**JOURNALISM OF COURAGE** 

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### PUBLICTRANSPORT, DOMESTICHELPS,

liquor shops allowed in green, orange zones

#### PRIVATE OFFICES CAN FUNCTION WITH

33% strength in red zones; so can private vehicles

#### **CENTRE ALLOWS RLY TO RUN TRAINS**

to take stranded migrant workers home

# More green than red as lockdown extended

2 weeks more of curbs, says Centre, lets states reorder zones; 77 deaths on Friday in biggest single-day toll

**DEEPTIMANTIWARY** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

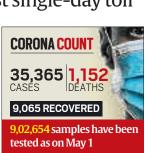
THE CENTRE on Friday extended the nationwide lockdown for the second time, for two weeks starting May 4, but announced considerable relaxations in green and orange zones, including movement of private and public transport within a state, and further opening up of the economy.

Some of the key relaxations in green and orange zones are: opening of markets (barring malls) and offices; operation of factories and industries: movement of public (with some restrictions); services of domestic helps, barber shops and all other selfemployed people; e-commerce delivery of non-essential items.

In red zones, barring containment areas, private offices can function with 33% strength, and standalone liquor shops will be allowed to open.

However, "movement of individuals for all non-essential activities shall remain strictly prohibited between 7 pm to 7 am" across all zones. The local authorities have been asked to issue orders under Section 144 of the CrPC to ensure this.

Besides, a "limited" number of activities will remain prohibited throughout the country, irrespective of the zone. These include travel by air, rail, Metro and inter-state movement by road; opening of schools, colleges, and educational



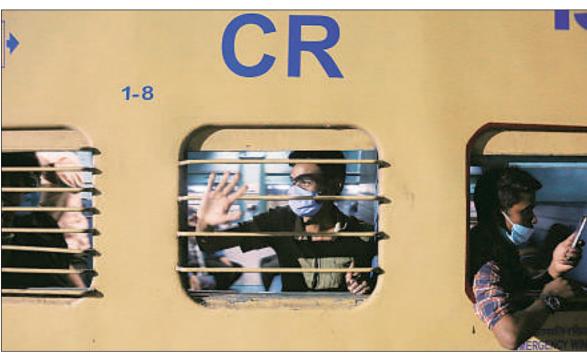
**FULL LIST OF WHAT'S** ALLOWED, WHAT'S **NOT IN THE ZONES** 

training/coaching institutions; hospitality services, including hotels and restaurants; places of large public gatherings, such as cinema halls, malls, gymnasiums, sports complexes etc; social, political, cultural and other kinds of gatherings; and, religious places/places of worship for public.

"However, movement of persons by air, rail and road is allowed for select purposes, and for purposes as permitted by MHA," the Ministry of Home Affairs said in a statement.

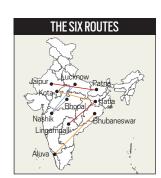
In green zones — districts which haven't reported a fresh case of COVID-19 in 21 days buses can ply with 50% seating capacity while private vehicle movement is allowed even for "non-essential" work. Social

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



A special train leaving Friday night from Nashik railway station with 332 migrant workers bound for Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. They were among the 1,900-odd stranded in relief camps across Nashik. Prashant Nadkar **REPORT PAGE 6** 





188 of the IPC, violations of any government guidelines in containment zones can attract penal provisions, going up to two years in prison. The guidelines for contain-

Firms told to

**DIPANKAR GHOSE** 

THE NEW guidelines issued by

the government on COVID-19

management make the down-

load of the Aarogya Setu app

must for all employees at a

workplace, whether public or

private. While thus far the use of

the app was "encouraged", now

onus has been put on the heads

of respective organisations to "ensure 100% coverage".

Management Act and Section

Under the

Disaster

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

ment zones, to come into force from May 4, also state that local authorities too must ensure 100% coverage of Aarogya Setu among the residents.

As per the new "national directives", "It shall be the responsibility of the head of the respective organizations to ensure 100 percent coverage of this app among employees.

Developed by the government, the app is meant to track **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

**EXPLAINED: FIGHTING VIRUS WITH PHONES** 

## Few in know before Govt clears 6 'Shramik Specials'

**AVISHEK G DASTIDAR** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

EVEN AS the nationwide lockdown was extended by another two weeks, the government allowed six special passenger trains to transport migrants, pilgrims, tourists and others stranded across the country to their home states Friday.

Named Shramik Special, the

six trains are from Lingampalli (Telangana) to Hatia (Jharkhand), Aluva (Kerala) to Bhubaneswar, Nashik to Lucknow, Nashik to Bhopal, Jaipur to Patna, and Kota to Hatia. With Railways in talks with other states, more trains are expected to run in the coming days to evacuate those stranded.

The decision to run the six trains - shrouded in secrecy till the first train departed at 5 am CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 Trains ahead of extension

WITH MAJOR urban centres still under considerable restrictions for an additional fortnight, the government would have found it difficult to contain migrant unrest. This could explain the change in plans to allow trains, the optimal means to transport large numbers.

## 'Officials told us at 11 pm, we packed clothes, rushed few clothes and rushed. We

**SREENIVAS JANYALA** & ABHISHEK ANGAD HYDERABAD, RANCHI, MAY 1

**VASUDEV SINGH was sleeping** when the announcement came. Officials came to the makeshift labour colony at Sangareddy, some 40 km from Hyderabad. around 11 pm Thursday and told them to pack their bags; they were going home. "We packed a

numbers, asked to show our Aadhaar cards, and then told to board buses. Around 2 am we left for the train station," says the 45-year-old construction worker from Garhwa in Jharkhand. Three hours later, Singh was

were screened, given token

among the 1,200 migrant labourers who left for Hatia, Jharkhand, from Lingampalli CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## India Inc says relaxed norms give them some relief but need more to open up

AASHISH AARYAN, PRANAV MUKUL & SANDEEP SINGH NEW DELHI, MAY 1

**THE WORLD** 

TRUMP HINTS AT

**TARIFF ON CHINA** 

**OVER CORONAVIRUS** 

**SOUTH AFRICA ENDS** 

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

FEAR, HOPE AND

**CENTRAL BANK** 

BY MANISH SABHARWAL

STRICT LOCKDOWN

PAGE 12

PAGE 8

IN ITS guidelines for the extended lockdown issued Friday, the panies to operate with up to 33% staff on their premises across all three zones, including in red zones outside containment areas, and

permitted cab aggregators and taxis in orange and green zones.

On paper, these moves are expected to trigger partial resumption of operations in the services sector. But, on the ground, a number of companies, especially those operating in red

These firms point to insufficient availability of commuting options and the risk of spread of the disease among employees as

**TABASSUM** 

**BARNAGARWALA** 

wears a deserted

look, with stray staff

attending to a few

patients in the OPD.

There isn't any

crowd either at the

681-bed

Rabindranath

& PRABHA RAGHAVAN

MUMBAI, NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE PREMISES of Southern

Kolkata's Remedy Hospital

Tagore International Institute of

patients visiting the hospital on a

"Compared with about 1,000

Cardiac Sciences (RTIICS).

Extra cost, empty OPDs:

Covid hits revenue model

Private &

**ISOLATED** 

AN EXPRESS SERIES

PART 3

reasons for economic activity continuing to stay on hold. The guidelines also prohibit movement of individuals for all non-essential activities between  $7\,\mathrm{pm}$  and  $7\,\mathrm{am}$ .

While allowing a section of the staff to work from offices could be a big relief for the serving firms in red zones said they were unlikely to implement the relaxations, terming them "too

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

regular basis only around 50 pa-

tients are coming now," said RTI-

ICS CEO R Venkatesh. Most private hospitals have witnessed a

huge drop in footfall of patients in

emergency as well as OPDs, and

almost all patients have resched-

From large hos-

pital chains to

smaller nursing

homes, the lock-

down and the Covid

pandemic have re-

shaped operations:

have

revenues

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

dipped by 70-80 per cent, oper-

ating costs have jumped with

hospitals required to provide

uled their elective surgeries.

## Badly hit to very good: how TN rode the crisis

**ARUN JANARDHANAN** CHENNAI, MAY 1

around mid-April, with the largest numbers Maharashtra and with 37 of its 38 districts reporting coronavirus. Tamil Nadu has since turned a corner. With a similar population as Gujarat, it has nearly half its cases and oneeighth its deaths. Just five-six districts are now reporting cases, while Coimbatore, which once had the most patients, has had

no fresh cases for about a week. What has helped the state keep the numbers relatively low (2,526 cases, 28 deaths, as of Friday evening), after a sudden surge, is its health network. Starting from welfare policies in the 1950s, and despite bitter transfers of power between parties, the state has in place a system of quality and affordable

healthcare. Of its 203 cases reported on Friday, 176 were from Chennai alone. The city also accounts for 16 of its total 28 deaths. On Thursday, a 27-year-old pregnant woman died in Chennai.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

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# Halted by sealed Delhi-Gurgaon border: Doctors, health staff, crucial surgeries

**ANCHOR** 

**SOMYA LAKHANI** & SHIVAM PATEL NEW DELHI, MAY 1

ON THURSDAY night, cancer surgeon Dr Mandeep Malhotra had to reschedule a surgery for a patient suffering from throat cancer after he realised he won't be able to make it to Fortis Hospital in Vasant Kunj from his Gurgaon residence the next morning.

Dr Tarig Matin, a Delhi-based neuro-interventionist. had to postpone a procedure too as he



A long queue of vehicles at the NH-8 border-crossing on Friday, first day of sealing. Abhinav Saha

couldn't make it to Narayana Superspeciality Hospital in

With the Delhi-Gurgaon border sealed starting Friday morning, healthcare workers who live in the two cities were among those who found themselves stranded. Apart from the long queues at border checkpoints,

healthcare workers said they had to deal with police personnel, who didn't let them pass despite their ID cards and explanations **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 

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#### A DOCTOR SUGGESTS WAYS TO TAKE CARE OF MENTAL HEALTH DURING LOCKDOWN

Mental health expert Dr Rachna Khanna Singh addressed queries and shared tips on how one can keep their mind calm during this lockdown

#### VIDEO OF THE DAY



**SPECIAL TRAIN FERRIES MIGRANTS** 

A one-off train ferried migrants from Hyderabad to Jharkhand

#### **MAY DAY**



**PROTESTS AMID THE** LOCKDOWN

**Civilians are protesting** over inequality, hunger and unemployment

# **EXPRESS** AUDIO

## How the coronavirus attacks the body

**NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY** 

Dr Swapneil Parikh explains how COVID-19 affects the body, how a person recovers from the virus and whether those with severe cases are going to face long-term problems.

## **FROM PAGE ONE**

### 'Shramik Specials'

on Friday from Limgampalli to Hatia carrying 1,200 migrant workers – came two days after the Centre allowed buses to evacuate stranded people.

Hours after the first train departed early Friday morning, the Home Ministry issued an addendum to its Wednesday order on buses to "include" trains. "Movement of migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and other persons... is also allowed by special trains...," the Home ministry order said.

The decision on the six trains set off requests for trains from including states. Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh.

For these six trains and for subsequent ones, ticket prices will be paid by the originating or destination states. Besides the sleeperclass ticket fare. Railways has charged Rs 30 as superfast charge and an additional Rs 20 per ticket.

Following a meeting between Railways and Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla Thursday, the transporter was given to understand that the government was going to allow migrants to leave by trains.

Following communication with Telangana Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, the Limgampalli-Hatia train was approved past 11 pm on Thursday. The 24-coach rake, which was sent for washing, sanitation and routine maintenance at 9 pm, rolled in past 2 am on Friday. The Railway ministry kept only a handful of officers in the loop. There was no indication then about the government running any other train.

The state government got the labourers in buses, which were kept waiting till the station authorities sent them a green signal. Passengers were then screened and given protective gear. Station staff and state government officials applauded as the train, with 54 passengers in each coach, pulled out of the station, Food and water were provided to the passengers, for which money was included in the ticket price.

Arun Kumar, DG, Railway Protection Force, said, "Our men escorted the train. We ensured social distancing inside and security of the train. It is a non-stop train.'

By Friday afternoon, the Home Ministry indicated that it was in the process of allowing trains to run from other areas.

While the Maharashtra government informed the Railways that it was willing to send out migrants bound for MP and UP, it said the special train can't originate from Mumbai or Pune as these are hotspots. With Nashik eventually chosen as the originating station, clearances were obtained from the state governments of MP and UP. As per the protocol finalised, the receiving states need to arrange for the medical screening of passengers

Passengers are screened at the source stations as well. On how the passengers are selected for travel, Railway sources said the matter was left to the states.

## 'At ll pm'

Railway Station in Hyderabad on board a special train — the first such to run since the start of the national lockdown on March 25. The 22-coach train was arranged by South Central Railways after Telangana government made a

request to the Railway Ministry. The workers who were sent back Thursday were employed at a construction site for IIT Hyderabad Phase 2 buildings, work on which is at a halt. Many of the labourers said they hadn't

been paid their dues. "We have been living crammed in shanties at the camp, surviving on bare minimum food and bad facilities. I hope to finally see my family," said an emotional Sanjiv Kumar, from Kurgi in

However, while Kumar hoped this would happen as early as Saturday morning, the Jharkhand government will screen them and may keep them in quarantine.

The decision to send labourers home followed two incidents of violence at Sangareddy between the men seeking wages and their supervisors. They also clashed with police. Later, the workers petitioned Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, who placed a request with the Centre to get the workers back.

Jharkhand Principal Secretary Amrendra Pratap Singh said the state was informed on Thursday night, and Telangana decided the passenger list.

Secretary Rahul Sharma, coordinating with officials in Telangana, said, "We had sent them a list of 16,000 people stranded in the state. Initially the Centre said people would be moved by road, but yesterday evening we were informed they were sending a special train."

Ranchi Deputy Commissioner Rai Mahimat Ray said, "Upon arrival in Hatia, each migrant worker will be welcomed with a mask and a flower and thermal screening conducted. Sixty sanitised buses have been prepared for their onward movement." Ray said they would put the passengers in home or institutional quarantine after medical screening.

A South Central Railway official said labourers were screened for symptoms before being allowed on the train. "To ensure social distancing, we removed the middle berth so that instead of 72 passengers per coach there were only 54. It is a non-stop train so Telangana arranged food and water.'

Sangareddy Divisional Revenue Officer M Nagesh said they had ensured an adequate number of food packets, including breakfast, lunch and dinner. "They were given eight bottles of water per head and we coun $selled\,them\,on\,the\,precautions\,to$ take." Nagesh said.

A Telangana official said they would make arrangements for the remaining labourers in the state too in the coming days, though this may take time now with the extension of the lockdown. About a thousand workers from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal continue to be stuck at the Sangareddy construction site.

Speaking about last week's incident, Sangareddy Chandrashekar Reddy said, "The workers said they had not been paid since February and complained of lack of proper food and accommodation." District Collector M Hanumanth Rao said he had issued a notice to the construction firm employing them to pay their wages.

Rajesh Singh, 38, from Ranchi was among the lucky ones. Going home with Rs 19,000, his dues since January, he said, "I don't know when I will return but till then this money will be useful."

Among those who said he was owed money was Khusbir Singh, a labour contractor, "The company has to give me around Rs 3 lakh. It paid only a portion of it."

Hamid Raja, returning home with Rs 400, said his family in Garhwa started crying when they heard the news. "After a month of uncertainty, this feels like heaven."

At 11.15 pm Friday, the train arrived at Hatia. Waiting for the labourers were welcome hoardings, roses, food, masks, doctors ready to screen them, 200 policemen on the ground and drones in the sky, plus buses labelled

## Samman Rath (Dignity Chariots).

India Inc refrain risky to expand any further beyond the current manner of operation". "It is a very tough call and I don't think I am going to take the risk. The virus is very contagious. and even if one employee catches it, the cascading impact is prohibitive," said the CEO of a leading fi-

nancial services firm. He said that in the services in-

## Two more weeks of lockdown, with relaxations

distancing, sanitisation and hy-

giene have to be maintained. For the first time, the sale of liquor, paan and gutkha, strictly prohibited in earlier lockdown orders, is allowed. However, MHA sources said only standalone liquor stores will be allowed in red zones.

While the restrictions will not be eased in containment areas, private vehicles will be allowed in red zones with two passengers besides the driver (earlier it was just one passenger in all zones) and motorcycles with just the rider. Cycle/auto rickshaws, taxis/cab aggregators, buses, barber shops, spas and salons still remain prohibited in red zones. As far as economic and industrial activity in red zones is concerned, the previous guidelines will remain in force. The only change is that private offices will be allowed to open with 33% staff strength, and all shops in rural areas, without any distinction of essential and non-essential items, will be allowed to operate.

While buses will not be allowed to ply in orange zones,

taxis and cab aggregators will be permitted with one driver and one passenger. All other activities, including opening of markets, liquor stores and barber shops, have been allowed.

"In the orange zones, in addition to activities permitted in red zones, taxis and cab aggregators will be permitted with one driver and one passenger. Inter-district movement of individuals and vehicles will be allowed for permitted activities only. Four-wheeler vehicles will have maximum two passengers besides the driver and pillion riding will be allowed on two-wheeler," said an MHA statement. In green zones, life is expected to return to near normalcy, with all activities, barring those prohibited across the country, to be allowed. These include plying of buses and operation of bus depots with 50% capacity.

"All other activities will be permitted activities, which are not specifically prohibited/permitted with restriction in various zones, under these guidelines," the MHA notification said. It, however, clarified that states can impose more restrictions if

Liquor shops are now al-

they deem it necessary. Pregnant women, those above 65 years of age, and children below 10 years have been asked to stay home.

States have also been asked to follow all SOPs issued by MHA with regard to transit of migrant labour, students and pilgrims and transit of foreigners. The announcement came on a day when 77 deaths were reported across the country in the last 24 hours — highest single-day toll so far. With 1,755 new cases in the last 24 hours, the tally is now 35,365 cases (9,064 recovered) and 1,152 deaths. In a communication to states Thursday, Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan had listed 130 districts in the red zone, 284 in orange zone, and 319 in green zone. The list is revised weekly.

While 17% of India's total districts are in the red zone, they account for about 33% of the population (2011 Census). On the other hand, 44% districts are in the green zone, but account for only about a quarter of the population. The 39% districts in the orange zone account for about 43% of the population. The Centre has allowed

states to restructure red and orange zones, according to distribution of cases within a zone. The MHA guidelines say that in case a district has been declared a red zone, but barring its municipal areas, the rest of the district has not seen any case in the last 21 days, the state may declare areas outside the municipal limits as orange. Similarly, orange zone districts could classify such areas as green. The decision, sources said

has been taken as many districts have been declared red or orange because their municipalities, with higher density of population, have reported high number of cases whereas the rest of the district has remained largely unaffected. "This kind of classification will open more areas in an affected district for economic activity," a Home Ministry official said. The 21-day lockdown, which began on March 25, was extended by another 19 days on April 14. With the second extension, the lockdown

# Firms told to ensure 100% staff has Aarogya Setu

COVID-19 cases, and inform a user if a positive case is around them. The new directives also underline that companies must avoid large meetings, put up a list of local hospitals and clinics authorised to treat COVID-19, and ensure employees showing symptoms are immediately sent for check-up. A quarantine facility to isolate employees showing symptoms till they are safely moved to medical facilities should also be earmarked, the directives state.

dustry, people are critical and his

firm would not take any chances.

"There is no back-up for a critical

individual and while companies

will have to take the call, we

would like to continue in the way

down period... will allow a cali-

brated opening of the economic

activities," said Sangita Reddy,

President, FICCI, adding, "Though

relaxations have been made... sig-

nificant part of the economic ac-

tivity will still remain in abeyance."

ceutical company in Mumbai's

Lower Parel said employees

would continue to work from

home, since travel "would be an

them to come to office just be-

cause we have been allowed to

have 33% employees at work. We

moved most of the work online

anyway during the past 40 days.

It is better to wait it out," the ex-

ing consumer goods companies

said they would prepare rosters

and see if people, other than those

already coming in, were needed

in office. "We had no idea of this

lockdown being extended, so a

couple of days ago, our HR depart-

ment sent out mails to vertical

heads, asking them to mention if

they needed more people com-

ing to the office after May 4, Now

I think that becomes irrelevant,"

a senior executive at an FMCG

business-to-business space said

However, companies in the

Officials at leading fast mov-

ecutive said.

"It would be unfair to expect

issue" without local trains.

An executive from a pharma-

"The extension of the lock-

we are operating right now."

lowed, and regarding these as well as outlets selling paan, gutkha and tobacco, the directives say all must ensure "minimum six feet distance (2 gaz ki doori), from each other and also must not have more than 50

ensure not more than 5 persons are present at one time". Spitting in public is punishable The directives also underline that marriage functions

be attended by more than 20. "No organization/manager of a public place shall allow a gathering of five or more per-

from before, such as compulsory face masks at public places and workplaces. Guidelines also say social distancing must be enforced at workplaces and in company transport, suggesting staggered shifts and lunch breaks.

"Provision for thermal

tizer preferably through touchfree mechanism will be made at all entry and exit points and common areas." the directives say, also calling for frequent santisation of work areas.

scanning, handwash and sani-

The directives add that organisations can ask all persons above 65 years of age, those with co-morbidities, pregnant women and children below the age of 10 to work from home unless they are employed in essential services.

#### sons," the guidelines say. Some elements continue

hospital due to the cost of protective gear and tests we perform to ensure our healthcare workers are not infected. We also have to exercise caution in operating other facilities (25 per cent cost-

not get infected." he said. Testing costs. Take for example, South Mumbai's Bhatia Hospital where 51 staffers tested positive. It spent Rs 32 lakh to test over 700 staffers. "And these tests will be routinely done again and again," said RB Dastur, medical di-

lier now) so that patients with

other critical conditions, and doc-

tors and nurses treating them, do

rector of the hospital. Then there are safeguards. "Our hospital requires 300 PPEs daily for its staff and we spend Rs 2.4 lakh a day on this," said an administrator at Breach Candy Hospital in South Mumbai. "Our hospital's income comes mostly from cardiac and stroke patients. But those cases have disappeared, we don't know why. There may be salary cuts in other industries. But in private hospitals, we are paying over 20 per cent incentives to staffers who agree to work," the administrator said.

Some can take these extra costs, others, including several neighbourhood nursing homes, have locked themselves down.

In Ruby Hospital in the city's suburbs, staff attendance dropped by 40 per cent as soon as the first Covid cases trickled in. "We can't afford PPE daily for every staffer. Some demanded a raise. With no patients, it is difficult to handle the increased cost," a paediatrician from the nursing home said.

The Breach Candy administrator said a hospital makes profits only if occupancy rates are 80-85 gan, bed occupancy is hardly 30 per cent," he said.

vate hospitals are likely to drop to Rs 18,000 crore from Rs 59,000 crore (pre-Covid) and losses at

around Rs 22,000 crore, said Dr Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Enterprises, and President. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

"The pain that the private sector is facing is the complete lack of revenue right now," she told The Indian Express. "The ability to say that we can provide free treatment for Covid-19 is not (possible)... other nursing homes and smaller hospitals are in a very bad scenario too. Most of them are losing money and don't know how

to pay salaries," Dr Reddy said. Said Dr Naresh Trehan, Chairman and Managing Director, Medanta - The Medicity: "Healthcare facilities are already cruising close to the ground in terms of revenues and profits. Now, the outbreak and lockdown has resulted in drop in revenue. There is a huge gap in our ability to pay our costs. We don't want to get rid of our staff and we want to keep operations intact. The industry may have to borrow up to Rs 10,000 crore to keep alive," he said.

Unlike other industrial sectors, where the lockdown means units are shut down and staff stavs home, said Reddy of Apollo Hospitals, hospitals don't have that elbow room.

"For (sectors like) aviation, you know they are shut down. They are closed, they are at home and it's done till they reopen. For healthcare, not only do you have no patients, but you have to be open for the 10 per cent or 20 per cent who will come because they need you. On top of it, you have to also treat this unknown, critical and difficult to handle third type of environment (the outbreak)... and handle your staff's insecurities," she said.

Trehan said there was a need for the government to support the working capital requirement at a lower interest rate. "We're not asking for grants, because we know that the government is already under pressure," he said. "Now that special COVID-19

hospitals have been created, there are no more Covid patients in hospitals like Medanta, so those who are non-Covid can come for their treatment without fear. Once that happens, the financial situation will improve," he said.

Ficci has, meanwhile, sought exemptions and waivers on indirect taxes, income tax benefits, deferment of statutory liability payments, and liquidity support.

But some public health experts suggest that the industry always exaggerates its burden. A few hospital bills accessed by The Indian Express show that patients have been billed in the thousands for PPE used by hospital staff.

In one instance, a Covid patient, who is admitted in a large private hospital for over 10 days now, was billed over Rs 8 lakh for treatment, with PPE costs running up to nearly Rs 50,000. The hospital is not being named since the patient remains admitted and the family shared the bills on condition of anonymity.

Dr Shaktivel Selvaraj, Director, Health Economics, Financing and Policy, at the Public Health Foundation of India, estimates the average cost of treatment of a Covid patient admitted to the ICU for 10 days and on ventilator support at a hospital in the charitable sector at Rs 2.5-3 lakh, just a third of Rs 8 lakh the patient has been billed so far.

Hospitals prefer brands that provide them higher commissions leading to higher costs for patients. "This holds good even during a pandemic," said Malini Aisola representing All India Drug Action Network (AIDAN), a patient activist group. "We have observed that costs of repeated Covid testing, PPE etc are all offloaded to the patient."

(With reporting by Sar in Patna and Atri Mitra in Kolkata)

### Tamil Nadu

The inter-ministerial team sent by the Centre that visited Tamil Nadu said Thursday that its recovery rate was "very good", with 54% of patients. Its case fatality rate, of 1.2%, is also less than half the country's (around 3%).

The state has 25 government medical colleges with another 11 being built in districts.

Like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, which has a huge diaspora in Southeast Asia, was among the first to start screening passengers at airports, in January last week.

Tamil Nadu got its first COVID-19 case on March 7, an engineer who had returned from Oman Its second case, on March 18, was of a migrant worker who had arrived from Uttar Pradesh, with the possibility of tracing the source of his infection, including on a train ride, a logistical nightmare. But what really set off the scare in the state and set its numbers zooming were the returning members of the Tablighi Jamaat congregation from Delhi. At one time. 90% of its cases had links to the Tablighi Jamaat. That proportion has fallen to 60% now with a vegetable market at Koyambedu, Chennai, emerging as a new cluster.

State Health Secretary Beela Rajesh said it was surveillance and continuous monitoring that helped them limit the numbers. "We have many people in public health and all of them worked together." she said.

A senior police officer said, "When we realised that over a thousand people had attended the Jamaat meeting in Delhi, Call Detail Records were reviewed and details shared across district officials. In two or three days, we had traced all of them."

"As some people were trying to use the Tablighi link for communal purposes, we did not share contact-tracing details on social media. We called each of them individually," he said.

A senior state secretary said another step that helped was ensuring that there was no mass exodus of migrant workers. Tamil Nadu is currently run-

ning 576 community kitchens for 1.18 lakh people. Its 245 Amma Canteens record an average footfall of 3.12 lakh people daily. Dr Amalorpavanathan Joseph,

the man behind Tamil Nadu's organ donation system, also lauded the state's public health system. However, he said, "confusing adhoc measures" over lockdown could have been avoided. "Complaints from frontline workers about poor facilities and safety measures could have also been addressed," Joseph said.

With 109 cases still a worry, as their source of infection has not been traced, Health Secretary Rajesh said they were focusing on SARI and ILI now. "We have been watching such cases since March. We have been testing all of them," she said.

#### Sealed border

regarding their work.

The Gurgaon authorities have directed that those working there and living in Delhi and vice-versa should make living arrangements at or near their workplaces to avoid cross-border movement.

Malhotra told The Indian

Express, "I can delay the surgery a

day or two, maybe even a week, but beyond that all our work will be undone." He said the hospital has given

them accommodation to stay back in Delhi, but he cannot as his aged grandmother and two young children stay with him.

Malhotra said even patients are in trouble as many cross the border for treatment. "I have a Gurgaon-based patient who got operated on for breast cancer. Now she needs post-surgery radiation. I asked her to get it done at a hospital in Gurgaon, but it turns out that a lot of its staffers live in Delhi, so her post-surgery radiation has not been scheduled."

Agarwal (58), senior consultant. anesthesia, at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, left his Gurgaon residence for work and reached in no time. On his way back in the afternoon though, he found himself pleading with police, "I work in a COVID hospital, I showed the police personnel my ID card, a letter from the hospital, but they just didn't listen. I told them I am tired, ageing and that they should let me go. I left the hospital at 1.30 pm and finally reached home at 4.45 pm," said Agarwal.

At 7.30 am Friday, Dr R K

Matin, the neuro-interventionist, said 40% of Narayana hospital's healthcare staff live in Delhi, and could not come to work Friday.

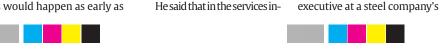
Gurgaon-based Dr Anurag Gupta, a neurosurgeon at Fortis Vasant Kunj, said: "NCR has always been one unit... I am the only neurosurgeon at the hospital. I have asked a Fortis Gurgaon neurosurgeon who lives in Delhi to cover for me. My wife works at Fortis Gurgaon and several heads of department and the director have been unable to come because they live in Delhi."

G K Khurana, secretary general of the All India Government Nurses Federation, said: 'Authorities should either allow movement or make arrangements for healthcare workers to stay near their places of work."

Dr Ritu Garg, zonal director of Fortis Memorial Research Institute in Gurgaon, said while restricting movement across the border may help reduce transmission, "we also need to ensure medical assistance to patients on chemotherapy and other emergencies".

A spokesperson for Max Healthcare said nearly 40% of their clinical, para-clinical and support staff travel between Delhi, Gurgaon and Faridabad. "Sealing at borders is forcing us to operate with limited manpower... Despite ID cards and passes issued by Delhi for healthcare workers, they are being stopped," the spokesperson said.

**FULL REPORTS ON** www.indianexpress.com



that even if there is a limit of 33%, most departments would want that strength to be present.

company said.

"In the B2B space, it is always a situation of all hands on deck. But here, the question of which employee lives where comes into play. Our focus and priority will be locally situated employees

who can come to office easily," an

people, while last rites cannot

corporate office said. An executive at a top fashion and lifestyle brand pointed out that while most of the company's largest market segments have been classified as red zones, there was a concern of customers not turning up even within green and

orange zones. In addition to this, e-commerce firms, which have been allowed to sell beyond the essential items in orange and green zones, may also witness hurdles. A majority of the largest fulfilment centres and shipment hubs that service large regions of the country are

situated in red zones. "We urge the government to consider the positive role e-commerce can play to get customers the priority products they need in red zones as well," said an

Amazon India spokesperson. Two senior executives with leading private sector banks said that while their branches are under essential services and are operating with around 30% of the strength currently, the banks are in

#### "no hurry" to call people to work. **Empty OPDs**

staffers financial incentives, personal protective equipment (PPE), transport service, and even accommodation.

At Hinduja Hospital in Khar, Mumbai, elective surgeries generated 80 per cent revenues, said its Medical Director, Dr Avinash Supe. "The occupancy is only 20 per cent since elective surgeries like cosmetic procedures, joint replacement, have completely stopped. We are treating only cancer and fracture cases. OPD has come down too," he said.

For the hospital, PPE, transport and accommodation, on the other hand, have added 10 per cent to the cost, he said. Operating a Covid facility is

much more expensive, said

Abhay Soi, Chairman, Max

Healthcare, and CMD, Radiant Life

Care. "It is thrice that at a regular

per cent. "Since the pandemic be-At 20 per cent occupancy levels, revenues per quarter of pri-

# THE OUTBREAK THE CITY

# As lockdown is extended, city cases still high: 223 on Friday

Govt issues order asking how healthcare workers got infected, suspends it later

**ASTHA SAXENA** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE NATIONAL capital reported 223 coronavirus cases on Friday, taking the tally to 3,738. The toll stood at 61, including two deaths being reported Friday.

Meanwhile, hours after the Delhi government asked heads of medical institutions to seek an explanation on how healthcare workers got infected with coronavirus, it suspended the order.

The order, issued by Delhi Health Secretary Padmini Singhla on Friday, had asked medical directors to obtain a written explanation from all staff members who have been infected "as how these persons got infected or become a contact in spite of wearing required protective gears, maintaining safe distance and following precautions prescribed for health care workers". The order was suspended soon afterwards - amid criticism.



New Delhi: Three Delhi Police constables posted with the Metro unit were suspended after they allegedly lied that they came in contact with an officer who tested positive for COVID-19, officers said Friday.

Police said that the men were posted at Shastri Park Metro station and had claimed that they came in contact with a Sub-Inspector, who tested positive on April 28, at the station.

They said that they performed duty with the sub-inspector, and as a result, should be quarantined. We sent them for medical examination, following which they were sent back to their own homes. Later when we checked, we found out that they were not on duty with the SI. They lied to skip duty," said DCF (Metro) Harendra Kumar Singh.

Meanwhile, a senior police officer said that "three other police constables, who actually worked with the infected SI, have been tested and are in quarantine." ENS

**BRIEFLY** —

**NE Delhi riots:** 

Chargesheet

against three

New Delhi: Delhi Police

has filed a chargesheet

against Shahrukh Pathan,

who allegedly shot at a policeman, and two oth-

ers for their role in the

Northeast Delhi riots.

Sharjeel cases

New Delhi: Supreme

Court Friday sought Delhi

Police reply to a plea by

INU student and activist

Sharjeel Imam seeking

clubbing of all FIRs regis-

tered against him. **ENS** 

Plea: Club



Over 300 health workers have tested positive in Delhi.

There are 38 Delhi government hospitals, and two — Lok Nayak and Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality — have been authorised to treat COVID-19 patients. The order had also directed non-COVID hospitals to constitute a team of doctors to assess how the person tested positive.

"It is reported that many doctors, nurses, paramedics and other staff in non-COVID hospitals are ei-

ther getting infected or reported as contact to infected person, and medical directors of respective hospitals are indiscriminately sending them in quarantine either at hotels or their homes for 14 days. This practice is causing unnecessary shortage of doctors and staff at the hospitals. It seems it is happening because either hospitals are not following standard SOPs or such persons are not following guidelines prescribed for health-

Over the past few days, several healthcare workers employed in the non-COVID hospitals have tested positive for coronavirus. These include Babu Jagjivan Ram, Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Delhi State Cancer Institute, Deen Dayal Upadhaya and GB Pant.

care workers," stated the order.

As private hospitals, nursing homes and clinics are running on a restricted basis, the patient load is largely being managed by the doctors at the government sector. Resident doctors across the city have been highlighting

the substandard PPEs. Even on Friday, an official from the health department rejected 41 PPEs as they did not meet standards.

"The government should stop blaming the healthcare worker for the poor quality of PPEs. Every hospital should be asked to provide details of PPE utilisation per healthcare worker. It will be clear who is at fault. The poor planning and execution has resulted in spread of infection to healthcare workers,' Dr Srinivas Rajkumar T, general secretary, RDA, AIIMS, said. Dr Anant Bhan, a researcher in

global health, bioethics and health policy, said: "They are indirectly assuming that healthcare workers would willingly want to contract the transmission by not wearing PPEs... If you are a health worker and are found to be infected, before you worry about your health or that of your patients and loved ones, you need to worry about providing a written explanation of how you got infected?

## 'Wanted to get students back sooner but hands were tied'

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE DELHI government has sent 40 buses to bring back students of the city stranded in Rajasthan's Kota, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced Fridav.

The students are likely to return by Saturday and will have to self-isolate themselves for two weeks, said the Arrangements for sending migrant workers back to their states are being worked out, he added.

"We were receiving calls from stranded students, but our hands were tied as we did not want to act without the Centre's approval. The Centre has now granted clearance. So. 40 buses have left for Kota from Delhi today. We are hoping the students will return by tomorrow," said Kejriwal.

Around 700-800 students from Delhi are at Kota, a coaching hub which attracts engineering and medical aspirants from

across the country. Ministry of Home Affairs had di-



Kejriwal addresses the press meet Friday

rected the states and Union Territories to develop protocols for sending and receiving stranded migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students, and others.

Kejriwal said Delhi was in touch with other states in working out the modalities of sending workers back: "We will share... our final plan once it is ready."

The Delhi government is treading cautiously, with the city having witnessed chaos in the last week of March when thousands of migrant workers had gathered at bus terminals bordering Uttar On Wednesday, the Union Pradesh, demanding arrange-

During the webcast, the CM said since Delhi was conducting a "lot of tests", nearly 2,300 per million population, there was also

"The national average of tests per million is around 500. That is why it appears that cases are rising in Delhi. But on the brighter side, around 1,100 patients have recovered. There have been 59 deaths, less when compared with many other states," Kejriwal said.

an uptick in the number of cases.

He also said that initial trends of plasma therapy have been good: "The first patient from Lok Nayak Hospital under plasma therapy has recovered. There was some confusion over a statement from the Centre.... The Centre had merely stated that only those with approvals should undertake this treatment on a trial mode."

Meanwhile, this month, PDS beneficiaries in the city will get 10 kg ration each. The Centre had in March announced that under the Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Yojana, every PDS beneficiary will have their monthly allotment doubled from 5 kg to 10 kg - free of cost — for three months.

## All districts 'red', Delhi may ask Centre for ward-wise division

**SOURAV ROY BARMAN** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE IMPLEMENTATION of the latest MHA guidelines will allow resumption of certain activities in Delhi, including opening private offices, delivery of public services such as issuance of birth, caste, income certificates, among others.

However, with all 11 districts of Delhi classified as red zones, public transport, including buses, Metro, cabs, autos and e-rickshaws will be under complete lockdown at least until May 17. Every district in Delhi has con-

tainment zones, with most having active cases. So far, four zones have been de-sealed, including three in East Delhi, while 97 remain sealed.

At 20, the maximum number of containment zones are in the Southeast district. The Northwest. with three, has the least.

"The MHA circular, however, does not allow district specificclassifications in case of Delhi, all of which comes under municipal areas. Only in case of other states, district-wise assessments on municipal and non-municipal areas is allowed. In Delhi's case, a municipal ward-wise classification will have to be made. The government is likely approach the Centre with a proposal in this regard," a Delhi government official pointed out.

Excise department officials also said liquor shops are unlikely to open unless such wardwise classifications are made as all liquor shops in Delhi are in shopping complexes, commercial areas or malls.

Among the six Uttar Pradesh and Haryana districts bordering Delhi, Noida, Faridabad and Sonepat and red zones, while Gurgaon, Ghaziabad and Jhajjar are orange.

Apart from public transport, barber shops, spas and salons will remain shut in the national capital. The MHA has also allowed industrial activities to resume in designated areas, but whether or not that will be enforced in Delhi will be clear only after Chief Secretary Vijay Dev issues the state-specific order on relaxations. Delhi can allow resumption of construction activities in sites where workers are already present.

# 7 Kashmiris returning home stranded once again — now at Jammu border

**JIGNASA SINHA** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

WHEN SEVEN Kashmiri women boarded a bus from Delhi Thursday to return to their families, they heaved a sigh of relief because home wasn't too far anymore.

Little did they know that this joy will be short-lived as they were stopped at the Lakhanpur border in Jammu by the Jammu & Kashmir police on Friday

Till late Friday night, the women – who were preparing for competitive exams, and stayed

at a paying guest accommodation in South Delhi's Hauz Khas were stranded outside a police station, with nowhere to go.

"The driver too has left. We are on the road. My parents are more worried for us, and we only have food to last us till tonight,' said Asmat Rashid (24).

It all started six days ago when the women made a video urging Kashmir authorities to evacuate them from their PG. "It was difficult for us to live in Delhi as our hostel owner was harassing us over rent money, and there was hardly any food. We were happy when many people responded to the video

and Altaf Bukhari called us," said

Bukhari, former MLA and founder of Jammu & Kashmir Apni Party, arranged for a private bus for the women and helped them get a pass from the police.

"I was only trying to help the women... The police gave us a pass, and I booked a bus, and we got a permit. I was told that the women will be shifted to another bus in Lakhanpur. I didn't think they would be left on the streets. I am trying to help," he said.

The women, however, feel cheated, and one of them, Ulfat Altaf, said, "Why did they arrange for a bus which could only drop us to Lakhanpur? At least we were in our rooms in Delhi. This is the worst. We packed some food last night; we are surviving on that. Where will we spend the night?'

Rohit Kansal, principal secretary of J&K government, said, "We have passed on this information to the Lakhanpur Control Room. The women will be taken care of as per protocol."

SSP of Kathua Shailendra Mishra said, "People who took permission from Resident Commissioner in their states were allowed to enter Kashmir We have had over 1,500 people

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# May day signal from city's workers: Lockdown has sent us back many years

**ANAND MOHAN J** NEW DELHI MAY 1

A 200-sq-ft room with an injection moulding machine, a gas cylinder and a bed. This is Hari Narayan's toy-making unit and home, which he shares with his wife and four children at Jhilmil Industrial Area.

On May Day, he was supposed to celebrate the one-year anniversary of opening his own toy-making unit — a significant stride which took Narayan 20 years. To get here, he worked in many factories before accruing the technical know-how, an investment of Rs 3 lakh and, above all, the courage to open his own unit.

His daughter is in the finalyear of a computer science course from a private college, and the other three children are studying in private schools. But the lockdown has undone two decades of progress. "I took a loan to pay for my daughter's education. She is the first woman in my family to attend college. I fear now she will end up making toys like me for a living," Narayan said.

The Jhilmil Industrial Area is a hub of engineering goods, plastic items, wires and other units churning out household appliances. There are over 600 units employing at least 7-8 skilled workers each. Most are machine operators who took two years to learn their trade and have, over the years, made enough to be able to afford college education for their children, buy a TV, and stay in two-room-set flats in the area.

The factory owners will find it difficult to operate even during a partial lockdown since most of the units are interdependent, said Jatinder Singh, secretary of Jhilmil Industrial Area Association (Block-A). "There are electricity



A worker at the Jhilmil Industrial Area, Friday. Amit Mehra

bills and machine upkeep costs to pay. We have no idea how the workers will be paid. So far they have been given ration to survive. The government has to think about how to revive the industry. In this lockdown, if a unit makes household cables, then it can't sell unless construction work is allowed. Everything is connected."

Most labourers work 12-hour shifts, earning Rs 15.000-20.000 With the pandemic wiping out their savings, some feel ashamed standing in food lines and sad when their children offer to help.

Manoj Kumar (25), who makes oxygen tank readers, was 15 when he first began work at a salary of Rs 1,200. He now earns Rs 12,000, and has been teaching a new employee, Rupesh. Both of them have been staying inside their factory unit since the lockdown. Manoj said, "I have three children, and all of them go to a government school, I had ensured they all get private tuitions, but I can't afford to pay anymore. How will they progress in life?"

Rakesh Kumar (33), who makes pressure cooker parts and earns Rs 12,000 per month, brims with joy when he mentions his daughter is a final-year BA student from Delhi University. He started with a salary of Rs 3,500 when he began working here eight years ago. Since the lockdown, his employer paid him his salary and Rs 5,000 every two weeks for ration. "My employer is a very kind man. He also supported my daughter's education. just hope she gets a job now."

May Day is a grim reminder for Ram Babu (33), who lost his job at a plastic manufacturing unit years ago for asking a leave on this day. He currently works as a foreman for Rs 17,000 a month, while his wife and three children are in Allahabad. He has Rs 2,500 left and fears standing in a line: "I am not poor. I make enough to put my eldest son in a private school. It is a shame he will have go to a government school when all this is over.' Kaliram (70) makes tea ket-

tles for a living. His two sons, who work in a private company in UP, lost their jobs recently. "For 50 years I made kettles only so that my family can survive. They will not find a job for months now. Kaafi saal piche chale gaye,"

## Former HC judge to assess riots damage

**PRITAM PALSINGH** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE DELHI High Court appointed a retired judge, Justice Sunil Gaur, as Claims Commissioner to estimate and investigate liability of public and private property damaged during the Northeast Delhi riots. Based on the court's decision, the Delhi government has issued formal order for his appointment.

The High Court appointed the Claims Commissioner, in pursuance to the Delhi government's March 9 letter seeking its intervention with reference to a Supreme Court judgment, which held that damage to public and private property must be recovred from perpetrators.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Delhi High Court Registrar General Manoj Jain said Chief Justice DNP atel has been pleased to appoint "Justice Sunil Gaur (Retd) as Claims Commissioner in terms of the law laid down by the Supreme Court..."

Jain further said that on March 18, they informed the Delhi government's Special Secretary (Home) of the decision.

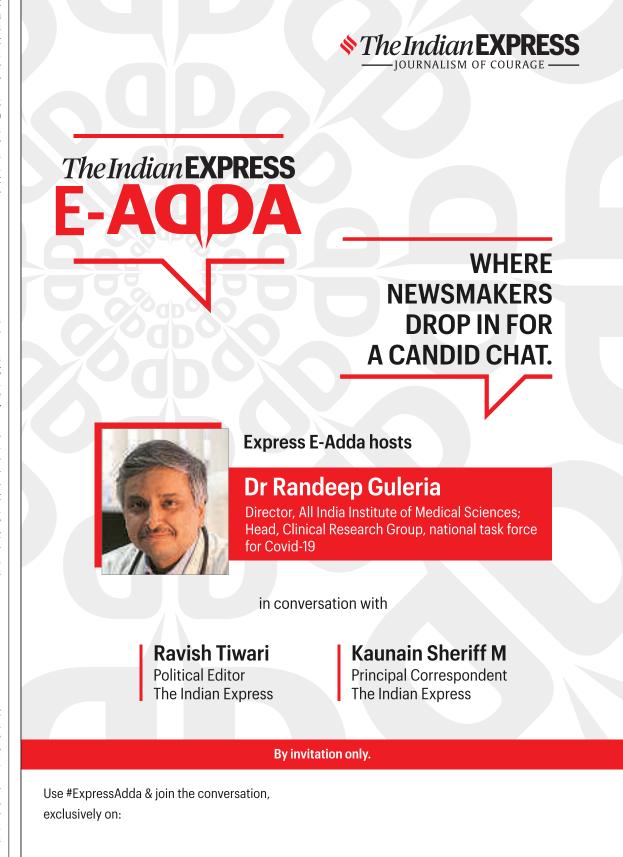
The riots in February resulted in the deaths of over 50 people, injuries to hundreds of persons and loss to government and private properties. As per court records, about 750 cases were registered.

As per the letter written by the Delhi government, "during these anti-CAA/NRC protests, there has been massive and extensive damage of public and private property including public transportation, causing huge losses to government excheq-

The Claims Commissioner will make a report to the High Court or Supreme Court, which will determine the liability after hearing the parties.

3 zoom

Join us on



# THE OUTBREAK THE CITY



Vehicles queue up at the Delhi-Gurgaon border on NH-8, Friday. Among the few exempted from restrictions are vehicles transporting essential items, ambulances, ATM cash vans, and those with passes issued by the Centre or Haryana government. Abhinav Saha

#### COP, MCD WORKER STOPPED: 'HAVE DIABETES, NEED TO GET HOME'

# Gurgaon seals out essential Delhi

**SAKSHI DAYAL** GURGAON, MAY 1

ON FRIDAY, assistant sub-inspector Sunil Dutt, deployed at Delhi's Vasant Kunj police station, found himself stuck at the Delhi-Gurgaon border, unable to return home. Dressed in his uniform, he appealed to his Gurgaon counterparts at the checkpoint to let him pass. "I am an insulin patient and need injections, which I get from my son. My family is in Gurgaon and I have taken leave to go home because I am not well, but the personnel here are not letting me pass," he said, standing in the sweltering heat, looking for personnel he could approach to let him through.

Dutt was among hundreds of people who had a hard time at the border, with the Gurgaon administration practically closing its doors at 10 am to everyone coming in from Delhi — MCD workers, police personnel, bank employees, hospital staff, supermarket employees. While many were caught unawares, others said they were under the impression that 'essential services' would not be hit.

Additional restrictions have been imposed across all borders of Gurgaon following directions from the District Magistrate, wherein he stated that it had become "imperative" to take additional measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus. In the order, he directed that those working in Gurgaon but living in Delhi and vice-versa would have to make living arrangements at or near their workplace to avoid cross-border movement.

Gurgaon now has the highest COVID-19 cases among the districts in Haryana, with six more people testing positive Friday. It has recorded 63 cases and 38 recoveries.

d 38 recoveries.

Among the very few ex-

## WHO IS ALLOWED — AND WHO ISN'T



■ Police personnel ■ Bank employees

■ Doctors and other medical professionals ■ Media personnel

■ Employees of any private companies or factories travelling across border for work

ALL THOSE
TRAVELLING ACROSS
GURGAON BORDERS
FOR WORK DIRECTED
TO MAKE LIVING
ARRANGEMENTS AT
THEIR WORKPLACES



The orders came into effect at 10 am on Friday. Abhinav Saha



#### EXEMPTED

■Those issued restricted movement pass by authorised officers of the Government of India or Haryana government

■ Vehicles transporting essential items such as vegetables, medicines, fodder for animals, and PPEs, but only if they have just one driver and one helper or security guard
■ Ambulances, ATM cash vans, LPG and oil containers and tankers

### DIRECTIONS FOR THOSE ALLOWED ENTRY

■ Install and use Aarogya Setu application

■Undergo thermal scanning and symptomatic screening at border check posts when entering

■ Undergo rapid testing facility if found to be symptomatic during entry to Gurgaon

### EXECUTION ON GROUND

30

**Duty Magistrates deployed** 

where he works at a mask-manu-

facturing company. At the Delhi-

Gurgaon border, police told him

his ID card or the pass issued by

the district administration would

no longer suffice. "They are not let-

ting us go to work, my employer

30

checkpoints set up

empted from such restrictions

are vehicles transporting essen-

tial items, ambulances, ATM cash

vans, and those with movement

passes issued by the Centre or the

Harvana government, People en-

tering the city, the order stated,

2,500

police personnel posted

will also have to download the Aarogya Setu app and undergo thermal scanning and sympto-

matic screening at the border. Earlier in the day, Delhi resident Shyam Shankar Prasad had left on his motorcycle for Khandsa, | 10

Duty Magistrates kept in

says we won't be paid if we don't turn up. What are we to do?" said Prasad. "Most such companies operate out of UP or Haryana."

Dharmendra Kumar, a resident of Mahipalpur who works as a fireman at a gated condo on will manage if a fire breaks out in one of the buildings?" said Kumar, who has been making the trip from Mahipalpur to Gurgaon for the last 14 years. "Staying at my workplace is not an option—I can't leave my wife and daughters alone," he said.

Among vehicles parked near the border was an Innova belonging to the Medanta group. Guddu

M G Road, cycled to the border

on the Expressway Friday after-

noon. Despite repeated requests,

he too was turned back. "Who

Among vehicles parked near the border was an Innova belonging to the Medanta group. Guddu Pal, the passenger, said he had travelled from Medanta Hospital in Lucknow to Gurgaon to pick up PPE kits, masks, gloves, and other equipment from its Gurgaon facility. "I have my ID card and hospital papers, which got me through all the checkpoints from Lucknow till here. But police are not letting me through. What is so special about Gurgaon that papers that work everywhere else

have no value here?" he said.

Among those who faced trouble travelling to their homes was a woman employed with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, who was travelling with three colleagues. "All of us live near Rajiv Chowk and are returning from duty, but police are not letting us through. Our homes are in Gurgaon. If we cannot pass, where do we go?" she said.

Officials insisted the situation will become more manageable in some time. Gurgaon Police Commissioner Mohammad Akil said, "2,500 personnel were deployed at the borders to enforce additional restrictions. The situation was manageable today and will become smoother in terms of execution with time."

"Today being the first day of restrictions, there was bound to be some confusion. The situation will become better and implementation smoother as awareness spreads," said ACP Karan Goyal at Sirhaul border on the Expressway.

# To prevent another migrant exodus, Delhi seals borders

**SOURAV ROY BARMAN** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE DELHI government Friday directed the complete sealing of inter-state borders, citing "intelligence inputs" that attempts are likely to be made to "incite and provoke" stranded migrant workers, amid talks with other states over sending them back.

Separately, the government also appointed 12 nodal officers for coordinating movement of stranded workers, students and pilgrims in accordance with directions of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The officers will coordinate with other state governments in this regard.

"Certain intelligence inputs have been received that in view of the aforesaid order of MHA (on movement of migrants), certain anti-social elements may try to incite and provoke the stranded persons, particularly migrant workers in the undesirable hope of creating some tensions and conflict besides attempting to violate the lockdown measures, which shall have devastating consequences in the fight against COVID-19 disease," the order issued by Chief Secretary Vijay Dev said.

A senior official said the order has been issued to prevent a repeat of last month, when thousands of workers had gathered in places such as the Anand Vihar Bus Terminal, demanding arrangements to go back to their native places. "Since the details of the plan to transport them back

With 17 cases, Noida records

are still being worked out, this order has been issued to prevent any possible chaos," the official added.

Accordingly, Dev, in his capacity as chairperson of the state executive committee on corona prevention, directed the Delhi Police Commissioner and district magistrates to take all necessary measures to prevent any unlawful assembly of people.

ful assembly of people.

"Adequate number of pickets should be set up in all areas where migrant workers are residing to prevent their movement. The inter-state borders must be completely sealed and a strict vigil should be maintained on inter-state movement of goods carriers too, lest they become a vehicle for illegal trans-

portation of stranded persons.

"Any vehicle found transporting stranded persons should be impounded and strict punitive action as per law should be taken against violators. It should be ensured that no movement of such stranded persons should be allowed at the inter-state borders without following the protocol prescribed by the MHA and GNCTD," the order states.

The Delhi Police special commissioner (intelligence), special commissioners (law and order) have also been directed to gather intelligence from all "corners of Delhi and inter-state borders" on movement of migrant labourers, tourists and pilgrims.

Meanwhile, on Friday, police registered a case against a man who allegedly spread rumours about inter-state travel facilities in Shahdara.



CORONA WATCH

## AAP MLA tests positive

New Delhi: Karol Bagh AAP MLA Vishesh Ravi Friday said he and his brother have tested positive for COVID-19. He said he is under home quarantine.

## 6 more personnel contract virus

New Delhi: Six more policemen tested positive for COVID-19. Two of them are from the Crime Branch team probing the case against the Tablighi Jamaat. **ENS** 

# Restrictions hit services at Covid hospital, several healthcare workers refused entry

**SAKSHI DAYAL** GURGAON, MAY 1

THE EMPLOYEES' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Hospital in Gurgaon, a designated COVID-hospital for the district, was among facilities hit by restrictions on the border, with many staff members being unable to make it to work.

"Around 10% of our staff, including the X-ray technician, radiographer, pharmacist and some administrative staff, come from Delhi and Faridabad. Some managed to make it today, but even they have been told they will not be allowed from tomorrow," said hospital medical superintendent Shubhra Gupta.

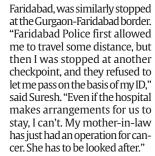
Among those refused entry was R S Mehra, Assistant Director (Finance), who lives in Dwarka:



At the border on Friday.

"I usually show my ID and come through, but today police first asked me my designation. When I told them the nature of my job, they said I would not be allowed entry."

Anita Suresh, Deputy Director General (Branch), a resident of



Officials at the hospital said at least 20 employees travel to Gurgaon from Delhi and Faridabad, and all are "critical" and needed on the premises. "This is a COVID-hospital and everyone is on duty. All roles are critical and needed in this situation," said Gupta.

On accommodation of staff at the hospital, she said, "I am forwarding any such requests to the office of the Civil Surgeon. For instance, our cook has said to make arrangements, and we are sending the request to the office. What else can we do? We have not received any communication from the administration so

Deputy Commissioner Amit Khatri offered reassurance that a solution would be worked out: "We will work it out to ensure unhindered operations."

On Wednesday, several members of the staff at the Faridabad branch of ESIC, including those involved in testing samples for coronavirus, were unable to reach work as additional restrictions were imposed at the district's borders. The administration later announced that Haryana Roadways buses would be arranged to transport those travelling to the hospital from

# highest single-day Covid spike positive were already in quarantine. The new cases are being Nagaris seventhin the 'rec'.

NOIDA RECORDED its highest single-day spike in cases on

NOIDA, MAY 1

single-day spike in cases on Friday, with 17 persons testing positive. Medical authorities however, said the situation is under control and contact tracing is on. Till Friday evening, Gautam Buddh Nagar district had reported 155 cases, 80 recoveries.

According to officials, 10 patients between aged between 10 and 32 hail from the Sector 8, where a case linked to the fire safety firm in Sector 135 had emerged earlier. The other patients are from sectors 9, 10, 55, 76, 150, and from Greater Noida's sector Pi and Bisrakh village.

Dr Deepak Ohri, CMO Gautam Buddh Nagar, said, "Eight of the patients who tested tine. The new cases are being given adequate treatment. None of them are on ventilators. The number of people discharged is more than the active cases, which is a good sign."

One of the 17 cases is a 27year-old woman from rural Noida who was tested at a private lab in Ghaziabad, an official said.

lab in Ghaziabad, an official said. "We have deployed 16 extra teams in Sector 8 and adjoining areas, which are carrying out intensive tracing and surveying. A camp is being held for two hours, which I inspect daily. In the camps, a list is being prepared of suspected patients. Accordingly, tests and quarantine measures are being taken," said Dr Ohri.

In Gautam Buddh Nagar, so far, 3,618 tests have been performed. Currently, 697 persons are in quarantine. As per MHA guidelines, Gautam Buddh Nagar is seventh in the 'red zone' list of Uttar Pradesh. Meanwhile, in Ghaziabad, a

Meanwhile, in Ghaziabad, a 60-year-old woman died on Thursday hours after she tested positive for COVID-19. Officials said she had several co-morbidities. Till Friday evening, Ghaziabad reported 62 cases and 48 recoveries.

and 48 recoveries.

The Ghaziabad administration Friday unsealed eight hotpots that saw zero cases over 28 days. These include Gyan Khand 1 in Indirapuram; Shipra Sun City; 2B Vasundhara; Shalimar Garden Extension 2; SSC Sappire Society; Sector 6 Vaishali; Khatu Shyam Duhai; and Oxy Home in Bhopura.

As per the hotspot list, Ghaziabad has been categorised under the 'orange zone' due to less frequency of cases.

# THE ()UTBREAK NATION



#### **DELHI CONFIDENTIAL**



#### MUSICAL REMINDER

THE CONGRESS, it seems, is no mood to forgive its estranged leader Jyotiraditya Scindia, who migrated to the BJP and led to the fall of the Kamal Nath government in Madhya Pradesh. The party has extensively circulated a song that severely criticises Scindia for his "betrayal". Party leaders say the recorded song is played in all 25 constituencies of the state to remind people of "what he has done to the Congress". It says that a betrayer cannot be called "Maharaja", "he has bit the hand that has fed him", and that people who have left are friends of no one. The Congress leaders say it is aimed at hitting Scindia's image, as the party has already begun preparation for by-elections.

#### MPs' HELPLINE

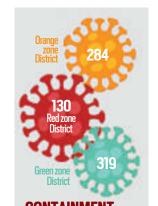
DAYS AFTER a housekeeping staff member working at Parliament complex tested positive for COVID-19, the Lok Sabha secretariat has taken an initiative to facilitate testing of MPs. In a communication on Friday, Lok Sabha Secretary General Snehlata Shrivastava said, "In view of the ongoing crisis of Covid-19 pandemic, Hon'ble Members may contact Information & Communication Centre (I&CC) on the telephone numbers given below so that they can be facilitated for getting their test done for Covid-19, if required."

### Novel Farewell

JUSTICE CK Abdul Rehim, the second most senior judge of the Kerala High Court who retired on Thursday, had an unusual farewell. In keeping with the COVID-19 times, he became the first judge in the country to have a virtual farewell. While the judge's family, colleagues, officials of the high court and office-bearers of bar associations joined Justice Rehim on Zoom. the 45-minute event was live-streamed on YouTube. Incidentally, Justice Rehim was the first HC judge to use videoconferencing to hear cases after the pandemic disrupted the movement of citizens.

## Lockdown lowdown

Two more weeks of lockdown, but more things will be up and running, depending on where you live



## CONTAINMENT

Areas within red and orange zones where there is a significant risk of spread of infection: its boundaries to be determined by district administration

#### RED ZONE

A district is designated red depending on the total number of active cases, doubling rate of confirmed cases, extent of testing and surveillance feedback hased on directions from Centre.

#### ORANGE ZONE Districts which are

neither red or green

#### **Green Zone**

**■** Domestic and

international air travel:

travel by rail and Metro;

inter-state bus transport;

and inter-state movement of

individuals by road -- except

Districts with zero confirmed cases till date; or no confirmed cases in the last 21 days

#### WHAT IS ALLOWED

#### **CONTAINMENT ZONES**

■ Local authorities should ensure 100 per cent coverage of Aarogya Setu among residents ■ No movement of people allowed in and out of these zones, except for medical emergencies, and for maintaining supply of essential goods and services

#### RED (excluding containment zones)

■Out-patient departments (OPDs) and medical clinics, with social distancing norms and other safety precautions ■ Movement of individuals for non-essential activities allowed, only between 7 am and 7 pm ■ Movement of vehicles, only for permitted activities, with a maximum of 2 persons plus driver in fourwheelers, and with no pillion-rider in case of twowheelers ■ Private offices can operate with up to 33 per cent strength, with the remaining persons working

#### **URBAN AREAS**

from home

■ All standalone shops, neighbourhood shops and shops in residential complexes can remain open, without any distinction of essential and non-essential.

when permitted by MHA..

■ Reopening of schools,

colleges, and other

educational and

training/coaching

institutions

TO KNOW WHICH ZONE YOUR DISTRICT IS IN, VISIT: www.indianexpress.com

■E-commerce permitted

only for essential goods

#### ■ In malls, markets and market complexes, only shops selling essential goods

allowed ■ Industrial establishments like SEZs, export-oriented units (EOUs), industrial estates and industrial townships with access control allowed. Manufacturing units of essential goods, including drugs, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, their raw material and intermediates allowed. Manufacturing of IT hardware; jute industry with staggered shifts and social distancing; manufacturing units of packaging material allowed ■ Construction work limited to in-situ construction (where workers are

#### **RURAL AREAS ■** Liquor shops can stay

available on site and no

workers are required to be

brought in from outside)

open ■ All industrial and construction activities, including MNREGA work, food-processing units and brick-kilns ■ All shops, except those in shopping malls, can open ■ All agriculture activities allowed – sowing, harvesting, procurement

■ Animal husbandry activities, including inland and marine fisheries.

and marketing operations in

the agricultural supply

■ Hotels and restaurants,

■ Places of worship closed to

cinema halls, malls.

gymnasiums, sports

complexes

the public.

WHAT IS NOT ALLOWED

autorickshaws; taxis and cab

and inter-district buses; and, barber shops, spas and

IN ADDITION TO ACTIVITIES

■ Liquor shops can stay open

■ Taxis and cab aggregators

will be permitted, with one

■Inter-district movement of

individuals and vehicles, but

only for permitted activities.

■Four-wheelers can carry a

passengers, besides the

driver; pillion-riding is

(None of the above is

allowed on two-wheelers.

allowed in containment

zones within orange zones)

WHAT IS NOT ALLOWED

■Inter-district and intra-

district plying of buses

■ All activities allowed,

of activities prohibited

throughout the country,

irrespective of the zone.

to 50 per cent seating

cent capacity.

capacity; bus depots can

operate with up to 50 per

■ Persons above 65 years

and those below 10 years,

pregnant to stay home,

needs or emergencies

those with co-morbidities or

except for meeting essential

■ Liquor shops can stay open

■ Buses can operate with up

except the limited number

**GREEN ZONE** 

maximum of two

driver and one passenger

ALLOWED IN RED ZONES

**■**E-commerce allowed

aggregators; intra-district

**■**Cyclerickshaws and

saloons.

only.

**ORANGE ZONE** 

# 33% population in the red zone, 43% in orange

**ONLY A QUARTER OF PEOPLE IN GREEN** 

KARISHMA MEHROTRA & ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE 130 districts in the red zone form 17 per cent of the total districts in the country, but account for about 33 per cent of the population (2011 Census).

The 284 districts in the orange zone – 39 per cent of the total districts — account for about 43 per cent of the population. And the 319 districts in the green zone form 44 per cent of the total districts, but account for only about a quarter of the population.

While 17 per cent of the population in the red zone are in Maharashtra, 16 per cent are in Uttar Pradesh and 12 per cent in West Bengal.

According to the revised guidelines, green zones are those which have not reported any fresh case in the last 21 days, down from the 28 days earlier. Red zones are defined "by taking into account the total number of active COVID-19 cases, doubling rate of confirmed cases, extent of testing and surveillance feedback."

The new classification means that some districts which have not reported cases for 14 days can still be listed in the red zone.

Health Ministry Secretary Lav Agarwal said on Friday that the idea is to prevent an unforeseen surge in cases.

"Earlier, we had just two criteria for these classifications: total cases and doubling rates. But as the cases increase, the recovery rates change, sampling requirement increases, and we need to change sampling and identification criteria. It should be more broad-based, multi-factorial so that every eventuality for identifying critical areas for intervention are identified and no zone which can go on to become a problem area in the future, should be missed out. This is how we have defined red and orange zones now. It is critical to preempt an undercurrent of cases that can become unmanageable for the district tomorrow," he said.

The list is dynamic - there were 170 red zones on April 15, there are 130 now. However, 42 districts that used to be orange zones are now red zones.

A comparison with an Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) list from April 27 shows that 48 districts that had reported no fresh cases for the last 14 days have now been listed as orange or red. Lakhisarai in Bihar had reported no new case in 28 days on April 27, but is now an orange zone.

Responding to a question on two districts in West Bengal which have not reported cases for 14 days but have been listed as red zones, Agarwal said: "We have used very comprehensive criteria. We have to be careful to not let things go out of hand in the future. There should not be a situation that we are testing less and we miss the undercurrent as cases keep growing. The density of the population too may hasten spread. We have identified potential future risk districts too and identified them as red zone. The challenge is whether we can delineate containment zones properly and do everything required with 100 per cent rigour," he said.

"It is important to carry out proactive and stringent containment and to ruthlessly break the chain of transmission so that it does not go out of the district. However, outside the containment zone, it is possible that there could be some relaxations that the Ministry of Home Affairs can notify under the Disaster Management Act,

**RISE IN SARI-LINKED CORONA CASES** 

## Karnataka orders use of oximeters at fever clinics

JOHNSON T A BENGALURU, MAY 1

WITH FOUR people who turned up at hospitals in Karnataka with Severe Acute Respiratory Infection dying of coronavirus infection in the last four days, the state government has instructed 651 fever clinics around the state to measure oxygen saturation of all patients at the clinics as a first step to

screen for COVID-19. and Welfare Health Department director Dr Om Prakash Patil has issued instructions to all fever clinics in the state to procure pulse oximeters to determine oxygen saturation levels of patients reporting breathlessness. Dr Patil stated in the order that several SARI and influenza cases with COVID-19 infection may otherwise be missed in the

As of Friday, Karnataka has had

ing positive for COVID-19-this includes 12 of 22 people who died  $- making \, up \, 7 \, per \, cent \, of \, the \, 589$ confirmed coronavirus cases in the state so far. As many as eight people with influenza-like illness cases (1 per cent of the cases) have also tested positive for coronavirus so far, raising concerns of community transmission.

A total of 651 fever clinics at government and private facilities are screening people with SARI and influenza-like illness for possible COVID-19 infection using infrared thermal scanner, which only measures body temperature and fever.

"It is being noted that many ILI and SARI cases are presenting mainly with breathlessness and cough, which are missed during screening and may turn out positive at later stages," Dr Patil stated in an order dated April 30.

"It has come to the notice of

oximeter is an essential tool for stratification of ILI and SARI, and must be made available at all fever clinics. All ILI and SARI cases with less than 95 per cent peripheral oxygen saturation should be subjected for Covid-19 swab test," according to the order.

A pulse oximeter measures blood oxygen carried by hemoglobin, and a less than 95 percent reading can indicate breathing and lung trouble. There are 31 fever clinics in Bengaluru, 523 in other parts of the state and 97 clinics in private hospitals and medical colleges.

The department has stated, "Fever clinics being the first point of contact in the process of passive surveillance, it is imperative that we have not just a robust way of screening, but also to stratify the cases and enable prompt and priority-based services and referrals."



NOT ALLOWED ACROSS ALL ZONES

A bus carrying students arrives in Kolkata. Partha Paul

## 2,400 students return from Kota to Bengal

*Kolkata:* After being stranded at Kota in Rajasthan for more than a month due to the lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19. about 2,400 students from West Bengal returned on Friday.

The buses carrying students entered the state via Bihar and Jharkhand. After a medical checkup there, students were sent towards their homes.

IAS officer PB Salim, who coordinated the process, said, "A total of 2,400 students came in 103 buses. Two convoys of buses reached Asansol and one convoy reached Siliguri."

These students will be taken to their home districts in govt buses. There they will be screened and quarantined," said

The buses reached Siliguri and Asansol within 1 pm and the first bus with students from Kolkata reached the city at 5 pm.

## **MILIND GHATWAI**

FOUL SMELLING toilets, unhygienic food, unclean wards and missing security guards. This, in a nutshell, was the description of R D Gardi Medical College and its associate hospital in Uiiain till a few

There were so many complaints from patients about the trust-run hospital, named a dedicated COVID-19 facility, that the Madhya Pradesh government threatened to revoke its licence if it did not get its house in order.

While things are still far from ideal, they have started to look up.

Uiiain has recorded the highest COVID-19 fatality rate in the country among cities with a minimum of 100 cases. Being the divisional headquarters, it caters to two nearby districts.

Madhav Nagar Hospital, a government hospital in the district that has been declared a COVID- and this shifted the entire load to Once the number of patients

After govt steps in, things look

up in Ujjain Covid-19 facility

in the district surged, the hospital management found it difficult to cope with the challenge as ward boys, security guards, a section of naramedic staff and even doctors stopped reporting for duty.

There were no arrangements to restrict the movement of relatives or patients because the hospital had never faced such a situation. It had to eventually erect barricades and lock certain rooms to facilitate isolation.

"Frankly, if I was a patient, I would have had lots of complaints. Most sanitation workers and security guards come from nearby villages but they stopped coming to the hospital out of fear... We could not have asked paramedics or doctors to do these iobs," said hospital superintendent Dr Shailendra Sharma.

Cases were registered against the staff and the hospital manage-

19 isolation facility, is ill-equipped ment was served notices. The hospital argued that it had no powers Its top management was in quarantine. When things did not improve, the government appointed a deputy collector to manage the affairs. It had previously served a notice on the management asking why its licence should not be

> revoked. The hospital, which is more than two-decades old, has the capacity to admit 720 patients. More than 50 COVID-19 patients and suspected cases are being treated in a huge ward and an ICU ward with three floors is being readied, should the need arise.

Deputy collector Sujan Rawat said about 30 sanitation workers, including 12 from the hospital and others sourced from the local municipal body and other places, have been roped. The food quality has also improved, CCTV cameras have been installed and policemen are filling in for the

# Rationing water, few offs: Managing a barricade in Jaipur

**ANKITA DWIVEDI JOHRI** JAIPUR, MAY 1

A 200-ML bottle of sanitiser and a one-litre bottle of Bisleri water are among the first things he packs. The latter, he says, is for the entire night. These, and a pair of gloves. a mask, a cap, and the thought that "duty toh karni hai, dar kar kya hoga (we have to do our duty, what purpose will fear serve)", says the 42-year-old head constable, have helped him report to work for the past month in Jaipur's Ramgani — one of the COVID-19 hotspots in the tourist city which accounts for over 50 per cent of its nearly 900 cases.

"My duty is in 'core' Ramgani. I feel scared to even keep my water bottle on the ground, take small sips through my shift. Since all shops are shut, I can't buy another bottle. I don't accept water from residents either, it may have the virus," says the head constable who has been with Rajasthan

Police for 26 years. Jaipur is among the 13 urban centres that account for well over half the number of COVID-19 cases in the country. For the past four weeks, the head constable has been stationed at a picket in Ramganj, along with a home guard, in Jaipur's Walled City where an indefinite curfew has been in place since late March. Nearly 1,000 police personnel have been deployed in the neigh-"I have been on night shift,

from 10 pm to 6 am, for the past 10 days. We are supposed to get a day off after seven days/nights of work, but I have got only a day's leave in 30 days. Maybe I will get one this week," he says. The policemen work in two other shifts -6 am to 2 pm, and 2 pm to 10 pm.

He moved into a guest house with another constable after a policeman at the Ramganj station contracted the virus a few weeks ago. "Hadkamp mach gava (There was chaos). Earlier, I stayed in the barracks at Police Lines. All of us



A police barricade at Ramganj on Friday. Rohit Jain Paras

ate from each other's plates, shared water bottles, sat on the same chair and beds... We now pay Rs 200 for a room from our own pockets," he says. A resident of Haryana, the 42-year-old has a daughter who is pursuing BTech.

As his concerns about his own safety grew, he also asked the SHO of his police station to hand him a dose of hydroxychloroguine – a preventive measure against coronavirus. "But he said the stock had

finished. I had a big fight with him, and the matter reached the DCP. It was resolved, but I didn't get any HCQ," he complains. Jaipur Police Commissioner

Anand Srivastava says, "Across Jaipur, at least 9,000 policemen are on corona duty. Of these, 300 were given HCQ doses based on proximity to infected people, which included policemen accompanying medical teams. Teams stationed at isolation



wards have also been given complete PPE kits... We have sufficient stock of masks, gloves and PPE kits for the next 15-20 days.'

Seven positive cases have been reported among police personnel in Jaipur, and 50 staff members who met them have been quarantined in the past month. IGP (Jaipur Range) S Sengathir says the department has received masks and sanitisers from both government and private players.

"Some women police officers have started sewing masks too. We have also purchased them from CRPF stores in Delhi... There is also an SBI-linked insurance

cover of Rs 50 lakh for all police personnel," he says.

Despite the department's efforts, says the 42-year-old, policemen on the ground fend for themselves. "I have home-cooked meals and lots of vegetables. We have to stay hungry on shifts since no restaurant is open, and carrying food to work is too risky...'

"I have three sets of uniform. Every alternate day, I wash two sets. I also wash my mask and gloves and reuse them for as long as I can... Apart from the few that I have got from work, I have also taken some from friends and NGOs. If I don't have five masks in reserve, I feel anxious," he says.

Towards the end of March, when he was told about his deployment in Ramganj, he says "l was a little nervous'

"I have served in the relief team during the Bhuj (Gujarat) earthquake. I have been on both election and curfew duty before. But this time the task was very different... My picket is in the interi-

New Delhi

ors of Ramganj, and in the early days, it was very hard to convince people to stay indoors," he says. Situated in the heart of Jaipur,

Ramganj is among the most densely populated areas of the city — making the task of health workers and security personnel even more difficult.

The 42-year-old's shift begins by first reporting at the Ramgani Police Station, "We are marked absent even for a 15-minute delay,' he claims. He then puts on his gear, cleans a chair with his small bottle of sanitiser and takes it to his "point". Night duty, says the 42-year-old, is particularly tough, and scrolling through 'news' on Facebook and WhatsApp only help for a few hours.

"There is no tea shop open. It's a struggle to stay awake without chai... I also listen to Haryanvi songs and watch Haryanvi films on YouTube. It keeps me awake," he says

**FULL REPORT ON** www.indianexpress.com

## cases in Kerala: **Health Minister**

No new Corona

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MAY 1

NO COVID-19 cases were reported on Friday in Kerala after a small increase in the case count in the past few days. The number of hotspots, however, rose to 80, with ten new ones being announced Friday. "No new cases were reported

ple have returned negative. The active cases in the state have touched 102," state Health Minister K K Shailaja said. Previously, the state had seen no fresh cases being reported on

on Friday and samples of 9 peo-

March 17 and March 18.

Four people each from Kannur and Kasaragod and one from Ernakualmtested negative today, Shailaja said in a statement. So far, 392 people have been treated for the infection and discharged.

#### **PALGHAR LYNCHING**

### Separate mob stopped bus rushing cops to lynching site

#### **KAVITHA IYER**

GADCHINCHLE (PALGHAR),

NEARLY TWO weeks after three men including two sadhus were lynched by a mob in Dahanu taluka of Palghar district, it has emerged that a separate group of about 200 men stopped and attacked a Maharashtra police bus that was rushing reinforcements to the lynching site on the intervening night of April 16 and

For over three hours, the bus was held hostage at Chisda village near Khanvel in Dadra-Nagar Haveli, about 13 km from Gadchinchle village in Palghar where the lynching occurred that night at around 11 pm.

An FIR was filed on April 17 regarding the bus attack in which some policemen suffered minor injuries. Nineteen men from Chisda and nearby areas were arrested on April 24 and released on bail. Two men, the alleged masterminds, were picked up again on Thursday and placed under preventive detention.

According to Dadra-Nagar Haveli Collector Sundeep Kumar Singh, Suraj Zimne and Jagdish Rathad were found to have led the mob of 200-300 men to cut down a tree and block the highway that night, soon after the **FULL REPORT ON** lynching. www.indianexpress.com

#### SC seeks status report from Maharashtra

#### **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

THE SUPREME Court Friday sought a status report from the Maharashtra government on a PIL questioning the role of the police in the Palghar lynching case and seeking a CBI probe into

The PIL filed through advocate Rahul Bansal questioned how a large number of people had gathered at the spot, despite the lockdown.

Issuing a notice to the state government, a bench of justices Ashok Bhushan and Sanjiv Khanna fixed the matter for hearing after four weeks. The present investigation by the CID into the case will continue.

The PIL contended that the mob had attacked the men in the

#### **E-TENDERING** PRESS NOTICE

Executive Engineer, Division No. IV, Irrigation & Flood Control Department Govt. of NCT of Delhi, L.M. Bund Office Complex, Shastri Nagar, Delhi-31 nvites on hehalf of President of ndia online Percentage rate tender rom approved and contractors registered with of Irrigation & Flood Contro Department upto 3:00 PM dated on 08.05.2020 for the works:

H.O.A.:- 2711 NON PLAN (REVENUE) MAINTENANCE

I. NIT No. 199/ RE/ CD-IV/ IFC/ 2019-20 2020\_IFC\_190298\_1)

Name of work:- Desilting of Right side portion of Trunk Drain No. 1 from RD 6690M to 8000M & its naintenance on both channel (Lef & Right side) for period of Nine months after the completion of desilting work. Estimated Cost of Rs. 83,19,360/- Earnest Money 1,66,387/-

completion 90 Days for desilting work and +275 days naintenance. Note:-

1) The enlistment of the contractors should be valid on the last date of ppening of tender. In case only the ast date of opening of tender is extended, the enlistment of contractor should be valid on the original date of opening of tenders. 2) The following Scanned copies are required to be uploaded:- (i) Copy of GST Registration/ unto file returned proof Registration of enlistment in the approapriates class. (iii) Scanned Copy of EMD. (iv) Scanned copy of ESI and EPF registration. (v) Copy of Pan Number, (vi) Valid Mobile Number, WhatsApp Number and E-

3) EMD's in the form of DD/FDR in favour of EE, CD-IV may be submitted in the O/o of EE, CD-IV physically upto 3.00 P.M. in the date of opening tender. If the same shall not be deposited physically, the tender shall be treated as cancelled. The Detail of above mentioned work can be seen and downloaded from website nttp://govtprocurement.

4) No manual tender shall be accepted; only tender submitted hrough e-procurement portal shall be considered.

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER** 

# 6 trains leave, long homeward journey begins



Migrant workers wait for their train at the Nasik Road station on Friday. Prashant Nadkar

## Screened, certified, home on their mind, 1,140 leave Kerala for Odisha

#### **VISHNU VARMA** ALUVA. MAY 1

THE FIRST batch of 1,140 migrant workers from Odisha, who were living and working in Ernakulam district of Kerala, boarded a special train arranged by the Railways to take them home. The non-stop train destined for Bhubaneswar left from Aluva railway station at 10 pm on

VS Sunil Kumar, minister incharge of the district, said that Railways informed them about the plan to run the train. A helpdesk jointly run by police, revenue and health departments began registration of the migrants at several camps early

Venu, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Ernakulam Rural, said the migrants who wanted to go home were chosen on first come-first serve basis, though priority was given to women, children and elderly people. As soon as news of the train flashed on local news channels, long queues formed in areas like Perumbavoor, a hub of migrant workers.

The workers were screened for symptoms of cough, cold. headache and fever. Those who passed were given certificates testifying that they were med-

The officer said that those who could not get into the first batch were assured that there would be more trains in the coming days. Migrant link workers,

Phone/Fax No. 0194-2443031/2443032 (Sgr.),

Portal www.jktenders.gov.in.

No. Prov-I/UE-03/2020-21/22321-40 Dated: 29.04.2020 DIPJ-395

उ.प्र. पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन लि.

**ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण स्चना** अनुभवी

कार्यदायी संस्थाओं / फर्मों से विद्युत पारेषण

खण्ड, मेरठ के अन्तर्गत निम्न कार्यो हेतु

ई-निविदायें ई-पोर्टल etender.up.nic.in

पर दो भागों में निविदा खोलने की दिनांक

को 12:00 बजे तक आमन्त्रित की जाती है।

निर्धारित निविदा शुल्क तथा धरोहर राशि

आर.टी.जी.एस. / एन.ई.एफ.टी. (RTGS/

NEFT) के माध्यम से (निविदा शुल्क एंव

धरोहर राशि पृथक–पृथक हस्तान्तरित की

जानी है) EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,

ETD, MEERUT, के पक्ष में HDFC

Bank, गंगानगर, मवाना रोड, मेरठ शाखा

जायेगी। निविदा के प्रथम भाग में आर.टी.

जी.एस. / एन.ई.एफ.टी. द्वारा जमा किये गये

निविदा शुल्क एंव धरोहर राशि की

यथायोग्य यू.टी.आर. संख्या की प्रति, खाते

का नाम, निर्गतकर्ता बैंक अधिकारी द्वारा

प्रतिहस्ताक्षरित पे—इन स्लिप की प्रति,

निविदा प्रपत्र, पैन कार्ड, जी.एस.टी. संख्या,

इन्कम टैक्स रिर्टन की स्वंय प्रमाणित

छायाप्रति, तकनीकी अनुभव इत्यादि

Format) तथा ई-निविदा के द्वितीय भाग

में दरे एंव वाणिज्यक नियम व शर्ते

ई–पोर्टल पर अपलोड की जायेगी।

पर स्कन्ड प्रतिया (PDF

खात

निविदादाता द्वारा

(IFSC

संख्या

Code

करायी

संचालित चालू

HDFC0009290) में जमा

एंव



Police officers in Aluva provide water to passengers. Express

who had been chosen by the district administration to keep channels of communication open with the workers, continuously worked the phones to tell them in Odiya that they would be allowed to go home.

A heavy contingent of police officers was deployed at Aluva railway station to take stock of the measures. Volunteers packed bread, bananas and water to be distributed to the workers in the By 7 pm, the first batch of

vorkers were ferried to the station in state transport buses. The minister, district collector and top police officers welcomed them with food and checked their medical credentials.

A migrant link worker from Odisha said on a loudspeaker that only two workers should sit on each seat in the train. They must wear masks at all times and wash hands regularly. They were

POLICE HEADQUARTERS J&K, JAMMU

e-NIT NO. 22 OF 2020 DATED: 29.04. 2020

e-NIT NO. 22 OF 2020 DATED: 29.04, 2020
Online e-tenders in two cover system (Technical & Financial Bid) are hereby invited from original Manufacturers/Authorized Dealers (having specific authorization from their original manufacturer/s to quote against this tender (as per format provided in Appendix-I) for finalization of rate contract for supply of Stationery Items to J&K Police as detailed in Annexure A to this NIT. (as indicated in the detailed SBD and BOQs). The download of NIT shall start on 29.04.2020 at 1300 hours. Fenders shall be submitted online on J&K e-Procurement Portal www.jktenders.gov.In before 29.05.2020 upto 1600 hours. The samples shall be submitted at Police Central Store, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu before closing date of submission of e-tender. Samples received after the prescribed date or time shall not be accepted.

The tenders (technical bids only) will be opened online on 31.05.2020 at 1100 hours at Police Headquarters J&K Jammu/Srinagar. In case of unforeseen circumstances, the date of opening will be next working day.

orking day.

Detailed tender documents (SBD) with terms and conditions are available on J&K State e-Procure

निविदा शुल्क,

Rayees Mohammad Bhat- IPS

AIG (Provision & Transport)

धरोहर

व्यवसायिक प्रपत्र हार्ड कॉपी में अथवा

व्यक्तिगत संवाहक के माध्यम से इस

कार्यालय में प्राप्त नहीं किये जायेंगे

ई-निविदा को उसी दिन निर्धारत समय पर

सार्वजनिक रुप में खोला जायेगा। निविद

भाग प्रथम में सम्बन्धित प्रपत्रों का अपलोड

न किये जाने की स्थिति में निविदा का भाग

द्वितीय प्राईस बिड नहीं खोला जायेगा।

ई-निविदा खुलने की अस्वीकार/विभाजित

करने का अधिकार अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के

पास सुरक्षित होगा। कृपया विस्तृत जानक

ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक

विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में कृपया

etender.up.nic.in पर लॉग ऑन करें

विवरण निम्न प्रकार है: ई-निविदा संख्या,

कार्य का विवरण, खुलने की दिनांक,

आमन्त्रित एंव खोलने का समय धरोहर राशि

एंव निविदा का मूल्य के क्रम में पढ़ा जाये

EE ETD MT T-06/2020-21 अधिशार्स

अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारेषण खण्ड, मेरठ के

प्रयोगयार्थ एक नग डीजल चलित वाहन

चालक सहित, को एल.ओ.आई./अनुबन्ध

की तिथि से 09 माह की अवधि के लिये

किराये पर रखने हेतु। दिनांक 27.05.2020,

12:00 बजे (आमन्त्रित) 13:00 बजे

1900.00, ₹ 590.00 (कर सहित)। (राहुल

नन्दा) अधिशासी अभियंता पत्रांक 1267/

वि.पा.ख.मे./ निविदा सूचना दिनांक 30.04.2020

(तकनीकी भाग पार्ट-1 खोलने हेत्),

डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एंद

राशि

warned against pulling the emergency chain to stop the train.

"The state's responsibility was to pick them up from their camps, register them using their identification cards, conduct medical check-ups, provide food for the 34-hour journey and ferry them to the station. We have done a systematic job. Railways informed us that workers have to buy tickets for the journey," the minister said.

Railways is expected to arrange all medical facilities on the train. "We have sent all the details of the travellers to the Odisha government. They can take a decision on quarantining measures." the minister added.

Milon Shaikh, a migrant link worker from West Bengal, said there is massive interest among the workers in going home. The control room in Ernakulam is receiving hundreds of calls every day for the same.

## Special train leaves Jaipur for Patna

#### **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

NEARLY 1,200 migrant labourers from Bihar left for Patna by a

According to senior officials these migrant labourers were

"The labourers who are leaving today were lodged at camps in Nagaur district. We brought them to the closest point which is Jaipur and from where they will be sent to Bihar," said additional chief secretary, industries,

An official from the North Western Railways (NWR) said the train will go non-stop till Patna from where Bihar government officials will make arrangements for screening and help them reach their homes.

which has 24 coaches will go straight to Patna," said the NWR He added that the labourers

Another train from Kota fer-Jharakhand was also scheduled

"I am happy that students Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Ref. No. 05-2021-WSF/01W

### JAIPUR, MAY 1

special train on Friday night.

of the Rajasthan government, all stranded in the state ever since the lockdown started and were living in government camps.

Subodh Agarwal.

"To ensure social distancing,

the middle berth of the coaches

won't be opened and the train,

were brought through stategovernment buses to the railway

to leave on Friday.

from Jharkhand are leaving by train from #Kota, #Rajasthan to Jharkhand and they would soon reunite with their families. My best wishes to all the students." tweeted Rajasthan Chief

(A Govt. of India Undertaking

**Notice Inviting Global E-Tender** 

Addendum, if any, shall be published only on above websites.

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Downstering of natural, rain water or accumulated water from

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inder jurisdiction of ADEN/MBA for one year.

under jurisdiction of ADEN/BANDA for one year.

please Contact No. - 0177-2801745.

(ĈIN : L74899DL1974GOI007417)

# At Nashik rly station: Will return when there's work

#### **IRAM SIDDIQUI & SADAF MODAK** NASHIK, MAY 1

AS THE seven-coach train entered Nasik Road station at around 8 pm on Friday, a wave of relief swept across those sitting in well-arranged queues on the platform, waiting to board the first passenger train that would chug out of Maharashtra—nearly 41 days after train services came to a grinding halt on March 22 as part of the national lockdown.

To allow stranded migrants to return home, the Maharashtra government Friday requistioned a special train for Bhopal in Madhva Pradesh in which 332 labourers left for home.

Among the lucky ones was Mahesh Baghde, whose phone kept buzzing as he waited to board. "My family is calling to check if I have boarded. Those living with us at shelter homes also want to know if we made it,' he said with a smile. Mahesh. who worked at a construction site in Thane, had begun walking home on March 29. He was stopped near Kasara in Thane and put up at a shelter in Nashik.

To ensure social distancing, there were 54 people each in the six coaches. Instead of eight persons in one lobby of a sleeper coach, only six were seated.

## Bihar to screen returning people at Patna station, quarantine them

#### **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** PATNA, MAY 1

THE BIHAR government on Friday welcomed the Centre's decision to send migrant workers to their home states by special trains, including one running from Jaipur to Patna on Friday, and said people arriving in the train will undergo screening at Patna railway station.

From the station, they would be taken by buses to their respective districts, where they would be quarantined for 21 days at the block headquarters, it was informed. There would be screening at the inter-state borders from where they would be ferried to their respective districts for quarantining.

Bihar Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi said: "We are grateful to Centre for allowing special trains to ferry migrants. The Opposition had been criticising us for not sending buses. It would have impractical to send buses to bring migrants from 1,500-3,000

km away." State minister NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED Neeraj Kumar said Bihar is among the Date: 02.05.2020 few states to possess dis-Bids are invited for supply of Water Soluble Fertilizers (WSF-NPKs) of different trict-wise data of migrants grades at JNPT, Mumbai. For details, visit websites: www.nationalfertilizers.com www.eprocure.gov.In and tenderwizard.com/NFL (E-Tender No. NFL-2057) stuck in other Last date for bid submission is 18th May, 2020 (1400 hrs. IST). Corrigendum parts of the country. Executive Director (Materials)

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Chief Engineer

(OP) South, HPSEB Ltd., Shimla-4.

New Delhi



Many people hit the Mumbai-Nashik highway on Friday. PTI

From 7 pm, over 10 buses brought the 332 workers and others from 27 shelter homes in Nashik district. As they alighted, some with all their belongings, including clothes and utensils, and others with nothing but two bottles of water given by the authorities, the one word one all of their lips was ghar (home).

While some had children back home, some parents, others had farms to take care of.

Janki Devi in her 30s with a toddler in her arms, said that she had walked for two days from Karjat in Raigad to Nashik after she stopped working in March. Devi said she had not even heard of the COVID-19 pandemic when work at the project site suddenly stopped.

"We waited for a few days but then our contractor ran away without paying us. We then decided to walk home, as we saw many doing the same," she said. Devi said she will return once work resumes here. "Aur kahaan jayenge? Jab wapas aa sakte hai, aayenge.

The migrant workers were asked to pay for their tickets back home-about Rs 215 for a general class ticket, "It is a dignified way to send them home," said collector Suraj Mandhare.

But for Sawant Kochle, the around Rs 500 he spent on his and his wife's tickets was the only cash he had on him. "We spent our money in buying things like breakfast or milk. I have no money left."

## Baghel writes to PM: Tough to get buses, special trains needed

#### **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

CHHATTISGARH CHIEF Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Friday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking the government to run special trains to bring back workers from the state stranded in other states.

In his letter, Baghel said Chhattisgarh is coordinating with other states for the return of migrants and an action plan has been chalked out to bring back workers in buses. However, he said, it would be

difficult to arrange buses and other infrastructure required to bring back workers in such large numbers. Baghel said special trains from point to point could be run to ensure safety, convenience and hygiene of the work-Meanwhile, his party—the

Congress-said the government's April 29 order allowing inter-state movement of stranded migrants only in buses defies logic. Senior Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi said the need of the hour is a "fiscal injection specially designed for migrant labour" and not "Tughlaqi farmans". "The order of the Ministry of Home Affairs...on movement of stranded workers...is nothing but all fizz and no pop. We wonder whether it

was issued by an ignorant and uncaring person. It was, in fact, a cruel joke," he said.

Special trains are now being run to transport migrant work-

#### **Cong slams Central** Vista project

The Congress on Friday slammed the Union government for continuing with the redevelopment of the Central Vista redevelopment project at a time the country is battling the coronavirus pandemic.

The party has asked the Supreme Court to take note of the issue and to direct the government that the project should be the last priority at this junc-

Rajya Sabha member Jairam Ramesh wrote to M Venkaiah Naidu, the Vice-President and chairman of the Upper House. asking him to oppose the project. In his letter to Naidu. Ramesh asked the Vice President to "speak out and support a freeze on the Central Vista Redevelopment Project".

"It is an atrocious sense of priority to embark on a new Parliament building and on new government offices when crores and crores of our people have lost their livelihoods and the economy is in doldrums," he

### NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

#### E-Tendering Tender Notice Divisional Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and on behalf of President of India invites scaled 'Open Tender' through on line (E-Tendering) for the following work. Earnest Description of work JHS-Engg Dewatering of natural, rain water or accumulated water from

E-2020-41

JHS-Engg-

Cost of Tender Form for both tenders : ₹ 3150.00. Date of closing of Tender: 21.05.2020 at 15.00hrs. Date of completion/period from issue acceptance letter for all tenders: 12 Months. \* Tender online can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs on 21.05.2020 \* For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in.

#### f North central railways HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LTD. (A State Govt. Undertaking) "E-TENDER NOTICE" (E-tendering mode only) ONLINE TENDERS are hereby invited on turniley basis (two part bid) by the undersigned for & on behalf of Managing Director, HPSEB Ltd., Shimla-4, for the following work: Comp- Online Sale Last date Opening of lection of Tender of Receipt Techno Commated Earnest Name of Work Period Documents of Tender reercial Bid CEO/M&C/ SOP to Release the Partial Load fender/No. of Industrial Area at Vakna Chat in 01/SOP- Electrical Sub Division HPSEBL 90 2.25 5900.00 Aknaghat/Kandaghat under Electrical Lac 2020-21 Division HPSEBL Solan. The detailed tender notification can be viewed/downloaded free of cost from the website https://www.tenderwizard.com/HPSEB and tender documents can be had after making prescribed payment. Any clarification / amendment shall be uploaded on the above web site. For further details on e-tendering.

## On 500-km walk home, three of UP family die in mishap

#### **AMIL BHATNAGAR** NOIDA, MAY 1

THREE MEMBERS of a family died in a road accident while walking from Delhi to their home in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur district, a distance of around 500 km. The migrant workers were crushed by a tractor after it was rammed by a truck in rural Aligarh, roughly 130 km into their long walk home, said Parshuram Singh, Circle Officer (Iglas) Aligarh.

Ranjit Singh (44) and his brother Dinesh (37) died instantly, while Dinesh's wife Santkumari (32) died in hospital, he said.

"We received information about an accident at around 12.30 pm on Wednesday night on GT Road in Madrak area. When we reached the spot, we found that two persons had died on the spot and the rest were rushed to a nearby hospital. Upon further inquiry it was found that the persons were a group of migrant laborers who were walking back home to their respective villages in UP approximately 500 km away from Delhi. An FIR has been filed against the truck driver and will be soon arrested", said Singh.

According to officials, the victims were working as daily wagers in Narela. Some labourers from Etah were also travelling along with the family.

# EXPRESS NETWORK



WATCH



Mumbai police staff make tea at an outpost. Nirmal Harindran

#### Management course norms released

New Delhi: The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) Friday released guidelines for standalone institutes offering postgraduate management programmes, asking them to start the 2020-21 session for first-year students on August 1 and for existing students on July 1. Admissions for the fresh batch of students should be completed by July 31, the guidelines said. While the UGC also released a calendar this week for higher education, it is indicative in

#### **MANIPUR Doctors** suspended for absence

Imphal: The Manipur government has suspended two senior government doctors for failing to report for COVID-19 duty at the India-Myanmar border. The specialist doctors, Bharat Singh (Bio-chemistry) and Ph Angkhong Rongmei (surgery), were assigned to the Integrated Check Post in Moreh, bordering Myanmar, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Manipur has set n isolation wards at Moreh Hospital and the checkpost.

#### **PUNJAB** Woman held with drugs tests positive

Ludhiana: A 35-year old woman arrested for peddling heroin tested positive for coronavirus late on Thursday. She was sent to Ludhiana Women's Jail on April 28. Seven policemen from Sangrur have been quarantined after she tested positive and her village Bagrian has been sealed, said Sangrur SSP Sandeep Garg. "She was tested and isolated. She did not mingle with other inmates," said the jail's superintendent Damanjit Kaur Walia.

# Industrial units in 14 Haryana districts can now get online nod to resume work

**VARINDER BHATIA** CHANDIGARH, MAY 1

INDUSTRIAL UNITS, commercial establishments and construction projects in 14 districts of Haryana shall be given "automatic approval" to resume operations after a self-declaration online to comply with Standard Operating Procedures issued by the Union Home Ministry

These guidelines were issued on Friday following an approval from Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar. The guidelines will not be impacted by the 14-day extension of the nationwide lockdown, the government said. "The relaxations stand intact," said Anil Vij, Haryana's Home and Health Minister.

The guidelines will be applicable only to units outside containment zones in the districts of Ambala, Bhiwani, Charkhi Dadri, Fatehabad, Hisar, Jind, Kaithal, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Mahendragarh, Rewari, Rohtak, Sirsa and Yamunanagar.

"Automatic self-generated approvals would be accorded within moments of applications being submitted on the portal as per the norms," the state government said.

Industries, commercial establishments and construction projects employing less than 10 workers need not apply to the state

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

THE CENTRE's decision to locate

the newly created International

Financial Services Centre (IFSC)

Authority in Gandhinagar is "dis-

appointing", and a move against

Mumbai's established status as the

nation's financial capital, NCP lea-

der Sharad Pawar said on Friday.

Minister is such that s/he should

always rise above his/her state.

The decisions should be broad, in-

clusive and of a national level.

Therefore, we will urge Prime

Minister Narendra Modi to recon-

sider the decision and retain

Mumbai's status as an interna-

Pawar said at a Loksatta web inter-

active series titled 'Sathicha

Friday, on the foundation day of

the state, will host all former chief

ministers of Maharashtra, and will

end with a talk by Chief Minister

Loksatta editor Girish Kuber and

Pawar was interviewed by

Stating that he hopes all polit-

ical parties will come together to

oppose the Centre's decision to set

up this new Authority in Gandhi-

nagar, Pawar said, "Mumbai has

always been the country's eco-

nomic capital, and it has its dis-

tinct identity. It is the leading in-

dustrial city. The decision to shift

the IESC Authority from Mumbai

the IFSC Authority in Gujarat is not

a right decision. We will pursue

the matter with the PM and urge

him to reconsider the decision

He said, "The decision to locate

to Gujarat is disturbing."

editor Mukund

The series, which began on

Gazhal Maharashtracha'.

Uddhav Thackeray.

associate

Sangoram.

"The stature of the Prime

MUMBAI, MAY 1

Pawar: Centre move to

in Gujarat disappointing

locate IFSC Authority



Personnel fix CCTV cameras at a containment zone in Chandigarh on Friday. Kamleshwar Singh

government for permission and may resume operations subject to adherence to social distancing norms and other requirements in the Union Home Ministry guide-

Eighteen of the 22 districts in Haryana are in the orange zone according to the circular issued by Health Ministry on Thursday. Faridabad and Sonipat are in the red zone, and Mahendragarh and Rewari are in the green zone.

and relocate it in Mumbai."

The IFSC Authority is a unified

agency to regulate all financial

services in international financial

services centres in the country

and was notified earlier this week.

It will be located at the Gujarat

International Finance Tech City in

of the nationwide lockdown, and

its resultant economic fallout.

Pawar said putting the economy

back on track remains a formi-

dable challenge. "Greater focus

on agriculture, industrial and in-

frastructure is a must. It calls for

higher investments. For this, the

Reserve Bank of India along with

other financial institutions will

have to provide incentives and

plans on loans and interest rates.

The RBI will have to take bold de-

time to do politics, Pawar said the

Prime Minister should convene an

all-party meeting for wider con-

Stating that this was not the

On the challenges in the light

Gandhinagar.

cisions.

lay down that if a unit fails to start functioning within seven days of being granted permission, the approval would stand cancelled. Deputy Commissioners have

been given the authority to review the on-ground situation. They can review the guidelines depending on an increase or decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases.

If the count of active cases in any of these 14 districts reaches 15, the relaxations will stand withdrawn and all operations shut

IAF, Navy await

go-ahead to

evacuation

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

start Mid-East

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** 

ON THE day the Railways began

operating special trains to return

stranded migrant workers to their

homes in the eastern states, the

armed forces announced they are

awaiting the government nod to

start evacuating Indian nationals

Speaking to reporters Friday,

Navy chief Admiral Karambir

Singh said: "We have a very large

diaspora in the Gulf, who are do-

ing important work there and

send large remittances. We were

asked to be ready for evacuation,

and we have prepared our ships.

As soon as we get the go-ahead, we

will go, along with Indian Air Force

together." The Navy chief was

speaking at a press conference

conducted by Chief of Defence

Staff General Bipin Rawat, along

with Air Force chief Air Chief

Marshal R K S Bhadauria and

Army chief General M Naravane.

warriors, Gen Rawat said the op-

erational preparedness of the

armed forces has not suffered be-

cause of COVID-19. "Preparations

do not fall down in 3-4 months. If

we were prepared before this

virus struck us, we will be pre-

He said that in honour of the

The IAF will conduct flypasts

corona warriors, all three forces

will hold special events on May 3.

from Srinagar to Trivandrum,

Dibrugarh to Kutch. During the

flypast, the aircraft will shower

displays at some Covid hospitals.

The Navy will have its warships

deployed in formations in coastal

areas on May 3 evening.

The Army will conduct band

flower petals at some places.

pared when it ends," he said.

Praising the work of corona

from the Middle East.

down. As soon as there are 10 active cases in the district, alerts will be sent to every industrial unit, commercial establishment and construction project that has obtained approval. The alerts will inform that the district is now five cases short of the shutdown limit, and that their permissions would become invalid as soon as the limit is breached. A reminder will be sent with every new case until the active case count reaches 15,

when all permissions would end.

days ago, Jhajjar now has most cases in Haryana

In green zone 5

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** CHANDIGARH, MAY 1

TILL FIVE days ago, Haryana's Jhajjar district was in the green zone and had not reported any COVID-19 case since March 4. Now it has the highest case count in the state.

The district has recorded 28 COVID-19 cases so far, the majority of which are linked to Delhi's Azadpur Mandi.

Haryana's total case count on Friday climbed to 357 out of which 112 are active cases.

Following the sudden surge in COVID-19 cases in districts bordering Delhi, state Home Minister Anil Vij said, "Nobody shall be allowed to enter Haryana without a COVID test. Be it people carrying essential services or those with lockdown passes, unless a person tests negative on the state's border, he/she will not be allowed

entry into Haryana."

Jhajjar district is followed by Sonipat with 22 active COVID-19 cases and Gurugram with 19 active cases. There are 18 active cases in Faridabad district, eight in Panipat, six in Nuh, two each in Ambala, Hisar and Palwal, and one each in Rohtak, Bhiwani and Panchkula. Sonipat Faridabad are in the red zone.



FARE AFFAIR: Over 1,000 migrant workers from Odisha, MP and UP left Surat in 91 private buses on Thursday and Friday.

#### The buses were arranged by different industrial associations in Surat and the workers had to pay the fare — between Rs 3,500 and Rs 4,000, depending on location. Hanif Malek

## MP amends mandi Act, to allow agri marketing yards

**MILIND GHATWAI** 

MADHYA PRADESH on Friday amended its Mandi Act to allow initiatives like setting up agriculture marketing yards and letting farmers sell their produce from their farms or doorsteps.

Promulgating an ordinance to amend the Madhya Pradesh Krishi Upaj Mandi Act, and calling it a game changer, the government said the move would increase farmers' income because they would have the option of selling their produce at a higher rate at their convenience. They can go to government marketing yards where produce is bought after auction or sell to the government at MSP.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said Agricultural **Produce Marketing Committees** will not interfere in private mandis. From warehouses to silos to cold storage, any premises could be declared a private mandi. The director of agriculture marketing will issue a licence to trade agriculture produce for the entire

state or part thereof, establishing a private market yard and electronic trading.

ure) Ajit Kesari said the government has made its intent clear and the rules will be framed later. He said the amendments were born out of the aim to decongest mandis in view of the coronavirus pandemic

The government has also revived the practice of 'sauda patrak'. Discontinued in 2009, it allowed farmers and traders to buy outside the premises of designated mandis but the sales ere recorded in mandis.

Mandis and procurement centres were opened on April 15. Nearly 80 per cent of mandi sales in the last fortnight have been through sauda patraks, Kesari said. "If the farmers feel empowered and are mature enough, why not decontrol everything?" he quoted the Chief Minister as saying.

The amendments will ensure that a trader does not have to go to a mandi to get permission to sell the produce purchased from farmers. The trader will get an electronic permit instead.

**RELIEF FOR UDDHAV** 

# **Maharashtra MLC** polls on **May 21: EC**

**RITIKA CHOPRA** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

ELECTIONS TO the nine vacant seats of Maharashtra Legislative Council will be held on May 21, the Election Commission (EC) de-

cided in a meeting on Friday. The decision is expected to pave the way for Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray

to enter the Legislative Council. As per Article 164 (4) of the Constitution, Thackeray, who is not a member of the state Legislature, needs to get elected to either the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council before the sixmonth deadline, expiring on May 27 in his case

The Commission will next week review the remaining elections to 18 Rajya Sabha seats and 9 Legislative Council seats of Bihar, which were also deferred because of the COVID-19 outbreak

The EC, officials said, will soon ask the Ministry of Home Affairs to appoint an officer of "suitable seniority" to ensure that the MLC election process in Maharashtra is compliant with guidelines issued by the Union government under the Disaster Management Act. Simultaneously, the EC will ask the Maharashtra government to depute an officer "to ensure that the extant instructions regarding COVID-19 are complied with while making arrangements for conducting the elections".

The state's Chief Electoral Officer, Baldev Harpal Singh, will be the observer for the polls, an EC official said.

The Commission, in the com-

ing week, will devise the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for conducting elections during a pandemic. The SOP will lay down the precautions the polling staff, and MLAs will have to take while casting their vote.

The EC's decision comes less than a day after Maharashtra Governor B S Koshyari asked the Commission to hold elections to nine Legislative Council seats, which fell vacant on April 24, "at the earliest".

Koshyari's letter came two days after Thackeray approached Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the matter. Thackeray called up the PM after the Governor sat on a recommendation made a month ago by the state government to nominate him to the Legislative

Thackeray was sworn in on November 28, 2019. His failure to enter the Legislature by May 27 would mean the state Cabinet would also have to resign.

The government had hoped to get Thackeray nominated through the Governor's quota following the EC's decision to defer polls to the nine Council seats due to the coronavirus outbreak and the subsequent nationwide lockdown, beginning March 25. Besides the Governor's letter.

the Commission had also received representations from the Shiv Sena, the Congress and the NCP, the ruling coalition partners in the state. Their letters stated that on account of the "peculiar, extraordinary, unforeseen facts and circumstances", Thackeray had not been able to get himself elected to the Legislative Council.

#### MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

## Delhi court nod to bail plea, Deepak Talwar to be out of Tihar jail "He (Talwar) shall furnish his ac-

**PRITAM PALSINGH** 

A Delhi court Friday granted bail to corporate lobbyist Deepak Talwar in a money laundering case in which it was alleged that his non-profit organisation M/s Advantage India received foreign funding illegally.

Observing that the "court could not be convinced how the further incarceration of the accused will help further investigation", Special judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar ordered Talwar's release from Tihar jail on a personal bond of Rs 5 lakh and a surety of the like amount.

Talwar was deported from Dubai on January 31 last year and has been in jail since then. The CBI and ED booked him in four cases. Earlier, he had secured bail in three of them and is now set to walk out of jail.

Judge Kuhar also imposed a condition on Talwar that he will surrender his passport, if not deposited, and furnish his residential address to the Investigating Officer.

tive mobile phone number and eable if his personal appearance is required for the purpose of any enquiry or investigation pertaining to the case," the order reads.

The court's order came on Talwar's plea for bail on the ground that the probe is over and that there was no chance that the investigation could be hampered.

ED's Special Public Prosecutor Amit Mahaian and Nitesh Rana had argued that Talwar was accused of serious economic offences and may flee from justice if relief is granted. Judge Kuhar, however, ob-

served, "So far as flight risk is concerned the apprehension is without any substance moreover fetters can be put on his liberty by depositing his passport, by issuing Look-Out Notice etc thus, putting a restriction on his travel abroad and his activities can be monitored... The ED has not been able to show any reasonable ground to say that he will tamper with evidence, moreover evidence collected is documentary.

# 'Given our constraints, India handled COVID situation very maturely'

Union Health Minister Dr HARSH VARDHAN speaks to ABANTIKA GHOSH about the measures India has taken to fight COVID-19, and the way forward. Excerpts:

The government is saying India has fought COVID-19 the best. Are we counting our chicks too soon?

No. Given our constraints. I would say that India handled the situation very maturely - with speed, scale and determination pre-emptively, proactively and in a graded manner. Today we stand at a better position compared to other countries so far as morbidity and mortality is concerned. Our numbers show this.

You would remember that on Ianuary 7. China reported the first case to WHO and on January 8, we started deliberations with our technical team of experts. By January 17, we had formulated our detail led response and issued detailed advisories to all states. Within the next 2-3 days, we started thermal screening of all international pas-

sengers coming from COVID-19 affected countries at seven major airports...We strengthened our mechanism for country-wide surveillance, contact tracing as well as entry screening for travellers. In coordination with states/UTs, we reviewed our public health system preparedness... Keeping in view the transmission mode of the disease, socio-cultural and geographic considerations of our country and on the basis of learnings from global experiences, we stressed on ways and means to enforce social distancing as the most potent 'social vaccine' for combating COVID-19. Lockdown is one such public health measure...

Is there a sense that India has got a less virulent strain of the virus? Why are there such high mortalities in places like **Indore and Ahmedabad?** 

This question cannot be answered without going into the epidemiology of the disease. COVID-19 outbreak in India has been the result of an imported viral strain... A paper from China described two different variants of this virus — S and L. L virus has been described to be more transmissible and pathogenic. However, the study had many flaws. The genetic make-up of the virus is not the sole predictor of the virulence of the SARS-CoV-2... The transmission and pathogenicity could have been influenced by many other factors which have not been considered in the study... Hence, we do not have robust evidence to attribute high mortality to viral strains in Indore and Ahmedabad.

While we are calculating





Vardhan

UNION HEALTH MINISTER

COVID deaths, patients of other diseases have been suffering because of lockdown, because doctors of non-COVID hospitals have not got passes, TB reporting is down. Migrants have died on way home. Will these be counted as COVID deaths?

COVID-19 death is defined as a death resulting from a clinically compatible illness in a probable or confirmed COVID-19 case, unless there is a clear alternative cause of death that cannot be related to COVID disease....It is evident that patients you are referring to as well as the migrants, who have died on way home, cannot be included in COVID-19 deaths, as per definition. ... During my various interactions with state/UT health ministers, I have been stressing that we should continue provision

of non-COVID services to needy patients. They are all trying their best. However, I do understand that COVID-19 outbreak has placed unprecedented demands on healthcare systems worldwide, not just in India... There is a risk that the quality of essential health services which communities expect from the health system may get compromised.

Is it correct that we can have a COVID vaccine as early as September?

The challenges and efforts needed to rapidly develop, evaluate and produce vaccine are enormous. Physicians, funders and manufacturers have come together as part of an international collaboration, coordinated by WHO, to help speed up the availability of a vaccine against COVID-

New Delhi

candidate vaccines, developed by WHO, includes seven candidate vaccines in clinical evaluation and another 82 candidate vaccines in pre-clinical evaluation. At the moment, half a dozen Indian firms are making efforts to develop vaccines against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Seven vaccines are at various stages of the evaluation process.

19... Adraft landscape of COVID-19

What is the status of testing

We have enough testing kits available for the next 10 days. We have already ordered enough kits to conduct 56 lakh tests.

There are projections of India hitting 2.74 crore cases by August 15. How long will this continue?

A lot of mathematical and epi-

are available right now. We should understand that every such model uses multiple assumptions when actual data is not available, as is the case with this disease outbreak. Hence, most models tend to be purely speculative. Without examining the assumptions that have gone into the formulation of such models, it is not prudent to comment on their speculative outcomes... India has managed to keep the COVID-19 threat under control till date, through proactive and pre-emptive interventions...We will continue to develop plans to flatten the curve, and space out the occurrence of COVID-19 over a longer time period to enable our health systems to respond to the increased clinical workload. **FULL INTERVIEW ON** 

demiological models on COVID-19

www.indianexpress.com

WORDLY WISE

THE ONLY WAY OF CATCHING A TRAIN I HAVE EVER DISCOVERED IS TO MISS THE TRAIN BEFORE

— G K CHESTERTON

# The Indian **EXPRESS**

S FOUNDED BY S

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL



RBI's job involves trade-offs, not conflicts. The virus lockdown makes them even harder

Fear, hope and central bank

MANISH SABHARWAL

AMARTYA SEN ONCE wrote in the Economic

## GET ON RIGHT TRACK

Special trains for migrants are welcome, must be informed by sensitivity and fair play, and guided by medical protocols

DAY AFTER the Union Home Ministry allowed the inter-state movement of migrant workers, a train carrying about 1,000 labourers took off from Lingampally in Telangana for Hatia in Jharkhand on Friday morning. The home ministry had initially allowed the movement of these workers in buses. But several states had questioned the feasibility of the move and demanded that the railways run special trains to ferry the stranded migrants. The Centre has done well to accede to their request. The railways has outlined plans to run special Shramik Trains to move migrant workers, tourists, students, and pilgrims back to their homes. It has asked the state governments to make sure that the Centre's COVID-19-related guidelines on the screening of inter-state travellers are scrupulously followed. It's now up to these governments to draw up plans and protocols for this purpose. They must hold regular conversations with the railway authorities to ensure transparency in running the special trains.

By all accounts, about 10 million migrant workers have been stranded in different parts of the country after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a nation-wide lockdown on March 24. Having lived on charity in cramped shelters arranged by state governments, NGOs and some business outfits, these workers are yearning to go back to the familiarity and comfort of their villages. The prospect of a train back home is bound to kindle their hopes. But such situations are also rife with feelings of desperation and anxiety. This was evident in Mumbai, about three weeks ago, when distressed migrants swarmed the Bandra railway station, anticipating a relaxing of the lockdown. When their hope turned to disappointment, the hapless workers took to the streets. To prevent such a situation from recurring, the railways and the state governments must engage and inform the migrants while planning special trains. Decisions on who gets to be on the trains must be fair and must be seen to be so too. The state must keep all channels of communications open with those who might temporarily be left out.

The railways has said that the passengers on the Lingampally-Hatia train were screened and social distancing protocols followed during the journey. Given that several studies have shown that most coronavirus carriers are asymptomatic, the imperative of following such protocols on future journeys cannot be overstated. The state governments and railway officials should make sure that these operations are conducted without burdening the migrants but at the same time, care should be taken to ensure that the virus does not spread to the country's rural areas. All this may pose logistical challenges for the railways and the state governments. It will require them to cooperate and coordinate on matters such as making lists of the travelling migrants, ensuring screening facilities for them, and arranging transport to, and from, the railway stations. This is an opportunity for these authorities to get the first steps towards the opening up right. For that reason, they will be closely watched.

## SELF-ISOLATED

In national interest, and in their own interest, private hospitals must reconsider their divestment from fight against pandemic

T IS ALMOST two decades after liberalisation, when private enterprise took the initiative from state enterprises. In that time, privately-owned and for-profit hospitals took the burden of disease over from a moribund system of publicly-funded hospitals. But the Rs 2.4 lakh crore private health care sector is faltering in the face of a public health crisis, whose burden is being borne by government hospitals, their doctors and nurses. Private enterprise owns almost three out of every four hospital beds in India, and almost eight out of 10 ventilators, but they are handling less that 10 per cent of those critically ill with novel coronavirus. States like Bihar, where private capital owns about twice as many beds as government hospitals, have seen the private sector in complete rout. The reluctance to engage is so great that they have been turning away coronavirus patients and other patients in need of aid. In Delhi and Maharashtra, the state government has had to issue orders so that they do not turn any more away.

As a series of reports in this newspaper showed, numerous factors have been at play in this failure — pay cuts, employee reluctance, the fear of sealing, the future consequences to brand value of hospitals identified with the pandemic, the lack of established protocols and protective gear, and bureaucratic instructions, like those issued in Telangana, to refer viral patients to government facilities. Underlying all this is the economic reality of falling revenues and footfalls, accompanied by new expenses and risk. While the central and state governments should offer to underwrite the risk, the fact remains that a sector which has benefited hugely from government concessions and encouragements, and which has tried to take over healthcare in India, has abdicated its public responsibility and remains isolated from the national effort.

The pandemic offers an opportunity to policymakers to revalue the virtues of public versus private healthcare, and those of free facilities versus insurance-backed care. But both must continue to exist and the present system, however flawed, must carry the nation through the crisis. To retain its perceived value, it is imperative for the private sector to do its public duty now, and be seen to be doing so. In a crisis in which every citizen is pulling together according to ability, financial excuses for withdrawing appear to be pusillanimous and morally wrong. In their long-term interest, abstaining private hospitals must reconsider this divestment from the national effort.

## **CREATOR OF MAGIC**

With grace and a cutting edge, Chuni Goswami held up the most romantic era of Indian football

ITH THE PASSING away of Chuni Goswami, Indian football has lost arguably its greatest-ever player. Among his peers, he stood out easily. PK Banerjee had speed and strength, Tulsidas Balaram thrived in an all-round game but Goswami had magical skills. Nobody in the history of Indian football had a sharper cutting edge in the final third. In his autobiography, Wing Theke Goal (Wing to Goal), PK mentioned a piece of Goswami's brilliance during a match at the 1962 Asian Games in Jakarta. Goswami dribbled past four opposition players, went around the goalkeeper and instead of feeding the unmarked PK, the then India captain scored from a very acute angle. PK wrote, "I asked him why didn't he give me the ball. Chuni's reply was sharp, 'I set it up going past five players, and you will put the cherry on top!"

Goswami was a born athlete. As a first-class cricketer, he was good enough to lead Bengal to a Ranji Trophy final. His inswingers had floored Garry Sobers's West Indies in a tour game against East Zone and Central Zone combined in the 1960s.

In many ways, Goswami, PK and Balaram symbolised the most romantic era of Indian football. India was not a footballing superpower then. But they were no pushovers either, and could produce moments of underdog magic, like beating Asian giants Iran, Japan and South Korea. They were not, perhaps, the most technically gifted or systematically regimented footballers. But when in sync, they could orchestrate artistic football, turn on the style quotient. There was always the allure of raw talent, and a beautiful unpredictability about them. With Goswami and Banerjee gone, Balaram remains the flickering link between the grossly commercialised times of Indian football and its uncomplicated blackand-white era.

and Political Weekly that Alfred Tennyson's poem "The Charge Of The Light Brigade", which glorified charging ahead in nobility, "Theirs not to reason why/Theirs but to do and die", was inappropriate inspiration for policy because "Good reform is the charge of the heavy brigade. The reason why is central to the task". A central bank like the RBI must replace intellectual certainty with continuous debate about Why because their job involves  $complex\,trade\text{-}offs-next\,quarter\,vs\,quarter$ century, growth vs stability, and mandates vs expectations. A global anthropological shock like COVID makes these trade-offs — they are not conflicts - even harder. The RBI must re $member\ three\ things-acting\ prudently\ to$ balance the next quarter and quarter century. acting flexibly to blunt this economic cataclysm, and acting within their mandate to ensure institutional legitimacy and immunity. First, acting prudently. If everybody be-

lieved that in the long run we are all dead, we would never sit under trees planted by people who had no chance of sitting under them. The coronavirus is a human tragedy but a central bank must not act like a commercial bank because that would compromise the balance between today and tomorrow. A narcissism — bordering on solipsism - already reflects in global debt levels that steal from our grandchildren. More importantly, India doesn't have the economic strength to copy the US Federal Reserve's \$2.3 trillion offer to lend to businesses of all sizes and sorts, run anything close to this year's expected US fiscal deficit of 15 per cent of GDP, or sustain Japan's public debt levels at 240 per cent of GDP. We are all in the same storm but we are all not in the same boat.

Second, acting flexibly within mandate. Renaissance physician Paracelsus had important advice for central banks; the dose makes the poison. Anything powerful enough to help has the power to hurt; handling the inevitable tensions between the RBI's dual mandate of growth and stability requires continuous work. Our inflation targeting regime is a macroeconomic gift to India. But recognising that is hardly inconsistent with acknowledging that inflation's

Just like COVID is particularly painful for patients with pre-existing conditions, the RBI's COVID balm is constrained by pre-existing conditions in Indian banking; bad loans (peaked at Rs 14 lakh crore but still large), inadequate competition (scheduled commercial bank numbers have hovered between 90 and 100 since 1947), private bank governance (CEO so powerful that boards and shareholders are weak), public sector bank governance (shareholder so powerful that boards and CEOs are weak), and the RBI's own game (process, technology and human capital in regulation and supervision). All these must be tackled with urgency when normalcy returns.

secular decline has many parents, some economic models are useful but all are incomplete, and the fog of war involves making second best choices as long as they are reversible, proportional, and accountable.

Central banks often undertake liquidity management while leaving policy rates unchanged; current actions are not a conspiracy to undermine the MPC or its interest rate corridor (between reverse repo rate and MSF rate with repo rate midpoint targeting and call rate operating target). They are a pragmatic encouragement for banks to lend to clients rather than lend Rs 7 lakh crore to the RBI. Other virus flexibility includes repayment moratoriums (with 10 per cent provisions), bad loan accounting forbearance (despite past experience of breaking the thermometer doing little for the fever) and bank windows for NBFC/Mutual Fund liquidity. Listening is hardly compromise. Especially if accompanied by a will to unwind liquidity, asymmetry and forbearance when the planet's gap year ends.

Third, acting within mandate. Central bank governance is a fine balance; they function best when they don't declare poorna swaraj from the government and they aren't considered a part of the finance ministry. The difficulty of balance isn't uniquely Indian; Wharton Professor Peter Conti-Brown asks: "Is the independence of the US Federal Reserve a precious public good to be protected or a nefarious dodge of public accountability?" History suggests technocratic central banks run by unelected officials amplify institutional vulnerability by wading into democratic politics; the messy, slow and clunky process involving conciliation, compromise, and squeezing collective decisions out of conflicting demands described in Bernard Crick's wonderful 1963 book, In Defence of Politics. The RBI must build on its track record of wisely balancing the trade-offs between depositors vs borrowers, companies vs banks, and stability vs growth. And it must continue to stay out of the government's domain.

The central bank crisis role debate is skewed by the great book, *Lords of Finance*, by Liaquat Ahamed that shows how central bankers of the 1920s failed to fight the Great

Depression. Historian Heraclitus suggested you can never step in the same river twice; the river is different, you are different, and the world is different. History matters but nobody knows if this is the beginning or ending of the virus. Yet the global central bank COVID toolbox has been substantial; buying corporate bonds, making corporate loans, cutting interest rates, conducting open market operations, and reducing reserve ratios. Additionally, banks have been permitted to grant loan moratoriums, hold less capital, restructure loans, pay lower deposit insurance premiums and delay bad loan recognition. The emergency authority under Section 13 of the US Federal Reserve Act being used — in my opinion, prematurely - also exists in Section 18 of the RBI Act. But emergency powers are a last resort. We are not there yet. The recovery being V-shaped, U-shaped, or Bathtub-shaped is only modellable after the lockdown.

Just like COVID is particularly painful for patients with pre-existing conditions, the RBI's COVID balm is constrained by pre-existing conditions in Indian banking; bad loans (peaked at Rs 14 lakh crore but still large), inadequate competition (scheduled commercial bank numbers have hovered between 90 and 100 since 1947), private bank governance (CEO so powerful that boards and shareholders are weak), public sector bank governance (shareholder so powerful that boards and CEOs are weak), and the RBI's own game (process, technology and human capital in regulation and supervision). All these must be tackled with urgency when normalcy returns.

The true antidote to fear is hope. Another fiscal package may come soon. But supplementing India's fiscal and monetary policy interventions by announcing two bold reform plans — 90-day flick-of-pen and one-year structural — that tackle overdue reforms in labour, education, cities, finance, compliance, and civil services, will catalyse hope among employers, employees, banks, and overseas investors. Creating a prosperous India needs many things. One of them is an independent, accountable, and boundaried central bank

The writer is co-founder, Teamlease Services

## BACK TO THE OLD NORMAL

In Pakistan, religious leaders, not doctors, are setting Covid policy

KHALED AHMED

ON APRIL 23, Prime Minister Imran Khan staged a four-hour "telethon" to collect funds for the coronavirus crisis and ended up netting nearly three billion rupees before asking his favourite cleric, Tariq Jameel, to pray. The mountebank priest first rejected the word "fight" against the coronavirus because it was "a curse of Allah" and needed repentance from a nation he thought was corrupt and lascivious. Khan and the nation took it as the old normal and bowed their head.

Unsurprisingly, the clergy in Pakistan has the upper hand and has defeated the doctors in deciding the state policy against COVID-19, which had struck 10,500 victims and had claimed 280 lives at the end of April. The doctors raised the alarm after Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) reached an "accord" with the "top" priests of the country to let people throng the mosques five times a day, plus special prayers during the month of Ramadan falling in the last week of April, depending on special moon-sighting by the same religious panjandrums.

Then, something funny happened. Another senior priest of Pakistan, Mufti Munib, got on to a roof in Karachi to sight the Ramadan moon but did not find it. There is an Islamic lunar calendar predicting accurately the rising moon every month but the priests would have none of it. When the moon was not sighted on Thursday, the mufti declared that the following day would not be the first day of fasting. Saudi Arabia, however,

The Khan government had decided to unrealistically allow the mosque administration to say a three-man namaz (sic). Taqi Usmani joined up with the state-appointed 'moonspotting' mullah Mufti Munib to declare that the government-allowed mosque namaz was not acceptable and that people should throng to their local mosques as before.

announced Ramadan and so did the rebellious mullah Popalzai of Peshawar, claiming he had seen the moon. Now, like many times in the past, Pakistan will get split over fasting and end up celebrating two Eids.

PM Khan was never for following the doctors — dozens of whom have fallen victim to the pandemic while treating victims — because he cared for the livelihood of the masses living below the poverty line. Then the mullahs pitched in, led by Mufti Taqi Usmani, who scares everyone because of his de facto authority inside Pakistan and among the Arabs. In this case, he defiantly overruled the Saudi monarchy that had decided to ban all congregation together with the other Gulf states.

The Khan government had decided to unrealistically allow the mosque administration to say a three-man namaz (sic). Usmani joined up with the state-appointed "moon-spotting" mullah Mufti Munib to declare that the government-allowed mosque namaz was not acceptable and that people should throng to their local mosques as before. Then Khan decided to parley with the rebel clerics and ended up allowing the mosque prayers that would spread the pandemic like wildfire. Both sides agreed on an unrealistic recipe of keeping the devotees three feet apart while praying, which no one believes can be put in practice.

The doctors of Pakistan said in a letter that if the mosques were opened, the country's medical service would not be able to treat the victims. They warned that "with mosques

across the country being filled predominantly by people over the age of 50, the risk of the virus spreading is high". They disclosed that in "the past 48 hours more than 80 per cent of the people" praying in mosques were in their 60s and 70s. "Clearly this has resulted in the violation of the first and foremost principle of preventing the spread of the virus in the most vulnerable group of elderly people", stated the letter from the Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA).

One-third of Pakistan's population lives below the poverty line, whose children end up in free-boarding madrassas. The madrassa's worldview is focused mostly on jihad and the rejection of modern life. According to one report, there were 300 madrassas in Pakistan in 1947; today, there are more than 35,000. Poverty and a lack of normal education set the stage for religion as a psychological refuge of neglected populations.

In India, too, the Muslim minority, as seen on TV being beaten up by Hindu vigilantes, has turned inward to religion. Small-time Muslim shopkeepers spend time earning their daily wage and going five times a day to their local mosque and become targets of the communal discrimination that has hit South Asia. In Pakistan, it is going to be impossible to keep the masses away from the mosque where they are likely to catch COVID-19.

The writer is consulting editor, Newsweek Pakistan



## May 2, 1980, Forty Years Ago

FIVE-DAY WEEK
THE LINION CARINET is under

THE UNION CABINET is understood to have approved the proposal for a five-day work week and an announcement in this regard is likely soon. The department of personnel of the Union home ministry has been asked to take necessary action. The five-day week plan was mooted some time ago in view of the increasingly felt need for conservation of energy and fuel. Moreover, it was felt that with two off-days in a week, the employees will be better equipped physically and mentally to do better justice to their jobs. Government sources have estimated that a five-day week will mean a yearly national saving of Rs 600 crore in the form of savings

in fuel, energy and other expenditures.

US VETO ON PALESTINE THE UNITED STATES vetoed a Tunisian resolution that would have had the UN Security Council call for a Palestinian state. The vote was 10-1 with four abstentions. The resolution got one more than the nine votes needed to put it through under normal circumstances, but the US's negative vote killed it. Britain, France, Portugal and Norway abstained. Tunisia, Niger, Gambia, Mexico, Jamaica, Bangladesh, the Philippines, China, the Soviet Union and East Germany all voted for the proposal. US Ambassador Donald McHenry, just before casting his negative

vote, explained to the Council that he would do so because the resolution could not "bring the achievement of peace one day closer to practical reality."

#### Bahuguna Resigns

H N BAHUGUNA, Congress-I secretary general, has resigned. He also resigned from the Congress-I working committee and parliamentary board. When he was asked why, Bahuguna said: "I had become non-functional. No job on hand and nothing to do." He said it had "nothing to do with" the list of Congress-I candidates for the UP assembly elections. He said he had not, however, resigned from the party.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2020

# THE IDEAS PAGE

#### WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"There are times when government must curtail individual freedoms to protect the public. But those measures must end once the threat passes."

— THE NEW YORK TIMES

# A new phase of the fightback

Though stringent, lockdown was timely. Now, it's time to address ballooning opportunity costs across sectors



Shamika Rav

WHILE THE OECD countries are reeling under the COVID-19 impact, India is clearly ahead of the curve. This is not merely in terms of the confirmed cases in the country but is also strongly reflected in very low mortality numbers (8.5 deaths per lakh population) compared to other nations (4,040 in the UK and 1,930 in the US). While the first cases were reported in most hotspot countries and India around the same time (last week of January), today, the outbreak is far more manageable in India than in most other countries. It was pragmatic for a resourcepoor country to be pre-emptive and declare a national lockdown when the total number of cases were still low at 500. The subsequent growth of the pandemic clearly shows a perceptible decline in the number of cases due to the lockdown. Though stringent, this was much-needed and a timely policy intervention by the government. It is important, however, to appreciate the high and growing opportunity costs that are involved during a lockdown. We must brace ourselves for longterm pandemic management (18 to 24 months) with significant economic impact

The immediate costs of the lockdown are borne by the most economically vulnerable people in society. This perhaps was the rationale behind the first round of economic policy interventions announced by the finance minister within a few days of the lockdown. They targeted front-loading of cash transfers through PM-Kisan, support to construction workers, self-help groups, food distribution through the public distribution system, among others. Beyond welfare concerns, there are significant growth concerns that are mounting with every day of economic inactivity in the country. Companies are struggling to honour payroll and maintain their workforce against cancelling orders and declining demand for their goods and services. These in turn will lead to greater delays and defaults in loan repayments, thereby further weakening the fragile banking sector and struggling credit markets.

The Reserve Bank of India stepped in for some timely monetary interventions, however, the longstanding climate of risk aversion within the banking sector will mean that transmission of these monetary interventions is unlikely to be timely or adequate. All eyes are set expectantly in one direction. Historically, when economies are faced with major calamities, governments step in to stabilise the environment and boost confidence within the business community who are the creators of wealth and employment. We have seen this response from all major economies disrupted by COVID-19 over the last several weeks. India will not be an exception to this as the government fine tunes its strategy to support and kickstart our immobilised economy. The opportunity cost of time, however, is ballooning with each passing day. Just like the spread of the virus, we are up against the

CONFIRMED CASES IN COUNTRIES WITH 50000+ CONFIRMED CASES, AND INDIA AS OF APRIL 30 640,000 320,000 160,000 Turkev: 120204 Case Double every 2 days 80,000 40,000 20,000 10,000 India Update 5.000 April 6: Reduction in growth rate, from cases doubling every 4 days to every 6 days Probably the effect of March 25th total lockdwon 2,000 March 29: Increase in growth rate, from cases doubling every 5 days to every 4 days 1,000 Probably the effect of March 13th to March 15th religous congregation at Nizamuddintotal lockdwon Probably the effect of March 12th State policies 500 March 23: Reduction in growth rate from 2. Shutdown of schools/colleges/public cases doubling every 3 days to 1. Travel ban and restrictions for certain 3. States pass stringent quarantine laws 200 Day 0, 300+ cases Day 10 Day 20 Day 40 Day 30 Day 50 Data Source: 2019 Novel coronavirus COVID-19 (2019-nCoV) Data Repository by Johns Hopkins CSSE Data update for India: 2020-05-01 02:32:28 (UTC) Mudit Kapoor (ISI, Delhi) & Shamika Ravi (Brookings)

full force and power of compounding. Mindful policy interventions, when timed well, can cut growing losses and the misfortune of many.

India is a large country and the current crisis keeps reminding us of that reality every day. While we have succeeded in slowing the growth of the virus at the national level, the true gains and pains are at the state and local level. As the data reveals, currently we have three states that have made remarkable gains and "flattened the curve" of COVID cases. These are Kerala, Haryana and Tamil Nadu where recoveries are growing and active cases are rapidly declining. States like Karnataka and Telangana are improving their recovery rates consistently, despite fluctuations. While every state and local administration has to keep eternal vigil and double down on containment and testing, they have to aggressively improve their contact tracing efforts with the help of their police who are trained in debriefing, call record mapping and have more manpower than public health departments of local administrations.

What should our strategy be? Given the scale and variation in infection control across the country, our national strategy needs to be informed and calibrated Currently, there are more than 300 districts in the country which have reported zero COVID-19 cases. This can be confirmed quickly with some random testing (we do have the capabilities to conduct these meaningfully) and the lockdown can be lifted effective immediately. Then there are about 225 districts which have reported less than 10 cases each. With adequate ring fencing at the level of the block where these cases are reported, these districts too can afford to lift their lockdowns. There are, however, approximately 30 districts across the country which have reported large numbers of confirmed cases and are identiIndia is a very large country

and the current crisis keeps

and the current crisis keeps reminding us of that reality every day. While we have succeeded in slowing the growth of the virus at the national level, the true gains and pains are at the state and local level. As the data reveals, currently we have three states that have made remarkable gains and 'flattened the curve' of COVID cases.

fied as "hotspots". The lockdown in these places needs to continue with some relaxations for basic trade and essential services. Not surprisingly, these "hotspots" are also important economic centres of the country. The capacity of the local administration to develop and enforce appropriate strategies of containment, contact tracing and testing, should determine their decisions to ring-fence and isolate blocks while allowing other parts of the district/city to resume economic activity.

Over the last month, India has developed

significant capacity to test and treat COVID-19 patients across the country by creating a large number of specialised fever clinics and identifying COVID hospitals across every state. Our disaggregated data analysis, however, suggests that there is no hospital rush of patients with symptoms of acute respiratory ailments like in the US, the UK, and Europe. Given the uncertainty of the virus, we seem prepared for large hospitalisation and care if the need arises. The efforts now must be to further contain the growth of the infection. If the current rate persists, we will reach over a lakh cases within three weeks. That is the power of compounding we are against. Beyond knowledge sharing across states and adopting successful containment strategies from each other, there is a role for the central government in providing "NSGlike" public health support teams to states that need them. On the economy front similarly, the central government's timely economic package should flatten the curve of exponentially rising opportunity costs across the sectors. Given the relative scale and virulence of the COVID-19 virus in India, the odds seem stacked in favour of a calibrated opening of the economy.

The writer is a former member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council

# Stronger after crisis

After pandemic passes, Madhya Pradesh will emerge as a logistics and warehousing hub for rebalanced supply chains



SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

COVID-19 IS undoubtedly the biggest challenge faced by our country since Independence. The bold and visionary decision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to enforce a lockdown early on has contained the spread of the virus.

Today, the resolve and dedication of medical, paramedical, police, and emergency services staff have ensured that the growth in confirmed cases in India is linear and not exponential as has been witnessed by many European countries and the United States of America. We salute our heroes.

Since the day of taking the oath, my priority has been the health and safety of the citizens of my state and to ensure that the last man standing in a queue is taken care of.

We have deposited Rs 885 crore in the accounts of 8.85 lakh registered labourers in the state. Seven lakh migrant workers based in 22 states have been given assistance to the tune of Rs 70 lakh. Rs 430 crore worth of scholarships have been disbursed. Sixty-six lakh students eligible for mid-day meals have been provided with Rs 117 crore. Forty-six lakh pension holders have been released advance pension of two months of Rs 562 crore.

A roadmap for prevention and containment of the virus was prepared as my predecessor government had not made any arrangements. A comprehensive IITT (Identification, Isolation, Testing, and Treatment) strategy was devised and implemented on a war footing. As of today, we have 20,243 isolation beds, 783 ICU beds, 690 ventilators, and 11 testing centres in the state.

Working on the mantra of self-reliance as propagated by our Prime Minister, PPE kits are being manufactured locally in the state. People have come out to support each other during this crisis - more than 57,000 volunteers have registered and are helping in government relief work.

In Madhya Pradesh, the growth in cases

has moderated and the situation is under control. The spirit of the people of Indore and Bhopal, who have set standards for cleanliness for the rest of the country, will overcome this battle. The cooperation of people of the state with the state government despite facing challenges has been commendable.

Every crisis presents an opportunity. Corona has given us PRERNA. It has taught us to be patient, reflective, empathetic, resilient, natural, and austere.

As Aristotle has put it, "Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet." All of us are patiently staying at home to ensure that we remain safe and India remains healthy. This is already showing better results. This is also likely to strengthen our relationships.

As Paul T P Wong said, "Time spent in self-reflection is never wasted - it is an intimate date with yourself." Utilise this time wisely. The world may never be the same again. Analyse and hone your skill-sets to be better prepared for the future.

"Empathy," it is said, "is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another, and feeling with the heart of another." The entire nation has shown empathy towards the plight of the migrant workers and people are helping in whatever small way they can by providing food and shelter to the needy. We feel the pain of our brothers and stand with them in this crisis.

As Steve Maraboli wrote: "Life doesn't get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient." The crisis will make us stronger. These life-long learnings will prepare us to face challenges in the future. As Frank Lloyd Wright famously said,

As Frank Lloyd Wright famously said, "Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you." The chirping of the birds, the clearer skies, and good air quality during the lockdown have all brought us closer to nature and made us realise its importance.

Most of us are enjoying no comforts or luxuries during the lockdown. E-commerce platforms and local kirana shops are selling only essential items. People are also consuming less without hoarding so that there is no shortage for the needy, leading lives of austerity.

The way businesses are run will undergo a sea change post COVID. Many companies would permanently shift persons in certain roles and functions to work from home. Remote working provides access to a bigger resource pool for companies. This will provide enhanced job opportunities for the talented youth of Madhya Pradesh.

The coronavirus has disrupted supply chains globally. This is likely to result in diversification of supply chains. Madhya Pradesh is geographically located at the centre of India. It has the potential to emerge as a logistics hub for the country in the near future, as a rebalancing of supply chains takes place. Resultantly, the state will become the warehousing hub of the country.

The entire political establishment is working together under the leadership of Narendra Modi to tackle the spread of the coronavirus. We have to remain vigilant, follow the lockdown strictly, and maintain social distancing so that the gains made to date are not negated. The next 10 days are crucial. Stay home, stay safe. Together, we will defeat corona and emerge stronger.

Jan Jan Ki Aas, Haarega Corona, Hoga Vikas!

> The writer is the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh



# COVID-19, a morality tale

It should inspire countries to recommit to principle of universal bio-deterrence

Lakshmi Puri

"IT'S AN ideal weapon because it only destroys people... It's a virus, airborne, indestructible, self-perpetuating, multiplying beyond our calculations and all life will cease to exist everywhere... Nothing can stop the Satan Bug." Gregor Hoffman, the insane bioscientist in the 1962 Alistair MacLean science fiction book and the 1965 film on the same (The Satan Bug), ominously described biological weapons thus.

The COVID-19 pandemic has suddenly awakened the world to the destructive potential of extreme biological events. Many see COVID-19 as a quasi-biological war in its scale, scope, duration and impact. UN secretary general Antonio Guterres has called this the biggest international crisis since World War II. Health and biosecurity have, thus, become paramount in national security in 2020.

COVID-19 illustrates the insidious nature and catastrophic potential of biological weapons. Highly transmissible and deadly, new biological agents cannot be anticipated and the time lag in finding treatment and vaccines inflicts high morbidity and mortality on defenseless populations. The latency period and mutation into different strains makes disease detection and control elusive. Mass contagion and fatalities can bring even the most powerful countries to their knees and economies to a halt. Societies can be put into turmoil and governance can suffer serious crises.

As such, our preparedness to detect extant and potential, natural and more dangerous, human-manipulated biological agents, and biodefend in a timely way is vital. Making all our normal laboratories and medical facilities transformable into a seamless

biosecurity infrastructure for quick and reliable testing, and vaccine development and deployment in telescoped time, is critical.

Any bioweapon attack or pandemic affects the armed forces' capacity to deal with other WMDs, conventional and terrorist threats. The double jeopardy of armed forces getting weakened by the disease and their resources being diverted for pandemic response poses security challenges. Biosecurity should be mainstreamed into our defence, security and counterterrorism strategies. Ideally, a dedicated National Rapid Deployment Biosecurity Force of armed forces, police and health responders should perform frontline pandemic-related bio-defence, and disaster relief and response roles.

The COVID-19 war has exposed the challenges of differentiating between the offensive and defensive: Peaceful and aggressive purposes of biological agents. We, therefore, need to reengineer verification and certification systems for accurate differentiation. Similarly, health security and biosecurity are complementary but require distinguishing between intentional harm and inadvertent transmission.

The controversy about whether the COVID-19 virus was natural or human-engineered in a Wuhan lab and accidentally released, and the US government investigation into it, elucidates the challenges of biosafety. Hand wringing about being blind sided during the first stirrings of the pandemic in China has exposed weaknesses in the international early warning systems. Effective, credible, national and international, biointelligence and bio-surveillance systems — especially for new diseases and potential

bioweapons — are critical. China's full disclosure and cooperation, as the virus originating country, is essential.

Stopping hostile state or non-state actors from stealthily and easily developing biological weapons is imperative. Biosafety demands prevention of accidental release or theft of biological disease agents from multiple, unevenly secured research facilities — governmental and private R&D labs, biotech and virology centres of countries. These facilities need to be catalogued according to established containment/safety levels, especially for dangerous biological toxins. Protocols in case of accidents and theft need to be established for them.

National defence intelligence should incorporate medical intelligence and infectious diseases-risk assessment, and pandemic predictions. A dynamic national strategy for bio-intelligence and cooperation with friendly biosecurity powers is needed. Close coordination with the national public health systems, and keeping a careful tab on biodefence facilities is indispensable.

The COVID-19 experience has shown the lack of authoritative and independent multilateral biosurveillance mechanisms. We need to empower the WHO's health security mechanisms to surveil and access facilities in ground zero countries, free from geopolitical pressures. India needs to propel the early reinforcement of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention with a comprehensive, legally-binding protocol on credible biosurveillance, verification and compliance mechanism at the 2021 review conference.

Biological weapons are now more

amenable to be used by non-state actors. Biosafety is key to preventing and combating bioterrorism as is the non-proliferation and export control on dual-use biological materials and technologies. Implementing the UNGA Resolution 1540 of 2019 — on general and complete disarmament measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring such WMDs — assumes significance.

We have to make our infrastructure, economy and healthcare bio-attack and pandemic-proof. Protocols for re-engineering the spatial matrix of production, work, mobility and delivery of essential services and IT-based health surveillance may now have to be hardwired. As a part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of economic and health security symbiosis, India should pursue national self-sufficiency in medical and healthcare supply chains and essential goods, services and technologies, and develop a robust export capacity for global health security.

COVID-19 has hurt the origin country, but in equal measure. China's global economic footprint and connectivity has also triggered a disastrous worldwide pandemic. We know now that in a biological war, every country will be devastated. There will be no victors and humanity will be vanquished. COVID-19 should be a morality tale to inspire all countries to recommit to abjuring the use of disease as a weapon of war, and a doctrine of universal bio-deterrence. India should mobilise international cooperation and solidarity to stop and banish the "Satan Bug" forever.

The writer is former assistant secretarygeneral of the United Nations and deputy executive director of UN Women

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## THOUGHTLESS STATE THIS REFERS TO the editorial, Going

home'(IE, May 1). When the sudden lockdown was announced without adequate preparation, it felt like a thoughtless step. There appeared to be no concern about the plight of not only tens of millions of migrant workers but also lakhs of senior citizens and women living alone in cities and towns. Surprisingly, this did not occur to our decision makers. It would have been better and less risky if people likely to be affected by COVID-19 it were given a week's time to prepare and the public transport system mobilised to facilitate their movement.

S N Shukla, Lucknow

#### IMMORTAL MEMORIES

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Matters of death' (IE, May 1). In mourning death, we inevitably mourn the irreplaceability of the person. Yet, why in the case of artistes like Irfan Khan and Rishi Kapoor does the mourning becomes personal even for their millions of nameless fans? Perhaps, it is because through their timeless performances, they gave us an experience of the sublime that takes us beyond mortality.

ond mortality. **Sunil Macwan,** Ahmedabad

#### LABOUR SECURITY

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The new deal India needs' (IE, May 1). An urban employment guarantee is the need of the hour. Had such a policy been in place, the crisis that labour is facing in cities like Delhi and Mumbai could have been averted.

New Delhi

Tarun Sharma, Aligarh

## LETTER OF THE WEEK

#### GLARING GAPS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Reset and reform' (IE, April 29). Inadequacies and deficiencies intrinsic in our health system and the absence of a support system, especially for daily wage workers, are attenuating our efforts to contain the Coronavirus. Though our government is seemingly making allout efforts to cope with this contagion, the initial delay in our response to it cannot be just wished away. Our taking shelter under the extenuating claims like the small death toll in our country as compared to those in other countries will only show our reluctance to learn from our mistakes. Tarsem Singh, Mahilpur

#### IRRFAN'S HONESTY

THIS REFERS TO the article 'He waited and won' (IE, May 1). Irrfan Khan wasn't born with a silver spoon. He was an outlier. He made his way up without being particularly good looking. The lesson for us in his struggle is that talent and hardwork do get recognition. Patience, as the writer suggests, is the key. The single most striking aspect of Irrfan's life, though, was honesty. In spite of success, he didn't lose the common touch. The sea of emotions expressed by his eyes will be difficult to forget.

M Abdullah Ghazali, Patna

#### <u>Orth Western Railway</u> Open E-Tender Notice

Divi. Rly. Manager, Engineering, N.W. Railway, Jaiupr for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tender for the following works up to 15.30 hours on date shown as below: Tender No.: ENGG-JP-2020-21-25, Name of work with Location: Jaipur Division DEN (East) Section: UP-gradation of level crossings from B-1, B-2 & C class to special class (15 Nos.), Approx. cost of work: 6567459/-, Earnest Money Rs.: 131300/-, Tender No.: ENGG-JP-2020-21-26, Name of work with Location: DEN/E/JP/Section: Replacement of broken sleepers, manual deep screening and repair of guard rail of important bridge no.23 in RE-AWR UP Line (1350 Sleepers), Approx. cost of work: 6436660/-, Earnest Money Rs.: 128700/-, Tender No.: ENGG-JP-2020-21-27, Name of work with Location: Bandikui: Repairs to road surface in colony and at L-Xings, Approx. cost of work: 4957362/-, Earnest Money Rs.: 99100/-, Tender No.: ENGG-JP-2020-21-28, Name of work with Location: ADEN (SIKAR) Sub division-Provision of stone Pitching, Dwarf wall & Toe wall at various locations in RGS - SIKAR Section., Approx. cost of work: 5817126/-, Earnest Money Rs.: 116300/-, Tender No.: ENGG-JP-2020-21-29, Name of work with Location: JP-Division-TRR (P): ENGG-JP-2020-21-29, Name of work with Location: JP-Division-TRR (P): PNGB-FL & CKS-SWM section, CTR on Br. No.-23, TTR (CS+CMSC) and various track related works in CTR on Br. No.-23, TTR (CS+CMSC) and various track related works in ADEN(L) JP & FL Sub division., Approx. cost of work: 46585945/-, Earnest Money Rs.: 382900/-, Tender No.: ENGS-JP-2020-21-30, Name of work with Location: Jaipur - Cleaning of Overhead and under ground water tanks (Sumps) in SSE(M) S-1/JP jurisdiction (For Two Years), Approx. cost of work: 603490/-, Earnest Money Rs.: 12100/-, 1. Other terms & condition will be shown on N.W.Rly website www.ireps.gov.in. No any manual tender will be accepted. 2. Payment of earnest Money deposit (EMD) & tender document cost (TDC) in repect of E-tendering should be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. The payment is to be made in favour of FA & CAO, NWR, Jaipur, other wise tender will not be expected. 2. Datail: a waitable of N.W.Rly website weaking the payment is to be made in favour of FA & CAO. ill not be considered. 3. Detail is available of N.W.Rly website www.ireps.gov.ir and Notice Board in WA section. DRM Office. NWR/Jaipur, 4. Tender No. ENGG-JF 2020-21-25 to ENGG-JP-2020-21-30 is to be closed on 26.05.20 at 15.30 hrs and ppened on 26.05.20 at 16.00 hrs. 5. M/s Shree Shyam Enterprises-Dausa, Radha Krishan colony, Behind Police Station, Bandikui, Ward No 12 Bandikui-Dausa Dausa-303313 in Tender No. ENGG-JP-2020-21-30 shall not be participated. 432-SP/20

Please join us on MWRailways

Supply, Installation & Testing and Commissioning of

Online Effluent Quality Monitoring system for Effluen

Note: Conigendum if any will be uploaded on website only.

Treatment Plant at Verka Patiala Dairy.

CORP./AUTH

HPGCL PANIPAT

HPGCL,PANIPAT

HPGCL, PANIPAT

HPGCL/WNIPAT

**HPGCLPANIDAT** 

THE HISAR JIND CO OP. HILK PRODUCERS UNION

LTD., MILK PLANT, INO.

LIHEWN PANCHILLA

UHBVN PANCHKULA

UHBVN PANCHKULA

UHBYN PANCHKULA

NAME OF

HARYANA LIVESTOCK

DEVELOPMENT ROARD

PANCHKULA

UHBVN PANCHKULA

UHBVN PANCHKULA

UHBVN PANCHKULA

UHBYN PANCHKULA

UHBVN PANCHKULA

HPGCL, PANIPAT

HPGCL, PAMPAT

HPGCL, FANIPAT

HPGCL, PANIPAT

MC SONIPAT

HARYANA POLICE HOUSING

CORPORATION, PANCHKULA

vailable on https://www.uktenders.gov.in from 06.05.2020

Name of work

Renewal work by S.D.B.C. in State Guest House

approach road in Km 1,2 & 3(200m) under Annua

Repair for Financial year 2020-21 (Length-2.200Km)

10

SR.

2

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12

#### NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/General, North Western Railway, Bikaner for & or pehalf of the President of India invites E-tenders for the following work. 1. Complete details of tenders can be een on Website No. : http://www ireps.gov.in, 2. Date & time of closing o -tenders: 26.05.2020 at 15.00 hours, 3 Date & time of opening of e-tenders After 15.00 Hrs on 26.05.2020, Tende Notice No.: 16-Elect-BKN-E-Tender-19 20R, Name of work: Outsourcing of maintenance of TL & AC coaches of Train No 14712 at Sriganganagar fo one year.. Approx Cost of the work: Rs 3433274.21, EMD/SD (Rupees) BKN-E-Tender-19-20, Name of work comprehensive maintenance contrac of storage type water coolers for 2 vears over Bikaner Division, Approx Cost of the work : Rs. 1099364.00, EMD/SD (Rupees) : Rs. 22000.00, Tender Notice No. : 01-Elec-BKN-Eender-20-21, Name of work Comprehensive maintenance contract of DG sets over Bikaner Division for two years, Approx Cost of the work: Rs 5715093.00, EMD/SD (Rupees) : Rs 114300.00 437-SP/20

Please join us on I . /NWRailways

THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-150022, EPABX NO. 0172-5041812

Bidders shall have to pay required Tender Processing fee through online mode only i.e. through debt to red living registered for extending system. EMD should be made only through online mode i.e. Credit Debt cand, NEFT.RTCS, Internet Banking. For participating in the above extender, the parties shall have to get themselves registered with our e-Tendering portal i.e. eproc. puripib gov in and get USER ID and Password well in time. For

downloading tender through a-tendering, process flow, please contact a Procurement help deck on given Nos. 0172-2970253, 2970254 immediately so that process of timely registration and downloading the tender is completed in timely the date of tender opening. For additional details regarding a fundering please visit veice to approximately the date of tender opening. For additional details regarding a fundering please visit veice to approximately the date of tender opening.

HARYANA GOVERNMENT

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

NATURE OF CORREGENDUM

Start date: 18:01.2020 at 18:00 Hrs.S. Last date 05:05.2020 at

13:00 Ptrs. Start date: 31:01:2000 at 18:00 Hrs. & Last: tiske 06:05:2020 at

13:00 H/s Closing date 18:05:2020 at 13:00 H/s. CVERHAULDING OF PA, FD, ID FANS AND FILLE GAS DUCTING OF BOOLER OF 150 HW, UNIT-7,

PTPS, RANIPAT

Start date: 03.03.2020 at 17:00 Hrs.N. Last: date 05.05.2020 at

Start date: 21.01.2020 at 18:00 hrs. & Last date 20:05.2020 at 12:00 hrs.

The tenders no. 123999, 123602, 123603 and 123604 called for various possitionalizers in Milk Union Hisar and at Milk Prant, and for the year 2020-21 for which technical back have already been opened on 21.04.2020 are hereby cancelled till further order due to some administrative reasons.

Previous date of Closing: 23.04.2030 Previous date of opening: 14.04.3020 Scheduled date of Closing: 14.05.2030 Scheduled date of Opening: 15.05.2030

Previous date of Cleanor, 23,04,2020 Previous date of opening; 24,04,2020 Scheduled date of Cleanor, 14,05,2020 Scheduled date of Opening, 15,05,2020

Previous date of Closing: 23.04.2020 Previous date of opening: 34.04.2020 Scheduled date of Closing: 14.05.2020 Scheduled date of Opening: 15.05.2020

Previous date of Closing: 23.04.2020 Previous date of opening: 24.04.2020 Scheduled date of Closing: 14.05.2020 Scheduled date of Opening: 15.05.2020

TENDER NOTICE

**OPENING** 

DATE

DATE

(TIME)

30.04.2020

08.05.2020

CLOSING DATE

18,05,2020

CLOSING DATE

14,05,2020

CLOSING DATE

14,05,2020

CLOSING DATE

14.05.2020

CLOSING DATE

14.05.2020

17,04,2020

18.05.2020

20.05.2020

20,04,2020

20,05,2020

16.04.2020

20,05,2020

CLOSING DATE

20,05,2020

04.05.2020

Contractor's

Category of

Registration

Category "D' & Above in

Road works

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

Completion

06 Months

THUCOMA

EMD

IN

RUPEES

1.40 LACS

6000/-

10.31 LACS

6.60 LACS

391311

on reserve

cost

12.84 LACS

7.95 LACS

8.50 LACS

1.82 LACS

3.97 LACS

41.16 LACS

1197.46

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT: www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

Consigneer Place of

Tender Opening

Verka Patiala Dairy

One Job

OLD REFERENCE/NIT NO.

(NET NO PTP/POH-111890)

[BRT NG PTRYON-LILING) (
TENDER ID 2022-1900, [24715, 1]
(NIT NG PTRYON-100040) (
TENDER ID 2020-1900, [18734 1])
SHGANN-7020(FARS DUCTING (2019
(TENDER ID NO. 2019-1900, [19740, 19740))

101930\_1) ( NET NO A2/END-IV/LT/ E-224)

VDL-III) (TENDER ID2020\_HBC\_121342\_1)

( NIT NO PTP/PDM-100032) (TENDER 3D 2020\_HBC\_115912\_1)

(23599,123602,123603 AND 123604

REG. CONSTRUCTION OF 4-E" HT DWALL AT 33KV S/STN. DHARAMGARH (PANIFAT) BALANCE

PURCHASE OF SYRINGES & NEEDLES

I NO. MAHINDERA BALERO, WITH DRIVER, FOR

DIVISION UHBVN NARAINGARH

CONSTRUCTION OF U FENCING, SUPPLY AND

SPREADING OF GRAVEL (20-25MM) IN YARD ETC. FOR

RENOVATION OF 33KV S/STN, 15RANA UNDER OP

S/DIVIN. ISRANA (PANIPAT)
CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS CIVIL WORKS FOR

AUGMENTATION AT 33KV 5/STN, NARA (PNP)

DISMANTLING OF 8 NOS TYPE -III RESIDENTIA

QUARTERS, OVERHEAD WATER TANK AND PUMP HOUSE

AT JASSIA (ROHTAK)

(ON RESERVED COST)

CONSTRUCTION OF YARJOUS CIVIL WORKS FOR

AUGMENTATION AT 33KV S/STN, NARAINA (PNP)

(NET NO.135/BMD-8/40 VOL-VII)

(NIT NO.PTP/POM-300052)

(NIT NO.PTP/POM-100045)

(NIT NO.PTP/PCM-200037)

PROVIDING & LAYING OF IPB TILES IN VARIOUS

STREETS OF RK COLONY M.C. SONEPAT.

CONSTRUCTION / UP-GRADATION / SPECIAL REPAIR

PROVIDING / RENOVATION / WORKS IN VARIOUS

DISTRICTS OF HARYANA STATE.

Office of the Executive Engineer

Provincial Division, P.W.D. Bageshwar

Phone/Fax.No:- 05963-220006 Email ID:-pdpwdbgr@gmail.com

Earnest

ender form Money (Rs. of Tender

0.55

60 Days

**Short Term Tender Notice (e-Tendering)** 

The Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, Public Works Department Bageshwar invites Online Short Term (Single Bio

System) e-Tender for the following works on behalf of hon ble Governor of Uttarakhand. All information regarding tender will be

(in Rs.)

2000.00-

Notice Inviting a Tender

E.M.D. (Rs.)

Sale of tender

W.e.f. 07.05.2020

#### NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender Notice No. - 2028-Accounts-1 On behalf of President of India, Senior Divisional Finance Manager North Central Railway/Agra invites the 'Open Tender' through 'On-Line (E Tender)" only for the following work:

Name of Work & Place	Total Approximate. Cost of work (?)
(3)	2
"Hiring of One Motor Non AC vehicle TAVERA"	₹ 8,27,760.241-
TOYOTA/OUALIS/SCORPIO or similar Make not	(Rs. EightLilich
earlier than 2018 5 in good working condition.	Twenty Seven Thousand
including Driver, Fuel, Crewand Maintenance etc.	Seven Hundred Sixty
for 24 months for official use of Cash & PaylAgra	& Twenty Four

For complete dotals of this tender, kindly go through the Indian Railway Website www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderers may apply their offers through this portal up to 21.05.2020 at 15.00 Hrs. For this work no manual tender will be accepted and the received lenders manually, if any, will not be 502/20 FA

Last Data & Time of

21.05.2020 upto

94:00 PM

WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH

www.hpgcl.org.in

www.hpgel.org.in

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www.hogel.org.in

https://etenders.hry.nic.in

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https://etenders.htv.nic.in

WEBSITE OF THE BOARD

http://pashudhanharyana.gov.in

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(CPRONCE Morth central ratherys

Office for running of 2000 Kms per month. (Nature)

of work: 12 Hrs penday without any Hobbis-Resti."

The Executive Engineer, Civil Divisio

Only)

www.verka.coop

Date & Time of

paring of e-tender

Technical Bid

22,05,2000 at 02:00 PM

Financial Bid

28 05 2020 at 11:00 AM

General Manager (PBLM)

NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT

DETAILS/EMAIL

0190-2566015

penmispigLijigmeil.com 0190-2566015

remit plg Light and com-9155009303

sennicpig1@gmeil.com

0180-2506015

venntcptgt@gmail.com

0100-2566015

venntcpigt@gmeil.com

xencivishtymrohtak@gmail.com

xencivilutio-mrofitan@gmail.com

xenciviluhtrunrohtak@gmail.com

xenciviuhtrymrohtak@gmail.com

NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT

DETAILS/EMAIL

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93547-26356

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xenciviluhbwarahtak@gmail.com

0180-2566015

senntcpig1@gmail.com

enntcpig1@gmail.com

0180-2566015

renmtopiq1@gmail.com

nco l'emp@toggrantes

serrcsonepat@gmail.com

dbpanchkula@yehoo.com

No. V, Irrigation and Flood Contro Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi Near Paryavaran Complex, Saiduilajal lew Delhi 110030 invites on behalf of resident of India, on line percentage ate tender from approved and eligible ontractors registered wth Irrigation flood Control Department up to 3:00 P.N on dates mentioned as below

**E-TENDERING** 

**PRESS NOTICE** 

. NIT 01/2020-21/EECD-V/IFCD (ID No 020\_IFC\_190336\_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A.: - 2711 Non Plan.

N.O.W.:- Removal of obstructions of Asola Nalla from RD 400 Metre to 1400 Metre and its maintenance for a period of 0 month. **E.C.** Rs. 26,84,117/- **Earnes Money** Rs. 53,682/- **Period o** Money Rs. 53,682/- Period o Completion 360 Days. (Date of opening 6.05.2020).

1). The enlistment of the contractor ould be valid on the last date of pening of tenders. In case the last date of opening of tender is extended the nlistment of contractor should be valid on the original date of opening of tenders.

2). Earnest Money in physical form i.e. deposited at FDR/Banker cheque/ emand Draft of schedule bank issued in evour of EE CD V I&FC Deptt. should be ploaded with the tender documents. Lontractor has to submit uploaded EMD nmediately after opening the tenders of ntimation.

3). Details of above mentioned work car seen and downloaded from website http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in

ocurement portal shall be accepted 5). Corrigendum, if any will be published

n e-procurement web site only. EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CD.V.

#### REQUEST FOR EMPANELMENT (RFE) OF CONSULTANTS The Chief Engineer (HZ)HP.PWD. Hamirpur on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the proposals , in electronic/Offline ring system from the eligible consultants for empanelment as detailed in the table. Scope of Proposal Cost of ender formation of Bid Empanelment of consultants for 25.05.2020 Preparation of Detailed Project Report of Roads & Bridges and other related reports. Design Consultancy for : Design of Buildings and ii) Design of Bridges. 500 06.05.2020 25.000 11.00 AM The bidders are advised to note other details of proposal from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in Chief Engineer (HZ) HPPWD, Hamirpur. Pin Code 17700 Telephone No. 01972-222925, e-mail: ce-ham-hp@nic.ir On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

# भारतीय कंटेनर निगम लिमिटेड CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD. एक नवरल कम्पनी (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) A Navratna Company (A Govt. of India Undertaking) ICD, Tughlakabad, New Delhi - 110 020

TENDER NOTICE (E-Tendering Mode Only) Online Open Tender in Two Bid system for **E-Tender cum Reverse Auction for Professional Service** of Cargo Handling at Inland Container Depot at PSWC, Dappar only through e-tendering mode. CON/NR/TC/Cargo, Hand./PSWC/2020
Professional Services of Cargo Handling at ICD/PSWC, Dappar ender No ₹54,91,602/-(including GST) per annum Estimated Cost eriod of the contract ₹1,09,900/- through e-payment ₹1000/- inclusive of all taxes and duties through e-paymen Earnest Money Deposit ender Processing Fee ₹3,240/-inclusive of all taxes and duties (Non-refundable) through From 02.05.2020 at 1500 hrs. (upto 15.05.2020 at 1600 hrs.) Date of Sale (On Line) ast Date & Time of submission On 18.05.2020 upto 1500 hrs.

Date & Time of Opening Through e-payment or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eprocure.gov.in or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eligibility criteria and other details please log onto www.concorindia.com or eligibility criteria and other details please log or eligibility criteria and other details please log or eligibility criteria and other details please log or eligibility criteria and other details p Through e-payment www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL. Bidders are requested to visit the websites regularly. CONCO reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof. For comple details logon to www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL. Group General Manager/N. Group General Manager/NR

On 19.05.2020 at 1530 hrs.

Date: 30-04-2020 The office of Executive Engineer (Maimenance), MS-II. Chinyshaaur (Utarkashi) invites tenderforthefollowing work-NRT No-06EE (MyNIB-8/20-21: Procurement of Rotating shaft Sleeve for 76 NW

utoines at Dharasu Power House, MB-H. Uttarkashi. NIT No-07/EE (M)/NB-1/20-21: Procurement of steel wire tope slings for Turbine units at

"e" Tender Notice

Charasu Power House M.S.-It, Ultarkashi 1. Approx value of work : Rs 92352800, Rs 78060000 only + (Taxes extra)

Tender Cost: Rs. 590.00 for each tende

RO No.: 256/UJVNIL

3. Earnest Money: Rs. 280001- , Rs. 240001-00 only Respectively Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal: 01 05 2020 at 15:00 Hrs.

5. Last Date/Time for receipt of bid in the portal: 23-05-2020 up to 16 00 H s 6. Last Date/Time for receipt of Hard copy in the office: 26-05-2020 up to 14:00 H s Date of opening of bid on the website: 27-05-2020 at 11:00 firs.

8. Name & Address of the officer inviting the bid. EE (Maintenance), MB-II, Dharass, PowerHouse, Dharasu.

Further details, subsequent addendum/corrigendum/cancellation etc. may be seen at e progrement portal http://uktenders.gov in

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

#### **E-TENDER PRESS NOTICE**

The EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CD-XIII

(ID No. 2020\_IFC\_190390\_1) Major Head of Account 2711 (Revenue) Name of Work: Maintenance o Mungeshour drain between (RD 0m to 10362m). Estimated Cost (in Rs.) 9.52.200/- Earnest Money (in Rs.) 19,044/- Time allowed 180 Days. Last date & time of receiving & opening of tender through E-Procurement System 07.05.2020 on 15.00 Hrs & 15.05 Hrs

NIT No. E.E/CD-13/Acs/2020-21/02 D No. 2020 IFC 190392 1) Major Name of Work: Maintenance of B.C Drain free domestic garbage floating material like hyacinth Polythene bags etc from RD 0m to RD 8550m. Estimated Cost (in Rs.) 8,56,980/-Earnest Money (in Rs.) 17,140/- Time Illowed 180 Days. Last date & time of eceiving & opening of tender through Procurement System 07.05.2020 or 15 00 Hrs & 15 05 Hrs respectively NIT No. E.E/CD-13/Acs/2020-21/03 (ID No. 2020\_IFC\_190394\_1) Major Head of Account 2711 (Revenue) Name of Work: Disposal of garbage, C & D waste from Mungeshpur drair etween RD 0m to 10362m upto MCD Processing Burari/Khampur/Bakkarwala Estimated Cost (in Rs.) 6.51.727/-Earnest Money (in Rs.) 13,035/- Time allowed 180 Days. Last date & time o eceiving & opening of tender through -Procurement System 07.05.2020 or 15.00 Hrs & 15.05 Hrs respectively. Note:- 1) Details of above mention

ndum if any, will be available at web site only. EMD in the form of Banker

rebsite within the period of bid submis ion. The original EMD should be

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CD-XIII** 

I&FC Department Govt. of Delhi, or behalf of the President of India, invites Online Percentage rate tender from the approved and eligible contractors regis tered with IRRIGATION AND FLOOD CONTROL DEPARTMENT. The conractors who are registered with othe department and now got their registrations verified from I&FC Deptt. are eligi ble to participate in Tender process for

. NIT No. E.E/CD-13/Acs/2020-21/01

vorks & eligibility criteria can be seen and downloaded from the web site https://govteprocurement.delhi.gov.in Amendment(s)/alteration(s)/corri

eque/DD/Fixed Deposit receipt in F/o EE/CD-XIII, I&FC Deptt Shall be canned and uploaded to the e-tende deposited in the office of EE/CD-XIII I&FC Deptt. within the period of bio

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE, ANANTNAG J&K (Camp Office: MMABM District Hospital, Anantnag)

Contact No. 01932-227624, E-mail: gmcanantnag2018@gmail.com Website: www.gmcanantnag.net NIT No. 07 GMCA of 2020

Dated: 29.04.2020 Abbreviated NIT for Supply/Installation/ Commissioning of High End Biochemistry Subject: Analyzer on Reagent Rental Basis.

On behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K, Principal, Government Medical College, Anantnag invites tenders from the original manufacturers/ their Indian Subsidiaries/ Indian Agents on the Authorization of Principal Manufacturers/ Indian Subsidiary if 100% Subsidiary of Foreign Principals (for imported equipment) and manufacturers/ their Authorized dealers for the J&K State (for indigenous equipment) for supply/ installation/ commissioning of High End Biochemistry Analyzer on Reagent Rental Basis as per following details:

Name of the Equipment	Qty.	EMD	Cost of tender document
High End Biochemistry Analyzer	02	Rs. 1,00,000/-	Rs. 750/-
	<u> </u>		

The Bidding documents consisting of specifications and detailed terms and conditions of contract can be had from the office of the Principal, Government Medical College, Anantnag (Planning Section) on production of Tender Fees in the form of DD drawn from any Nationalized Bank favoring Principal, Government Medical College, Anantnag payable at Anantnag (J&K) and a Covering Letter from the Agency requesting for issuance of the tender document. The schedule of dates is given as below:-

Date of issuing of tender document	From 01.05.2020 to 15.05.2020
Date from which tender can be submitted	05.05.2020
Last Date of submission of bid	21.05.2020 (upto 2.00 P.M.)
Opening of Bid	25.05.2020

Sd/- (Prof. Shaukat Jeelani), Principal/Dean, Government Medical College,



DIPK-NB-176

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida - 201301 (U.P.)

### **E-TENDER NOTICE**

E-Tenders are invited from eligible firms/contractors for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDA Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com and http://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

- .08/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 M/o W/s (Cleaning of UGR or Network Sector-88, 90 & 168), Noida (For Two Years). Cost - ₹ 38.83 Lacs.
- 2.51/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 M/o Sewerage (Desilting of main deep sewer line by Super sucker machine in Network Sec-33, 34, 35), Noida (For Two Years). **Cost - ₹ 29.17 Lacs.**
- . 55/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 M/o Sewerage (Cleaning of Deep Sewer Line by Super Sucker Machine in Sector - 90, 136 & 137), Noida. **Cost - ₹ 53.38 Lacs**. . 62/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 - M/o Sewerage (Desilting of Deep

Sewer Line by Super Sucker Machine in Sector - 88 and

Village- Yakubpur), Noida. Cost - ₹ 49.40 Lacs. Γhe above tenders can be uploaded by date 08/05/2020 upto 5:00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on

date 11/05/2020 at 11:00 AM. 5.70/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 - M/o W/s (S/F of Line Shaft for UGR & TWs in Sector - 28, 29, 37), Noida (For Two Year).

- Cost ₹ 45.34. Lacs. 6.71/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 - Reboring and Chlorination Plant in Different Sectors (Reboring of TW No. 14/21) Noida.
- Cost ₹ 30.14 Lacs. **'. 72/SM(Jal)-II/ET/19-20 -** M/o Sewerage (P/L of Damaged
- Sewer Line in Various Sector 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 136, 137 138, 139, 140, 140 A, 150 & 168), Noida. Cost -₹ 48.20 Lacs.
- The above tenders can be uploaded by Date 15/05/2020 upto 5:00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on

(Yogendra Kumar) Office Sector-37 Noida Senior Manager (JAL)-II, Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

Date 18/05/2020 at 11:00 AM.

URBAN ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT 4TH Floor, D Block, Indravati Bhavan (HOD Building), Nava Raipur Atal Nagar, Chhattisgarh, 492002 Phone 0771-2222972 Fax 0771/2222409 Email: technicalcellraipur2017@gmail.com

**RFP NOTICE** 

09/UADD/2020/2706

R.O. No. G-80351/1

NAVA RAIPUR ATAL NAGAR, DATED 29.04.2020 RFP for "RFP for Appointment of PR Agency for carrying of IEC activities, Social Media Handling and PR related work of UADD Chhattisgarh."

Urban Administration and Development Department (UADD) is the Mission Directorate for

implementation of all Schemes of Urban Development in the State. Through this notice UADD invites bid for "RFP for Appointment of PR Agency for carrying of IEC activities, Social Media Handling and PR related work of UADD Chhattisgarh.

Name of work	EMD	RFP Document Fee
RFP for "RFP for Appointment of PR Agency for carrying of IEC activities, Social Media Handling and PR related work of UADD Chhattisgarh."	, ,	INR 10,000/-

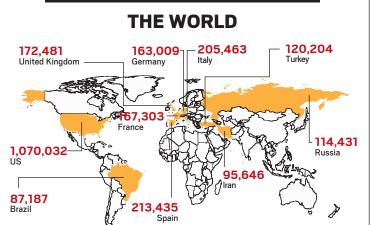
- 1. RFP documents can be seen on the website <a href="http://uad.cg.gov.in">http://uad.cg.gov.in</a> and downloaded from the said portal.
- 2. The RFP can be postponed or cancelled at any time due to administrative reasons and no claim shall be entertained on this account.
- 3. Modifications/ Amendments/ Corrigendum, if any shall not be advertised in the newspaper but shall be published in the departmental website only. The undersigned reserves the right to change the terms and conditions, select/ reject any application without assigning any reason thereof.

Chief Engineer **Urban Administration and Development Department** Chhattisgarh, Nava Raipur Atal Nagar

Category "D" Renewal work by P.C. in Garur-Kapkoti-Falyati Motor 3000.00-60 Days 06 Months 0.95 road in Km 1 to 4 under Annual Repair for Financia & Above in year 2020-21 (Length- 4.00Km) Road works Renewal work by P.C. in Dangoli-Sailani-Darimkhet 60 Days 06 Months Category "D' Harbar-Pandrapali-Balighat-Dofar-Dharamghar-18% GST & Above in otmanya-Pakhu-Thal-Saatsiling motor road (SH:60 Road works in Km 36(330m), 37, 38(670m) under Annual Repai for Financial year 2020-21 (Length-2.00Km) Fabrication, Erection, Bearing fixing, Riveting and 60 Days 09 Months Category "D' painting work in 30m span bridle bridge on Lahur 18% G.S.T & Above in River near Jakh Khari under District Sector in Distric Road works Bageshwar. 5 Renewal work by P.C. in Bageshwar-Girechhina-60 Davs 06 Months Category "D" & Above in 2500.00+ 0.70 Repair for Financial year 2020-21 (Length-3.00Km) Road works Renewal work by S.D.B.C. in Km 3,4,5 & 12 of Karnprayag-Simali-Gwaldam-Chaukuri-Thal-Category "C" & Above in 4000.00 60 Days 09 Months 1.20 Munsyari-Jauljivee Motor road (Baijnath-Bageshwa Road works Section) under SPAR (Length-4.00Km)

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

## CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD



**TOTAL CONFIRMED: 3,276,373** 

**DEATH COUNT: 233,998** 

Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11:00 pm on April 30

## HOW MASKS, GOWNS CAUSE SKIN INJURIES AMONG DOCTORS, NURSES





THE PERSONAL protective equipment (PPE) that medical professionals wear while treating COVID-19 patients masks, goggles, face shields, and protective gowns - causes skin injury. In the process, it puts them at increased risk of infection, according to a new study by a large team of Chinese researchers, and published in Advances in Wound Care, a monthly from Mary

Ann Liebert publishers. The study covered 4,308 medical staff from 161 hospitals, with responses from 4,306 valid. The medical staff worked daily for 8 to 12 hours



Putting on PPE in Guwahati. AP

wearing PPE. Among them, 42.8% experienced serious skin injury related to use of PPE, the study found. Flagging the increased risk of infection, the researchers wrote: "The skin injuries among medical staff are serious, with insufficient prevention and treatment."

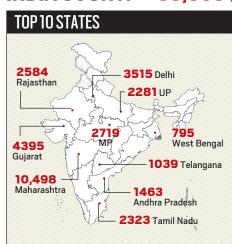
The researchers identified three main types of PPE-related skin injuries: device-related pressure injuries; moist associated skin damage; skin tear. Several factors increased the risk for skin injury, including gender (see chart).

Sources: Mary Ann Liebert publishers; Advances in Wound Care

#### **SOME STAFF AT GREATER RISK THAN OTHERS**

Risk factor	Higher prevalence	Lower prevalence
Gender	Male staff: 59.7%	Female staff: 40.5%
Age	Over 35 yrs: 46.3%	Under 35 yrs: 41.2%
Healthcare role	Doctors: 51.9%	Nurses: 41.6%
PPE quality	Grade-3 PPE: 88.5%	Grade-2 PPE: 21.0%).
Daily wearing time	Over 4 hrs: 47.3%	Within 4 hrs: 18.7%
Sweating	Heavy sweat: 91.3%	Not heavy: 17.8%

#### **INDIA COUNT:** 35,365 (1152 DEATHS)



	REST OF INDIA	
	Andaman and Nicobar Isl	ands 33
=	Arunachal Pradesh	1
$\equiv$	Assam	42
3	Bihar	426
3	Chandigarh	56
3	Chhattisgarh	40
3	Goa	7
3	Haryana	313
3	Himachal Pradesh	40
3	Jammu and Kashmir	614
$\equiv$	Jharkhand	111
=	Karnataka	576
3	Kerala	497
3	Ladakh	22
=	Manipur	2
3	Meghalaya	12
3	Mizoram	1
3	Odisha	143
3	Puducherry	8
3	Punjab	357
=	Tripura	2
	Uttarakhand	57

Union Health Ministry update as of 11 pm, May 1. Some states may have reported higher numbers. Only states/UTs with at least one case listed above. 9065 PATIENTS DISCHARGED IN 30 STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES

Have a question on the COVID-19 outbreak and what you should/should not do? Write to explained@indianexpress.com

## SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

# Fighting COVID with phones

The govt wants everyone to download the Aarogya Setu app to help fight the pandemic. How do contact tracing apps work? Which other countries are using them? What are the concerns around data & privacy?

#### **PRANAV MUKUL**

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

ASTHE world and India battle the novel coronavirus pandemic, India has all but made it mandatory to download and use a mobile phone application called Aarogya Setu developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

According to new guidelines for the extended lockdown beyond May 3, use of Aarogya Setu is required for all employees, private and public, with the head of the organisation made responsible for ensuring 100% coverage among employees. Earlier in the week, all central government employees were asked to download the app and, beginning Friday, it has been made mandatory for everyone crossing the Delhi-Gurgaon border.

#### How does a mobile phone app help in the control of a viral epidemic?

The Indian government has adopted the strategy of aggressive and elaborate 'contact tracing' (along with testing) as the key to controlling the disease and restricting its spread.

Aarogya Setu is a contact tracing app that uses GPS coordinates and Bluetooth data to track the user's location, both on their own, as well as relative to other users, to establish whether they have come physically close to someone suffering from COVID-19, and to make an assessment of their risk of infection.

Many countries are using mobile apps to track the spread and progress of the disease. South Korea and Singapore were the early starters. In South Korea, the app was rolled out by private developers; in Singapore, it was an initiative of the government.

The use of these apps has been credited with a significant extent for these countries' success in flattening the disease curve. The outbreak in these countries began relatively early, but as of the end of April, South Korea had under 11,000 cases and 247 deaths, while Singapore had 15,000-odd cases and only 14 deaths. Their case fatality rate and deaths per 1 lakh population were very low - 2.3% and 0.48, and 0.1% and 0.25 respectively, according to data on the Johns Hopkins University pandemic tracking dashboard.

China has been using health apps to ward off a potential second wave of infection. Italy, which seems to have got over the worst of its crisis, is working on an app, and Germany has backed a joint Google-Apple initiative to build a contact tracing API. The same initiative is under discussion in France, amid disagreement over the amount of data to be collected.

In the UK, a Bluetooth-based contact tracing app is under testing. In Israel, the NSO group, which built the Pegasus surveillance software last year, has tested a contact tracing app, even though an initiative by the Israeli police to use mobile phone location to enforce quarantine measures has been blocked by Parliament over privacy concerns.

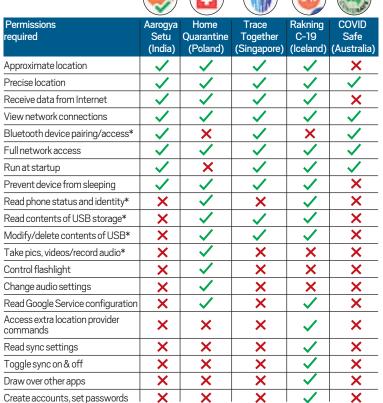
Several health experts have argued that a key tool at governments' disposal to contain the COVID-19 outbreak, and which was not around during the 1918 Spanish Flu, is the ability to harness digital technologies to track the spread. At the same time, deployment of contact tracing apps by governments or public health authorities has added to the debate on online privacy and personal data protection.

While some of these apps have sought sweeping access to smartphone functionalities, others stop just short of that, collecting and uploading data without specifically obtaining the consent of users in every case.

#### So, which countries already have such apps, and what data do they collect? There are private initiatives in several coun-

tries, but the main government-backed apps are, apart from India, in Poland, Singapore, Iceland, and Australia. Each of these apps requires a specific set of permissions from users, and have different policies on how they store,

#### FIVE APPS BACKED BY GOVTS, WHAT THEY SEEK



\*Each entry marked with an asterisk refers to two sets of permissions. In each such pair, a given app either seeks both sets of permissions, or does not

Read phone status, identity: Separate permissions

permissions for storage; and for photos/media/files Take pics, videos/record audio: Separate for taking photos & videos; and for recording audio

maintain and share data collected from users. A comparison of the terms and conditions of their use is in the chart. This analysis is based on the Android versions of the apps: the iOS versions too, need similar permissions.

India's Aarogya Setu seeks nine sets of permissions (in the chart, the entry on Bluetooth refers to two sets of permissions) — including for network-based location, GPS location, receiving data from the Internet, running at device start-up, and preventing the device from 'sleeping'. The number of permissions sought by Aarogya Setu is higher than only Australia's COVIDSafe app, which does not seek permission for network-based location or for receiving data from the Internet.

The reasons for seeking particular permissions range from the purpose and design of a certain app, to the data that the app's developer intends to collect. For example, the "prevent device from sleeping" permission, which all apps analysed for this report (except Australia's COVIDSafe) seek, is intended to ensure the app is able to keep the smartphone's CPU awake to complete work.

Android devices are designed to fall asleep when idle, to prevent draining of the battery. But some apps need to work in the background, and for this, they seek permission to wake up the phone's screen or CPU.

Again, given that Poland's Home Quarantine app is meant to ensure those under quarantine stay that way, it periodically asks people to upload a selfie, which is geotagged. Upon failure by a user, police are notified. To make this effective, the app seeks access to camera and storage.

How exactly does Aarogya Setu work? India's official COVID-19 contact tracing



seek either kind of permission Bluetooth device pairing/access: Pair with

for phone; and for device ID & call information Read contents of USB storage: Separate permissions for storage; and for photos/media/files Modify/delete contents of USB storage: Separate

**US states.** Reuters app functions in the following manner: When someone registers on the app, their

Care 19 app, which is used in some

name, phone number, age, sex, profession and the countries they visited in the last 30 days are collected, and stored on a server run by the Government of India. This is stored with a unique ID, which is used to identify the user in all subsequent app-related transactions. This digital ID is also associated with any information that may subsequently be uploaded.

At time of registration, the person's location details are collected from the device, and uploaded to the server. For the app to do its job, users must keep the location and Bluetooth features switched on at all times. When two registered users come within

Bluetooth range of each other, typically less than 10 metres, the apps on their respective devices will automatically exchange the digital IDs and record the time and GPS location at which the contact took place. This information collected at this point is

stored locally on the devices. If one of these registered users tests positive for COVID-19, the information will be uploaded from their mobile device, and stored on the server. According to Aarogya Setu's privacy pol-

icv. the app continuously collects the user's location data and stores it on the device, creating a record of all the places visited at 15-minute intervals. Further, every time a user conducts a self-assessment on the app, tickmarking COVID-19 symptoms, the app marks this user Yellow, Orange or Green, based in a reducing order of threat, with Green meaning the person is safe.

What about questions of user privacy? One of the red flags being raised about Aarogya Setu is that it collects a single blanket consent from the user at the beginning, and the details of what this consent would be used for, is included in the privacy policy. This is not the case with similar apps in other countries. The privacy policy of Australia's COVIDSafe notes, for example:

'We cannot access any contact data stored on a device, or share this with health officials, unless and until a COVIDSafe user consents to upload the data to the data store.' The COVIDSafe app is based on a source code from Singapore's TraceTogether app, but differs from the original app in several ways.

Around the world, questions have also been raised about what happens to the data and the app itself once the pandemic recedes.

Policies of these apps have detailed clauses on deletion of data. Iceland's Rakning C-19 app says phone numbers it stored will be deleted when the need for contact tracing is over, and all location data will be deleted from the database 14 days after uploading.

COVIDSafe gives an option to its users to request deletion of data held in its database; this is in addition to all contact data being automatically deleted after 21 days.

Aarogya Setu says that "all personal information collected. at the time of registration will be retained for as long as your account remains in existence and for such period thereafter as required under any law for the time being in force". It will, however, purge all data stored on the app that is not uploaded to the server after 30 days.

Singapore's TraceTogether app says that on request, it will delete contact information and identifiers from its servers, thus rendering "meaningless all data that your phone has exchanged with other phones, because that data will no longer be associated with you".

#### How many people are currently using Aarogya Setu?

The Android and iOS versions of the app have been downloaded more than 75 million times, according to official data.

While Aarogya Setu started off as a voluntary exercise to top the government's efforts of containing the COVID-19 outbreak, it is gradually inching towards becoming one of the mainstays in the battle. The government has mandated all central government employees and officers to download the app. Only if they are marked "safe" or at "low-risk" by the app should they commute to work, the government order said.

This is in addition to several private companies asking employees to download the app as they prepare for lifting of the lockdown. It is possible that a 'safe' status on Aarogya Setu could become a formal or informal 'permit' to enter public buildings and spaces in the future.

There is one important point to consider regarding penetration of the app, however which is directly linked to its effectiveness. Officials from most of the governments

rolling out these apps have pointed out that the key factor that will determine the success of these projects would be the rapid emergence of a critical mass of users. The apps, including Aarogya Setu, must have a penetration of at least 50%. This means that unless half the population of the country downloads the contact tracing app, the intended outcome will not be achieved.

While this is a reason for governments to aggressively push for downloads, critics have argued that this particular response to the pandemic opens out a vast space for intrusive surveillance by state agencies, threatening the privacy of large sections of their users. The critics have said that while some of

the features that do not necessarily adhere to all privacy norms are all right as long as the app is voluntary, governments may begin to make the apps mandatory in order to achieve the necessary penetration. This could mean using the app to give a safety clearance to individuals before they use public transport, enter their workplaces or even step out of their residential premises.

# How outbreak is disrupting both supply of, and demand for, bank loans

#### **UDIT MISRA**

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

ON THE face of it. it is a conundrum why, despite the Reserve Bank of India's repeated efforts to bring down the interest rate in the economy as well as provide more money to the financial system, banks have not been extending more loans to the broader economy.

For instance, the RBI has made it cheaper for the banks to borrow from it - by reducing the reporate by 185 basis points since February 2019. Further, it has made it less remunerative for banks to park their funds with the RBI by cutting the reverse reporate by 225 basis points.

However, at the count, banks had parked close to Rs 7 lakh crore with the RBI. Essentially, banks have decided to even park the deposits that they get (say from savings account holders) with the RBI instead of lending to either retail customers or businesses

(also referred to as wholesale customers).

And yet, there are several sectors of the economy such as the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that are facing acute shortage of funds especially in the wake of the COVID-19-induced economic disruption.

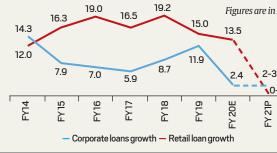
### What explains this oddity?

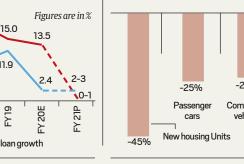
To understand what is happening, one needs to break down the picture into the demand and supply sides of loans.

Chart 1 shows the credit growth rate for retail and wholesale consumers. Credit growth to businesses was already struggling for the last several years. Most of the momentum to credit growth was coming from loans retail customers were taking. These were typically being taken by individuals buying homes, personal cars, and other consumer durables like televisions, refrigerators etc.

But, as the graph shows, even before the COVID-19 disruption in the past couple of months, demand for loans had already

## **CHART 1: GROWTH IN RETAIL LOANS EXPECTED TO STALL..**





plummeted among businesses in the 2019-20 financial year. Retail loan growth also suffered a bit as the economy slowed down.

However, the COVID-19 impact is likely to be spectacular according to most estimates. CRISIL Research estimates that while demand for new loans would remain anaemic among the business, retail loans, which were pushing up the total credit growth rate, will fall to their lowest growth rate in a decade.

Why is the demand for retail loans

## -22% Consume Source: CRISIL Research

expected to fall?

**CHART 2: ... AS DEMAND FOR UNDERLYING** 

**ASSETS IS EXPECTED TO PLUMMET** 

Chart 2 shows why. Demand for most commodities for which individuals would have typically taken a retail loan is likely to fall sharply. In terms of financing penetration, almost all commercial vehicles are financed, as are 75% of all

passenger vehicles, and almost every second home (new units); this dip in demand completely shuts off the demand for retail loans.

#### What about the supply of loans?

It is a valid question why banks, which are flush with cheap money, are not aggressively pushing for loans in the economy.

Simply put, banks are increasingly riskaverse. Moreover, they do not know which firm will survive the COVID-19 disruption and which will flounder. The irony is that banks may be willing to give loans to the bigger firms but these companies do not need new loans because they already have excess capacity while smaller firms, which are in dire need of funds, appear too risky for banks' appetite.

In this regard, the regulatory forbearance, in the form of a three-month-long moratorium on paying back loans, has made it difficult for banks to assess which firms are poor are managing their business and finances in this period.

# 12 THE OUTBREAK THE WORLD



#### **FRANCE** Life won't be normal after May 11: Macron

President **Emmanuel** Macron warned on Friday that the end of the national lockdown on May 11 would only be a first step as France looks to pull out of the crisis created by the outbreak of the coronavirus. Traditional Labour Day protests that usually see thousands of demonstrators on streets were cancelled this year due to the virus outbreak that has killed 24,000 people across France. "May 11 will not be the passage to normal life. There will be a recovery that will need to be reorganised," Macron said. "There will be several phases and May 11 will be one of them."

#### **SINGAPORE**

#### Govt extends stay-home span for workers

Singapore: Singapore on Friday extended the stayhome period of foreign workers, including Indians, in the construction sector by two weeks until May 18 as the COVID-19 infections among the community continue to rise, constituting majority of the 932 new infections reported. With the new infections, which include Indian nationals, the total number of cases in the country has reached 17,101, the health ministry said. The vast majority of the new cases are work permit holders residing in foreign worker dormitories, it said.

#### **SRI LANKA**

#### Govt extends lockdown in risk zones till May 11

Colombo: Sri Lanka on Friday extended the lockdown in the coronavirus high risk zones of the country, including capital district Colombo, till May 11, saying steps were being made to bring life and institutions back to normalcy. "The curfew in the capital district of Colombo and three other high risk zones for COVID-19 was due to be lifted on 4 May. This has now been extended till 11 May," an official statement said. Sri Lanka has recorded 690 confirmed COVID 19 cases with 7 deaths so far.

# **PANDEMIC WATCH** Trump hints at tariff on China over virus

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** WASHINGTON, MAY 1

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump Thursday hinted at imposing tariff on China, but ruled out considering cancelling US debt obligations to the country as a punishment for the coronavirus.

He said debt cancellation is a "rough game" and may harm the sanctity of the US currency.

"We can do it with tariffs. We can do it other ways even beyond that without having to play that game (cancel US debt obligations). That's a rough game,' Trump told reporters in the East Room of the White House.

"Well, I can do it differently. I can do the same thing but even for more money just by putting on tariffs. So I don't have to do that. You know, it's approximately \$1 trillion, a little bit more as I understand it, \$1 trillion. But we can do that in probably a little bit of a more forthright manner," Trump said.
"You start playing those

games (debt cancellation), and that's tough. You know, we have the dollar to protect. We want to protect the sanctity of the dollar, the importance of the dollar. It's the greatest currency in the history of the world. It's become stronger. We have a very strong dollar. That's why we're borrowing at zero, zero interest rate," he said.

He also said the WHO should be "ashamed" of itself,



President Donald Trump at the White House. AP

as he likened it to a public relations agency for China amidst the pandemic after it originated

"I think that the World Health Organisation should be ashamed of themselves because they are like the public relations agency for China," Trump said.

He also said he was confident the coronavirus may have originated in a Chinese virology lab, but declined to describe the evidence. "Yes, yes I have," he said, declining to give specifics. "I can't tell you that. I'm not allowed to tell you that.'

The Wuhan Institute of Virology has dismissed the allegations, and other US officials have downplayed their likelihood.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday it was not known whether the virus came from the lab.



#### Global pressure over virus origin

THE US, Britain, Australia and Germany are among nations that have pressured on Beijing over the virus. A statement by US intel agencies debunked one theory — that the virus was manmade. However, the calls for China to provide answers, compensation or both continue to be voiced, particularly by leaders in the United States.

# South Africa eases strict curbs: 'Fortunately, we are open now'

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** JOHANNESBURG. MAY 1

South Africa began easing one of the world's strictest lockdowns on Friday, with runners and dogwalkers returning eagerly to the streets but not all wearing the face masks that are now mandatory in the country with Africa's most coronavirus cases.

In Johannesburg, Cape Town and elsewhere, people took a breath of fall air and some headed to the malls to buy warm clothes for winter, which brings a new challenge in combating the virus: flu season.

South Africa has more than 5.600 cases of COVID-19. Concern among health workers remains high. On Friday, health workers, unions and civil society members protested outside one of the country's bestknown hospitals. Chris Hani Baragwanath in Soweto, demanding personal protective equipment.

As the country eases down one notch to Level 4 restrictions, many businesses can resume limited operations. Many mines, factories and agricultural businesses can resume work in phases, starting with only a third of employees. Restaurants can reopen for deliveries only.

People are now permitted to leave their homes for exercise between 6 am and 9 am. A night curfew is in place from 8 pm until 5 am. Public transport, including buses, can operate with restricted numbers of passengers.



People exercise in Cape Town on Friday. AF

#### **MEASURES IN OTHER COUNTRIES**

The country has slowly reopened by allowing some classes to return to school and hairdressers, tattoo parlours, physiotherapists as well as courts of law to reopen, Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said "where we stand now means not everyone can return to work as they did before the corona crisis."

But the ban on domestic and international travel remains.

Even with the easing, sales of liquor and cigarettes remain banned, which some have critnearly one month of closures, in a move critics say risks igniting a sharp increase in infections. An industry group said about 850 factories are operating with fewer

Bangladesh has reopened

hundreds of its garment

factories this week after

icised as puritanical. But health officials warn that smoking might exacerbate respiratory problems experienced with

COVID-19. The ban on alcohol

workers and following

safety guidelines.

sales has reduced brawls and traffic accidents, according to police.

Some workers found the return of business enough reason to celebrate. "We were badly affected by the lockdown but fortunately we are open now. We had to listen to the leaders because this is a very difficult time," said Cameron Elihaz, who owns a cellphone repair and accessories shop in Johannesburg.

According to officials, schools should reopen in phases starting June 1 with the first batch being Grade 7 and Grade 12 pupils, the oldest classes in primary and secondary schools, respectively. But teachers' unions have protested, saying schools should not reopen until safe conditions can be assured.

## WHO extends declaration of global health emergency

**NEW YORK TIMES** NEW YORK, MAY 1

WORLD Health Organisation extended its declaration of a global health emergency on Friday, amid increasing criticism from the Trump Administration about its handling of the pandemic. The move comes three

months after the organisation's original decision to announce a "public health emergency of international concern" on January 30. At the time, only 98 of the nearly 10.000 cases confirmed had occurred outside China's borders.

But the pandemic continues to grow. More than 3.2 million people around the world are known to have been infected and nearly a quarter million have died, according to official counts. There is evidence on six continents of sustained transmission. All of this led experts on the

WHO's emergency committee to reassess the evolution of the pandemic, and to advise on updated recommendations, officials said. Many countries have weak

health care systems that could easily be overwhelmed, even as the spread has appeared to slow in parts of Asia and Europe.

"The COVID-19 crisis has illustrated that even the most sophisticated health systems are struggling to cope with the pandemic," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO director-general.



### May Day Turnout

An aerial view shows hundreds of protesters practising social distancing during a May Day rally at the Greek parliament, in Athens on Friday, Rallies were held despite appeals from the government to postpone them until curbs are lifted. AP

## Patients try to escape quarantine in Pak

#### **MZULQERNAIN** LAHORE, MAY 1

SEVERAL COVID-19 patients in Pakistan, including several members of the Tablighi Jamaat, quarantined at a centre here broke open the building's main door in a bid to escape, creating a law and order situation.

Over 400 COVID-19 patients, mostly Tablighi Jamaat members are being quarantined at Lahore's Expo Centre Field Hospital.

## **RECORD 1-DAY COUNT**

■ Pakistan has reported a record 990 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours, taking the total number to 17,439 with 391 deaths so far, the health ministry said on Friday

"On Thursday a good number of COVID-19 patients mostly Tablighi Jamaat members refused

to stay (at the centre) and broke open the door in a bid to escape," said Mayo Hospital's chief executive Dr Asad Aslam who is also supervising the management of the Expo Centre Field Hospital.

"A law and order situation occurred, however, police managed to control the situation and send all those trying to escape back to the centre," said Aslam. He said the matter was resolved after holding dialogue with the patients. "They wanted to go back to their homes before the completion of the quarantine period," he said.

Muhammad Shabbir, a Tablighi Jamaat member, said the centre's management had unnecessarily kept them in the 'detention house' despite being tested negative. Aslam said under operating

procedure, the patients would be discharged after their reports will be negative twice.

## Russia reports record cases; PM tests positive

**GLEB STOLYAROV** MOSCOW, MAY 1

RUSSIA ON Friday reported a record daily rise in the number of confirmed coronavirus cases, a day after Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin announced he had been diagnosed with the new virus and was temporarily stepping down to recover.

The nationwide case tally rose by 7,933 cases and now stood at 114,431, Russia's coronavirus crisis response

It said 96 people diagnosed with COVID-19 had died in the last 24 hours. That raised the official overall death toll up to 1,169. Mishustin, the prime minis-



Mishustin ter, told President Vladimir Putin

would self-isolate Mishustin, who had been one of the main coordinators of Russia's response to the new coronavirus, was the first highranking Russian official to pub-

on Thursday that he had been di-

agnosed with the virus and

licly say they have the virus. Putin has warned the peak of the outbreak has yet to come, and the authorities have said there could be a new spike in

coronavirus cases. REUTERS

## UAE: Over 32,000 Indians register to return home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ABU DHABI, MAY 1

MORE THAN 32,000 Indians in the UAE, who wish to return home amidst the coronavirus lockdown, have registered with the Indian missions here on day one of the opening of the online registration process, according to a media report.

On Wednesday night, the Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi announced the details of data collection through the website of the Indian Consulate in Dubai. Within minutes, the site faced technical issues, prompting the missions to delete the tweet about it and repost it hours later. In a tweet posted in the wee

hours of Thursday, the Indian

Consulate asked applicants "to

bear with it if it takes time for the

page to load due to high traffic." "As of 5pm on Thursday, we received more than 32,000 registrations," Consul General of India n Dubai Vipul told the Gulf News.

Vipul said the technical issues took place because of the huge rush of people trying to access the webpage on the Consulate's site for registration.

**OTHER TOP GLOBAL STORIES** 

## US not releasing data on Taliban attacks: Watchdog

#### **ASSOCIATED PRESS** KABUL, MAY1

THE US mission in Afghanistan has for the first time refused to publicly release its data on insurgent attacks amid the implementation of a peace agreement between the US and the Taliban, an American watchdog said Friday.

The decision not to release the data comes as the Trump administration is eager for the US-Taliban agreement to be seen as successful so President Donald Trump can meet his commitments on pulling troops out of Afghanistan.

Special Washington's Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR, which monitors billions of dollars in US aid to Afghanistan, expressed its concern in its quarterly report, which also discusses the reduction in ground operations of Afghan forces

John F Sopko, who heads the watchdog, wrote that data on Taliban and other militant attacks 'was one of the last remaining metrics SIGAR was able to use to report publicly on the security situation in Afghanistan."

However, the office of Afghanistan's national security adviser earlier this week said the Taliban have carried out 2,804 attacks since the peace agreement between the Taliban and US was signed on February 29.

#### **KATIE GLUECK** NEW YORK, MAY

FORMER VICE President Joseph R Biden Jr on Friday denied an allegation of sexual assault by a former Senate aide, Tara Reade, his first public remarks about an accusation that has roiled his presidential campaign.

"I recognise my responsibility to be a voice, an advocate, and a leader for the change in culture that has begun but is nowhere near finished," Biden wrote in a Medium post. "So I want to address allegations by a former staffer that I engaged in misconduct 27 years ago. They aren't true. This never happened.'

Biden, the presumptive



Biden during an interview on Friday. AP

Democratic nominee, also called on the National Archives to release any existing complaint related to the allegation.

In an interview with MSNBC's "Morning Joe", Biden said of Reade's claim, "No, it is not true. I'm saying unequivo-



Biden denies sexual assault claim: 'It never happened'

## THE WHITE **HOUSE**

cally it never, never happened." Responding to questions from Mika Brzezinski, Biden said that all women had a right to be heard when they come forward with allegations, and then the facts need to be examined. But he strenuously insisted that in his case, "I assure you it did not happen. Period. Period."

At issue is an allegation from Reade, a former aide in his Senate office, who has said Biden assaulted her in 1993, when he was a senator from Delaware.

The statement comes as a number of women's rights advocates and organisations have called on Biden to address the matter, and as several people have corroborated parts of Reade's claim, saying they recalled her sharing elements of the story years ago. In his statement, Biden said that women who make allegations "should be heard, not silenced," but their stories also warrant scrutiny. He went on to raise "the full and growing record of inconsistencies in her story, which has changed repeatedly in both small and big ways." NYT

#### **VICE PRESIDENT AUDITIONS UNDERWAY**

Washington: Presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden began the process of selecting a running mate in earnest on Thursday by announcing a committee to vet potential candidates. The panel's work will likely last through July, he said, meaning months in which some candidates will appear up one day only to fade and potentially be replaced with someone who isn't on anyone's radar the next.

Scott Reed, who managed Bob Dole's 1996 presidential

New Delhi

a running mate often takes twists and turns because it's one of the few things a nominee can control after a primary spent largely reacting to surrounding political forces. He said reverberations from the choice can last for years. Biden has limited some of

campaign, said the search for

the mystery by promising to pick a woman. Gretchen Whitmer, Amy Klobuchar, Stacey Abrams, Kamala Harris and Elizabeth Warren are considered to be some of the main candidates. AP



₹75.09



**②** \$26.15

**②** ₹38,100

**SENSEX:** 33,717.62 ▲ 997.46 **NIFTY:** 9,859.90 ▲ 306.55 **NIKKEI:** 19,619.35  $\lor$  574.34 **HANG SENG:** 24,643.59 ▲ 67.63 **FTSE:** 5,796.29  $\lor$  104.92 **DAX:** 10,861.64  $\lor$  246.10

## ALL PRODUCTION FACILITIES WERE CLOSED IN COMPLIANCE WITH GOVT ORDERS

# Barring tractors, automobile sector records zero sales in Apr on lockdown

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

OTHER THAN tractor sales, which benefitted from lockdown relaxations announced on April 20, 2020, the automobile industry registered zero vehicle sales across the country. As the country witnessed a nationwide lockdown for the entire month of April, impacting production and sale of passenger car and other vehicles across the country, leading automobile manufacturers – Maruti Suzuki India Limited and Hyundai Motor India — announced zero unit sale for April, a first time in any month since their existence. As tractor manufacturing and sale was permitted in green zone, M&M announced sale of 4.772 units of tractors in April.

In its statement, MSIL said that the zero sales was because all production facilities were closed in compliance with government orders. Hyundai too EXPLAINEI Whole value chain needs to start functioning

There is no point starting production, despite some relaxations, as the vendors and showrooms also need to

Until the whole value chain starts functioning, starting output will be of no benefit. Nearly 300 showrooms linked to tractor manufacturers opened after the relaxations on April 20 and selling the tractors in the zones marked

said that zero sales in domestic market was due to "suspension of manufacturing activities amid the nationwide look-down."

While MSIL exported 632 units from Mundra port following resumption of port operations, Hyundai Motors exported 1,341 units in April.

MG Motors too announced sale of zero units in April. The company, however, began operations and manufacturing on a small scale at its facility in Halol in the last week of April 2020 and hopes that production will rampup in the month of May.

Leading manufacturers, however, say that there is no point starting production, despite some relaxations, as the vendors and showrooms also need to operachain starts functioning, there is no point starting production.

Naveen Soni, senior vice president, Sales & Services, Tovota Kirloskar Motor said, "As with many other sectors, with the closure of dealerships and manufacturing the operation of the automotive value chain has come to a grinding halt. Restart of the entire value chain cycle and its restoration will be gradual as the industry is faced with the challenges of low consumer sentiments, rebuilding of disrupted supply chains that need factors of productions to be restored that including return of workforce etc.

Tractor sales, however, resumed after the government relaxed the lockdown restriction in certain industries including production and sale of tractors since April 20. Mahindra & Mahindra sold 4,772 units in the 10 days of operation in April. The sale in April was, however, lower by 83 per cent over the sales of 28.552 units

Industry sources say that

close to 300 showrooms linked to tractor manufacturers opened after the relaxations on April 20 and selling the tractors in the zones marked as green. M&M resumed manufacturing in its Rudrapur plant after the relaxations were announced.

Commenting on the sales performance, M&M presidentfarm equipment sector Hemant Sikka said,"The extension of the national lockdown impacted the business, with dealers partially open for just a few days.'

While he said that there are several positive factors including a good rabi output, opening of procurement centres by the government, indication of good crop prices, reservoir levels that augur well for tractor demand, "The rate of improvement will depend on how quickly the on-ground sales operations, including the start of NBFCs are normalised, following the relaxation of the lockdown," Sikka added.

behaviour will determine the seaments that are likely to flourish after the pandemic is

brought under control

A near halt of all non-essential activities in the industrial sector, and supply chains have been significantly disrupted

Depressed global demand has led to a collapse in global

As debt levels increase and loans turn bad, the banking sector might face challenges and this can cause a financial

The collapse in alobal demand is depleting the savings and increasing the debt levels of households, corporates and the governments and will most likely create a channel for a new round of debt crisis

Source: Dun & Bradstreet/PTI

# After pharma, pesticide industry eyes make in India opportunity from COVID

HARISH DAMODARAN NEW DELHI, MAY 1

WHILE THE focus has been on pharmaceuticals, the issue of "Chinese dependence" is coming to the fore, especially post-COVID-19, also in pesticides. India's imports of crop protection chemicals - mainly the technical material or active ingredients that go into making end-use formulations - stood at Rs 9 266 84 crore in 2018-19 most of it coming from China (Rs 4,904.28 crore), the US (Rs 1,050.69 crore) and Germany (Rs

614.53 crore). "Just as in pharma, the government should encourage backward integration by our industry to reduce excessive reliance on imports of technicals, particularly from China," says Raiesh Aggarwal, managing director of Insecticides (India) Ltd. The Rs 1,250-crore annual sales company - along with UPL, Gharda Chemicals, and PI Industries – is among the few major domestic manufacturers of technical grade pesticides.

"We can and should do more. And this is the time for the government to also help," points out Aggarwal, whose company manufactures technical-grade products that include herbicides (bispyribac-sodium, pretilachlor and atrazine), insecticides (lambda-cyhalothrin, bifenthrin

**ENSECONOMIC BUREAU** 

THE TWO-WEEK extension of

lockdown with new guidelines for

opening up of certain areas and

districts in the green zone will al-

low "calibrated opening of eco-

nomic activities," Federation of

Indian Chambers of Commerce &

Industry (Ficci) president Sangita

Amazon says India business

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

The big opportunity the industry has to undertake is manufacturing of active ingredients that are scheduled to lose patent protection in few years

and thiamethoxam) and fungicides (thiophanate methyl).

India, in 2018-19, exported crop protection chemicals worth Rs 22,090.18 crore, a large part of it to Brazil (Rs 4,314.74 crore) and the US (Rs 4,238.63 crore). "Our exports are higher than the domestic market, the size of which is Rs 19.000-20.000 crore. Investing in technical manufacturing capacity will allow us to project ourselves as more serious players in the global market. We can emerge as an alternative global supplier to China of both formulation products and technical material," adds Aggarwal.

The big opportunity the Indian industry has to undertake is manufacturing of active ingredients that are scheduled to lose patent protection in the next few years.

These include chlorantraniliprole and cyantraniliprole (both blockbuster insecticides of DuPont sold to FMC Corporation of US in 2017, while marketed under 'Coragen' and

Lockdown extension to allow calibrated

opening up of economy, says Ficci

patents expiring in 2022 and 2024, respectively), flubendiamide (insecticide molecule of Bayer CropScience sold under 'Fame' brand and just gone offpatent) and fluopyram (fungicide, also of Bayer and marketed as 'Luna', with patent expiry in 2024).

"The multinationals that have developed these active ingredients simply import them now. The government should speed up the process of granting registration for their manufacture by domestic companies once they have become generic chemicals," states Aggarwal, Potential manufacturers are permitted to reverse-engineer proprietary crop protection products even during their period of patent protection.

"The problem today is that even after the data is submitted, the grant of registration takes inordinately long time. As a result, we cannot launch any product that has gone off-patent and make it immediately available to farmers at a more competitive rate. Since the registration process is so slow, it discourages domestic manufacturing and India ends up being a large-scale importer of technical material from China. The ultimate loser is the farmer," claims Aggarwal.

Whether that pace would change after novel coronavirus,

## Tesla scrip tumbles after Musk tweets stock price too high

**REUTERS** NEW YORK, MAY 1

SHARES OF Tesla Inc tumbled 9 per cent on Friday after Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk tweeted that the electric carmaker's high-flying stock was overly expensive.

"Tesla stock price is too high," Musk said on Twitter in one of several unusual messages, including ones quoting parts of the US national anthem and that he would sell almost all his physical

The subsequent share drop erased around \$13 billion from Tesla's market value and nearly \$3 billion from the value of Musk's stake. Still, shares remain up almost 50 per cent from the start of April.

tweets began, Tesla had not responded to requests for comment. Twitter declined to comment. The Wall Street Journal reported that Musk had responded to an email asking whether he was joking or

The subsequent share drop erased around \$13 billion from Tesla's market value and nearly \$3 billion from the

whether his tweet was vetted by saying, "No".

value of Musk's stake

Musk has a history of sending provocative tweets. In August 2018, he tweeted that he had secured funding to possibly take Tesla private at a big premium, which led a fraud case by the US Securities and Exchange Commission. Musk settled by agreeing to pay \$20 million and have a Tesla lawyer pre-screen tweets with important information about the company.

The subsequent share drop erased around \$13 billion from Tesla's market value and nearly \$3 billion from the value of

## 'Global recession, change in consumer attitude to shape economic activity'

As India tries to gain control over COVID-19 pandemic, the period of lockdown, global recession and changes in consumer behaviour are the factors that will shape economic activities going ahead, says a Dun & Bradstreet report



Daily movement of trucks falling to less than 10 per cent of normal levels

commodity markets

Reddy said. "While a regular assessment of the zones and activities is required to further relax the opening up of The group suggested that airlines should be allowed to open for the general public but after ensuring the principles of social distancing

business activities, it is also now opportune time for the government to come up with the financial package, especially for the MSMEs, and for the industry on the whole," Reddy said. Ficci earlier suggested the dis-

tricts which fell in the green zone should be opened in a phased manner. Public transport such as buses and trains should be allowed

March 23, should be allowed to open for the general public but after ensuring the principles of

# Forex reserves fall \$113 mn to \$479.45 bn

**ENSECONOMIC BUREAU** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

AFTER RISING for the past few weeks, the country's foreign exchange reserves declined \$113 million to \$479.45 billion in the week to April 24, due to a fall in foreign currency assets, according to the latest data from the Reserve Bank In the previous week, the re-

serves had increased by \$3.09 billion to \$479.57 billion. The reserves had touched a lifetime high of \$487.23 billion in the week to March 6, after it rose by \$5.69 billion. During 2019-20, the country's foreign exchange reserves rose by

In the reporting week ended April 24, the foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves, decreased by \$321 million to \$441.56 billion.

Expressed in dollar terms, the FCAs include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange re-Gold reserves rose by \$221 mil-

lion to \$32.901 billion in the reporting week, the RBI data

The special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) fell \$6 million to \$1.42 billion, WITH PTI

#### PRESSTRUSTOFINDIA PM discusses NEW DELHI, MAY 1

Amid pandemic, PM

reviews performance of

aviation, power sectors

AMID THE COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown. Prime Minister Narendra Modi reviewed the performance of the aviation and power sectors on Friday, with a focus on reducing costs and making them more efficient.

Reviewing the power sector. the prime minister underlined its importance in propelling the economy. The need for an effective enforcement of contracts to attract private investment was also dis-At the review of the civil avia-

tion sector, it was decided that the country's air space should be effectively used in a manner that the flying time for travellers is reduced and airlines save costs.

Reviewing the power sector, Modi asked officials to work towards ensuring round-the-clock

## labour welfare

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi held discussions on labour welfare on Friday and said the country is proud of its hardworking labour force.

"We discussed wavs through which this sector can power India's growth," the prime minister said in a

"India is proud of our hardworking labour force." Modi said. PTI

supply of electricity to all con-

At the meeting on the power sector, he also discussed various long-term reforms for enhancing the sustainability, resilience, and

## worst hit among foreign ops **ASMITA DEY** NEW DELHI, MAY1

AMAZON HAS said its India business has been the worst hit among its international operations. Talking to investors on the Q12020 earnings call, chief financial officer Brian Olsavsky said, "The biggest impact internationally has been in India."

He said the constraints of operating during the lockdown period, during which e-commerce players have been permitted to sell only essential items, had meant cutting back on merchandise."We will expand when the Indian government announces that we are allowed to resume operations. So we are in bit of a holding pattern except for grocery in India," Olsavsky said.

Losses for Amazon's international operations soared to \$398 million in Q12020 from \$90 million in the year-ago period with operating expenses shooting up to



Shares of Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, fell 5 per cent in after-hours trade. Reuters file

\$19.50 billion.

The global e-retailer's net income for the quarter declined to \$2.5 billion from \$3.6 billion in

Amazon said it could incur as much as \$4 billion on COVID-19 related expenses. "Under normal

circumstances, in this coming O2. we'd expect to make some \$4 billion or more in operating profit. But these aren't normal circumstances. Instead, we expect to spend the entirety of that \$4 billion, and perhaps a bit more, on COVID-related expenses getting products to customers and keeping employees safe," Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO, said.

Last month, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said the sale of non-essentials by e-commerce companies would be permitted only to reverse the decision a day before the rules were to kick in. Small businesses led by The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) had strongly opposed resumption of sale of non-essentials by online firms. A March report by Forrester Research said e-tailers are expected to take a hit of at least \$1 billion in gross sales due to the lockdown that limits shipments to essential items. The report had captured the impact of the initial 21-day lockdown period. **FE** 

#### Non-subsidised cooking gas price cut by ₹162.50/cylinder

**PRESSTRUST OF INDIA** NEW DELHI, MAY 1

NON-SUBSIDISED LPG or marketpriced cooking gas prices were cut by a record Rs 162.50 per cylinder on Friday, in line with the slump in

This is the third straight

# equity capital of Rs 2,000

benchmark international rates.

monthly reduction in rates of nonsubsidised LPG, which users who have given up subsidy buy. Also, this is the gas that domestic household consumers buy after exhausting their quota of 12 cylinders of 14.2 kg each at subsidised

#### crore from investors, including its promoter and a Warburg Pincus firm. **NCLT** transfers 8

New Delhi: The NCLT has transferred eight members to different Benches.

members

#### Ogata named president, MD & CEO of HMSI

New Delhi: Honda Motor said it has named Atsushi Ogata new president, CEO and MD of Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India. PTI

## Court dismisses **ArcelorMittal** application against Essar

London: The Court of Appeal in London has dismissed an application filed by Arcelor Mittal seeking permission to appeal against the . London High Court's judgment that refused a worldwide freezing  $order\,against\,the\,parent\,company$ of Essar Steel Ltd and members of promoter family

"The Court of Appeal's decision given by Lord Justice Newey on April 21, 2020, concluded that Arcelor Mittal USA's (AMUSA) appeal had no real prospect of success and there was no other compelling reason for the Court of Appeal to hear it," Essar said. PTI

# US manufacturing skids to 11-year low in April

**REUTERS** WASHINGTON, MAY 1

US MANUFACTURING activity plunged to an 11-year low in April as the novel coronavirus wreaked havoc on supply chains, supporting analysts' views the economy was sinking deeper

into recession. The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said on Friday its index of national factory activity dropped to a reading of 41.5 last month from 49.1 in March. That was the lowest level since April 2009, just a few months before the Great Recession ended. A reading bethe manufacturing sector, which accounts for 11 per cent of the US

The smaller-than-expected drop in the ISM index was because the survey's measure of supplier deliveries surged to a reading of 76.0 last month from 65.0 in March.

A lengthening in suppliers' delivery times is normally associated with a strong economy and increased customer demand, which would be a positive contribution. But in this case slower supplier deliveries indicate supply shortages related to the coronavirus pandemic and not stronger demand.

#### Zero net debt to be achieved within 2020: **RIL joint CFO** New Delhi: RIL chairman and MD

Mukesh Ambani has accelerated the timeframe for wiping out Rs 1.61 lakh crore of net debt at the company by bringing in strategic investors in key businesses as well as committing more equity. In an investor call, RIL's joint

chief financial officer Srikanth Venkatachari said, "The zero net debt target will be achieved within the 2020 calendar year." Since the August announcement, Ambani has sold a 9.99 per cent stake in the digital platform and decided to hive out Reliance's oil and petrochemicals business into a separate entity to help a proposed stake sale to Aramco. PTI

## Apple sales inch higher despite virus, but CEO sees uncertain future

**REUTERS** SANFRANCISCO, MAY 1

APPLE INC reported sales and profits that beat Wall Street expectations Thursday, with Chief Executive Officer Tim Cook saying China sales were "headed in the right direction" as that country reopens from the novel coronavirus.

But Cook said it was impossible to forecast overall results for the current quarter because of uncertainty created by the virus. Shares declined 2.4 per cent to \$286.56 in extended trading.

Sales of subscription services



Apple CEO Tim Cook. File

such as streaming television con-

New Delhi

to ply only between green zones. while these vehicles should avoid making any stops in the red zones. The group also suggested that airlines, which had been asked to suspend operations on

social distancing

## **BRIEFLY** Govt defers

### release of GST mop-up data New Delhi: The government

on Friday deferred the release of April GST revenue collection data as the ongoing lockdown and extended return filing deadline led to lower mop-up, sources said.

#### Tarun Bajaj takes over as **DEA Secy** New Delhi: Tarun Bajaj, a

1988 batch IAS officer, Friday assumed charge as the Economic Affairs Secretary. **IDFC First** 

Bank to raise

New Delhi: IDFC First Bank on

Friday said it will raise a fresh

₹2,000 cr

# THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2020 SPORT



India lost the top spot in the Test rankings to Australia, dropping to third after their stupendous 2016-17 record (12 wins, one loss) was eliminated from the annual update as per rules. The latest update rates all the matches played since May 2019 at 100 per cent and those of the previous two years at 50 per cent.

**COLIN GRAVES** has decided to step down from his position as the England and Wales Cricket Board chairman on August

31 following the postponement of The Hundred tournament to next year, the ECB announced on Friday. Graves, who was appointed as chairman in May 2015, will be replaced by Ian Watmore



**Badminton Worlds moved to** 

The badminton world championship slated

for August next year in Spain will now take

place from November 29 to December 5, the

sport's apex body said, postponing its show-

piece to avoid a clash with the Olympics.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF)

and Spanish Badminton Federation (FESBA)

can confirm the BWF World Championships

traditionally scheduled for August 2021 will

world championship has traditionally been

an annual event, which is however not held

in an Olympic year. But, with the 2020 Tokyo

Games postponed to next year owing to the

COVID-19 pandemic, it will be the first time

that the prestigious event will be conducted

now take place at the end of 2021 from

Monday 29 November to Sunday 5 December," the BWF said in a statement. The

**Hungarian GP minus fans** 

The Hungarian GP on August 2 will be

staged without fans in response to the

coronavirus pandemic, organisers an-

nounced. The race at the Hungaroring is

following the example set by the British GP

and the truncated F1 season's new curtain-

raiser in Austria as likely to go ahead but in

front of empty grandstands. "It has now be-

come clear that we cannot hold the 35th

tors despite all our efforts," a statement

ment added that this decision was neces-

sary to protect the health of fans. AFP

Formula 1 Hungarian GP in front of specta-

from race organisers announced. The state-

in the Olympic year. PTI

avoid clash with Olympics

year to oversee the inaugural season of the 100-ball tournament, decided to end his term early after the cash-rich tournament was postponed due to the fastspreading COVID-19 pandemic. "With the launch of The Hundred unavoidably moved to 2021, I have reviewed last year's extension of my term as Chair, and put a request to the Board to now finish early, on August 31." Graves said in a statement. "There is still much to be done in the coming months as I continue to lead the ECB during this challenging time." PTI

Shashank Manohar. Graves, who had

agreed for an extension till November this

#### Australia won't allow sweat, saliva on cricket ball

Australia will not allow the use of saliva or sweat to shine the ball once cricket training resumes in the post COVID-19 world, says a framework released by the federal government, regarding the staged return of sports. There is speculation that use of saliva to shine the ball will be stopped to cut down the risk of the highly contagious infection with reports suggesting that the ICC is considering the possibility of allowing the use of artificial substances to polish the red ball under the supervision of umpires. According to ESPNcricinfo, Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in consultation with medical experts and sporting bodies has come up with guidelines, restricting the use of saliva and sweat to shine the ball. The framework, which outlines a staged return to play, has three stages – Level A, Level B and Level C. **PTI** 

#### Pole vault showdown

Three of the world's top male pole vaulters will meet in competition on Sunday in what has been dubbed the "Ultimate Garden Clash". World record-holder Mondo Duplantis, two-time world champion Sam Kendricks and 2012 Olympic champion Renaud Lavillenie of France will be connected via a live video link as they compete from their own back gardens. The event, which will be streamed by World Athletics, is scheduled to start at 1500 GMT and will span three locations: Lavillenie in Clermont-Ferrand, Kendricks in Oxford, Mississippi, and Duplantis in Lafayette. AFP

# Postponement of Hundred sees ECB chairman resign Wushu beats the lockdown

Maharashtra state championship held via video app; nationals to follow later this month

**SHIVANI NAIK** MUMBAI, MAY 1

AROUND 80 athletes, dressed up in their finest bright, baggy martial arts finery, pulled their hair back tight from the face and took their steady solemn stance for webcams at Maharashtra's first-ever online Wushu state championship that happened this week.

The 30-second routines in Wushu's Taolu event comprises barehand and short weapon defense and offense manoeuvres.

The Covid-19 crisis has halted every sporting activity in any sensible nation looking to stem the rise in infections.

But shooting had a stab at competing from home and chess is thriving in this unprecedented environment of social isolation. Wushu joins the small group of restless sports itching to find ways — as compact as they are - for some semblance of normalcy under lockdown

Jammu & Kashmir will also see 18 districts conduct their online Wushu state meet from May 3-5, while the online Wushu Nationals will take place from May 25-29.

Taolu Wushu which emphasises on slow movements — literally at a slow-mo taut crawl had most participants opt for Nanquan, a routine which mimics the fighting poise and movements of a tiger on a prowl. Participants at the Maharashtra meet were judged on body structure, shape of the stance, balance, speed and landing efficiency of the jumps, though degree of difficulty was capped given constraints of space inside a home. "There was no entry fee - a first for state competition," Sopan Katke, chief organiser, said.

Gajanan Pawar of Pune who picked a medal reckons it was his power-packed 30 second gig that helped him pip opponents. "It was a first time experiment and I had to consider the space constraints. But my performance had more power than opponents which is why I medalled," he said.

Participants would finish their routine and then squint into screens to watch their opponents on Zoom. Pawar's younger brother helped shoot and in checking the

On Thursday, many more competed in



Participants completed 30-second routines in Taolu, which is slow barehand movements of choreographed techniques. Screengrab

the more popular Tai Chi event — which has served to alleviate edginess of its practitioners even beyond this competition. Katke, the brains behind the event, says he's been busy these last two months training many in Ta Chi online. "Besides being a sport at Youth Olympics and Asian Games, Tai Chi has become relevant as something that helps improve immunity," he claims.

Though all such pronouncements come with large-fonted disclaimers, Tai Chi has its famous followers. Former first lady Michelle Obama is said to have hopped into Tai Chi classes when on an official state visit to China while movie star let Li is also a Tai Chi buff.

"It's to do with breathing techniques and it can be customised for knee problems, BP, hypertension, asthma, arthritis relief. Usually it's three-and-half minutes in international competition (Taolu is 1 min 20 seconds) We've cut it to 30 seconds," says the secretary of the state Wushu association.

Tai Chi — more fidgety and fighting than yoga and Pranayam and acquiring a mystical fetish owing to its old association with Shaolin temples, is increasingly gaining popularity even in India owing to its expansive limb movements and general jumps and flips

-360 and 540 degrees in the air and the dramatic accurate landings. In competition, the fringe benefits like mental peace, decision making and inner-mind control cannot be calibrated. What does, says world silver medalist Shravani Katke, Sopan's 18-yearold daughter, is clean lines in the movement.

"But movements are in slow motion. So inner mind distractions actually reflect in the movement. Judges can see it. But mostly, participants rely on body posture, jumps, landings for points," she claims. That and crucially, a good internet connection.

Shravani realised also that while the usual pressures of performing in front of crowds are not a factor in online competitions, something else gave athletes sleepless nights.

"We've been practicing for this 30 second show for many days at home. It's literally home territory. But even if there's no public pressure, imagine failing at home. Or not being able to perform while competing in the area where we practiced 1000 times," she says of a patch created by pushing all furniture against one wall. "I didn't want judges to get distracted," she says of not bothering with the peripherals like cushion covers.

Organisers had to scale down ambitions in

Organisers had to scale down ambitions in how complex the routines could be - so, no long

how complex the routines could be - so, no long weapons like swords or ninja jumps that could be a problem on slippery house floors and none of the Neo, Morpheus Matrixartistry. "Not even the terrace, and following all social distancing rules," says Sopan.

from Kashmir to the north east to inner Maharashtra districts like Jalgaon and Amravati – were quick to leave the couches when the national federation got active about aggressively pushing for its athletes to inculcate Wushu training in their daily regimen. "They are using Tai Chi to help patients in Wuhan," said the federation's Suhel Ahmed.

Chi and Qigong classes (with a China flag strategically placed in widely circulated videos) for patients with mild symptoms of the coronavirus in Wuhan were all on the internet. These were obviously after the worst storm had passed and the PPE-draped Tai Chi performing nurses were gently coaxing patients to resume some exercise. But it found resonance in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district.

Bhushan Marathe, a Wushu athlete and judge from Jalgaon wrote to the district's government hospital and police authorities suggesting he could take basic classes on Tai Chi to help them deal with the stress.

"The response was positive. And we took take some time out," he adds.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

be losing theirs. The most

positive way to use your

planetary energy at the

even months.

moment is to get involved in

benefit within a few years or

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

as long as you listen carefully to

other people's views. The only

problem may arise if you are

dealing with matters where

emotions count for more than

do your practical skills. And,

above all, don't undervalue your

own contribution to the world.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

for you, you'll stay well clear of

to one side and concentrate on

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

You are bound to

meet your fair share

of criticism. In fact

the greater the

opposition you face, the better,

sharpen up your act, with good

consequences for your social

dreams and romantic affairs

in particular.

because you'll be forced to

finding out what makes

someone else tick.

dubious financial involvements. Put your emotional suspicions

This certainly looks

moment and if you

know what's good

like an expensive

some sort of charitable venture Do favours for others and you'll

BY PETER VIDAL

Please don't lose

your head just

because all around

you partners seem to

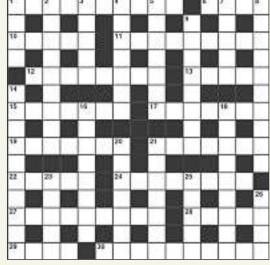
You think you know

your own mind, but

do you? Now is the

time to face the facts.

### **CROSSWORD 4107**



#### **ACROSS**

- Fail in a raffle but get lucky at Russian roulette (4,1,5)
- Jar for a kind of berry (4) It's to be seen on a rifle (5)
- She's used to getting low scores (9) Eliminate in 10 seconds flat
- Time for grammar (5)
- He may go to an ancient city People out - on patrol?
- They pound away with
- mortars (7) Brace of fresh lobster
- 22 Nothing turns up in the flower beds (5)
- Now proud, then undone before the fall (8)
- Painful reminder of the need for filling time? (9)
- Not qualified to sum up (5) Two-way agreement (4) Up-to-date description of Christmas (7,3)

- Seat of learning, perhaps (4) Angostura put out for Jason's
- crew(9) Greek upper chamber (5) Anti-labour act? (7)
- Journey on such a train can only have one end (7)
- Free-style wrestling can leave one so exhausted (3,2)
- Those who claim to be teachers?(10) Censorious to a dangerous
- degree?(8) Details put as specified (10)
- A hot line arranged for the opera(8)
- Charged with putting under test, perhaps (9) I'd enter uphill races beside
- the motorcycle (7) They play in the alley (7)
- Examine a surgical instrument(5)
- Point out a device for climbers (5)
- Sport may be part of the act, or vice versa (4)

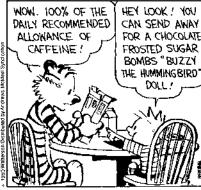
Solutions Crossword 4106: Across: 1 Elegiac, 5 Fibre, 8 Andantino, 9 Nil, 10 Ease, 12 Egotists, 14 Rather, 15 Recess, 17 Virginia, 18 Isle, 21 Obi, 22 Implement, 24 Irene, 25 Lateral. Down: 1 Erase, 2 End, 3 Inns, 4 Cringe, 5 Frontier, 6 Banisters, 7 Enlists, 11 Saturnine, 13 Definite, 14 Ravioli, 16 Dispel, 19 Extol, 20 Heat, 23 Ear.

## **OVER THE HEDGE** by Michael Fry & T Lewis



# **CALVIN & HOBBES** by Bill Watterson





#### MARVIN by Tom Armstrong















#### LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) Your planetary

aspects could not be more challenging. This is just a simple

It's certainly a

New Delhi

unduly affected by

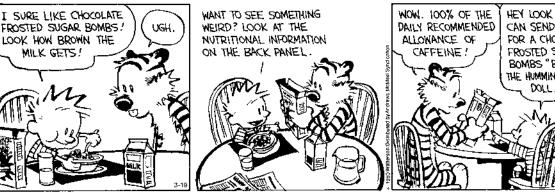
weapons like swords or ninja jumps that could be a problem on slippery house floors and none of the Neo, Morpheus Matrix-artistry.

India's Wushu practitioners - spread

Videos of nurses and doctors taking Tai

2-3 sessions for the frontline doctors and nurses, wearing PPE of course. And later for police personnel. We couldn't help monetarily. But we thought this could be our small help," he says. "It was possible only because the cases were not too many and they could













## JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip. :sweet speech flows from his mouth - Hesiod (5,4) Happy is the man whom the

**AEEGLU LPEEO ACUUMV LOPSS** 

**Juswet:** Happy is the man whom the **Muses love**: sweet speech flows from his mouth **SOLUTION:** ELOPE, SLOPS, LEAGUE, VACUUM

#### Difficulty Level 5s Instructions

SUDOKU 41

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

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

## 8 8 8 2 6

#### SOLUTION SUDOKU 4196 5 4 6 7 2 9 8 1 3 1 8 2 6 5 3 4 9 7 9 4 5 167 9 4 2 3 5 8 2 3 5 9 1 4 7 5 3 8 6 1 2 9 9 6 1 4 7 2 3 5 8

### **DAY TODAY**

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Everything seems to focus around how much you can afford,

not to mention the value vou place on certain relationships. Money itself may be a cause of friction, but you may also spend your way to satisfying long-held desires. Just check you've got the spare

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21) There's a powerful

undercurrent in all your affairs at the moment, sweeping you inexorably towards the future. In fact, you'll soon reach an emotional high tide. It seems inevitable that you must be true to your heart, and this will make it very difficult to compromise.

#### GEMINI (May 22 - June 21) You are bound to feel

just a little strung out today, perhaps because it looks as if your work is never done. If you put your emotional energy into achieving something of value, rather than frittering your time away, then you will soon begin to reap

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) You should state your case and stick to it. If you know

the rewards.

that what you say is an exact reflection of how you feel, there can be little room for compromise. It is up to others to realise that, just now, you have to be you. I'm sure partners will be patient with you.

way of saying that difficulties should be welcomed as 'learning opportunities'. You may see this as a chance to grow in wisdom, maturity and confidence, even if partners behaviour is sometimes wild and unpredictable.

#### VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) powerful moment. and you seem to be

the way other people think and feel. There may be nothing you can do about it for now, beyond trying to get them to talk about their many fears and desires. Don't judge them too harshly.

#### AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19) Whatever you're doing, however you feel, there are always



#### PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20) You seem to be



be greener on the other side, but you're not sure how to get there. News from overseas might just bring relief, but a mystical or spiritual approach may reveal the answer.

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