The 30-share BSE Sensex settled 535.86 points or 1.68% down at 31,327.22, while the NSE Nifty declined 159.50 points, or 1.71%, to 9,154.40.

Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund late on Thursday announced winding up of six debt schemes, with assets under management of over ₹25,000 crore, due to redemption pressures and lack of liquidity in bond markets amid the Covid-19 crisis.

Many retail investors and high net worth individuals (HNIs) who invested in these schemes as part of their fixed-income asset allocation would be hit as the money will be blocked with no clear timeline for recoveries, experts said.

Bajaj Finance was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, dropping 9.14%, followed by IndusInd Bank (6.58%), Axis Bank (5.96%), ICICI Bank (5.09%) and HDFC (5%).

Reliance Industries, however, capped the losses by rallying 3.34%.

Sun Pharma, Hero MotoCorp, L&T, PowerGrid and Bajaj Auto were among the other gainers.

During the week, the Sensex declined 261.50 points or 0.82%, while Nifty fell 112.35 points or 1.21%.

"...Winding up of a few debt schemes by a large fund house in India added to the selling pressure witnessed in banks and NBFC stocks. Reliance and a few pharma names were the only saving grace in today's trade."



"Investors should have a clear asset allocation strategy to navigate the present volatility created by the pandemic," said S Ranganathan, head of Research at LKP Securities.

BSE realty, finance, bankex, metal, IT and tech indices fell up to 4.15%, while energy, healthcare and capital goods rose up to 2.05%.

Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices cracked up to 1.77%.

Meanwhile, global markets slumped on mounting economic pressure of coronavirus-led lockdowns with no respite in sight.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul ended with heavy losses, while those in Europe were also trading significantly lower in early deals.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures slipped 0.38% to \$21.25 per barrel.

On the currency front, the rupee depreciated 40 paise to provisionally settle at 76.46 against the US dollar.

The death toll due to the pandemic rose to 718 in India, while the number of cases climbed to 23,077.

Global tally of the infections has crossed 27 lakh, with over 1.90 lakh deaths.

Sri Lanka to seek \$400-m debt swap facility from RBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, April 24

SRI LANKA IS set to enter into an agreement with the Reserve Bank of India for a currency swap worth \$400 million to boost the foreign reserves and ensure the financial stability of the country which is badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, a top minister has said.

The Cabinet has approved a proposal made by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa as the finance minister to enter into an agreement with the RBI for the financing facility to meet short-term international liquidity requirements, co-cabinet spokesman information and communication minister Bandula Gunawardena said.

Sri Lanka will enter into the agreement with the RBI for a Bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement worth \$400 million, Gunawardena said, adding the facility from the RBI is aimed at boosting the island nation's foreign reserves.

The swap arrangement is a decision two countries reach while doing trade related payment. Sri Lanka has placed critical economic measures to save the resources hit badly by the Covid-19 pandemic which has infected 373 persons in the country and the death toll reached 7.

Addressing the Cabinet media briefing yesterday, Gunawardena said the Cabinet meeting chaired by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa paid special attention to the control of the coronavirus pandemic, its success and the distribution of goods and relief to the people.

The minister pointed out that the whole world is now experiencing the economic collapse since World War II resulted from the COVID-19 outbreak and a single country alone cannot find a solution to the crisis.

So the Cabinet of Ministers has approved this proposal in order to ensure the financial stability of the country, Gunawardena said.

The country has ordered imports restrictions to prevent non-essential imports.

Area sown to kharif rice up 37.70% so far: Agri min



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, April 24

AREA SOWN TO rice increased by 37.70% to 34.73 lakh hectare so far in the kharif (summer) season of the 2020-21 crop year, according to Agriculture Ministry data released on Friday.

Farmers had planted rice in 25.22 lakh hectare area in the year-ago period in the same season.

Rice in rain-fed kharif crop besides maize, bajra, greengram, blackgram, groundnut and sesame seeds in the category of foodgrains basket.

The Met department has forecast a normal southwest monsoon during June-September period.

With regard to rice planting, the ministry has advised states to promote Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) which require less labour and tend to mature faster than transplanted crops. It has also asked them to promote cultivation of hybrid rice.

Currently, 8% farmers use this method especially in states like Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, it said.

The government is targeting 102.6 million tonne of rice production in the kharif season of the 2020-21 crop year (July-June).

As per the ministry's data, area sown to

pulses has increased to 5.07 lakh hectare so far in the kharif season this year from 3.82 lakh hectare in the year-ago.

In case of pulses, the ministry has advised states to promote intercropping of pulses with oilseeds, sugarcane, maize and cotton. It has also asked to use bunds for cultivation of arhar or tur dal besides weed management and application of fertilisers based on soil head card.

Similarly, area sown to coarse cereals has increased to 8.55 lakh hectare from 5.47 lakh hectare, while that of oilseeds acreage increased to 8.73 lakh hectare from 6.80 lakh hectare in the said period, the data showed.

The ministry has asked to give priority to oilseeds and promote improved variety of soybean, groundnut, sesame and sunflower seeds. States have been asked to replace upland or low yielding paddy areas with oilseeds besides promoting intercropping with pulses, cotton, maize and millets.

Farming activities have been exempted from the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown. Farmers have been asked to take safety precautions and maintain social distancing while planting kharif crops.

The government has set a foodgrain production target of 149.92 million tonne for the kharif season of the 2020-21 crop year.

Street Signs

BSE Metal

Index slides on weak investor sentiment **2.96%**



BSE Oil & Gas

Index falls as most members lose value in the trade **0.67%**



April 24

INDIAN BASKET CRUDE
\$17.66 BBL
₹1,343.40 BBL
EXCHANGE RATE
₹76.06/\$

PRICE POINTS

April 24

	Del	Mum	Kol	Blr
Rice	35	31	31	52
Wheat	24	34	NR	36
Tur dal	101	115	90	96
Potato	28	33	22	36
Sugar	40	42	41	38
Mustard oil	132	120	114	132

Price in ₹/kg for Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru Source: Dept of consumer affairs

Quick View

Sebi extends timelines for depositories & DPs

IN VIEW OF the pandemic, markets regulator Sebi on Friday extended timelines for depositories and depository participants to comply with regulatory requirements. For submitting BO (beneficial ownership) grievances report to depositories, the timeline for depository participants (DPs) has been extended till May 18 for March and April reports, Sebi said in a circular. The half-yearly internal audit report by DPs for the half year ended March 31, which was due for submission on May 15, can now be submitted till June 30. Systems audit done on annual basis can be completed by July 31 for the financial year ended March 31, the circular added. Further, reporting for artificial intelligence and machine learning applications has now been allowed till May 31 for the quarter ended March 2020.

Probe against alleged dumping of fibre boards

INDIA HAS INITIATED a probe into an alleged dumping of fibre boards, used in furniture industry, from Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia following complaint by domestic manufacturers. Greenply Industries, Greenpanel Industries and Century Plyboards have filed application before the commerce ministry's probing arm, directorate general of trade remedies, for anti-dumping investigation on imports of "plain medium density fibre board having thickness less than 6 mm" imported from these four countries. The applicants have alleged dumping of the board from these countries and requested for imposition of the anti-dumping duties on the imports.

'Poultry sector to see 4-5% degrowth in revenue'

THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN has impacted the domestic poultry industry, and the poultry meat segment is likely to witness 4-5% decline in revenue in the fourth quarter of 2019-20, according to a report. The industry incurred large net losses due to sharp decline in demand, realisation and profitability and rumours circulated in social media, linking poultry birds as possible vectors of the virus, further leading to the demand drop and hence realisations, ratings agency Icria said in its report. "We expect domestic broiler meat demand to be affected in the short-term due to the Covid-19 pandemic leading to a marginal degrowth of 4-5% in poultry meat revenues and table egg demand to moderate by 1-2% in FY21."

Sugar mills urge UP power co to clear ₹1,150-crore dues

DEEPA JAINANI
Lucknow, April 24

THE UTTAR PRADESH sugar industry, which is already grappling with a liquidity crunch because of poor sales, weak molasses and ethanol offtake, and non-existent exports, has asked Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation (UPPCL) to clear its power co-generation dues of ₹1,157 crore on April 22 so that the sugar mills can clear their dues to farmers. These power dues have been accumulating since March 2019.

In a letter to UPPCL chairman Arvind Kumar, Uttar Pradesh Sugar Millers Association secretary general Deepak Gupta has drawn attention towards the precarious financial condition of the state sugar industry at present and its deepening crisis.

"The gravity of the situation can be gauged by the fact that sale of sugar is extremely poor. As almost 70% of domestic sale is driven by institutional demand, which has almost dried up owing to lockdown in the country, the situation can be easily understood. Added to that is the fact that exports are not happening and ethanol offtake has also slowed down considerably owing to very low consumption of petrol and



limited storage capacity with the oil marketing companies," he has written.

Stating that sugarcane crushing is still going on, Guptara said the mills have the statutory liability to settle the cane dues within 14 days and the amount of cane dues payable is increasing day by day.

"Besides the logistical problems with regard to storage of sugar and allied products, these factors have put a severe strain on the liquidity position of sugar millers, which has further impaired their cane price-paying ability. With working capital limits for most of the mills having been fully utilised, the sugar millers are finding it very difficult to meet their cane price payment obligation, for which constant pressure is exerted from both farmers and the state government," he wrote.

Maha's onion supplier database to act as alternative marketing channel

NANDA KASABE
Pune, April 24

DESPITE THE LOCKDOWN, around 550 truckloads of onions from Nashik and other parts of Maharashtra are being transported to other states. This has been possible because of a database of onion suppliers created by the Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board (MSAMB).

"Our main objective is to provide an alternate marketing platform to farmers and create links between buyers and sellers. The database has also been uploaded on the web portal of the marketing board," Sunil Pawar, MD, MSAMB, said.

So far, the board had created a database of about 750 onion suppliers that include farmers, farmer groups, exporters, traders, farmer groups and farmer producer companies and this database had been shared with various states so that direct procurement can take place, he said.

Since the lockdown began on March 25 till date, around 5,891 trucks of onions from Nashik have been transported to almost all the states in the country, he said.



Pawar said the board plays only the role of a facilitator and the transaction is among the traders.

When asked if the database was created since the functioning of market committees is pretty erratic during the lockdown, Pawar replied that arrival of onions is higher in agriculture produce market committees (APMCs) in March 2020 than March 2019. The database is for providing a direct purchase access to traders of other states as an alternative channel in case arrivals at APMCs dries up.

When the lockdown initially began due

to the coronavirus outbreak, there was no clarity on the supply of fruits and vegetables across the country and onion is a commodity that is closely followed by all sections, Chandrashekhar Bari, a senior board official from Nashik said.

"Although things are pretty streamlined now, labour issues had arisen and the functioning of market committees was also erratic." Thanks to the database that has also been uploaded on the board's website, state government authorities or traders could directly get in touch with the onion suppliers, he said.

The database is updated every week with addition of new farmers and traders in the list. Around 600 farmers, farmer groups and farmer producer companies are from Nashik district and others are from Pune, Solapur and Ahmednagar districts. The database includes their location, contact numbers and also the quantity of onions they have. Meghnath Pawar, a farmer from Nashik whose name is part of the database, said since the database is somewhat new, there has been no benefit as yet. However, he said a database of this nature would be useful in the long run.

Ramadan glut, crude oil slump drag basmati paddy futures down 6%

M SARITA YARMA
Thiruvananthapuram, April 24

BASMATI PADDY FUTURES price has tumbled nearly 6% in a week on the Indian Commodity Exchange (ICE). Analysts attribute it to softened festival demand, improved supplies and the impact of crude slump.

On ICEX, the May contract traded at around ₹3,309 per quintal on Friday, falling from the high-perch of ₹3,498 on April 17-contract. About 66% of India's 6.5 million tonne of basmati rice is exported. Phenomenal lows in crude oil price are likely to give a shakedown to the economies of West Asian countries, which are the staple buyers of basmati rice, according to experts.

"Saudi Arabia, facing its worst economic shock since 1999, is heading for a fiscal deficit of 15%. The Gulf country is considering a massive borrowing plan to bail out its economy, sinking from the double-shock of pandemic and crude oil slump," said Ajay Kedia, director, Kedia Advisory, on the shrinking purchasing power of one of the major buyers. "In such a scenario, I would not be surprised if it de-prioritises imports, including those of some high-end food products like basmati rice," Kedia told FE.

In the domestic market, Ramadan rice demand has softened, as consumers have been stocking up for the holy period starting Friday. Supply had improved after partial resumption of operations in rice mills.

Unseasonal rains hit mango production in Andhra

BV MAHALAKSHMI
Hyderabad, April 24

MANGO GROWERS FROM Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh, which is famous for Banganpalli, Chinna Rasalu and Pedda Rasulu varieties, are expecting about 50% losses due to unseasonal rains and high velocity wind.

The growers said the overall production is relatively low at 50% though the complete harvest is still due till month-end. Further, due to lockdown, the local traders are unable to lift the produce from the farmers to supply to retail markets.

Andhra Pradesh has around 1.5 lakh acre under mango cultivation and the average yield is around 4.5 tonne per acre. "The crop is almost ready to be harvested. But due to

unseasonal rains, we are doubtful of a bountiful harvest from mango orchards," said horticulture department officials.

Moreover, in initial stages, there were incidences of delayed flowering and thrips attack on fruits thereby reducing the total productivity, officials said. The Mango or thrips attack had affected the coastal areas and most of the flowers, which were set to become fruits, withered due to strong winds which almost shook the whole tree.

Mango is a major crop in West Krishna and Nuzvidu regions grown in about 50,000 hectare. "Due to Covid-19, availability of labour teams for harvest is an issue and even if the harvest is managed somehow, drivers to move truckloads are difficult to align," said Nuzvidu traders at Nunna market, which is one of Asia's largest mango

market.

"The drop in production is due to late flowering in trees due to prolonged winter and uneven weather conditions. However, we anticipate the harvest to start increasing from the first week of May 2020 when one of the major mango cultivation belt Chittoor will start harvesting," said Palat Vijayaraghavan, founder & CEO, Lawrence Agro Processing India (LEAF), an agriculture-value chain major that supports marginal farmers through integrated solutions.

The company sources Banganapalli variety of mangoes from Andhra and is expecting Chittoor harvest to boost the volumes. "We have been working with Andhra Pradesh mango farmers for many years and even during this year, we are continuing the work," said Palat Vijayaraghavan.

Permission for construction of roads, bridges to help supply by local dealers

SUSHIM BANERJEE

DG, Institute of Steel Development & Growth



THE GLOBAL ECONOMY faces one of the stiffest challenges since the Spanish flu. More worrisome is the fact that though the Covid-19 pandemic in Wuhan city of China, which is known to be its origin, had subsided by February-end, it is said to have resurfaced in China. All the developed countries led by the US, Italy, France, Spain, UK are severely reeling under its impact whereas emerging economies Turkey, Brazil, Iran are showing signs of cracking down. India stands exposed to the menace, albeit limited, considering the size and population of the country.

While the doctors, nurses and health care workers, along with police, local administration and NGOs, are all working continuously and carrying on a herculean task of prevent-

ing the virus, the five-week long lockdown and the uncertainty would have an adverse impact on the economy. But, this is also the time to repose faith on our strengths and work out short-term pragmatic policies.

The February Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data released a few days ago was indeed encouraging. Manufacturing sector had grown 3.2%, mining 10% and electricity 8.1% and together could contribute to IIP to grow 4.5%.

The declining trend in capital goods and consumer durable segments were restricted to (-) 9.7% and (-) 6.4%, respectively, while infrastructure and construction sector showed a marginal rise in February and intermediate goods sector had clocked 22.4% growth over February of last year. Under manufacturing, the basic metals and furniture manufacturing showed a positive growth. This trend got swift downward change in March 2020 by a deep contraction in Purchasing Managers' Index with lockdown of all economic activities in the country. Two recent reports on the nationwide impact of the pandemic need special mention.

The World Economic Outlook released



by IMF in April 2020 has projected a global growth of (-) 3% in 2020 with severe contraction ranging from 5-6% for all advanced economies of the US, EU, Japan, South Korea. China's GDP has been projected to grow 1%, while India's GDP is to grow 1.9%, the highest among all countries. It is quite hopeful to learn that International Monetary Fund perceives that the trend of GDP would follow a V-shaped growth in 2021 and not a U-shaped one, implying a faster pick-up in global growth post-Covid-19 scenario. Thus for 2021, projected Global GDP is 5.8%, with the US at 4.7%, China 9.2% and India 7.4%.

The report brought out by WTO projects global trade to go down by 13-32% in 2020 and the scenario in 2021 a bit uncertain as of

now. The report has indicated India's exports of \$324 bn captured 1.7% share in total world exports in 2019, while India's imports of \$484 bn stood at 2.5% of world's total imports. It has projected exports from Asia to grow in 25-36% range during 2021 after taking a dip in 2020 under optimistic and pessimistic scenarios.

For India, the reasonably better scenario in February 2020 as reflected in higher manufacturing and IIP data has resulted in a consumption growth of 3.9% in total steel consumption. However, the production cut imposed by the pandemic has resulted in (-) 23.04% drop in steel consumption in March 2020 compared to the previous year. While non-alloy segment has consumed 22% less, the alloy and SS was consumed 39% lower during the month to pull down together the total growth of steel consumption in the country for FY20 by 1.3%.

The government has timely managed to announce a slew of measures to support the daily wage-earners and the weaker sections of the society, most affected by prolonged lockdown. It has to spend enormously on health care and family welfare.

To enhance liquidity and lend support to the SME sector, RBI has come out with specific steps. It has injected liquidity to reach 3.2% of GDP since February 2020. To encourage banks to deploy the amount absorbed under reverse repo rate, it cut the same from 4% by 25 bps. It also took three auctions of targeted long-term repo operations to back Nabard, SIDBI and NHB with ₹50,000 crore for lending to agriculture, rural, housing and SME sectors and also injected additional liquidity of ₹1 lakh crore in April 2020.

As the states are indeed short of revenue generation due to stoppage of economic activities, RBI has enhanced the Ways and Means Advances by 60% over March 30 limits to enable the states to borrow more funds from the central bank.

Construction of roads, bridges, building and irrigation in rural and semi urban areas has been permitted from April 20. This would help steel supply by local dealers and distributors, while the large institutional buyers (Railways, oil and gas, coal, power) must also commence procurement with assured production and transport by steel producers. (Views expressed are personal)

COVID CRISIS

Frantic for corona gear, US turns to China's elite

People and firms with vested interest in sustaining the US-China relationship are stepping in as ties fray between the two countries

ALEXANDRA STEVENSON, NICHOLAS KULISH & DAVID GELLES
Hong Kong, April 24



The Trump administration has frustrated states by telling them to buy their own equipment and has struggled to meet the nation's growing demand

US HOSPITALS AND state officials face desperate shortages of the masks, ventilators and other gear they need to fight the coronavirus. Chinese factories can make it and sell it to them, but huge obstacles stand in the way — and Washington's stumbles and growing hostility with Beijing aren't helping. Now some of China's elite — and others with big stakes in keeping the US-China relationship alive — are stepping in to help. An ad hoc network of companies, wealthy individuals, academics and former diplomats has emerged to help the United States get the Chinese-made goods it needs to save patients and protect front-line workers — and, perhaps, help polish China's dented image along the way. They are trying to navigate snarled supply chains, connect wary buyers and sellers and help overwhelmed local officials in desperate need of equipment. The group includes people like Jack Ma and Joseph Tsai, the co-founders of Alibaba, the Chinese e-commerce giant; Marc Benioff, the co-founder of Salesforce, who struck a pact with Alibaba last year to sell its services in China; and Yichen Zhang, the chairman of Citic Capital, a major Chinese investment firm affiliated with a state-run conglomerate. Responding to calls for help from doctors, Zhang saw a chance to help one of Citic Capital's portfolio companies, which got into the business of making protective gear for China during its own outbreak, and Yale University, which his daughter attends. He sent 10,000 masks and 40 protective gowns to

Yale's health clinic. "It's a business opportunity and a social responsibility," said Henry Yin, Zhang's assistant. Altruism may be just one factor for the others as well. Under pressure to deflect criticism of its own performance, the Trump administration has blamed China for the global spread of the devastating virus. President Trump has also accused China of taking American jobs and launched a trade war against Beijing. Two-thirds of Americans now hold unfavorable views of China, according to a Pew Research Center survey released this week, the highest level since it began asking the question in 2005. The companies and individuals are acting at a time of yawning gaps, both in the vast

and important US-China relationship and in the American government's own response. The Trump administration has frustrated states by telling them to buy their own equipment and has struggled to meet the nation's growing demand. "It's a new feudalism in America," said Orville Schell, director of the Center on US-China Relations at the Asia Society. "China recognizes this and China, too, they've had their talk with Trump, but they're also trying to stitch into the American fabric at the sub-national and the corporate level."

Filling those gaps could help the image of Chinese business in the eyes of the American public. Ma of Alibaba, China's richest person, chartered a plane to New York in March to deliver more than one million masks and testing kits, among other donations around the world. This week, Fortune magazine placed Ma at No. 3 on a list titled "Heroes of the pandemic." Alibaba's shares traded in both New York and Hong Kong.

While Andrew M. Cuomo, the New York governor, assailed the federal response to the New York's plea for ventilators and protective gear, Tsai of Alibaba and his wife, Clara, together with Mr. Ma arranged for the delivery of 2,000 ventilators and millions of masks and goggles to the state. Tsai owns the Brooklyn Nets and the New York Liberty basketball teams. —NYT

Govt panel for delayed start to new college session, Sept instead of July

RITIKA CHOPRA
New Delhi, April 24

THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN has officially delayed the 2020-21 academic year, with a government-appointed committee recommending that the traditional mid-July start for higher education should be pushed to September.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 when the Union government announced a nationwide classroom shutdown as one of the measures to contain the outbreak.

The seven-member committee, which was set up by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to deliberate on issues related to examination and the academic calendar in the wake of the classroom shutdown, submitted its report Friday.

Besides the two-month delayed start to the new academic session, the panel has also recommended that the year-end or semester-end examinations that could not be held on

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 when the Centre announced a nationwide classroom shutdown as one of the measures to contain the outbreak

schedule should be held in July. Haryana Central University vice-chancellor RC Kuhad headed the panel. AC Pandey, director of Inter-University Accelerator Centre; Aditya Shastri, vice-chancellor of Banasthali Vidyapeeth; and Raj Kumar, head of Panjab University, are among its other members.

The UGC will frame guidelines on university examinations, and the academic calendar based on the committee's report. "The guidelines will not be binding on higher education institutions, but they will lay down the outer time limit by which the government expects them to start their new academic year," said a source, who

spoke on condition of anonymity.

This committee's recommendation, if and when accepted by the UGC, would mean that the Union government would have to approach the Supreme Court to seek an extension of the last date for completing admissions to medical programmes (August 31) and technical applications (August 15) such as engineering. These deadlines are mandated by the top court and hence the need for its permission before being tinkered with.

Another committee set up by the UGC to make recommendations on online education has advised against asking universities to conduct online examination mandatorily, given the "diversity, local environment, composition of students and preparedness of the learners, current infrastructure and technology support".

Nageshwar Rao, Vice-Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), is heading the committee on online learning.

Islam's holiest sites emptied by Covid crisis as Ramadan begins

REUTERS
Riyadh/Jerusalem, April 24

THE HOLY MONTH of Ramadan began on Friday with Islam's holiest sites in Saudi Arabia and Jerusalem largely empty of worshippers as the coronavirus crisis forced authorities to impose unprecedented restrictions.

During Ramadan, Muslims the world over join their families to break the fast at sunset and go to mosques to pray. But the pandemic has changed priorities, with curbs on large gatherings for prayers and public iftars, or meals to break the fast.

In a rare occurrence in Islam's 1,400-year history, Mecca's Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina — the religion's two holiest locations — will be closed to the public during the fasting period.

Prayers from inside the mosque at Mecca on the first evening of Ramadan on Thursday were restricted to clerics, security staff and cleaners, in a ceremony broadcast live on television. In comments marking the start of Ramadan, King Salman, who is the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, lamented the need for social distancing during the holy month.

"It pains me to welcome the glorious month of Ramadan under circumstances that forbid us from prayers in mosques," he said, according to the official Saudi Press Agency. "It doesn't feel special this year, we don't feel any Ramadan vibes," said Sarah, a mother-of-two in Riyadh.

Meghan's war on UK tabloids gets first day in court

MEGHAN MARKLE HAD her first day in court in her fight with the British media, as she

sues the Mail on Sunday over the publication of a letter she wrote to her father shortly after her wedding to Prince Harry. Her lawyer, David Sherborne, told a London judge that the publication of the five-page letter, which "contained her most personal thoughts," breached her right to privacy. In the letter, Markle complained about her father talk-

ing to the press. The letter "was disclosed with the sole and entirely gratuitous purpose of satisfying the curiosity" of the Mail's readers, Sherborne said on Friday. "A curiosity deliberately generated by the" Mail. Markle and Prince Harry have been at odds with the UK media for months, but the situation became even worse earlier this year when the couple said they were stepping back from their royal duties. The court hearing

comes just days after the couple cut all ties with the UK's leading tabloids, including the Daily Mail, the Sun and the Mirror. Friday's hearing was a pre-trial application by Associated Newspapers, which owns the Mail, to dismiss part of the misuse of private information claim in Markle's lawsuit, including allegations of dishonesty and malicious intent.

The Mail declined to comment during the hearing. —BLOMBERG

Boeing set to cut Dreamliner output, jobs on low demand

BLOMBERG
Chicago/London, April 24

BOEING IS POISED to cut 787 Dreamliner output by about half and announce workforce reductions when it reports first-quarter earnings next week, said people familiar with the plans.

Details of the production changes for Boeing's commercial lineup are still being finalized and will determine the number of jobs to be eliminated through layoffs and buy-outs, said the people, who asked not to be named as the discussions are confidential. The planemaker plans to lower the Dreamliner's monthly output, which began the year at 14 jets, to a single-digit rate.

Dave Calhoun, Boeing's chief executive officer, hinted that painful measures would

The planemaker plans to lower the Dreamliner's monthly output, which began the year at 14 jets, to a single-digit rate

be needed when he warned employees last month of a "new reality" with a far smaller jetliner market when the world emerges from the coronavirus pandemic. Global airline sales are projected to plunge by \$31.4 billion this year, according to an industry trade group, and travel may not recover fully until mid-decade.

The forbidding landscape leaves Chicago-based Boeing with no easy decisions.

Airbus, its European rival, has already announced plans to pare output by about a

third. Both companies probably burned through record amounts of cash in the first quarter: 6.5 billion euros for Airbus and \$8 billion for Boeing, according to calculations by Melius Research analyst Carter Copeland.

The US manufacturer faces added strain from maintaining 400 or so newly built 737 Max jets that are stuck in storage until regulators lift a grounding imposed more than a year ago after two fatal accidents.

"Boeing is facing essentially a self-made problem on the Max and an act of God on the virus," said Robert Spingarn, an analyst with Credit Suisse Group.

"These two things together create just an unbelievably difficult situation to have to manage through."

Coronavirus shakes conceit of 'American exceptionalism'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Washington, April 24

WHAT IF THE real "invisible enemy" is the enemy from within — America's very institutions?

When the coronavirus pandemic came from distant lands to the United States, it was met with cascading failures and incompetencies by a system that exists to prepare, protect, prevent and cut citizens a check in a national crisis. The molecular menace posed by the new coronavirus has shaken the conceit of "American exceptionalism" like nothing big enough to see with your own eyes.

A nation with unmatched power, brazen ambition and aspirations through the arc of history to be humanity's

"shining city upon a hill" cannot come up with enough simple cotton swabs despite the wartime manufacturing and supply powers assumed by President Donald Trump.

The crisis turned doctors in the iconic American shining city, New York, into beggars with hands outstretched for ponchos because they couldn't get proper medical gowns. "Rain ponchos!" laments tech entrepreneur Marc Andreessen. "In 2020! In America!" It's turned a Massachusetts hospital executive into an under-the-radar road warrior, working up a deal through a friend of a friend of an employee who heard about a warehouse more than five hours away with masks.

Covid-19 spread slows in Europe ahead of next steps to relax curbs

BLOMBERG
Berlin, April 24

SPAIN RECORDED THE smallest number of new coronavirus deaths in nearly five weeks, Germany's sick beds continued to empty, and France and Italy showed progress in slowing the spread, welcome signs for European leaders ahead of further steps to ease curbs that have battered the economy.

With Spain still on almost-total lockdown, the number of fatalities rose by 367, the fewest since March 21, according to health ministry data published on Friday.

As other countries in Europe



start to relax containment measures, Spain has yet to publish detailed plans on lifting the restrictions that have brought the nation to an almost complete standstill for more than a month. Fighting the most extensive outbreak in Europe, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez

has said that a cautious easing may begin next month.

In Germany, some 106,800 people have recovered from the disease, and Europe's largest economy maintained its so-called reproduction factor below 1, meaning the number of people with Covid-19 is declining.

PUBLIC NOTICE

UPDATION OF EMAIL ADDRESSES OF SHAREHOLDERS

Notice is hereby given that in compliance with applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 read with General Circular No. 14/2020 and General Circular No. 17/2020 dated 8th April, 2020 and 13th April, 2020, respectively, as issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Religare Health Insurance Company Limited is proposing to convene an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (RHICL EGM No.01/2020-2021) on Thursday, May 21, 2020 at 9.30 a.m. through Video Conferencing. In this regard, the Company intends to issue Notice of the aforesaid meeting to all shareholders of the Company whose names appear in the Register of members as on Friday, April 17, 2020, by sending the notice on their respective email IDs as registered with their Depository Participant (DP) or with Company.

However, in case your email ID is not registered with your DP or with the Company, we hereby request you to kindly register your respective email ID with your DP or with the Company by sending your details to the following email: rhicl.secretarial@religare.com on or before Tuesday, April 28, 2020 with following details:

Name of the shareholder	
De-mat ID	
Client ID	
No. of shares held	
Email ID to be registered	
Contact no. to be registered	

In case of any query or concern, you can call us : +91-124-6141810

By Order of the Board of Directors
For Religare Health Insurance Company Limited
Sd/-
Pratik Kapoor
Company Secretary
FCS-8361

Place: New Delhi
Date: April 25, 2020

Religare Health Insurance Company Limited
5th Floor, 19, Chawla House, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019
Phone: +91-11-66250048
Website: www.religarehealthinsurance.com
Email: rhicl.secretarial@religare.com
Insurance is a subject matter of solicitation. CIN - U66000DL2007PLC161503
UAN:20043622 IRDA Regd. No.148

FORM NO.CAA. 2

[Pursuant to Section 230(3) and rule 6 and 7]
BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL KOLKATA BENCH
Company Application No. CA (CAA) No. 254/KB/2020

In the matter of: The Companies Act, 2013 ("the Act")
And
In the matter of: A petition made under Sections 230, 232(1) of the Act.
And
In the Matter of:

- CIMMCO LIMITED, an existing company within the meaning of the Act, having its Registered Office at 756, Anandapur, EM Bypass, Kolkata - 700107, within the aforesaid jurisdiction.
CIN: L28910WB1943PLC168801
PAN: AAACC3147K
And
- TITAGARH CAPITAL PRIVATE LIMITED, an existing company within the meaning of the Act, having its Registered Office at 756, Anandapur, EM Bypass, Kolkata - 700107, within the aforesaid jurisdiction.
CIN: U01122WB1994FTC138832
PAN: AAACF3929L
And
- TITAGARH WAGONS LIMITED, an existing company within the meaning of the Act having its Registered Office at 756, Anandapur EM Bypass, Kolkata - 700107, within the aforesaid jurisdiction.
CIN: L2720WB1997PLC084819
PAN: AABCT1377F

Notice and advertisement of notice of the meetings of shareholders and creditors
NOTICE is hereby given that by an Order passed on 22nd April, 2020 the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Kolkata Bench (NCLT) has in modification of its order dated 19th February, 2020 permitted the respective meetings of the Equity Shareholders and Secured and Unsecured Creditors of CIMMCO LIMITED (originally scheduled on 30th March, 2020) to be conducted through video conferencing on Wednesday, 29th April, 2020 for approving the Scheme of Amalgamation of Cimcco Limited (Applicant No. 1 or the Company) and Titagarh Capital Private Limited (Applicant No. 2) with Titagarh Wagons Limited (Applicant No. 3). The proposed resolution is given in the Notice dated 21st February, 2020 sent to all the shareholders and creditors together with explanatory statement and documents listed therein. The Notice that the meetings scheduled on Monday, the 30th March, 2020 had to be postponed due to lockdown announced to combat COVID-19 was advertised by the Company in "Financial Express" and "Ajkaal" on 28th March, 2020.

In pursuance of the said order, the following separate meetings will be held on 29th April, 2020 through video conferencing:

Meeting of Cimcco Limited	At	Meeting ID	Pass Key
Equity Shareholders	2.00 P.M.	2522140	0011
Secured Creditors	3.00 P.M.	2522219	0111
Unsecured Creditors	3.30 P.M.	2522491	1111

For joining the meeting: download and install "Lifesize Video Conferencing" from Application Store or Google Play on your mobile or from browser (Google Chrome/Internet Explorer) on your laptop/desktop, open the application and select "Join as a Guest"; type your name, client ID/Folio No., click "Join" and thereafter enter your relevant Pass Key given above. For better experience please use your earphone and mute the microphone when not talking. In case of any assistance required for joining the meeting by video conferencing please call 9051575100 or 9073980265. For receiving effective assistance please download and install AnyDesk remote assistance software with proper internet connectivity.

The e-voting by all the shareholders/creditors will be exercised only after joining the meeting by video conferencing for which members to keep handy the Client ID/Folio No. and No. of shares held by them and creditors: the amount receivable by them.

The said meetings by video conferencing are being conducted in compliance with the applicable provisions of the Act and General Circulars No. 14/2020 dated 8th April 2020 and No. 17/2020 dated 13th April 2020 issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India ("MCA Circulars"). A copy of this Notice as well as Notice dated 21st February, 2020 shall be available on the website of the Company: www.cimcco.in and of the stock-exchanges viz. www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com. The members who are holding shares in physical form or members/creditors who have not registered their email addresses with the Company can cast their vote through e-voting system only at their respective meetings by filling up a simple form by clicking <https://cimcco.in/e-voting>.

The members/creditors who have not registered their email addresses with the Company can get the same registered by emailing to investors@titagarh.in or inward.ris@intech.com, 24 hours before the meeting. The said email is required to be sent by the first holder mentioning folio number, number of shares held and name of the first holder registered with the Company preferably including his/her permanent number.

As the remote e-voting provided to the members/creditors closed on 29th March, 2020, the members/creditors who have already cast their votes through the said facility are welcome to attend the meeting by video conferencing on 29th April, 2020. However, if they cast their vote again by e-voting at the meeting, the same will be treated as invalid. Please note that as per the MCA Circulars the facility of appointment of proxies will not be available for the meetings on 29th April, 2020. However corporate members/creditors can appoint their representative by sending authority letter and board resolutions by email to investors@titagarh.in 24 hours before the meeting. No attendance slip is required for the meeting. For inspection of documents pertaining to the proposed resolution to be passed at the meeting, please click http://cimcco.in/scheme_of_arrangement.htm

Sd/-
Arjun Mookerjee
Chairperson appointed by NCLT for the meeting of Unsecured Creditors
Kolkata, the 24th April, 2020.

Sd/-
Kanishka Kejriwal
Chairperson appointed by NCLT for the meeting of Secured Creditors

Sd/-
Urmila Chakrabarti
Chairperson appointed by NCLT for the meeting of Equity Shareholders

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS

Shareholders are hereby informed that the Bank is seeking consent of Shareholders as set out in the Postal Ballot Notice dated 22nd April, 2020 for the following:

- To create, offer, issue and allot such number of Equity Shares of Rs. 10/- each (Rupees Ten only) for cash at a price as determined in accordance with the SEBI (Issue of Capital & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018 aggregating to **Rs. 831 Crore (Rupees Eight Hundred and Thirty One Crore Only)** on Preferential basis to Government of India ("GOI"), (Special Resolution).
- In view of present situation due to COVID-19 pandemic in the Country, Bank is unable to send physical copy of Postal Ballot Notice along with Postal Ballot Form and pre-paid business envelope to the Shareholders for this Postal Ballot.
- As guided by the General Circular No. 17/2020 dated 13th April, 2020 of Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Bank is sending Notice of Postal ballot by email to all its Shareholders of Bank, who have registered their email addresses with the Bank / Depositories / RTA.
- Shareholders of Bank, who have not registered their email addresses with Bank / Depositories / RTA can obtain the soft copy of Notice of Postal ballot by sending email to investor_services@mahabank.co.in / helpdesknum@mcgregistrars.com. Notice of Postal ballot is also available on website of Bank i.e. www.bankofmaharashtra.in
- The Bank, in terms of Regulation 44 of the SEBI LODR Regulations, is providing remote e-voting facility to Shareholders of the Bank for voting on the Special Resolution. Only those shareholders of Bank whose names appear in the Register of Shareholders / Beneficial Owners of shares as on the Cut-off Date i.e. 17th April, 2020 will be entitled to vote through remote e-voting only. As the Bank is unable to print Paper Form Notices and Postal Ballot Forms and dispatch the same to the Shareholders, whose email ids are not available with the Bank / Depositories / RTA, the Bank is providing only e-voting facility. Shareholder who has not received Notice and wish to vote on the resolution may mail to investor_services@mahabank.co.in / helpdesknum@mcgregistrars.com for obtaining soft copy of Notice.
- The e-voting will commence from 09.00 a.m. Monday, 27th April, 2020 and end on 05.00 p.m. Tuesday, 26th May, 2020.
- Ms. Malati Kumar (COP No. 10890) or failing her Ms. Ashwini Vartak (COP No.16723) of M/s. S. N. ANANTHASUBRAMANIAN & Co., Company Secretaries, has been appointed as Scrutinizer for conducting the Postal Ballot (e-voting process) in a fair and transparent manner.
- For grievance/queries/clarification connected with e-voting by Postal ballot, Shareholders may contact Mr. Subodh Vichare, MCS Share Transfer Agent Ltd., at subodh@mcgregistrars.com or 022-28516020/21/22/23 or CDSL on helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or toll free number 1800-22-5533 for redressal.
- The e-voting results of the Postal Ballot will be declared within 48 hours from the conclusion of end of e-voting period and same will be hosted website of Bank, CDSL and Stock exchanges i.e. BSE Ltd. and NSE of India Ltd.

Addendum to the Postal Ballot Notice dated 22nd April, 2020:
In continuation to the disclosures made in the Explanatory Statement on the proposed Special Resolution for the creation, issue and allotment of equity shares to the President of India acting on behalf of the Government of India on preferential basis, as contained in the Notice of Postal Ballot dated 22nd April, 2020 emailed to the Shareholders, the following further disclosures are hereby made for information of the shareholders in compliance with Chapter V of the SEBI ICDR Regulations, 2018:

- The issue price calculated in terms of the provisions of Regulation 164 of the SEBI ICDR Regulations, 2018 as on the Relevant Date of 24th April, 2020, is Rs. 11.43 per equity share (including premium of Rs. 1.43 per share) in respect of Preferential Issue of shares against capital contribution aggregating to Rs. 831 crore to Government of India, the promoters of the Bank.
- At the above issue price, Bank would be allotting up to 727034120 equity shares to the President of India acting on behalf of the Government of India against capital infusion of Rs. 831 crore.

The shareholding pattern of the Bank before and after the proposed Preferential Issue, would be as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Before the Issue		After the Issue	
		No. of Shares	Share-holding %	No. of Shares	Share-holding %
A.	Promoter	5386578326	92.49	6113612446	93.32
B.	Non-Promoter	437530974	7.51	437530974	6.68
Total		5824109300	100.00	6551143420	100.00

This notice is also available on Bank's website i.e. www.bankofmaharashtra.in and on the websites of the Stock Exchanges i.e. www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com

By order of the Board of Directors
For Bank of Maharashtra
Sd/-
Company Secretary

Date: 24/04/2020
Place: Pune