The Indian EXPRESS



The lockdown to contain the coronavirus outbreak has disrupted supply chains. One crucial chain is delivery of information and insight – news and analysis that is fair and accurate and reliably reported from across a nation in quarantine.

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The Indian EXPRESS

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 14 PAGES

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE **SINCE 1932**

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RBI opens Rs 50,000 cr liquidity window for mutual funds

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 27

SOOTHING THE frayed nerves of the investor community, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monday announced a special liquidity window of Rs 50,000 crore to bail out mutual funds hit by the turmoil in the debt fund segment, that led to the closure of six credit risk funds by Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund.

Under the special liquidity facility for mutual funds (SLF-MF), the RBI will conduct repo(repurchase agreement) operations of 90 days tenor at the fixed repo rate of 4.40 per cent for banks. Funds availed under the SLF-MF will be used by banks exclusively for meeting the liquidity requirements of MFs.

A repurchase agreement (repo) is a short-term agreement to sell securities to buy them back at a later date. The one selling the repo(banks) is effectively borrowing and the other party (the RBI) is lending.

The RBI's liquidity offer is expected to bring some degree of comfort in the debt market which has been under huge redemption pressure, especially in the credit risk fund category which has assets of over Rs 55,000 crore. Faced with huge redemptions, Franklin Templeton had closed six credit schemes, effectively locking up Rs 28,000 crore of investors money last week

The whole debt segment had witnessed outflows of Rs 1.94 lakh crore in March. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



THE LIQUIDITY window will help MFs meet any redemption pressure on debt schemes in a troubled market situation that is devoid of liquidity and investor confidence after the Franklin Templeton abrupt closure of schemes. The liquidity window can create buyers for lower rated

POST-MAY 3 ROADMAP PM underlines the twin challenge: restarting economy, fighting Covid



Migrant workers wait for their medical check-up at a quarantine centre in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, Monday. Ritesh Shukla

'Lockdown has saved thousands of lives... have to be brave and bring in reforms... danger of virus far from over'

LIZ MATHEW, **ABANTIKA GHOSH** & DIPANKAR GHOSE NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE LOCKDOWN is set to continue in red zones and other areas of concern beyond May 3. Curbs would be stricter in states with a big spike in cases. And, with infections likely to peak again in June-July, a balance should be struck between restarting the economy and containing the COVID-19 spread.

With a week left in the second phase of the extended lockse are some of the key

takeaways from Monday's

videoconference between Prime

Minister Narendra Modi and

Chief Ministers, sources told



At the videoconference with CMs, Monday. PTI

The Indian Express. It was the fourth such meeting since March 22. two days before the lock-

Probe against 3

I-T officers for

to policies'

NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

Income Tax officers.

report 'contrary

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

TERMING A report titled FORCE

(Fiscal Options & Response to

COVID-19 Epidemic) prepared

by 50 young IRS officers as a po-

sition "contrary to current poli-

cies of government", the Centre

on Monday initiated a formal in-

quiry against three senior

report had advocated a hike in

Among other measures, the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

assured that the state of the economy is good and there is no need to panic. "We have to give mpor ice to the ea With Finance Minister well as continue the fight against Nirmala Sitharaman attending COVID-19... We have to be brave the conference for the first time, and bring in reforms that touch CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 sources said the Prime Minister

States guarded on lifting lockdown, want clarity on movement of workers

MANOJCG & SANTOSH SINGH NEW DELHI, PATNA, APRIL 27

MOST STATES on Monday indicated at the videoconference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi that they wanted the lockdown to continue in some form post-May 3, while adding that they would follow the Centre's

lead on the matter. West Bengal accused the Centre of sending mixed signals ation of some th the relax

The PM, one Chief Minister said, did not respond to demands for an economic package. "The mood was in

CORONA COUNT

DEATHS

9 samples have been

28,380 886

6,362 RECOVERED

tested as on April 27

guidelines in this regard.

Justice can be done without robes or congregation: CJI on lockdown lesson

Decision on summer vacation after a panel submits report: Justice Bobde

SEEMA CHISHTI NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE SUPREME Court was hoping to start tapping artificial intelligence to reform its processes in March but then came COVID-19 and, as it has done across the board, the outbreak pushed all plans to the backburner and has forced a rethink in the judiciary as well. In an interview at his office in his residence, Chief Justice of India Justice S A Bobde spoke to The Indian Express on his vision for the Court in the post-COVID world.

This is the time of webcasts and hearings... Could this have been the opportunity for making the Court much more open?

That is a wider issue, whether to televise Court proceedings or not. That needs to be seen as to which case should be televised, and those important hearings are not taking place, we are not dealing with it, we are currently in fire-fighting mode, new technology – that is, old

To what extent has the COVID effect led to a decline in Court activity?

In January this year, there were up to 205 filings per day and a total of 4,108 for the

Delhi Police report on migrant camps: Fans not working, bad food



actions in a new way.



It is a huge challenge and I am not sure we can do it only by

reading opposing affidavits in Court. month. In April, the e-filing is just



CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA 305 so far (until April 26). That

gives you some idea of the extent of the impact of COVID.

What is the Supreme Court doing at a time when there are major challenges to right to livelihood, migrant populations, medical care as well as threats to right to life, Article 21, which the Court has so well-defined?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

securities and help fund houses honour redemptions avoiding a spill over.

Amid Covid uncertainty, Arvind Subramanian at Express e-Adda today

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

AS COVID-19 pushes the economy into a recession, policy makers are struggling to balance the imperatives of public health and economic well-being. To discuss the contours of a prudent vet compassionate macro-economic policy framework, The Indian Express will host its first online Express Adda on Tuesday, with former Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian.

He will be in conversation in the Express Adda webinar with Harish Damodaran, National Editor, and P Vaidyanathan Iyer, Executive Editor (National Affairs). Subramanian would likely

reflect on the immediate and





medium-term challenges facing the economy, the policy options before leaders, and the trade-offs there in. He has had first-hand experience with ideating and





income tax rate to 40 per cent for those earning over Rs 1 crore a year for a limited period of time, levy of a 4 per cent COVID-19 cess on taxable income over Rs 10 lakh, and re-introduction **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

curbs, while Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha, facing the prospect of hundreds of migrant labourers returning, asked it to specify

Not hostage to Govt, says SC, seeks its response on migrant workers in a week

ANANTHAKRISHNANG NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

MAKING CLEAR that "this institution is not hostage to the government", the Supreme Court Monday gave the Centre a week to respond to a prayer for interstate movement of migrant workers stranded due to the nationwide lockdown.

The bench of Justices N V Ramana, S K Kaul and B R Gavai asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to inform it about the steps being taken in this regard.

"We are only asking if there is any proposal regarding this," Justice Kaul observed after the Solicitor General said the government was seized of the emerging situation and would examine

concerns raised in the plea Mehta said the Centre was consulting the states on the issues being faced by the migrant workers. He urged the court to

record his statement instead of issuing any direction. The bench objected to a tweet by advocate Prashant Bhushan – he was appearing for petitioner Jagdeep Chhokar - in which he targeted the functioning of the court. 'You don't have faith in us.

How can we hear you?... An order can always be criticised... You say that you are with this institution for more than 30 years. You know some orders are favourable, some are not. You should not have said such things... This institution is not **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

In war room, 5 teams of doctors, data analysts keep watch

continuing the lockdown with concessions," Puducherry CM V Narayanasamy said, while telling **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY

your hands are surely ried, Sir, but the mask

THE WORLD

BORIS BACK AT

WORK, WARNS

AGAINST EASING

CURBS TOO SOON

IN US, CONFLICTING

MESSAGES STOKE

CONFUSION PAGE 12

muffled

your praise

for Agra.

Food being distributed to children of migrant labourers at a flyover construction site in East Delhi Monday. Abhinav Saha

SOURAV ROY BARMAN NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

"FANS NOT working and no power back-up; sanitisation of toilets rarely done; most migrants want to leave as their families cannot survive; rude behaviour of civil defence staff: food quality not good; no hand wash and sanitisers; foul smell in toilets; water supply in the toilets only between 7 am and 11 am; one soap for bathing and no detergent for washing clothes; mosquito bites.

These are among key observations made by 10 Delhi Police station house officers (SHOs), who were tasked to prepare a report on shelter homes for migrants in Central Delhi. The problems were

flagged by personnel from Civil Lines police station, which surveyed two shelters at Majnu ka Tilla and the posh Civil Lines. More than 15 shelter homes were assessed by the police.

The report was forwarded by OCP (North) Monika Bhardwaj to Deputy Commissioner (Central) Nidhi Shrivastava on April 22. The Central District administration directed officials to take remedial action based on the report within 24 hours

DCP Bharadwaj said that after police observed a few problems at the centres, SHOs in the district were asked to file reports from their jurisdiction. Bharadwaj then compiled the analysis and sent it to the DM so the government could take necessary action.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



WE CAN GIVE EMPLOYMENT TO 15 LAKH PEOPLE'

YOGI ADITYANATH CHIEF MINISTER OF UTTAR PRADESH

INSIDE

EARLY SCREENING HELPS KARNATAKA PAGE 7

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, APRIL 27 IN NIRMAN Bhawan, which

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

houses the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, a lounge on the first floor, where joint secretary-level and above officers would gather to celebrate birthdays, has been functioning as a

COVID-19 "war room" for about a month-and-a-half now. This is where about 30-odd

people – including doctors, data analysts. information communication technology specialists and public health professionals from



various agencies - have been

five teams, each tracking different sets of data, all projected onto five giant screens in the war room. One team tracks the growth

of cases and deaths, doubling time and identifies hotspots.

Another team keeps a watch on the availability of infrastructure, down to the district level. A third team looks at future projections to assess the state-



A Central team at a control room in Pimpri-Chinchwad in Pune. Express

level preparedness, and shares this data with the states every day. "For example if there is a facility or a district where there is no assigned ventilator, we flag that to the state. We take inputs from states, analyse them and give them feedback," said a team member.

A fourth group looks at the projections to see where the numbers are headed; and the last team tracks global trends vis-a-vis India, and sets deliverable goals for the states.

There is also a dashboard tracking social media, identifying fake news and information

that needs to be relayed to the states among other things.

Explaining their work, a member of the team that tracks hotspots said: "Our job is basically to look at data and give inputs to the states or the ministry, as the case may be, so that they are prepared for the future. That is why we work with doubling time, rather than looking at the number of fresh cases each day, to detect a trend. When you work

on doubling time, you can foretell a surge before it happens." A screen shows all the emerging hotspots like Ahmedabad and Indore as well as the existing ones like Mumbai, Pune and Delhi. And at the click of a mouse, all the relevant data, including the number of cases. deaths and doubling time, come up on the screen. "All the inputs go straight to the secretary," said an official.

This was where the list of hotspots, that Health Secretary Preeti Sudan shared with states earlier this month, originated.

A committee room on the second floor has been converted into a second war room for Health Ministry officials, to relay feedback to states on a daily, sometimes an hourly, basis.





2 THE SECOND PAGE

The Indian EXPRESS

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WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In today's episode 3 Things, we look at why a major mutual fund house shut a bunch of schemes and why the RBI has got involved

lice survey that many homeless

persons have moved out of the

shelters after the lockdown was

announced. "They were forced to

leave the homes and that is creat-

ing a lot of chaos in the adjoining

shelter homes for the homeless in Delhi. Additionally, 111 govern-

ment facilities, mostly school

buildings, have been notified as

shelter homes to house migrants

stuck in the city due to the lock-

down. These additional spaces are

housing over 10.000 people.

while the daily occupancy of the

permanent ones stands at around

7,000. For instance, the report

states that in shelter number 11.

near Old Delhi Railway Station,

around 350 homeless persons

used to stay. After the lockdown,

the number has come down to

156. According to official data, on April 26, 172 people stayed in the

The Kotwali and Kashmere

Gate police stations submitted

that there are no shortcomings in

shelters falling under their juris-

diction. The report from Sadar

Bazar police station states that at

the shelter home at Motia Khan,

"social distancing is not being

maintained due to overcrowding

as 412 persons are staying. It

needs sanitisation and cleaning".

states the report, no basic medical

facilities are available, and water

is not fit for drinking. Inputs from

3 I-T officers

of wealth tax for individuals with

net wealth of Rs 5 crore and more.

said the Board issued

chargesheets to the three offi-

cers under Rule 14 of Central

Civil Services (Classification.

Control & Appeal) Rules, 1965

for violation of conduct rules.

The three senior I-T officers have

been divested of their current re-

sponsibilities. No action was,

however, taken against the young officers who had written

The three officers against

whom action has been initiated.

with the approval of the President

of India, are: Prashant Bhushan

(1988 batch), General Secretary of

IRS Association, Sanjay Bahadur

(1989 batch), Principal Director

(Investigation), North East Region

and Prakash Dubev (2001 batch),

Director, DoPT and Joint Secretary,

charges framed against these offi-

cers said the officers had "with-

out any authority guided prepa-

ration of document titled FORCE

in which a position contrary to

current policies of government on

various matters related to income

tax.like tax slabs.incidence of tax.

administration and collection of

unauthorisedly released in the

public domain, has created con-

fusion and uncertainty with re-

spect to the policy of government

with respect to income tax which

can have an adverse impact on

economy, especially during this

time when country is battling a

pandemic and the government is

keen to ensure a stable tax

rised preparation and release of

such a document for wide dis-

semination also "amounts to crit-

icism of government policies" by

senior tax officers thereby "caus-

ing avoidable embarrassment to

day. CBDT said it had never asked

the IRS Association to prepare

such a report and that "necessary inquiry" would be conducted.

In a statement earlier in the

It further said that unautho-

"This document, having been

tax has been taken.

regime," it said.

the government".

The statement of articles of

IRS Association.

the report, they said.

Sarai Rohilla police suggest that

At three Timarpur shelters,

shelter.

There are 223 permanent

areas," states the police report.

FROM PAGE ONE

Govt silent

The Indian Express that Modi praised Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot for his handling of the coronavirus issue.

in ICC Test Batting Rankings

en opped durinklik bleve livith sever ant open is the tex. 'I poperion in the K.K.

Again, Andhra Pradesh was among the few states to seek relaxation. Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy said that with 80% of the state a virus-free "green zone", this may be considered. However, Jagan did not say if the state would lift restrictions after May 3. In a televised address later in the day, the CM said that with a vaccine not likely for a year, developing herd immunity was the only option.

Maharashtra, the state with the most coronavirus numbers. indicated that it could continue the lockdown.

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar sought directions on the issue of its students stuck in Kota and other places, as well as on migrant labourers, while leaving a decision on extension of the lockdown to the Centre. Facing flak for not bringing back students from Kota, he said unless there was a direction from the Centre, it amounted to violation of the curbs.

On whether the lockdown should go on after May 3, Nitish said, "Experts should be consulted. Bihar will abide by whatever decision the Centre takes." It also expressed concern over people returning to the state without screening

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik sought framing of a national SOP for movement of people stranded across the country. The state estimates that over five lakh of its workers are stranded in different parts of the country.

Narayanasamy, who raised the issue of students stuck abroad. said the PM made a "passing remark" saying the migrant labour issue has to be considered, but did

shown the way)." The Prime Minister was apparently referring to the Rajasthan government's decision to increase working time in factories from 8 hours to 12 hours.

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Accusing the Centre of making contradictory statements, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee wanted greater clarity on the Home Ministry order regarding this. "We are in favour of the lockdown. But the Centre on one hand emphasises on this. and on other hand, issues orders to open shops. If you open shops, how will you enforce the lockdown?" Banerjee said. She added that the state

would plan up to May 21. "From the Prime Minister's speech, it was clear that this will continue for long."

Fighting a surge in numbers and a high fatality rate, Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani called for a "phased" lifting of the lockdown, "citing the interests of small and medium entrepreneurs and labourers". He said at the videoconference that most of the deaths in the state were due to comorbidities

Having directed opening of single-unit shops except in containment zones on Saturday, Gujarat has revoked the order for Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Raikot and Surat. Rupani said he had received representations from shopkeepers saying they preferred staying closed till May 3, while adding that the state would

go by what the Centre decides. Úttar Pradesh CM Yogi

Adityanath did not give any indication of the state's plan, even as he ordered officials on Monday to create facilities to quarantine about 10-15 lakh people. Significantly, it also arranged to bring home about 10.000 students from different districts of the state stuck in Pravagrai. Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, however, said the state was in no position to bring back its students or labourers. "We have been saying that we want to bring (stranded students, labourers) back. But the MHA issued orders that ban inter-state travel till May 3... Other states are flouting the orders and we have been left helpless," Soren told reporters.

PM underlines the twin challenges

the lives of common citizens," Modi said. On their part, many states suggested that the lockdown should continue with curbs being eased in green zones

Gujarat, which has recorded 3,548 cases so far, sought a gradual and phased exit from the lockdown Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik proposed an extension by another month from May 3, and Meghalaya's Conrad Sangma wanted the curbs "to continue with relaxation on activities in green zones or non-COVID-affected districts"

Sources said almost all the states were of the opinion that restrictions on inter-state transportation, including by air and rail, should continue. Kerala submitted that it wanted to continue restrictions on interdistrict and inter-state transport till May 15.

"Bihar made the point strongly that while the Disaster Management Act does not allow travelling from one place to another, one state is getting children from Kota, another is moving its migrant labour," a senior state functionary, who attended the meeting, said in a reference to UP and MP.

Highlighting the importance of strictly enforcing guidelines in hotspots or red zone areas. the Prime Minister asked the states to work to-

wards converting the red zones into orange zones and thereafter to green zones. Sources said the modalities of an exit strategy for green zones would be announced closer to May 3. Modi underlined that the

helmets to scare people

lockdown has yielded positive results as the country has managed to save thousands of lives in the past one-and-a-half months. Pointing out that India's population is comparable to that of the combined population of several countries, Modi said the country has been able to protect its people because of timely measures taken

"He, however, forewarned that the danger of the virus is far from over and constant vigilance is of paramount importance," an official note released after the videoconference stated

Sources guoted the Prime Minister as saying that he has learnt from experts that COVID-19 cases could peak again in June-July. "They feel that with the lockdown, the spike may be avoided for April-May, but when the lockdown is lifted in some places, it may spike in June," sources said.

Referring to the Prime Minister's remarks, the official note said: "He said that as per experts the impact of coronavirus will remain visible in the coming months. Reiterating

the mantra of do gaz ki doori (maintaining a 2-metre distance). he said that masks and face covers will become part of our lives in the days ahead." Modi also signalled that re-

strictions could be voluntary, too. "...Under the circumstances, everyone's aim must be rapid responses. He pointed out that many people are selfdeclaring whether they have cough and cold or symptoms, and that this is a welcome sign," the note said.

According to sources, states with a number of COVID-free districts, including from the Northeast, wanted some restrictions to be eased so that economic activities could be revived. Most states also favoured opening up zero-case districts (283 so far), limited relaxations

They suggested that whenzone slips into red, there should ing operations. According to the Health Ministry, orange zones

are areas that have reported no case in 14 days and while green refers to those with no fresh case in 28 days. The videoconference came

on a day when 1.463 new cases were recorded in the last 24

time of the global financial cri-

RBI opens Rs 50,000 cr liquidity window

Mutual fund experts said quality as also on the liquidity funds in October 2008 (at the proposal to open up a special

hours, taking the total count to 28,380. The country, however, also recorded 60 deaths, the highest toll so far in a single day, taking the total number of fatalities to 886.

MANIPUR SHOWS THE

People walk past stalls

taking what they need

at a safe distance

WAY TO DISTRIBUTE

FULL COVERAGE

In Monday's meeting, the chief ministers of nine states -Meghalaya, Mizoram. Puducherry, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh. Odisha. Bihar, Gujarat and Haryana got a chance to speak. Others were given the option of either attending the meeting themselves or assigning the respective chief secretary or a state minister. Kerala, for instance, deputed its chief secretary while submitting its suggestions in writing.

On the other issues that came up, sources said while Kerala wanted Indians from overseas to be brought back, Modi said it has to be done keeping in mind that their families are not under any risk.

Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga told The Indian Express that he raised concerns about the porous international borders that the state shares Myanmar with and Bangladesh. "We only have one COVID-19 patient who is recovering... But we are concerned about sharing our borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh, both of which are hotspots," he said.

liquidity window for NBFCs.

(With Esha Roy)

Bhushan said: "I understand, Sir. This is not lack of faith in the

"Don't try to project that you are the only concerned person in the country," Mehta intervened. 'I have never said that I have

no faith in this institution,' Bhushan said, adding "if the objection is to me, I will withdraw. Some other lawyer will appear". "Why should we ask you to withdraw?" Justice Kaul asked.

"I only expressed my views. Some retired judges are also saying the same thing," Bhushan said.

what?" countered Justice Kaul. Bhushan said the migrant

tion and are in a desperate situation. "Why people who have tested negative can't go to their respective homes, I don't understand," he said, adding that this violates their fundamental right.

ports about some states taking steps to address this.

Bhushan replied that the steps were only for students. He also cited news reports which said 96% of the workers are not getting wages, and have very little food. Mehta said the report was wrong.

Bhushan said the government was not enforcing the fundamental rights of the people and, therefore, he was pleading to this court to enforce their fundamental rights. "This is the institution in which one has a lot of faith," he

Justice Gavai pointed out that he had come across reports that the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister was saying he will bring back 15 lakh labourers.

Bhushan replied that this will clash with the Centre's orders. He said it seemed as if the Centre had shut its eves.

Intervening, Mehta said the government was very concerned

institution.'

"We also have some views. So

workers have have only a day's ra-

The court then pointed to re-

said. the "migrants want to go back". while the ones from Gulabi Bagh talk about food not reaching on time and same masks being used repeatedly by the inmates.

Officials in the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) officials

in orange zones, and strict

curbs in red zones with containment areas. ever there is a fresh case in a green zone, or when an orange be a swift crackdown in terms of restrictions and contact-trac-

not offer any solution.

"The Chief Ministers were unanimous in telling the PM that the way in which the coronavirus cases are increasing, there should be a cautious approach and the PM has to take a call on the basis of observations by CMs. Most of the BIP-ruled CMs said the lockdown should continue and economic activity should be slowly started." he said.

Narayanasamy said he was among the CMs who sought an economic package, as well as the states' share of GST revenues. "The PM did not respond to that directly. He praised state governments for doing a Herculean task... He praised the Raiasthan CM for his handling of the coronavirus issue." the CM said.

According to him, the PM said, "Every state has some party in power, which realises that it has a chance to take the country forward.... Hamein reform bhi karna hai. Agar reform karne ki disha mein rajya initiative leta hai, aap dekhiye yeh sankat ko hum bohot bade avsar main palat sakte hain. Main Ashok Gehlotii ko badhai dunga. Unhone kai initiative live. Unhone labour ke live samav seema ki bi badotri ki hai. Theek hai alochana thodi hue hogi, lekin Rajasthan ne disha dikhayi hai (We have to carry out reforms. If a state takes an initiative for reform, we can turn this crisis into a big opportunity. I want to congratulate Ashok Gehlot. He has taken many initiatives. He has increased the time limit for labourers as well. There must have some criticism, but Rajasthan has

CLARIFICATIONS & CORRECTIONS

27.04.20, PAGE 7

In the article 'How MPLAD scheme works...', the photo caption wrongly said the scheme was announced in December 2013. It was announced in December 1993.

The error is regretted.



Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar urged the government to remove the uncertainty around dates of competitive examinations. Punjab sought permission for reopening of small shops, businesses and industries in all areas except containment zones. Kerala CM Pinaravi Vijavan

said the state had told the Centre that the lockdown can continue partially till May 15, advising "a cautious approach" on lifting restrictions. Tamil Nadu CM K Palaniswami sought more RT-PCR kits for the state to take testing up from 10,000 a day from 7,500. Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma suggested an "Economic Task Force" including all states to suggest solutions to initiate economic activities.

Madhva Pradesh said it would wait for the Centre's guidelines to decide its post-May 3 plan, while Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao said the lockdown should be extended if necessary as it was the only weapon against the virus.

(With inputs from Kolkata, Ranchi, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Thiruvananthapuram, Guwahati, Bhopal, Mumbai)

CJI Bobde

We have asked the government to report to us on the actions they are taking in all this: medical, nutritional, regarding shelter and transportation and whether transportation is consistent with social distancing norms. We have made provisions for states for the release of prisoners, enabled the freeing of those held in detention

centres in Assam. A monitoring committee or

oversight by the Supreme

uidity will boost investor confidence in the sector. "It's a good confidence building measure taken by the RBI. to ensure continued confidence of the investors in the MF industry as also normal functioning of the markets. The MF in-The RBI had opened special ligdustry continues to be on uidity repo window for mutual sound footing both on portfolio

Court could help?

what is essential to the judicial Officers, by the very nature of process and what is not. There would have been the realisation their jobs are present in each of the 700 plus districts. The Court that there needs to be a different cannot monitor activities of all ofemphasis for a more just society ficers in districts. We can certainly and that problems can be adask and have asked government dressed in many ways other than what is being done and they have the traditional ones. Justice can be equally done reported steps they are taking, there is no reason to find fault. without robes or congregation.

There are a large number of important cases of habeas corpus in lammu and Kashmir, electoral bonds, digital privacy and other rights and other Constitutional matters. When will they be heard?

These and so many other matters are there, I cannot say when they will be heard but we will certainly hear them.

Habeas Corpus should be the most urgent petition?

On Habeas and others, we are conscious of the nature of these petitions and they will be decided.

Will there be a summer vacation this year?

That is yet to be decided. The Committee in the Court that is looking at this (consisting of Justices R Nariman, UU Lalit, A M Khanwilkar and L Nageswara Rao) will submit its report to me at the end of the lockdown and in any case the full court has to decide on this. We are mandated to work 210 days in every calendar vear.

What is your vision of the Judiciary in the post-Covid world?

The entire fraternity of judges and lawyers would have realised

he RBI move on pumping liqfront despite an isolated incident in these challenging times." said Nilesh Shah. Chairman, Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). This is the third time the RBI is opening the liquidity window for the financial sector players in the last 15 years.

This was always so but now peo-

ple would have experienced it.

The older generation of lawyers

and judges would undoubtedly

feel a little uncomfortable with

the new introductions of features

like video-conferencing, e-filing

and the absence of the usual kind

of an "audience." One senior ad-

vocate has remarked that "we will

have learnt not to interrupt our

opponents" which is how it

judges and lawyers would have

realised that such large congrega-

tions are not necessary in the ad-

ministration of justice. Maybe the

importance of the brief, precise

argument, oral or written, would

transmission of records from one

court to another would be far

and taluka courts to high courts,

there were 26.84 lakh pages that

were transmitted! Then there is

paper work from high courts to

the Supreme Court. So that is the

volume currently, then is the mat-

ter of speed. With digital keeping,

that is also speeded up, as the mo-

ment an appeal is filed, from a dis-

trict court, the judgment to a high

court, the entire record can be

transmitted by the High Court

So also, the pleadings. The

In January 2020, from district

I think the litigating public,

should be in any way.

have been established.

more efficient.

over the Net.

sis) and again in July 2013, when returns on debt mutual funds dropped sharply after the rupee fell significantly against dollar and mutual funds feared redemption pressure. However, when the IL&FS fiasco hit the financial sector two years ago, the RBI did not approve a Finance Ministry

The digitisation of records,

though we are some distance

from achieving it as this crisis of

Covid erupted, but if this happens

in each of the 17,500 district

courts, of course, the problem of

authentication of these digital

hopefully, this digital culture

would strike roots. Then this

would be the basis for the

Artificial Intelligence (AI) which

we can then introduce. It will be

most effective when it has elec-

tronic data to work on. We were

meant to launch AI in March but

could not do so. An algorithm has

enormous speed. 10 lakh words

that there is a shift in conscious-

ness, the legal community during

the lockdown has been forced to

deal with the electronic medium

and it is conscious of the impor-

tance of electronic transmission,

making submissions, records can

also be transmitted by advocates

via emails and WhatsApp to the

The most important thing is

per second!

On Monday, the RBI said banks can extend loans to mutual funds and undertake out-Deposit (CDs) held by MFs.

right purchase of and repos against the collateral of investment grade corporate bonds, commercial papers (CPs), debentures and certificates of

There is a well-known term called "iudicial review" which is a power the Courts have, as it is the Judiciary which has to decide if their (Executive's) actions are in accordance with the Constitution.

records is there, to prevent tam-Anything else you may wish to pering. We are looking at that but, say?

(Smiles) - Stay Safe.

Adda today

framing key structural reforms from introduction of Goods and Services Tax to the Direct Benefit Transfer scheme - during his term as CEA in the Ministry of Finance.

A non-resident Senior Fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics and a Visiting Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, Subramanian's presence couldn't have been more timely as the government discusses a fresh fiscal relief package for the economy and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) continues with a series of measures to inject liquidity into the financial system.

The Express Adda is a series of informal interactions organised by The Indian Express Group and features those at the centre of change. Among the recent guests were Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Nobel laureates Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, and Chief Economic Advisor Krishnamurthy Subramanian.

SC on migrants

hostage to the government," Justice Kaul told Bhushan after Mehta drew the bench's attention to the tweet.

and was helping the migrant workers. He said the government was consulting states on how many have to be transported to their states and how many have to be given help and what kind of help. "We are taking all kind of steps," he said.

Justice Kaul asked Mehta "are vou ready to examine this".

The SG replied that the government was examining everything. "Brilliant ideas of the petitioner are not required." he said.

"So, you are in consultation with states?" Justice Kaul asked. "Many things are being discussed," Mehta said, assuring the court all points raised by the petitioner will be examined by the government.

Taking a dig at Bhushan, Mehta said, "every time Mr Bhushan loses, he goes to the lawns and says this is a black day. You cannot run government as a PIL petitioner."

He also raised questions on the data cited by Bhushan to make his claim about migrant workers not being paid. He sought two weeks to reply, but the court granted him one week.

Delhi camps

When contacted, District Magistrate, Central, Nidhi Shrivastava said a copy of the report "has been sent to all the subdivisional magistrates to rectify the shortcomings".

According to the report, a survey of three shelter homes by the staff of Lahori Gate police station in their area revealed that there were "no proper arrangements of drinking water" and no facilities such as reverse osmosis (RO) to serve treated water to the inmates. "No proper arrangement for food was noticed. It was found that food was being served twice a day but quality was not satisfactory. Therefore people roam around for better food. No gap, social distance is found between the beds/mattresses fixed for homeless persons. No arrangement for sanitisation or hand wash," the report states.

FULL REPORTS ON It also emerged during the powww.indianexpress.com

What is the relationship between the Judiciary and the Executive, and other pillars in a democracy, as this has been discussed recently. It is a Constitutional relationship, defined by the Constitution

Registry. If email fails then WhatsApp is the 'stand-by' mode.

of India. The Judiciary has primacy

in the judicial field, the Legislature in its field and the Executive in its

So you do not think it is important for the Judiciary to 'ease' the path of the Executive?

field.





New Delhi

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 THE ()UTBREAK THE CITY 5

MUCH DEPENDS ON CASES IN NEXT 6 DAYS, CENTRE CALL Full un-lockdown unlikely, city will adopt phased approach

MALLICA JOSHI NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE DELHI government is looking to extend the lockdown in the national capital beyond May 3, albeit with a few relaxations, officials said.

Chief Minister Arvind Keriwal attended the meeting with the Prime Minister through video conferencing on Monday, though he was not among the nine CMs who spoke. The consensus among Delhi

government officials is that lifting of the lockdown in a week's time will be counter-productive. "We are looking at opening up in a phased manner. Containment zones, in any case, will not be opened up till the time no case is reported among the population living there for 28 days. Other than these, we are looking at which districts have the least cases and perhaps some relaxations can be given in sub-divisions in these districts. If, let's say, a few sub-divisions have not

Policemen at work wearing a face shield in New Delhi on Monday. Praveen Khanna

350 Tablighi members ready to donate

plasma after recovering from Covid

seen a single case, we can look at opening more stores than are allowed at present. But no state is in a condition to completely open up next week." said a senior government official. The final decision, though,

will depend on the Centre's call. The lockdown in the city began on March 23, two days before the nationwide lockdown was imposed. Delhi has the sec-



lockdown rigorously can help contain the spread. Another official The Indian Express spoke to said the lockdown can only be lifted in a phased manner for it to be effective. "If we open up immediately, there is a big chance that we will

see a spike. Delhi has high population density, and we have to consider the decision to open up very carefully. Depending on the number of cases we see in the next six days, we will have to take a decision on opening up, that too in a phased manner. Since such a high percentage of people are asymptomatic or only have mild symptoms, a hasty decision could overwhelm our medical facilities," he said.

Restaurants, hotels, salons and other service and contactbased business are expected to remain shut even beyond May 3 Malls and big markets, too, are not expected to open next week.

"Offices might remain shut for at least two more weeks. A few more categories of businesses might be allowed to restart functioning, but what these are is yet to be assessed. We are already following the MHA guidelines on opening neighbourhood shops and have seen crowds in a few areas, which can prove dangerous. We have to move ahead cautiously," the official said.



BURNOUT

A health worker attends to her colleague who fainted, reportedly due to exhaustion and long working hours at a COVID-19 testing camp in New Delhi. AP

Cases in capital cross 3,000, no deaths for second consecutive day

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE NUMBER of COVID-19 cases in Delhi crossed 3,000 Monday, with 190 fresh cases being reported. It was also the second consecutive day with no deaths in the capital.

While the total cases in the city is 3,108, as many as 54 people have lost their lives. None of the 1,060 people admitted in hospitals or COVID-19 care centres recovered on Monday.

Healthcare workers across the city are emerging as the most vulnerable section. So far, close to 250 doctors, nurses and other hospital staff have tested positive.

At Babu Jagjivan Ram Hospital, 15 more healthcare workers said that patients who test negative will be shifted to other hospitals for further treatment.

At Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital, five more medical staff tested positive for the disease taking total cases in the medical facility to 70. Among those quarantined include the medical director, seven chief medical officers (CMO) and other resident doctors of the hospital. As per the list prepared by the administration, of

the 70 people, 42 are doctors. The Indian Express had reported on Monday that 33 healthcare workers at Max Hospital, Patparganj, tested positive for COVID-19. The hospital administration released a statement saying they have tested 581 healthcare workers at the hospital over two weeks. "Of the 33 healthcare workers, 32 are admitted at Max Hospital, Saket, while one has been discharged." The organisation said that it has instituted mandatory COVID-19 testing for all its 24,000-plus employees and pa-

tients admitted across their hospitals. Across Max hospitals in Delhi and Mumbai, 200 COVID-19 patients are admitted.

Over the past two weeks, a large number of people testing positive are those at the forefront of relief work, be it healthcare workers or those involved in distribution of food or in administrative outreach. A staffer working in direct contact with the district magistrate of the Southwest district also tested positive Monday. The DM has also been placed under home quarantine.

diagnosed with coronavirus, have agreed to donate their plasma to treat severely ill patients in the city. So far, 25 of them have donated for plasma therapy. Senior officials in the health department said those who have come forward to donate their

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AROUND 350 members of the

Tablighi Jamaat, who had come

to Delhi to attend its congregation

in Nizamuddin Markaz last

month and were subsequently

NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

plasma recovered from COVID-19 at the Sultanpuri and Narela quarantine centres. On Monday night, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain also visited these patients at the quarantine centre.

Farah Bashar (40) from Tamil Nadu, who tested positive after attending the event in Delhi, has

donated the plasma at Sultanpuri guarantine center. "I have done it for humanity and for the cause of saving the lives of other people. Like me, many others who have recovered from

the disease are coming forward to donate their plasma," he said. Of the over 2,300 people evacuated from the Nizamuddin Markaz, 1,080 had tested positive for the infection. Several of them have now recovered and are being discharged from the hospitals.

Recently, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal made an appeal to patients who have successfully recovered from coronavirus to donate their plasma for treatment of COVID-19 patients. He said the initial results of plasma therapy on critically-ill COVID-19 patients have shown "encouraging" initial results. Even on Sunday, the CM requested peo-

ple to donate plasma, saying the

virus has no religion. "Many people are since com-

ing forward to donate their plasma," said a senior official from the health department. Plasma therapy uses antibodies found in the blood of people who have recovered from an infection, to treat patients who are infected. In this therapy, blood is drawn from a person who has recovered from the disease and the serum is separated and screened for virusneutralising antibodies.

The only qualification donors need to fulfill is that they should be between 18-60 years of age, having no diabetes or blood pressure, and should have crossed three weeks and tested negative for coronavirus twice.

At Lok Nayak Hospital, six people have been administered the plasma therapy, and two of them have been shifted out of the ICU. The hospital administration is preparing a list of the donors who are medically fit to donate plasma for the other patients.

"We are hoping that one of the patients will be discharged on Tuesday. We are waiting for the final results," said Dr JC Passey, medical director of the hospital.

Similarly, the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) has received around 11 donations.

The therapy was first administered to a 49-year-old patient admitted to Max Hospital. The patient has recovered and been discharged from the hospital on Sunday.

On April 16, Delhi government received the nod from the ICMR to use plasma therapy. The research institute has given an approval to ILBS and Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC), which had applied to the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for a research protocol.

CORONA COUNT **DELHINCR**



tested positive on Monday, taking the total to 65. Several others have been quarantined.

District Magistrate (North) Deepak Shinde said: "The hospital was sealed on Sunday and is regularly being sanitised. Contact tracing of all staff members is going on, and we are also looking at services at the hospital's critical-care unit as well."

The hospital has also tested some critically ill patients and their reports are awaited. Sources

The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

Cancer patient dies alone, 2 constables among 5 at funeral

JIGNASA SINHA NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

WHEN 78-YEAR-OLD Dr Shyam Murari Kapoor, who was suffering from cancer, passed away on Sunday, head constables Ramesh and Jitender were among five people at the funeral.

The policemen, posted at Hari Nagar police station, had been taking care of Kapoor since April 19. "Kapoor uncle was humble and treated me like his son. On Sunday, when I received information about his death, I rushed to his house and found his body inside the bathroom. I was shocked and carried his body to the ambulance. I spoke to him on Saturday night; he had called and said he missed his sons and wanted to meet them. I had assured him that he will meet them soon," said Ramesh.

Family members said the elderly man had been living alone in West Delhi's Hari Nagar for a "very long time" and his sons lived in Hyderabad and England. Due to the lockdown. his family members couldn't come to Delhi and take care of him.

Mukta, Kapoor's niece, said, "The policemen helped us a lot, they bought medicines and food for uncle. On Sunday, before I could reach his house, the policemen were already there and had shifted his body. I was confused as to what to do next. They handled everything from the post-mortem to the final rites. I called other relatives but only two of them could make it. Most of our rel-



atives couldn't get passes... But the policemen stood there and helped with all the arrangements."

Head constable Ramesh said he first met Dr Kapoor on April 19, when he called the police as he "wasn't feeling well". When Ramesh reached the house, he found that Kapoor had a high fever and lived alone.

"He was frail and lying on his bed. He told me about his family, and I took him to DDU Hospital and called his niece. We waited for three-

four hours until his niece came. She shifted him to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital. I was told that he has cancer and needed someone to be with him. Our staff was helpful, and we took care of him," he said. The policemen had

also hired a medical attendant to stay with Kapoor after he was They discharged. checked on him every day and also provided him with ration and medicines. "He treated us like

one of his own. So it was our responsibility to help him when he needed us," he said.







Date:28/04/2020



lic Registrar

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 THE ()UTBREAK THE CITY

CHARGED UNDER UAPA NE Delhi riots: Jamia alumni head arrested

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL, ARANYA SHANKAR& **PRITAM PAL SINGH** NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE DELHI Police Special Cell has arrested the president of the Alumni Association of Jamia Millia Islamia (AAJMI), Shifa-Ur-Rehman (43), under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in connection with the February Northeast Delhi riots.

A Delhi court Monday sent Rehman, also a member of the Jamia Coordination Committee (JCC), to 10-day police custody. Police have alleged Rehman's speeches had contributed to the riots. Commercial District Judge Sanjiv Jain allowed the Special Cell to quiz Rehman in custody.

Police told the court that during the course of investigation of some other arrested accused, names of more people had emerged who needed to be questioned at length.

"Huge money was also funded as well as spent by the conspirators to carry out these riots in Delhi," police contended before the court, seeking 12-day police remand. Noting that the charges are serious in nature, Judge Jain remanded him in police custody.

The Indian Express had reported on April 25 that Delhi Police are exploring action against several members of the Popular Front of India (PFI), the

JCC, Pinjra Tod, All India Students' Association (AISA) as well as former and current students of Delhi University and JNU under the UAPA Act.

Investigators contended before a court that Rehman's custodial interrogation was required as he was allegedly found 'involved in providing help in setting up anti-CAA/NPR/NRC protest at various sites in Delhi, giving hatred speeches at various protest site - Shaheen Bagh, Seelampur, Khureji, Inderlok and Hauz Rani in front of huge gathering of public in order to insti-

gate them against the government of India and other communities, which led to recent riots". The counsel for the accused opposed the remand and said his

client has been falsely implicated in the case and there is no evidence against him. But police claimed before the court that apart from organising protests at various sites, funding had been received from Gulf countries. used to procure weapons/explosives and create riots at various places, resulting in huge loss of lives and property.

Two weeks ago, UAPA was invoked against former JNU student Umar Khalid, Jamia student and RJD's youth wing president Meeran Haider, JCC media coordinator Safoora Zargar, and

Danish. a resident of Northeast Delhi's Bhajanpura. This is the fifth arrest in con-

nection with the riots since the lockdown was announced - po-

lice had earlier arrested Zargar, Haider, former Congress councillor Ishrat Jahan and activist Khalid Saifi.

Sources close to Rehman said he was with his family at his hometown in Uttar Pradesh when he was contacted by the New Delhi range of Special Cell. "He was asked to join the investigation. Police told him they wanted to ask him some questions related to the FIRs, for which he was called to Mawana in Meerut yesterday afternoon," a relative said.

"He was assured he would be allowed to go back home but instead he was taken to Delhi and arrested from his home in Ghaffar Manzil at night. He wasn't even active in the anti-CAA protests in Northeast Delhi, so we can't understand why it's happening," the relative alleged. Several calls were made to

AAJMI office bearers, but their phones were switched off. Following Zargar's arrest ear-

lier this month, 26 civil rights activists and political leaders had condemned the "arbitrary arrests" of the Jamia students, and alleged that police were "abusing" their powers by arresting those critical of government policies under the 'cover" of the lockdown.

The Delhi Police, on the other hand, tweeted on April 20: "While investigating Jamia and NE riot cases, Delhi Police has done its job sincerely and impartially. All arrests have been made based on scientific and forensic evidence."



Divisha Lal (5) and her brother Tanmay (10) have been away from their parents for over a month. Arul Horizon

Mother connects with five-yr-old

via video calls, stories over phone

ARUL HORIZON & ATIKH RASHID PUNE, APRIL 27

FIVE-YEAR-OLD DIVISHA Lal has lost count of the days she has been away from her mother. "It must have been five months," she says. Her grandmother corrects her, "It's been one month and 10 days.

Divisha, her 10-year-old brother Tanmay and their grandparents, who live in Delhi, had travelled to Pune on March 17 to meet her aunt Shalini Mundada and spend a few days away from the Delhi summer. They were supposed to return on March 23, but the nationwide lockdown has extended their brief visit to an extended and enforced holiday, which is particularly hard for the five-year-old girl, who has been away from her mother, Rachana

First, the airline sent a message about the flight being 'rescheduled', with no new date. On March 24, the national lockdown came into effect. While 10-year-old Tanmay

understands the situation they are facing, Divisha started getting restless after the first few days of the lockdown, says Shalini. "Understandably, she gets cranky. Away from her mother, she refuses to eat and is sad most of the time. Rachana video calls her fivesix times every day. She tells her

bedtime stories over the phone. Sometimes that consoles her,"

Meanwhile, 1,400 km away, Rachana, who has been spending sleepless nights, says Tanmay and Divisha have never stayed away

"When we are on video call, I can't show the children how troubled I am by this," says Rachana, a lawyer. "I try to keep Divisha entertained by calling her every day between 3 and 5 pm. I also plan some special surprises for her such as making a conference call with her best friend in Delhi, so that she has something to look forward to," she adds.

Due to the lockdown and the pandemic, the children have not even been able to go outside the building. "The situation is such that I can't even treat them to outside food or even ice-cream, because I don't want them to de-

velop a cold, which may affect their prospective plans to travel,"

says Shalini. Rachana savs that in her desperation, she has sent out requests on Twitter tagging Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, but is yet to receive any response.

Divisha's father Ashesh Lal, who is also a lawyer, has been trying to get a transport pass for his children and mother-in-law. While the Maharashtra government readily agreed following a request on April 22, the trio can't hit the road since the vehicle will have to pass through four other states, and they don't have a permission from each of them yet.

"I'm hoping that the Maharashtra government will find a way... I have also contacted other state governments with a similar request.' said Lal.

14 new cases in Gautam **Budh** Nagar

AMIL BHATNAGAR NOIDA, APRIL 27

GAUTAM BUDH Nagar witnessed its second highest single day spike with 14 coronavirus cases, including eight medical staff in various hospitals, being reported on Monday. The latest samples have taken the district's tally to 129, with 58 active cases.

"We have asked hospitals to take extra precautions; sanitisation will be carried out. Contact tracing of the medical staff has begun and we are gathering information about the patients they might have come into contact with. The number of hotspots have also increased," said Suhaas LY, DM Gautam Budh Nagar.

According to officials, medical personnel from World Health Organisation and GIMS Greater Noida will conduct workshops in hospitals managing non-COVID patients. The move comes in the wake of complaints in several UP districts alleging that emergency patients are not being admitted because of fear of coronavirus.

Among the new cases, six health workers are from the Super Speciality Pediatrict Hospital in Sector 30, which is specifically looking after coronavirus patients, while two others are from ESIC Hospital in Sector 24 and district hospital. The remaining six patients hail from Kulsera, Jonchana, Nithari, p-1, Chotpur Sector 63 and Chauda Village, which have been added to the red zone in hotspot list.

The DM also clarified a fourmonth-old infant "brought dead to a hospital" on Saturday had tested negative. The infant's father is coronavirus positive.

Ensure 7-day ration to the poor: HC tells Delhi govt

NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

are still closed. So when the entire lockdown is lifted and all our vendors can operate, only then can we start production," he said. Officials from the district ad-

Monday directed the Delhi government to ensure delivery of food grains to the poor from PDS

On land, and then by boat: How food reaches 80 on a tiny Yamuna island

ABHINAV RAJPUT NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

A CAR, a motorcycle and a boat - bringing food to 80 people living on a tiny island on the Yamuna is a unique challenge. On Monday, on the menu for residents of Chilla Yamuna Khadar was puri, sabzi, halwa and a special treat for the children: chips. The food is cooked in a court-



Maruti gets admin nod to start ops but with minimal staff

SAKSHIDAYAL GURGAON, APRIL 27

THE GURGAON district administration Monday granted permission to Maruti Suzuki to restart operations at its Gurgaon plant, five days after similar permission was given to its Manesar plant. According to the Permission

ministration said the plant had been granted permission to op-

erate only its "spare parts depot" as it provides parts for several an-

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE OBSERVING THAT "denial of access to food grain for the poor" has further aggravated their "distress", the Delhi High Court

"Also, production cannot be

started because many vendors

they will not be starting produc-

tion there as of now," said V S

Kundu, the monitoring officer

appointed by the state govern-

ment for COVID-19 in Gurgaon.

to the Manesar plant to begin

operations with 600 employees.

Maruti officials had sought per-

mission to resume operations

Express Monday, Kundu said the

administration is granting per-

mission only to industries work-

ing on "absolutely essential com-

ponents", since it has outrun the

juota given by the state govern-

ment for the number of passes

to be issued: "We received 2,400

applications from industries...

and granted permission to 340."

Speaking to The Indian

with 4,696 employees.

Permission had been granted



Noida for allegedly selling bicycles to people planning to return to their villages outside the district.

Noida: A bicycle shop

owner was arrested and

another was booked in

two separate incidents in

CORONA

WATCH

Cycle shop

owner held

Two die in Gurgaon

Gurgaon: Two people undergoing treatment for COVID-19 at Medanta-The Medicity in Gurgaon passed away Monday, said officials. "One is from Odisha and the other from Irag... Both had cancer. which caused complications in their treatment," said Chief Medical Officer Jaswant Singh Punia.

Baby gets new lease of life

New Delhi: A 10-monthold infant from Malaysia underwent liver transplant at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital. Doctors performed the operation after the baby tested negative for COVID-19 following the 14-day quarantine. ENS

yard next to a sweet shop in Mayur Vihar Phase III, whose residents decided to send food to those on the island once a day. A resident, Virender Sachdeva, packs food in cartons and sends them off in a car that heads to DND flyway. At the mouth of the flyway, driver Sonu Pandit, who does farming in Yamuna Khadar. stops and makes a phone call. Five minutes later, a man on a motorcycle, Lokesh Sharma, Pandit's friend who lives in Shakarpur, takes the carton and rides through 3 km of a muddy track along the Yamuna.

He reaches the end of the track, where a boat awaits him. On the boat is Suraj, a fisherman who lives in Yamuna Khadar. A 15-minute ride later. the food finally reaches residents. Having lost their means of livelihood after the lockdown, the residents are dependent on Sachdeva and his team. With water on three sides and tall shrubs growing out of muddy water on the fourth which leads to the DND Flyway, the residents are locked in.

Living in tents and small huts, the residents do not have power or LPG connections. Before the

Once a day, residents of Mayur Vihar Phase III send across food to residents. Abhinav Saha

lockdown, they would row out to Okhla to get groceries, vegetables and drinking water and cook on mud chulahs using wood. With shops closest to them shut and no income, they have nothing to do but wait. Children who live on the island go to a government school nearby on boats.

Most residents work as labourers in nearby shops, construction sites or grow vegetables. "Aaj bachchon ke liye chips bhi hain," said Pandit. As children queue up waiting for the treat, Shikha Kumari (20) gets in line too. Her father grows tomatoes but has had no buyers since the lockdown. "Earlier, we sold to traders who came in small trucks near DND. Since the lockdown, they have stopped com-

ing," she said. She used to work

as a cleaner in a beauty parlour but has been home for a month now, without wages.

The virus has not touched the island so far. "This is a safe place to be in these times as hardly any outsider ventures here, but it also makes life difficult as they are dependent on outside support for even small things," said Pandit.

People started living in Chilla Yamuna Khadar around 20 years ago when flooding forced them to leave their jhuggis on the Yamuna bank. Kavita Kumari's house has a wall made of a ply sheet, supported by a tree trunk Outside is a cot, a mosquito

net and a few clothes. The 24year-old is learning to use the computer at an institute in Abul Fazal Enclave.

"My father helped make tin

sheets. Now construction has stopped, we are at the mercy of others... Earlier, my sisters and brothers went to school where they would get the mid-day meal, now even school is closed. They have started online classes and we use solar power to charge mobile phones. Not everyone has that, so the others go to Okhla and charge their phones at shops or friends' homes, which is not possible

these days," she said. Sachdeva first found out about the island a few days after the lockdown, when an acquaintance told him about people in need of food and supplies. He, businessman Vijendra Dhama and a sweet shop owner, Rajiv Kohli, then started a kitchen for those in need.

Certificate, the plant can operate with only 159 employees, though Maruti had sought permission to begin work with 3,704 personnel and 31 vehicles.

'The application is approved for permission to operate during lockdown period with only 159 employees, subject to physical inspection and submission of all necessary documents in support of their claim (declaration, SOP, photographs, etc) before commencement of actual operation," states the certificate from the Gurgaon Deputy Commissioner.

"No other manufacturing service activity is permitted in the unit other than those approved under the MHA guidelines during the said lockdown period, else strict action will be taken and you will be responsible for the same," it states.

Officials at the organisation, however, said it is impossible to begin work with just 159 people. "We cannot begin production with 159 people, but we can start working to ensure the readiness of the plant and implement the measures required whenever permission is granted," said a company spokesperson.

cillaries. "This plant has been alshops all seven days of the week. lowed to work because it is their "The GNCTD (Government of major inventory for spare parts

National Capital Territory of Delhi) shall ensure food grains are for a lot of other ancillaries. They have more than 10,000 workers distributed to poor, needy and employed here but we have marginalised non-PDS residents given permission for 159, which from PDS as well as other distriis essentially just to open it up bution centres stated to be set up and operate their spare parts deby them for the said purpose, said a bench of Justice Siddharth pot. They have been allowed as an essential component of sup-Mridul and Justice Talwant Singh. ply for remaining industries, so

The court's direction came on plea by NGO Delhi Rozi-Roti Adhikar Abhiyan, which highlighted the ground reality based on visits to ration shops and pressed for the need to ensure effective and time-bound redressal of complaints on non-supply of ration. The bench observed that 'any person who is hungry should be eligible for grain".

"Even though we are informed... that GNCTD is undertaking necessary steps to alleviate their suffering through various measures, including serving of hot meals twice a day at a large number of specified locations," it said, 'GNCTD shall ensure all ration shops remain operational and disburse food grains... on a regular basis between 9 am to 1 pm and 3 pm to 7 pm, 7 days a week".

NORTHEAST DELHI In Shiv Vihar lane full of bakeries, riots and lockdown deal double blow

ANANYA TIWARI NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

IN NORTHEAST Delhi's Shiv Vihar, every lane had at least one family that made bakery goods from small basements and rooms. But the riots that ravaged the area two months ago and the subsequent lockdown have left them without equipment and manpower to run their units.

"After the riots, we were trying to restart our bakery, just like the first time we did 15

years ago. This entire area will have to rebuild from scratch," said Nadeem Mansoori (22), whose family runs Riyasat Bakery, selling mainly rusks.

During the riots on February 24-25, many residents fled to areas such as Mustafabad. Chaman Park and Babu Nagar. When they returned, many of their houses or shops were reduced to rubble or completely looted. Mansoori, with his parents

and five siblings, fled from home on February 25 to Mustafabad, where they have relatives. "We stayed there for

around 20 days. When we returned, we found that all the material required for baking was looted and the machines were broken," he said.

After availing help from non-profit groups and volunteers, the machines were fixed, but the business remains shut. 'Right now there are no earnings, as everything has become very expensive. The sugar we would earlier buy for Rs 1,500-1,600 now costs around Rs 2.000," said Mansoori. The bakery used to earn them Rs 20,000-30,000 earlier, but now



the shop only makes rusks a few hours each day.

"A few bakeries have opened in the last 10-12 days, but there are hardly any customers," said Mansoori.

Mohammad Guldeen (37) too has had to shut his bakery operation as his staff of seven have returned to their villages in UP. Unable to find help, he now buys baked items from

Neighbours are the only customers at Mukeel Ahmed's shop. Ananya Tiwari

Mustafabad to sell at his shop. "My family – my wife, two

young children, and a nephew fled our home on February 25. The rioters took everything, including stocks of flour, oil, sugar. Early March, the family returned home, but could not restart business without the staff. If the lockdown ends, hopefully our lives can go on. Maybe the people will come

back," said Guldeen. Meanwhile, some are slowly picking up the pieces and starting again

Mukeel Ahmed (50), who

owns Prince Bakery, was fortunate as his two employees stayed put while he stayed with relatives in Mustafabad for 20 days. "A few raw items like flour were left behind. There was no money but it was enough for roti," he said.

Now, his only customers are neighbours and local shops.

'When we came back and tried to restart our business, the lockdown began. A few neighbours buy some things for breakfast, as do a few local shops. Everything is in loss right now," he said.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 THE ()UTBREAK NATION



CORONA WATCH



A vendor sells fruits and vegetables on his two-wheeler, in Pune. Pavan Khengre

WEST BENGAL 69-year-old surgeon dies of COVID-19

Kolkata: A doctor who tested positive for COVID-19 died in West Bengal Monday night. Sisir Mondol, 69, an orthopaedic surgeon, died at a private hospital at Salt Lake. He was a resident of Ballygunge. The doctor was admitted to the hospital with COVID-19 symptoms on April 14 and was on ventilator since April 17. After he tested positive, a floor of the private hospital was closed and a nursing home he was attached to was also sealed. ENS

ODISHA 25 stranded fishermen return by sea

Berhampur: Twenty-five fishermen reached their native place in Odisha's Ganjam district Monday after a voyage from Chennai where they were stuck due to the lockdown, officials said. They landed at Ramayapatna beach and were taken to a hospital for isolation, said Chikiti block Tehsildar Haraprasad Bhoi. In all, 39 fishermen, including 14 from Andhra Pradesh, started their journey on April 24, Bhoi said. hsildar said those



At a drive-through sample collection point being run by a private lab, in Mumbai's Goregaon (East) on Monday. Amit Chakravarty

Mumbai cop dies, third in four days

Dr Vidya Thakur, Superinte-

ndent of Rajawadi Hospital, said,

"I will have to check why this pa-

tient was not admitted.

Sometimes, the family does not

provide us the patient's correct

medical history, which makes

their clinical assessment difficult."

Shah said she was not aware of the

case, and would need to get de-

tails from the hospitals. "No BMC

hospital turns away a patient un-

ital said they could not treat him,

Sonawane's son contacted the

senior police inspector of Kurla

traffic division, who in turn con-

tacted senior inspector of Bhoi-

wada police station. It was only af-

ter he spoke to hospital authorities

that Sonawane was admitted. He

When doctors at KEM Hosp-

less there is no bed available."

BMC spokesperson Daksha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 27

A 56-YEAR-OLD Mumbai Police head constable infected with COVID-19 died at KEM hospital on Monday. He is the third policeman in the city to have succumbed to the pandemic since Friday.

Shivaji Sonawane (56), who was posted at Kurla traffic police division, was hospitalised on April 21. He had been suffering from

fever for a few days, but it was after he started losing consciousness that his son rushed him to the hospital. A police officer said Sonawane was turned away from Rajawadi hospital and referred to Kasturba Hospital. However, he could not be admitted to Kasturba Hospital either. Doctors there told his son to take him to KEM Hospital. All three hospitals are run by

Brihanmumbai

Corporation (BMC).

was on ventilator support for the last two days, an officer said. This is the third COVID-19 Municipal death in Mumbai Police. On

1 in 5 Indore samples positive,

admin says situation improving

Friday, a constable posted at Vakola police station succumbed to COVID-19 and another constable died on Sunday. A total of 107 policemen, most of them posted in Mumbai, Thane and Pune, have tested positive so far. Seven of them have recovered.

The deaths of three colleagues within a span of 96 hours has rattled the constabulary. "There is a fear that police personnel can catch the virus while being deployed on the frontlines, or doing desk work in an office or even while commuting to and from work," said a state police officer.

It is a convention for senior officers to visit families of personnel who die in service, but they have not been able to follow this in the case of these three constables.

The family of one of them, however has received condolences over the phone from the highest level of the force and the government."Home Minister Anil

Deshmukh and DGP Subodh Kumar Jaiswal called us to express their condolences and offer any assistance we may require," said the son of the constable who died on Friday. The home department has announced a compensation of Rs 50 lakh and a government job to a family member of each of the constables who died. While policemen have been

provided N95 masks, gloves and face shields, the constabulary is concerned about the exposure to the virus. "Senior officers do not want me to touch registers that we pass them though we are wearing gloves. At every public place, it is the constable who interacts the most with residents. There is no telling where and from

whom we will contract the infec-Personnel above the age of 50

Central team returns from Indore

MILIND GHATWAI

ICMR tells states to return rapid test kits

Highest single-day toll: 60 deaths in 24 hours, total 886

the individual."

quality standards.'

districts

14 days.

morning.

samples)

Sixteen districts, which ear-

lier had positive cases, have not

reported any fresh case in the

last 28 days. While three new

Maharashtra, Davanagere in

Karnataka and Lakhisarai in

Bihar – have been added to this

list, two other districts – Pilibhit

Bhagat Singh Nagar in Punjab -

A total of 85 districts have not

The ICMR said 6,65,819 sam-

The inter-ministerial central

reported any new case in the last

ples had been tested till Monday

team that went to Pune has

found that the city currently has

a doubling time of seven days

(the national doubling time is 10

days), and one out of nine sam-

ples tests positive (the national

average is one out of 23

the high case load and death

rates in states like Maharashtra

and Gujarat, Agarwal said:

"These are very densely popu-

lated areas – places like Mumbai

and Pune. So it is important to

adhere to the containment strat-

Responding to a question on

Gondia in

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE INDIAN Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has asked all states and Union territories (UTs) to return the rapid test kits procured from two companies in China as they have shown "wide variations in sensitivity".

The kits were to be used only for surveillance and not for diagnosis, but that too stands suspended now.

Facing questions on the pricing of these kits, the ICMR also issued a clarification stating that it has "not made any payment whatsoever", and the "Government of India does not stand to lose a single rupee".

Meanwhile, in the highest in Uttar Pradesh and Shaheed single-day toll so far, 60 deaths were reported in the last 24 hours, taking the total toll to 886. have dropped out. With 1,463 new COVID-19 cases being reported on Monday, the tally has gone up to 28,380 (6,361 recovered).

In a letter to chief secretaries of states and UTs on Monday, the ICMR said some states had raised issues regarding the performance of the rapid test kits. "The ICMR, thereafter, has also evaluated the kits of Guangzhou Wondfo Biotech and Zhuhai Livzon Diagnostics in field conditions. The results have shown wide variation in their sensitivity, despite early promise of good performance for surveillance purposes. In view of this, states are advised to stop using these kits procured from the abovementioned companies and return them, to be sent back to the

It reiterated that the RT-PCR egy, whether it is a cluster or an throat/ nasal swab test "detects outbreak, deploy sufficient manthe virus early and is the best power for a house-to-house surstrategy to identify and isolate vey, identify those with acute

No one should buy vegetables from Muslims: UP BJP MLA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

respiratory diseases or influenza like illnesses.'

Iver.

At the daily briefing, Health Ministry Joint Secretary Lav Parameswaran Agarwal said: "Rapid diagnostic Secretary, Drinking Water and kits have a limited role to play. Sanitation, who heads the em-We have been highlighting their powered group on logistics and role in epidemiological investisupply chain, outlined the steps gation or surveillance. We have being taken by the government followed the full process in their to tackle challenges in four critiprocurement and no payment cal sectors - agriculture, manuhas been made to these compafacturing, logistics and feeding vulnerable groups. nies. Required action has also been taken for non adherence to

In its clarification on the rapid testing kits, the ICMR said the evaluation committee got four bids - of Rs 1,204, Rs 1,200, Rs 844 and Rs 600 - for the kits from Wondfo. The lowest bid offer was considered.

Saving that it tried to procure the kits directly from Wondfo company in China, it said: "However, quotation received for direct procurement had the following issues: Quotation was FOB (Free on Board) without any commitment on logistics issues. The quotation was on the basis of 100% direct advance without any guarantees. There was no commitment on timelines. Rates were communicated in US dollars without any clause for account-

ing for fluctuations in prices." So, it said, it went through Wondfo's exclusive distributor for India, who quoted an all-inclusive price without any clause for advance.

"It needs to be also remembered that this was the first ever effort by any Indian agency to procure such kits and the rate quoted by the bidders was the only reference point... It needs to be stressed that ICMR has not made any payment whatsoever in respect of these supplies. Because of the due process followed (not going for procurement with 100% advance amount), GoI does not stand to lose a single rupee," the ICMR said.

BDO suspended after video shows food-throwing at Agra centre



suppliers."

tion," said a constable or suffering from diabetes or hypertension have been kept away active field deployment.

from Andhra Pradesh got down at Dankuru. PTI

MADHYA PRADESH Govt to give out churan for immunity

Bhopal: The Madhya Pradesh government will distribute one crore packets of churan (ayurvedic powder) under the Jeevan Amrut scheme to build immunity. officials said on Monday. The powder is called Trikuta Churan and is a mixture of dry ginger powder, black pepper and long pepper. The state's minor forest produce federation will prepare 50gram pouches of the powder to be distributed by health workers and people's representatives. ENS

DIPANKAR GHOSE

EVEN AS the COVID-19 situation in Indore has improved from registering 256 positive cases in one day last week to reporting 295 new cases over the past eight days, the percentage of positive cases is still 21.02 per cent - indicating that one in five

samples are testing positive. Numbers issued by the state government indicate that while the percentage of positive cases is coming down, it is still alarmingly high. While April 17 saw a positive percentage of 25.12 per cent, the numbers dropped to 21.02 per cent by April 24. The mortality rate is down, from 10 to 11 percent recorded on April 13 to 5.3 to 4.84 per cent recorded last week. Recovery rate has gone up from 8.05 to 9.09 per cent.

A health department official said, "While it has come down slightly, one in five people to be testing positive, even from containment zones, is very high. Recovery rates are also guite low,

Data shows that on April 17, there was a positive rate of 25.12 per cent, a mortality rate of 5.33 and a recovery rate of 8.05 per cent. By April 25, the positive per-

centage stood at 21.02 per cent, mortality rate at 5.6 per cent and recovery rate at 9.09 per cent. Indore Commissioner Akash

Tripathi said the numbers may be high but the samples returning results are those collected primarily from containment zones. "We finished surveying containment zones a few days ago. Now we are surveying remaining areas. But samples being tested are mainly still from containment zones and samples we are getting from 'yellow hospitals' to which symptomatic patients are coming."

Tripathi said he is expecting another jump in cases over the next two days before the numbers start stabilising.

While the state government has argued that the high numbers are because of extensive testing, data shows that at least over the

19 and 21 are stark, with only 166 new tests over three days, and 33 positives among them. Since April 21, four days have seen 320, 428,

but hopefully they will pick up. The last week, from April 17 to 25,

continuing high percentage of there have been only 2,087 new

311 and 441 tests, respectively. Tripathi said the testing blip was explained by two factors. "A lab technician was found positive so we had to quarantine our staff and collect their samples. They came negative the next day and then they could return to work. The other thing is that we installed an automated RNA extractor which takes half a day. So for two days, our testing was affected." Tripathi said.

The Indore Commissioner said there were clear signs of improvement in Indore, and that the number of patients in intensive care was reducing. "I believe the positivity rate in new samples is not more than 15 per cent. The number of admissions in yellow hospitals has gone down. These are good signs," Tripathi said.

FULL REPORT ON

www.indianexpress.com

After spending nearly a week in Indore, the inter-ministerial central team returned on Monday. bles from Muslim vendors. The state government claimed that the central team was happy with its handling of the situation

in hotspots like Indore. The state government has now decided to send special teams to hotspots like Indore and Ujjain. The teams will camp there and monitor the situation.

The state government on Monday also announced a fine of Rs 1,000 for spitting in public.

Meanwhile, days after being given the portfolios of health and home in the state government, BJP leader Narottam Mishra was accused of violating social distancing norms when he visited his hometown Datia on Saturday. His family members welcomed him as many supporters joined the celebrations.

Despite repeated attempts, Mishra could not be contacted. ENS BJP MLA Suresh Tiwari has reportedly asked people in Deoria district not to purchase vegeta-

The legislator from the district's Barhaj constituency was heard making the remarks in a video doing the rounds on social media. "Keep one thing in mind, I am telling everyone openly, no one should purchase vegetables from Muslims," he told some people, including government officials

When contacted, Tiwari said he had made the statement last week during his visit to the office of the Barhaj Nagar Palika, where several government officials were present.

"After hearing complaints that people of a community were selling vegetables after contaminating them with saliva in an attempt to spread coronavirus disease, I advised them not to purchase vegetables from them... After the situation gets the remarks, he added.



normal, then decide what they

The legislator claimed he had

only given his opinion, and it was

up to people to decide if they

wanted to follow it. "Everyone can

see what Jamaat members have

done in the country," Tiwari said,

referring to the Tablighi Jamaat

congregation in Delhi last month.

the local police station."

police, he said

State BJP spokesperson Rakesh Tripathi said the party

Suresh Tiwari

want," said the MLA.

lowing the emergence of a video clip showing food packets being thrown from outside a locked gate of a quarantine centre in Agra An inquiry was initiated into

A BLOCK Development Officer

was suspended on Sunday fol-

the incident after the video was shared on social media.

"I personally inspected the spot and several other officials have also made rounds in the Sharda quarantine centre. The Block Development Officer in charge of food distribution in the area has been suspended. The authorities are making constant visits. The facility is new and provisions are up to date. Whatever discrepancies there are, they will be rectified," said PN Singh, Agra DM.

According to officials, a redoes not endorse such statements. The party would take port was submitted by the Chief cognisance of the matter and Development Officer and a letguestion Tiwari about the cirter seeking suspension proceedcumstances in which he made ings against BDO Manish Kumar was sent to the government.

Threats, police action, and a storm on Twitter: Tale of 2 Jharkhand vendors

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, APRIL 27

AUTO DRIVER-TURNED-VEG-ETABLE vendor Nasim Khan (52) says he is scared to set up shop at Jamshedpur's Ghodabandhai Maidan. He says he was forced to leave the maidan five days ago by a group of men who had abused him for his religion, and alleged that his co-religionists were spreading the novel coronavirus infection.

After he complained to police, Khan says, an FIR was registered. But he remains afraid that the men would retaliate.

The lockdown forced Khan to try to sell vegetables for a living. "I could no longer ply my autorickshaw, and I decided to sell vegetables in order to survive. For about a month I managed some modest sales. But sud-

denly one day, all the vendors were asked to move to a field nearby. That was when my troubles started," Khan, who lives in

Jharna Basti in Govindpur, told The Indian Express over the phone.

The group of men showed up soon after he moved to the maidan, Khan said. "When they found out my religion, they asked me to leave. They threatened to throw away my vegetables. No one came to my help. Silently, I left," he said.

Police registered a case under IPC Sections 341 (wrongful restraint). 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace), 506 (criminal intimidation), 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), and 295A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to

outrage religious feelings of any

class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs). But no one was arrested because the men could not be identified.

The following day, Khan sent his son to the same place to check the situation. "My son in-

formed me that a group of men had again started gathering. I feared for his life, and I asked him to come back. I don't want to go there anymore. I have heard stories of people being beaten up. My family is dependent on me and I can't afford to take the risk," Khan said

> Having left the maidan, the only option for Khan was to try to sell vegetables within his locality, but sales have been poor, he said. "I sold 2 kg of onions and a watermelon yesterday. I took a loan of Rs 4,000 recently to buy vegetables in bulk. I now dry most of the vegetables on my roof every day to prevent them



Raj Kumar at his shop; Nasim Khan on his terrace

from rotting. Several police officers have asked me to start my business again, but I am scared. I have been seeing on TV all that has been happening; it is now happening to me," Khan said. While for Khan the only hope

is for the pandemic to end and. with it, the troubles that it has brought to his community to recede, 15 km from Ghodabandhar in the Kadma area. another vendor has a very different story to tell

For about a month, Raj Kumar, 45, had been tying a banner at his fruit shop that read, "Vishwa Hindu Parishad ki anumodit Hindu phal dukaan (A Hindu fruit shop approved by the VHP)". Then, someone on Twitter tagged the Jharkhand authorities

On April 25, Jamshedpur Police posted on Twitter that the banner had been removed, and preventive action had been initiated against Raj Kumar under Section 107 CrPC (security for keeping the peace).

Kumar told The Indian Express that he "respected the VHP" because it "worked for the Hindu community", and he had, therefore, liked the idea of putting up the banner. However, he said, "I never discriminated against any religion... I sold to Hindus as well as to Muslims.

"But suddenly one day some-

Prasar Pramukh Sanjay Kumar body tweeted about it, and the police showed up, removed the said: "The posters were given by banner, and said that a case had the VHP, but it has been done on been registered. I was scared... earlier occasions like the Puja For two days I made rounds of festival, too. In this case it was done 20 days ago. We condemn Kumar claimed that ever the police action."

Jamshedpur SSP Anoop since the picture of his fruit stall went "viral", he had been receiv-Birtharay said: "Under the National Disaster Management ing "threatening calls" because his number was on the banner. Act and the Municipal Corporations Act, the govern-"I am being harassed," he said. He has filed a complaint to the ment will approve the shops that can operate during the crisis... Former Chief Minister VHP cannot approve a shop. If Raghubar Das has assured we allow it, then some other or-Kumar that there would be no ganisation will approve mutton action against him for putting up

shops... this cannot happen." Also, the SSP said, "During this crisis, customers of essential commodities cannot be attracted on the grounds of religion. We need to maintain social harmony. All these things are done by design. We have taken preventive action to maintain peace.'

Iharkhand VHP Prachar

the banner. In a release, Das said:

"As per the Indian Constitution,

people have the right of freedom

of religion... In Jharkhand, UPA

government is doing appease-

ment politics and torturing

Hindus amidst COVID-19."

people. The WHO advisory is to

maintain social distance so that

the chain can be broken. The

same appeal is being made by

the central and state govern-

ment to all citizens. The law is

doing its job to protect people.

There is no communal discrimi-

Fake news and rumours have

lynching in some parts of the

A team of 30 police officers is

working round the clock to

check the spread of fake news.

This team tracks the geographic

origin of accounts of those post-

ing fake news and creates a data-

base. The social media team

identifies the case and gives it to

the district cyber cell. This in-

cludes cases of hate speech or

fake news. FIR is being registered

in such cases. Accounts on

Twitter and Facebook,

WhatsApp and TikTok which are

spreading fake news are being

The state police's move to

travel to Delhi to summon a

senior journalist booked over

The law is taking its course

against anyone spreading false

news, fake news or rumour, no

matter who they are. In the time

of crisis, journalists should give

correct information to the public.

Criticism on fake facts intended

to mislead people is not good.

FULL INTERVIEW ON

a tweet has drawn criticism.

Your comment?

government taken steps to

led to fatal incidents like

country. Has your

contain this?

blocked.

nation in UP.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 **6 THE OUTBREAK** NATION



The migrants reached MP by Monday evening. Bhupendra Rana

Six migrant workers leave for UP from Surat on bicycles

ADITI RAJA VADODARA, APRIL 27

THE BLISTERING sun beats down on the concrete surface of the Vadodara-Halol highway on Sunday afternoon as 24-year-old Vikram Rai stops to take a break near Jarod village in Vadodara district after cycling a distance of 173 km from Surat.

The journey began at 2 am Saturday, when Vikram and five others packed their belongings in grain stocking bags, securing them to their brand new cycles purchased from a local dealer for Rs 4,500. The cycle is their only hope of covering the 1,400-odd km distance to reach their homes

in Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh. "We are homesick... There is no work in Surat and we have run out of money. Our families are worried. At least we can be together at this time," Vikram says. By late Monday evening they

crossed over to Madhya Pradesh. Vikram and his group of friends worked for a wholesale saree dealer, who, according to them, has "stopped answering calls", knowing they will demand money.

Sumair, another one from the group, says, "Our money is finished We had our last couple of thousands and we heard from other migrant friends about this person who was selling cycles... Many of our acquaintances bought cycles to go back to Rajasthan, Orissa and MP.."

When asked, why the group could not wait for the Uttar Pradesh state government to work around my house and stay fetch them as announced by UP close to my family," says Sumair.

this danger. Also, a comprehensive action plan was imple-Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, mented in India. UP followed the they say, "Kab lene aayenge? Hum PM's guidance in letter and spirit. Being the most populous state, mar jayein uske baad? Ek mahine the danger was highest here. But se toh kisi ne haal bhi nahi poocha... (When will they come a time-bound action plan and its to fetch us? After we die? None has enquired about us for over a month)... But if they do send the buses to take us, we will take the

ride midway from wherever we are at that point.' Vikram says, "I will fill water from petrol pumps on the way. We have faith that we will meet good people on the way who will give us food. Even one meal can help us through the day. We are also trying to charge our phones at petrol pumps for a few minutes to keep it going." The group is aware that the

the state. More than 60.000 samjourney ahead — if they are alples have been tested. When the lowed to cross state borders - is corona threat was sounded, we very long. "We think it will take had only one lab where 50 tests us about nine days to reach could be conducted. Today, home. We haven't informed our 4,000 tests are being conducted daily in 17 labs. Not only Team 11, families because they will be worried. They have watched in I too communicate continuously the news that some migrant with officials working in the workers died out of exhaustion from all the walking last month. My mother was pleading with

me not to walk, so I decided to buy the cycle," Vikram says. The group has decided not to return to Surat for work again. "I

am not coming back to work here or anywhere else. This crisis has taught me that there is nothing like being close to your family. We live in cities in deplorable conditions... If something like this happens, we will die and be cremated without even our family seeing us. It is not worth it. So. I am definitely going to find some

field. I hold review meetings UTTAR PRADESH Chief Minister **YOGI ADITYANATH** speaks to with Team 11 every day. **LIZ MATHEW** about the steps

Is the state able to conduct adequate number of tests?

We have 24 state medical and help stranded migrant colleges. We established testing labs in 10 of them. The other seven labs are established in other institutions. Now, new laboratories are being set up in four government medical colleges and six divisional headquarters. COVID sample collection centres I am grateful to Prime have been set up in each district. Minister Narendra Modi, who Our government has created a had warned the country against COVID Care Fund which will be used to increase testing facility. Besides, UP is the first state to conduct pool testing.

Has the government taken adequate steps to protect health workers?

effective implementation led to Firstly, I thank all health considerable success. My cabiworkers, doctors and nurses net colleagues worked with me who are working to serve huto formulate an action plan. manity. Our topmost priority is Whether it is paying mainteto protect them. We have given nance allowance to street venfull protection to Corona Warriors. If anyone violates dors or providing food grains to weaker sections, the 'Team 11' of rules, strict action is taken under law. We have adequate PPE kits, senior officials effectively implemented the plan. Each of these N95 masks and sanitisers to protect them. Secondly, I keep apteams has responsibility and accountability. As a result, today pealing to people that we should there are 10,000 isolation beds, respect and encourage doctors, 20,000 quarantine beds, 1,000 nurses, police personnel and ventilators and 17 testing labs in health and sanitation workers. Incidents of stone-pelting against health workers were reported at some places. Soon after, clear instructions were given to take stringent action against such persons, including under NSA. In order to protect health workers, police team will accompany Health Department







teams for sample testing or screening in hotspot areas.

Is the government taking steps to stop community spread of the virus?

Lockdown rules, social distancing and sealing of hotspot areas are the steps being taken. The government will take further steps if needed. We will not allow community spread. An order has been issued for not keeping people together in guarantine centres and shelter homes. I have given instructions that no public gathering should be allowed till June 30. No one is allowed to enter a hotspot except police, medical teams and those associated with doorstep delivery. The result of such strictness is evident. In UP, 19 districts are



Migrant workers returning to the state may lead to rise in unemployment. Does the state have programmes for them? What measures have you taken to check the virus spread?

The state government has taken the responsibility of migrant labourers who are in UP or stranded in other states. We deployed nodal officers in every state so that labourers living there do not face any problem. We have sent letters to CMs regarding this. Regarding workers from other states, we have kept them in guarantine and made arrangements for food. We are also making efforts to provide employment to them here.

UP was reeling under unemployment before 2017. But when we made efforts after forming the government, there was a lot of employment generation. The workers, who you are saying will lead to increase in unemployment, will also get employment here. There is no dearth of possibilities. There are challenges but we also have opportunities. During lockdown, the government has provided direct and indirect employment to more than 1.5 lakh people through doorstep delivery. We are in a position to provide immediate employment to 15 lakh people. There is opportunity in government construction work, MNREGA, MSME enterprises and work done through voluntary organisations. Instructions have been given to prepare an action plan for the post-lockdown period. I

want to assure everyone that no labourer in UP will have employment problems.

Concern was raised about fear created among Muslim minorities regarding communal profiling of corona patients. This seems to have made tracing patients

tougher. Your comment? Team-11 is monitoring every activity in the state. At a time when the government was almost successful in controlling corona, the Tablighi Jamaat brought new concerns because most of the cases were related to Tablighis. But our government resolved this matter very well. We have a better system, from hospitalisation to quarantine facilities, so that there is no atmosphere of fear. The work of identifying patients is being done at every level, in which all departments are working jointly. Some people of the Tablighi Jamaat tried to remain in hiding, but after the government's appeal and strictness of police, they came forward.

The CAA protests and **Tablighi-related COVID-19** cases appear to have created a communally charged situation. Do you think this could threaten the state's development?

Coronavirus is a global disease. It is totally unfair to associate the CAA issue with it. Disease does not differentiate on the basis of caste or religion. It is a different matter that due to the Tablighi Jamaat, the disease spread rapidly among many

kitchen set up at the back of the unit, run by Uday Singh and two

helpers, who are from Rajasthan.

www.indianexpress.com Sent back once, body of man who died in **UAE** handed

over to family **PRITAM PAL SINGH**

NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

They make rice, dal, pooris, sabzi and butter-milk for lunch and NINE DAYS after a 24-year-old dinner, with the vegetable the died of cardiac arrest in UAE, the only variant on the menu, apart mortal remains were handed to from breakfast. The vegetables and milk are supplied daily by a

his family members on Monday. Kamlesh Bhatt died of a heart tack in Abu Dhabi on April 1' and his mortal remains were

sent to India by Etihad airport

services cargo on April 23. Bodies

of two other people from Punjab

were also sent on the flight. But

they were sent back to the UAF.

by the immigration authorities

Vimlesh Bhatt, a resident of Tehri

Garhwal in Uttarakhand, moved

the Delhi High Court on Saturday

and sought direction to the au-

thorities concerned to bring back

the mortal remains of his brother.

ing through video conferencing

before Justice Justice Sanjeev

Sachdeva, who was told that

"even though the requisite clear-

ances were available, still the

concerned authorities did not

permit the unloading the mor-

tal remains of the deceased at

Delhi and they were flown back

the Ministry of Home Affairs

Saturdav issued a memorandum

that stated that mortal remains

would be permitted "subject to

strict adherence to the guide-

lines ... regarding management

of COVID-19 and submission of

a no objection approval/concur-

rence from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry

At the hearing on Monday, ad-

vocates Rituparn Uniyal and

of External Affairs (MEA)".

After the court's intervention,

on the same aircraft".

The issue came up for hear-

Following this, Bhatt's brother

at Delhi on April 24.

Gujarat unit readies parts, unsure of sales as automobile hub still empty

AVINASH NAIR

labourers. Excerpts:

you manage it?

has so far been able to

contain the spread of the

virus to an extent. How did

UP, the most populous state,

Libra Stampings LLP No. of workers: 50

AS A car pulls into the parking lot

SANAND (GUJARAT), APRIL 27

Usual strength: Around 50





Policemen in Ludhiana carry a banner with "Main Bhi Harjeet Singh" written, in support of their colleague whose hand was dismembered in an attack on April 12. Gurmeet Singh

Show of solidarity for Punjab cop who lost hand in line of duty

of his land for setting up a play-

ground in Harjeet Singh's name.

(Traffic and Highways) Dr Rajshri

Singh dedicated a poem penned

twitter handle posted a picture

with #MainBhiHarjeetSingh and

wrote "a show of solidarity, a trib-

ute to sacrifice", Uttarakhand DGP

Anil K Raturi changed his name-

plate to Harjeet Singh on Monday.

police tweeted, "Tripura Police

stands with COVID 19 Protector

SI Harjeet Singh of Punjab Police

who showed exemplary

courage....Don't harass doctors.

A similar message was

Talking over phone from hos-

posted from the twitter handle

pital, Harjeet Singh said, "No

words can suffice how proud

and thankful I feel for this cam-

paign. It is a feeling which I can-

#ManiBhiHarjeetSingh

#PunjabPoliceInd".

of Andaman Police.

not express in words.

On its official handle, Tripura

by her to Harjeet.

Haryana Inspector General

While Kerala Police's official

NAVJEEVAN GOPAL& **KANCHAN VASDEV** CHANDIGARH, APRIL 27

IN AN unprecedented show of solidarity with their colleague who was injured in the line of duty during the COVID-19 curfew, the entire police force of Punjab, led by DGP Dinkar Gupta, Monday wore a nameplate carrying SI Harjeet Singh's name. Harjeet Singh's left hand was dismembered in an attack by a group of Nihangs in Patiala after a police party intercepted them and asked for curfew passes.

The day also saw DGP Gupta launch a social media campaign - #MainBhiHarjeetSingh – which saw tremendous support pour in from police personnel from across the country.

The trending hashtag was also shored up by twitter users outside the police community. Noted Punjabi singer Satinder Sartaaj, rapper Honey Singh and Punjabi film actor Guggu Gill expressed solidarity with the campaign.

A constable from the injured



Known to all at the small factory as "Pandeyji", the 45-yearold from Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh explains, "The car handle is the one place most owners should be wary of."

Among the neighbours of Libra – which manufactures 'stampings' or parts used in submersible pumps, supplying them across the state – are Tata Motors and Ford Motors. However, since

relaxations in the lockdown starting April 22, Libra is among the few units that has reopened at the Sanand GIDC (Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation).

The bustling hub stands quiet, with most units marked by locks on their front gates or lonely watchmen. The handcarts and kiosks selling tea and food are missing.

Libra's 50-odd labourers, now split into two shifts of 25 each, are sharing duties. Pandey, for example, is a gardener, earning Rs 10,000 a month. For the reopening, the company gave him "training" on disinfecting people coming into the premises. He checks them with a thermal scanner, asks them to use a

SI's village, Gulab Singh, went a step ahead – he donated an acre



Libra is among the few units that has reopened at the Sanand GIDC. Javed Raja

hand sanitiser, and sanitises their vehicles with the disinfectant spray in his backpack. No one apart from staff and government officials are allowed in.

Should the gun show red when someone is checked. Pandey is expected to alert the bosses

The staff have been given masks to wear at all times, as they spread out over the vast shop floor of over 22,000 sq ft.

Naresh Vidhani, who owns Libra with elder brother Kanhaiya, says they have been able to restart as they managed to convince all their labourers to stay back when the lockdown began in March. "We have housed them, we pay them regularly and we have kept our unit canteen open," he adds.

Ashwini Kumar, Secretary to



FROM FACTORIES Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, said around 40,000 industrial units with five lakh workers have reopened in Gujarat. "This is an im-

portant step towards normalisation. Things will slowly fall into place," he said. However, the Sanand

Industrial Association said that while almost all units can now restart operations, many are hes-



Naresh says they too are not sure about sales. "We are currently packaging the materials gathering dust for one-and-ahalf months, keeping them ready for despatch whenever our clients ask for them. Our production is minimal as most of our clients are yet to start operations." he says. Their monthly average is 125-150 tonnes of stampings, but the Vidhanis have not set any targets for the coming months.

Talking about the efforts to keep back workers, Naresh says, "I caioled them, told them we would provide food and shelter and they were much safer on the campus than outside.'

With no food stalls open, the labourers are dependent on the

cal vendo

At their living quarters on the first floor of the unit, the 25-odd not on duty that day lie on bunker beds across two large rooms with fans whirring against the summer heat. Their shoes lie strewn across the corridor, while clothes hang from multiple strings. There are 10 toilets, an equal number of bathrooms and a space to wash

clothes. The workers are not allowed to leave the premises. Only five staff members, including the Vidhani brothers, have transit permits.

Basant Yaday, who hails from Chapra in Bihar, says he last went home six months ago. "My mother and wife are back there. Now, there is danger that I might get infected on the way and end up transferring coronavirus to them. So the best option for me is to be at the factory and wait till the disease subsides," he says.

Suraj Kumar, however, won't wait a day longer once they are allowed to go. "When the trains begin, I plan to return," says the 30-year-old.

Naresh is apprehensive he may not be able to hold on to them a second time. "We manufacture only one part of the motor. Till the time the other players open, we have to go slow or just wait. We do not expect the situation to normalise before four-

should remain safe" he said.

would also take steps to bring

back those stranded in other

states due to the lockdown. A reg-

istration process for those who are

stranded in other states and want

to return to Kerala will begin on

Wednesday, he said, adding that

quarantine would be mandatory

for all those who come back.

six months." he savs.

Abhishek Kumar, who represented Vimlesh Bhatt, said "Kamlesh Bhatt, Sanjeev Kumar and Jagsir Singh bodies arrived at Delhi airport Monday early morning, after the government reversed abroad for a short visit and those its decision to ban coffins being who have no means of livelihood brought back as a part of air cargo be brought back on priority. "Our due to the coronavirus pandemic". top priority is that the pravasis

Uniyal said the bodies of Kumar and Singh have also been Vijayan said the government handed over to their families.

Vimlesh had said in the petition that they were shocked to be informed by the cargo company that they were not allowed to unload the body due to some immigration issue despite having complete documentation required for repatriation of human remains to India as laid down by the MEA.

2 lakh stranded expats register to return home to Kerala

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. APRIL 27

number of expatriates from process on Sunday evening. Kerala are looking to return in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 2 lakh people living in various countries have registered their names with the state gov-Non-Resident ernment's Keralites Affairs Department (NORKA ROOTS) in one day.



Kerala has been persistently demanding from the Centre that

expatriates stranded abroad due Following the state governto the cancellation of flights be brought back. Elaborate arrangements have been made in the register themselves, NORKA state to quarantine the returnees ROOTS started the registration for 28 days, either at isolation centres or at their homes.

Government sources said a To guarantine expatriates, who are expected to arrive in batches, around 2 lakh rooms have been identified and 1.24 of them are ready to be occupied. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan

said Monday that among the expatriates, there are people from

low-income groups, those staving at labour camps and students who used to earn through parttime jobs. "The Prime Minister was requested that Centre should bear the flight charges... Those who lost their jobs due to the lockdown have to be rehabilitated and the Centre should announce a package. Schemes should be formed to make use of their expertise," he said.

Vijayan said they have told the PM that those who require treatment, those who went



ment's announcement that expatriates who are stranded abroad and want to return may

IN AN indication that a large









THE OUTBREAK

group that includes the patients helps them stay in touch.

cer in-charge of the trauma cen-

tre, said most of the patients at the

hospital were asymptomatic.

"Only one or two patients are in ICU. Our role is confined to look-

ing after their requests and

director of the state-run Indira

Gandhi Institute of Child Health

in Bengaluru, commended the

role of "young doctors, the resi-

dents and the fellows in teaching

institutes, who are shouldering

Institute of Chest Diseases has the

example of the newly married Dr

Arvind Ram, who lived out of his

car for over a fortnight while on

duty as a nodal officer for coron-

avirus patients. Dr Deepak U G,

earlier in-charge of the patients

in a monthly rotation system, sent

his family away to ensure they

A government doctor warned

that the positive picture hides the

fact that while the state had fo-

cused on teaching hospitals, it has

ignored basic healthcare facilities

like PHCs. "The last-mile connec-

tivity in the healthcare system is

lacking, like in most places in

India," says Dr Abhijit Bhograj. A

free Sunday clinic his family runs

on the outskirts of Bengaluru gets

nearly 1,500 people on an aver-

age, from rural areas of the state

as well as Andhra Pradesh.

Pointing out that this shows the

lack of doctors in these parts, Dr

Bhograj added, "For the first time

in 45 years, the clinic is shut due to

were not exposed to the virus.

The State-run Rajiv Gandhi

much of the clinical work".

Dr Asha Benakappa, former

needs.'

Dr Balaji Pai, neurosurgery professor who is the special offi-

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



LESS CAUSE TO COMPLAIN

THAT ONLY nine chief ministers were slated to speak during the Prime Minister's interaction with chief ministers on Monday had caused heart burn among many, who wished to get an opportunity to personally present their views ahead of May 3. But there is very little for CMs to complain on this count. Reason: almost every chief minister was slotted for presenting their views once during the four interactions called by the PM to mobilise national response to the pandemic. For the CMs, the real issue remains that of financial support to states, for which they are still looking to the Centre.

LOST IN TRANSLATION

MIZORAM CHIEF Minister Zoramthanga came out of the PM's video-conference with CMs feeling a little perplexed. Having been asked to speak, after briefing the Prime Minister on the COVID-19 situation in the state, the CM said he did not understand a word of what anyone said because "they were all speaking in Hindi. And I don't understand a word of Hindi".

REFUND PLEA

HEARING A petition seeking a direction to flight operators to fully refund the tickets booked for flights that had to be cancelled due to the lockdown, the Supreme Court has issued notice to the Centre. A bench of Justices N V Ramana, S K Kaul and B R Gavai issued the notice on the plea by NGO Pravasi Legal Cell, which requested that non-refund of the amount be declared illegal and violative of the Civil Aviation Requirement issued by the Director General of Civil Aviation. It pointed out that the Ministry of Civil Aviation in its office memorandum on April 16 had asked airline operators to refund full fare for tickets booked during the first phase of the lockdown period – from March 25 to April 14.

Kashmir woman who died after delivering stillborns tests positive

NAVEED IQBAL SRINAGAR, APRIL 27

TWO DAYS after a 32-year-old woman died at the Anantnagbased Maternity and Child Hospital after delivering two stillborns, the administration has started tracing her contacts at her village in Kokernag.

The patient's samples tested

demanding protective equipment and moving the facility from the overcrowded building it is cur-

rently in. "Both foetuses died days before she was brought to hospital. An inquiry is being conducted by four doctors to ascertain the exact cause of death. We conducted the COVID-19 test since she had come from a red zone." Dr Showkat Jeelani, principal,

Revamped facilities, early screening help Karnataka keep numbers down

JOHNSONTA **BENGALURU, APRIL 27**

EARLY response, aggressive contact tracing plus quarantining and good medical infrastructure have helped Karnataka, that saw the country's first death due to coronavirus, keep down its COVID-19 numbers. Once No. 3 in the country, it is now at No. 11 in terms of tally.

On Monday, its numbers stood at 512 cases and 19 deaths. This includes 193 who have recovered, 294 who are still in hospital isolation and five in ICU. While over 7,000 beds have been set aside for COVID-19 care in government and private care facilities, only 324 beds are occupied at present.

"We have not added a large number of cases and the credit goes to health workers," State Health Commissioner Pankaj

Kumar Pandey said. Health Secretary and Additional Chief Secretary Jawaid Akhtar said they were not letting their guard drop. "Our preparedness by way of infrastructure, materials required and human resources is to tackle even the worst-case scenarios." he said. As early as February 4, more

than a month before the state got its first case, the Karnataka Department of Health and Family Welfare cited the WHO to declare coronavirus a public health emergency, and kicked into motion its disease surveillance systems across districts. The state's system has been honed over the SARS outbreak in 2003, bird flu and swine flu in 2009, MERS in 2011, and Zika

In a first, SC

tests positive

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

A SUPREME Court employee

tested positive for COVID-19 on

Monday, the first such case re-

the employee had come to the

court for two days during the

urgent work. He came last on

two Registrars have been asked

Highly placed sources said

"We call them when there is

Following the development,

ported from the top court.

lockdown

employee

NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

A 'Meat On Wheels' service by local authorities in Hubbali to serve meat and eggs at controlled rates during Ramzan. PTI

and Nipah viruses recently.

"The healthcare system in Kerala gets a lot of credit but the system has worked quite effectively in Karnataka as well. This is because we began work very early. In early March we were sending nurses every night to the airport to screen international passengers," said Dr H D R Radhakrishna the Superintendent of the 250-bed C V Raman General Hospital in east Bengaluru, which is now a COVID-19 quarantine facility.

The state's first coronavirus patient was an information technology sector employee who had returned from the US and tested positive on March 8. Two days later, an elderly man who had returned from Saudi

Arabia succumbed, becoming the first casualty due to the virus in the country.

Acting on the advice of exnerts such as cardiac surgeon Dr Devi Shetty, Dr R Ravindra of the Indian Medical Association and Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association, which cited the devastation being caused by the disease in Europe, the BIP government in the state introduced a partial shutdown on March 13, involving primarily curbs on large gatherings.

With a medical infrastructure including as many as 60 colleges, 200 B.Sc nursing institutes, revamped government hospitals, as well as district and teaching hospitals in almost all its 30 districts, Karnataka was well-equipped to

handle the emergency. As the cases started surfacing, Victoria Hospital in Bengaluru, a 100-yearold facility attached to the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute, was converted into a 300-bed COVID-19 centre. The doctors, nurses and staff directly dealing with patients at the hospital were housed on the campus.

Dr Asima Bhanu, the nodal officer at the trauma care centre at the hospital, which currently has 42 patients, says, "We are like a family here. We try to ensure that all the needs of the patients are looked after. While even biryani is being supplied, there is no one to really ask them what they want. We are trying to do that." A 'Corona Conquerors' WhatsApp

Karnataka man who tested positive for **COVID** kills self

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU, APRIL 27

A 50-YEAR-OLD chronically ill man, who had been on dialysis for over 15 years and tested positive for COVID-19 on April 24, on Monday jumped to death from a trauma care centre building at the Victoria Hospital where he was receiving treatment.

The incident came a day after a 45-year-old woman, who was chronically ill, died in the ICU of the designated COVID-19 treatment hospital.

The 50-year-old lived with his brother in south Bengaluru. The suicide led to the first postmortem in Bengaluru after a positive coronavirus test. The suicide has not been accounted for as a coronavirus death.

"The post-mortem was necessary despite the patient being COVID-19 positive because the death involves a medico-legal case," an official at the Victoria Hospital said.

Patient admitted on 24-04-2020 with history of pneumonia, known case of hypertension, HCV positive and chronic kidney disease on regular dialysis died on 27-04-2020, with non-COVID cause," the Karnataka health department said on Monday.

"He was admitted in the ICU and so he was isolated ... After breakfast he went to the top of the building unnoticed by anyone," a senior doctor at the Victoria Hospital said.

Two nephews of the deceased were at the hospital. "He was undergoing dialysis on a regular basis.... We cannot understand why such a thing would happen. He called last night to say he was doingfine," said one of the nephews.

coronavirus.' As cases rise, aggressive testing in Andhra red zones

SREENIVAS JANYALA HYDERABAD, APRIL 27

WITH THE number of coronavirus cases rising in Andhra Pradesh, the state government has resorted to including aggressive testing in the red zones of Kurnool, Guntur and Krishna districts.

The state is currently testing 1,396 persons per million as on April 27, compared to the national average of 480 per million. State Health Department officials said aggressive testing in the affected zones is helping to identify and isolate patients so that the spread can be minimised.

In Kurnool. 292 coronavirus cases have been reported, while District Health and Medical Guntur has 237 cases and Krishna



Krishna District Collector A Mohammed Imtiaz and Vijayawada Police Commissioner Dwaraka Tirumala Rao in Vijayawada's Krishnalanka area. Express

Dr Rama Giddaya, Kurnool Officials said that initially, people did not maintain social Officer, said, "There is an increase distancing and disobeyed quarKumar said testing was going on full-scale in the red zones. "In Guntur town, we are seeing a reduction in numbers while Narasaraopet and Varakatta are still a concern. All the cases in the district are linked to Tablighi Jamaat returnees. We have identified all the primary and secondary contacts and are quarantining them and testing them. Once all of them are guarantined and tests are finished in the red zones, we will see a decrease in the number

in the district," he said. Over 7,000 tests have been conducted in Guntur town and Narasaraopeta – the two most affected areas of the district.

travel history to Dubai – decided

when they were screened initially

but were advised strict home

quarantine. They later developed

symptoms and tested positive.

The first driver infected 25 per-

sons while the second driver... in-

fected 14. Apart from these two

cases, about 50 persons returned

from the Markaz Nizamuddin

meeting and a majority of the

"Both had no symptoms

to play cards with neighbours.

Meanwhile, Krishna district saw a spike in the number of cases after two truck drivers –

cases are their primary and secondary contacts..., Dr R Ramesh, the District Health and Medical Officer said Officials said that the infection

spread quickly in congested areas of Vijayawada and surrounding areas. They said 7,475 tests have been conducted in the red zones in the district so far.

"It is very disappointing when people disobey the guarantine rules and break social distancing norms and infect people. Due to the callousness of two persons, 40 others were infected. If people do not cooperate then even if government takes all kinds of precautions and does everything, it would be futile," said Krishna District Collector A Mohammed Imtiaz, who walked around the

positive for COVID-19 Monday, a day after her death. The body was returned to her family and several people attended the funeral.

The woman's family members, living in a red zone, are yet to be tested. While the family has alleged negligence on the part of the hospital, hospital authorities said it was a case of Intra Uterine Deaths. She has not been listed as a COVID-19 death in the UT's bulletins. Officials said 23 of her contacts have been tracked so far.

Meanwhile, the staff at the hospital staged a protest Monday,

SC seeks Centre reply on plea against job cuts in the media

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought the Centre's response on a petition by various journalist unions against retrenchments and salary cuts in the media in the wake of the lockdown. Issuing notice, a bench headed by Justice N V Ramana and comprising Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and B R Gavai observed that some serious issues have been raised which require a hearing, as similar concerns were being raised by other unions too.

Appearing for the petitioners National Alliance of Journalists, the Delhi Union of Journalists and the Brihanmumbai Union of Journalists, Senior Advocate Colin Gonsalves said many journalists have lost their jobs.

The petition contended that notwithstanding appeals by the Prime Minister and government advisories "to not terminate services or reduce wages of employees, several employers/establishments in the newspaper/media sector have taken unilateral kneejerk decisions to terminate services, reduce wages and also send employees on forced indefinite unpaid leave". The bench directed that a petition copy be given to the Centre, and asked it to file a reply within two weeks. ENS Government Medical College, told The Indian Express. The medical college is the supervising body for the maternity hospital.

Commissioner Deputy Anantnag, Bashir Ahmad Dar said, "Inquiry is underway. On the basis of findings, action will be taken."

The woman's husband alleged that the hospital initially refused to admit her since they came from a red zone. "She died within three hours of giving birth to two dead children. While I came home to bury them, she

started complaining of palpitations and soon died," he said.

to self-isolate as it is suspected that the employee may have sent them some files.

April 16," sources said

Though there is a thermal scanning for entry to the SC, the concerned employee had passed it on April 16 as he did not have any abnormal temperature then.

"For the last three days or so, he was running high fever following which he went for a test on Sunday and today the result showed he is positive," the sources added.

The Supreme Court is currently hearing only urgent matters via video-conferencing.

has 210. The three districts account for 63 per cent of the total 1.177 cases in Andhra Pradesh.

In all three districts, the infection has spread mainly in congested areas, and where people were lax in maintaining social distancing and broke lockdown restrictions, officials said.

On Monday, 13 new cases were reported in Kurnool – a small relief for officials after days of reporting 30-40 cases daily. About 5,500 tests have been conducted in Kurnool town and Nandyala till Monday.

in the number of cases because we are conducting a lot of tests. Primary and secondary contacts of Tablighi Jamaat returnees caught the infection from them and they are now testing positive. In Kurnool city and Nandyala town, we have identified about 400 primary and secondary contacts and all of them are in guarantine. We expect the number of cases to decrease from today (Monday) as all them have been identified and put in isolation. Almost all the cases in the district can be traced to Delhi-returnees.

antine rules in Kurnool city and Nandvala, due to which the virus spread. On Sunday, six relatives of Kurnool MP and YSRCP leader Sanjeev Kumar tested positive officials suspect it is the first instance of a community spread in Kurnool city.

In Guntur, officials on Mondav resorted to packing off anyone found on the roads without a valid reason in an ambulance and taking them to quarantine centres, even as 23 fresh cases were reported in the district. Guntur District Collector I Samuel Anand

EXPRESS

one who had returned from West streets of Krishnalanka area on Bengal and the other who had re-Sunday appealing to people to turned from Chennai but had a stay indoors.

On Monday, Chief Minister YSJagan Mohan Reddy told mediapersons that 74,551 tests have been conducted in the state so far. The rate of samples testing positive is 1.61 per cent against national average of 4 per cent. He said that out of 676 mandals in the state, only 63 were in the red zone – with five or more cases reported – while 54 were in the orange zone, with 1 to 4 cases reported.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES UGC deliberates on suggestion for common entrance tests

place across the country.

grammes and not professional

degree programmes, for which,

common entrance examina-

tions are already conducted at

Commission had not decided

whether the recommendation

on entrance test should

compulsory. At best, we can ad-

vise institutions to pool re-

sources to conduct common

admission tests for as many ac-

ademic programmes as possi-

ble in the interest of the stu-

dents," said a UGC official who

lator, in all likelihood, will ac-

cept the Kuhad Committee's

suggestion on delaying the start

of the new academic session by

The higher education regu-

did not wish to be identified.

"We cannot make anything

be accepted.

Till Monday evening, the

the national and state level.

The

RITIKA CHOPRA NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE UNIVERSITY Grants Commission (UGC) held a meeting Monday to discuss the recommendations submitted by two expert committees, including one on conducting common admission tests for academic degree programmes.

The UGC had set up two committees this month, in the wake of the government-mandated classroom shutdown, to suggest an indicative academic calendar for 2020-21 and ways to promote online learning to make up for the learning disruption.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 as one of the measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.

The committee, led by Haryana Central University vice-chancellor R C Kuhad and tasked with proposing the academic calendar for 2020-21, is learned to have suggested common admission tests at the undergraduate and postgraduate level

recommendation two months – from mid-July to sources said, was made keeping September.

in mind the difficulty candi-As first reported by The Indian Express on April 26, the dates may face in travelling to different test centres to appear Kuhad committee has suggested that the semester-end for various entrance exams because of travel restrictions in (odd semester) examination should be held in July (July 1-15 Common admission tests, as for final-year students and July proposed by the Kuhan panel, 16-31 for intermediate year stuare meant for academic prodents).

The month of lune should be treated as summer vacation, the report states.

For students entering higher education, the committee has suggested that the admission process should be held in August and the academic session should begin in September. The new academic session for intermediate year students is proposed to start from August 1.

The UGC is expected to release an "indicative" academic calendar for 2020-21 along with "broad guidelines" on pending semester-end examination by Wednesday.

Universities and colleges will be free to make changes to the academic calendar depending on their local circumstances and lockdown situation.

all COVID-19 procurement public: Cong New Delhi: The Congress

Monday demanded that details of all the coronavirus-related procurement - made in the last one month by the government should be made public. It alleged profiteering and argued there seems to be "absolute an-

600 each and at Rs 400 each to

said at a press conference.

iustice.'

Make details of

archy" in procurement. Referring to a company engaged in supply of testing kits, Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari alleged that kits imported at Rs 245 each from China were being sold by the same company to ICMR at Rs

Tamil Nadu government. "We would like to demand from the government that all procurements which have been made ... all those transactions must be transparently put in the public space..." Tewari Congress leader Rahul

Gandhi tweeted, "that any human being would try & profiteer from the immeasurable suffering of millions of his brothers & sisters, is beyond belief & comprehension. This scam is an insult to every Indian. I urge the PM to act swiftly to bring the corrupt to

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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

WORDLY WISE

HUMAN DIGNITY IS THE SAME FOR ALL HUMAN BEINGS: WHEN I TRAMPLE ON THE DIGNITY OF ANOTHER, I TRAMPLE ON MY OWN. — POPE FRANCIS

The Indian **EXPRESS**

∞ Founded By ∞ Ramnath Goenka

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

WAYS OF OPENING UP

As economic costs rise, prime minister's meeting with chief ministers signals cautious shift in lockdown strategy

N MONDAY, PRIME Minister Narendra Modi held another video conference with state chief ministers to discuss the ongoing battle against the coronavirus, and to plan ahead. This, the fourth such interaction, was held amid growing signals of the government preparing for a gradual easing of the national lockdown as economic concerns begin to loom larger – with the prime minister himself noting that "we have to give importance to the economy as well as continue the fight against COVID-19". This signals a cautious shift in strategy. As the lockdown has progressed, with the disruption in economic activity intensifying, its toll becoming more visible, the stark debate of lives vs livelihoods is being steadily recast and reframed. Among several state governments too, as the fiscal strain is beginning to show, the mood seems to be shifting from unqualified support for a nation-wide lockdown to a push towards a gradual and calibrated exit.

To be sure, as states are on different infection trajectories, each one will have to firm up separate plans for easing and exit. States with lesser number of infections, or with a better grip over the spread of the virus, are likely to press for easing more restrictions so as to allow economic activities to resume, at least in the green zones. Yet even the modalities of the exit from the lockdown in the green zones will have to be worked out carefully. One thing is clear: Both Centre and states must work together to figure out ways to allow economic activities to resume while minimising the health fallout — even as any such joint strategy will need to take into account, and make space for, the differences across states and the varied emphases of state governments. As the number of cases mounts - during a meeting of state chief secretaries, the central government projected the number of infected in the country to reach 65,000 cases by May 15 — and the capacity of the healthcare system of the country comes under more strain, coordinated action at various levels of government will become more urgent to ensure continued expansion of the institutional capacity — setting up of containment wards, production of ventilators, ensuring adequacy of testing equipment.

During the course of the interaction on Monday, the prime minister also spoke of the need to usher in reforms that touch the lives of common citizens. While fiscal and monetary support will be needed to nurse the economy back to health, given the collapse in economic activities, the need to push through contentious but required factor market reforms that address the long-standing structural issues that plague the economy, cannot be overstated.

WITH DIGNITY

Video clip from Agra quarantine facility drives home urgent need for training and monitoring healthcare workers

VIDEO CLIP that went viral on social media on Sunday framed the indignities meted out to people at a quarantine facility in Agra. The 25-second clip shows a PPE-clad (personal protective equipment) person tossing water bottles and food packets outside a locked gate and dozens of people stretching out their hands through the iron grille for these essential supplies. The woman shooting the video can be heard saying that she was brought to the centre for a check-up, which wasn't conducted. Agra's district magistrate has confirmed that this shocking incident "happened a few days ago", ordered an inquiry into the incident, and claimed that "everything is fine now". However, the visuals raise serious questions over the methods used in dealing with the pandemic in a city, which, only two weeks ago, was being lauded by the



In unpredictable times, RBI should preserve its inflation credibility. This requires making MPC more enduring

Costly to bypass MPC framework

URJIT R PATEL

FOLLOWING THE GLOBAL financial crisis of 2007-08, India, like many other countries, embarked on a stimulus. The pump-priming did not end too well. By 2013, India crossed or approached double-digit figures in inflation and the national fiscal deficit, in addition to looming bad loans. In summer 2013, when the Federal Reserve indicated a possible reversal of its ultra-accommodative policy, macroeconomic parameters for India were so weak that it got caught up in the "taper tantrum" and experienced external sector fragility. While fiscal excesses and financial sector stress remain issues today, India has improved significantly on at least one dimension - namely, inflation - which has also stabilised the external sector.

How was this beneficial progress achieved? Starting in September 2013, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) initiated an effort to build credibility with domestic savers and international investors on maintaining inflation at prudent levels. Three years later, the RBI Act was amended to put in place a flexible inflation targeting framework. A Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), comprising of RBI representatives and external members appointed by the Government of India, was enjoined with the legal mandate of managing the policy (repo) rate so as to keep consumer price inflation at a target level of 4 per cent, while keeping in mind economic growth.

By objective measures, the MPC framework until recently worked well. It lent transparency and democratic accountability to the process of interest-rate setting; combined with efforts on managing food inflation, it has brought inflation closer to the target; it has contributed to tempering household inflation expectations and has kept borrowing costs at reasonable levels in spite of the high level of government borrowing and several other distortions. Indeed, rating agencies and multilateral institutions repeatedly mention the MPC and the inflation targeting framework as a landmark structural reform towards sound macroeconomic management.

Yet, since last year, somewhat inexplicably, a series of monetary actions by the RBI have left the MPC's decision on the policy rate partly redundant, diluted the accountable process of monetary decision-making, and put at stake the sanctity of the framework. Let me elaborate. The MPC framework until recently worked rather well. It lent transparency and democratic accountability to the process of interest-rate setting; combined with efforts on managing food inflation, it has brought inflation closer to the target; it has contributed to tempering household inflation expectations; and, it has kept borrowing costs in the economy at reasonable levels in spite of the high level of government borrowing and several other distortions. Indeed, rating agencies and multilateral institutions repeatedly mention the MPC and the inflation targeting framework as a landmark structural reform towards sound macroeconomic management.

With a stated intention to improve the transmission of monetary policy to households and corporations, the RBI has pumped unprecedented levels of money (close to Rs 7 trillion) into the banking system. It has done so mostly by purchasing government bonds but partly also by purchasing dollars. Given impaired financial sector balance-sheets, transmission to economic growth has been at best muted; liquidity is no silver bullet to durably address financial sector stress. The primary effect of excessive liquidity has, instead, been to monetise the government's expenditures and keep its borrowing costs low. With its declared aim not being met satisfactorily, the RBI has doubled down on liquidity supply, with the same outcome.

An important casualty has been the MPC framework.

At times, even when the MPC has kept the policy rate unchanged, the RBI has injected yet more liquidity to move medium-term interest rates down; the two actions have been noted to be in direct contradiction of each other. If the objective is to move medium-term rates, why not build consensus within the MPC to cut the policy rate more aggressively and communicate the rationale?

Further, given the enormous liquidity glut, every night banks park liquidity with the RBI at a (reverse repo) rate lower than the policy rate and which is not set by the MPC; nevertheless, this rate used to be changed only as part of the MPC Resolution. Lately, the RBI has moved this rate progressively lower than the policy rate; recently, it has done so outside of the MPC meeting cycle and not as part of the MPC Resolution. There are straightforward tools in liquidity management to ensure that in surplus conditions also, the central bank transacts with banks at the policy rate - technically, by switching from "deficit" to "floor" system of liquidity management. Such a switch is routinely adopted by central banks when they provide excess liquidity; the RBI has chosen not to do so.

The net effect is that market interest rates are being increasingly controlled by the RBI rather than the MPC. Indeed, there is a proposal that the rate at which the RBI absorbs liquidity be still lower, likely divorced from the policy rate set by the MPC. The spirit of the MPC framework enshrined in the RBI Act is being violated. It is unclear how the MPC can be expected to satisfy its legal mandate if what it seeks to achieve via setting of the policy rate is in conflict with, or compromised by, the RBI's liquidity management.

These developments have the potential to pose risks for India's macroeconomic stability going forward: The implicit monetisation of fiscal expenditures through government bond purchases by the RBI in the secondary market has postponed the recognition of the untenable fiscal reality. The delay has meant the government has had limited policy space since the onset of COVID.

Supply-chain disruptions due to measures taken to contain the pandemic raise the possibility of cost-push inflationary pressures, especially given the excessively easy fiscal and monetary conditions. This can abruptly raise economy-wide borrowing rates, inflict losses on banks, and imperil financial stability.

If the gains in inflation credibility built by the MPC framework are dissipated by ineffective policies and operations, both household and investor expectations for inflation could unhinge. It is disturbing that while referring to desirable levels of inflation, analysts appear to have already stopped referring to MPCs mandated target inflation rate of 4 per cent and the focus has instead shifted to the upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent. Worse, it could instigate turmoil in the external sector. Excessively low bank deposit rates may induce some non-resident deposits to exit India.

In a highly unpredictable time such as this, the RBI should preserve its inflation credibility. This requires making the institution of MPC more enduring, not bypassing it. Decision on monetary policy actions based on voting by committee members, provision of inflation and growth forecasts in the resolution statement, and coordination of ratesetting and liquidity management, need to be adhered to.

Even in desperate times, we need to follow due processes and justify with substance the extraordinary actions so that commitment is provided as to how these actions will be unwound when necessary.

> The writer is former Governor, Reserve Bank of India



AN UNPARALLELED ACT

Centre for developing a model strategy against the novel coronavirus.

On April 5, the Centre issued guidelines for quarantine facilities in the country: "Disposable and pre-packed food needs to be served to quarantined people and they are to be kept on separate beds with distance of 1-2 metres with no bed facing opposite to each other". The document emphasises a humane approach towards quarantined people, including providing them "counselling and psycho-social support". It also talks of providing "regular training to all the staff" at the quarantine centres. The incident at the Agra facility reflects poorly on the sensitivity, and also the training and monitoring, of healthcare workers at such facilities. The according of human dignity is a constitutional necessity — in several verdicts, the Supreme Court has underlined that the assurance of dignity is central to the Right to Life under Article 21. But a compassionate approach in the country's battle against the coronavirus is also needed to enhance the prospects of its success — humiliation of the kind meted out at the Agra facility could deter people from self-reporting their symptoms or cooperating with officials involved in contact tracing efforts.

UP's Additional Chief Secretary (home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi has described the Agra incident as an "isolated" one. However, last month, health officials in Bareilly provoked outrage when they sprayed disinfectants on migrants returning from Delhi. The state government would do well to recognise that most of the country's successes so far in the battle against the pandemic have come when administrations and officials have reached out to the people — to give a helping hand and also to enlist their trust and support.

A HOME IN ART

Zarina Hashmi's works reflected on the idea of displacement and exile – the leitmotif of the times

ARINA HASHMI WAS just 10 when India was partitioned. Growing up in Aligarh, where her father taught history at the university, the Partition was an intense experience as the violence unleashed by it set in motion a gigantic process of displacement. Her immediate family had stayed on in India. But in the late 1950s, just after Zarina had completed her degree in Mathematics and got married, they migrated to Pakistan. It marked the beginning of exile for Zarina, who travelled with her diplomat husband on his postings. She studied print-making with Stanley William Hayter in Paris and learnt woodblock printing in Japan. In the Sixties, she returned to India and worked with papermakers in Jaipur. In the early '70s, she left for New York, which became her home in exile for over four decades.

Home, exile and memory were the tropes she leaned on to create art. Over the years, the idea of home became an abstraction for her, appearing in her minimalist works as mere lines on grey sheets, or in shades of black and white. The idea of home became inseparable from the idea of exile, both embedded in memory. Her works recall the deep humanist anguish and sense of loss that distinguish Partition literature and art. In fact, she spoke about discovering a home in literature, especially Urdu poetry, and that seems to have provided a reference point to her exile.

Since displacement and exile are a leitmotif for the 20th century, Zarina's work has a certain universality, which also makes her more than just a reflective chronicler of the Partition. An unusual 1991 bronze work, "I went on a journey III", is of a crumbling house without windows on four wheels, each pointed in different directions, indicating the impossibility of movement. In the atlas of her world, exile seems to have been the only permanent state of existence, especially when the nation state and its cities are experienced as cartographic prisons, something that eloquently showed in her works.



NEELAM MANSINGH CHOWDHRY

DO WE CELEBRATE a life or mourn a death is a question that assails me as I reflect on the passing away of theatre director Usha Ganguly in Kolkata last Thursday. Her plays, among them *Court Martial* and *Rudali*, enacted by her theatre group Rangkarmee, founded in 1976, conveyed her single minded obsession and commitment to her work that can loosely be classified as representational realism.

Within this vast framework, she injected flashes of experimentation, taking risks with dramatic flourishes that added a freshness and verve to her work. With her distinct way of dealing with social narratives, storytelling, and structures, Usha effectively and dramatically wove all these strands together. Her theatrical generosity was visible in the way she accepted and admired other directors' way of working with alternative sensibilities.

Usha was a friend and confidant of decades, someone I deeply admired. An enduring memory I have of her — one that is indicative of her indomitable and infectious spirit — dates back to our trip to Lahore in 2005 for a theatre festival organised by Madeeha Gauhar of the Ajoka Theatre group. As part of our hosts' *mehman nawazi*, we were taken to the famous food street in Lahore's Anarkali Bazaar. The atmosphere in this delightful labyrinth of street is well known for its varied cuisine, but more so for

500

Usha's capacity to spread herself across so many varied theatrical milieus and coalesce them into a cohesive whole was indeed a rare talent. What impressed me the most was that her work cut through multiple social strata, appealing to a varied range of people from students to farmers and, of course, the cognoscenti.

the fact that it is part of the city's centuriesold red light area. We were enjoying the festive atmosphere and eating the delicious food when, without notice, Usha jumped up and, with vivacious abandonment, began dancing as if she were in a trance. She swirled, gyrated and pirouetted, singing all the while along with the minstrels. One of the Pakistani actors accompanying us somewhat inappropriately remarked that, "aaj badnam basti mai ek sirfzaidi ka nacch dekha" (in a disreputable locality a respectable women is dancing), but he did so with secret awe and admiration. Other patrons at surrounding tables and cafes too were captivated by Usha's unprompted performance and gravitated towards her clapping, singing and swaying with the music.

Whenever we met, our conversation was never personal and began and ended with the new plays she was scripting, the shows she was participating in, and the pressures of operating a big theatre company. It was theatre that defined and consumed her. Once she told me that she managed 38 shows in a month one in the morning in a school courtyard followed by another in a bank, and yet another in the evening in a posh Kolkata theatre. The latter were part of the folklore and history of Bengali theatre, where stalwarts including Nati Binodini, Utpal Dutt and Shambhu Mitra had performed. Usha's capacity to spread herself across so many theatrical milieus and coalesce them into a cohesive whole was a rare talent. What impressed me the most was that her work cut through multiple social strata.

I always looked upon Usha as a movement, comprising students and theatre professionals. Even stragglers were welcome and some ended up gradually becoming an intrinsic part of her journey as a director. Compassion and the ability to make an immediate connect with her players and audiences were the intangible thread that kept her theatre company together for so many years.

The most amazing and mysterious improbable, however, was that most of her productions were in Hindi. Her working in Hindi in Kolkata, the heart of Bengali theatre, and being wholly accepted there, has never ceased to amaze me.

But I do have one regret.

Whenever we met, she always expressed a desire for me to direct her. She often said that she was even willing to come for an extended period to Chandigarh to make this happen. Regretfully, I allowed that moment to pass, thereby missing the opportunity to work with an actor with incredible talent, charisma and an insatiable urge to explore, investigate and tread new theatrical paths.

The writer is a Sangeet Natak Akademi winner and professor emeritus at Panjab University



APRIL 28, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM SOS

THE ASSAM GOVERNMENT has sent an urgent message to the Centre for supply of essential petroleum products, including aviation fuel, as it has failed to lift the available stock at the Gauhati refinery following workers' non-cooperation. The state government said air services to Assam and other parts of the north-eastern region were going to be affected as aviation fuel with the Indian Oil Corporation was not allowed to reach the Borjhar airport for refuelling aircraft. The message said, besides this, transport services, including transportation of essential commodities for the region, had been seriously affected.

AMERICAN WARNING PRESIDENT CARTER'S NATIONAL security adviser, Brzezinski, said that he would not rule

viser, Brzezinski, said that he would not rule out another mission or any other option to free the hostages in Iran while still hoping for a peaceful solution. Defence secretary Harold Brown declared that the United States would refuse to engage in any barter for the return of the eight dead men left behind when the rescue mission was aborted. Brzezinski warned Iran: "Do not scoff at American power. Do not scoff at American reach. It is in Iran's interest to resolve it peacefully. It is our preference to resolve it peacefully if possible, but the United States is prepared to do all that is necessary to obtain the release".

EMBASSY SIEGE ENDS

THE 61-DAY HOSTAGE standoff at the Dominican Republic embassy ended when a Cuban jetliner left Bogota for Havana with an estimated 15 leftist guerillas and an undetermined number of hostage diplomats abroad. Several diplomats apparently were freed just before the Soviet-built Ilyushin jet departed at 8.20 am local time, approximately 90 minutes after the guerillas left the embassy with their hostages in two Red Cross buses. It was believed that five diplomats were on the flight and that 11 were freed. Those freed were taken from the plane and driven in a speeding bus across the airfield.



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

THE IDEAS PAGE

Let's fill up the tank

Sharp fall in oil prices is opportunity for Union government to increase stockpile, achieve a degree of energy security



OIL PRICES CONTINUE to decline globally, with crude hitting multi-decade lows, as global demand evaporates. Earlier last week, in unprecedented price action, the near-month contract for West Texas Intermediate (WTI) sweet crude oil dropped to -\$37.63 a bbl. A negative price has never before been registered for a major global crude oil benchmark. The extreme price action is a signal that there is a global oil glut with few places to store oil. Global oil markets have been severely disrupted. While WTI does not feature in India's basket, Brent Crude Oil, which does, is trading around \$25 a barrel, the lowest in 18 years.

The economic consequences of COVID-19 are going to be drastic for India and the world. It is hard to say what kind of recovery the economy and markets will undergo when this is over, though there is much glib talk of it being "V", "U" or "L" shaped. But whichever letter of the alphabet wins the race, one opportunity is clear: Even as India suffers from a lockdown, a silver lining for future recovery and reconstruction is the price of oil.

Given India's growth aspirations and lack of self-sustaining oil production, a sharp reduction in oil prices is a bonanza. Normally, reduced oil prices would translate into surplus for the consumers and a fiscal bonus for the government through increased tax collections. However, given that the demand for petrol has slumped, those gains will not accrue right away. But India should look at this as an opportunity to strengthen its energy security by buying oil and filling up our Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR). Considering that India was the third-largest consumer of energy in the world, as well as the third-largest importer of oil in 2018, we are particularly vulnerable to oil price fluctuations. The dramatic reduction in oil prices offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us to fill up our reserves in an extremely cost-effective way

Currently, we do maintain an emergency stockpile of oil reserves: Under the existing Strategic Petroleum Reserves programme, India claims to have 87 days of reserves. Out of this, refiners maintain 65 days of oil storage and the rest of the reserves are held in underground salt caverns maintained by Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL). The existing and planned capacity for the underground reserves is 10 and 12 days of import cover for crude oil respectively.

There are a couple of issues to be highlighted here. First, capacity does not directly



mation about where they are located is not publicly available.

The first step, therefore, should be to introduce transparency and accountability in relation to the SPR. The procedures, protocols and facts about Indian SPR storage require greater public and parliamentary scrutiny, just like India's other strategic reserves (for instance, foreign exchange). For this, there should be timely and reliable dissemination of information. Instead, it is now shrouded in secrecy.

The lack of transparency around our SPR holdings is compounded by the ambiguity surrounding the mobilisation process. SPR reserves are meant to be used in emergencies, where time is likely to be of the essence. The SPR mobilisation process could be made more efficient by laying out designated roles for different agencies to avoid redundancies in times of crisis. There should be role and process clarity regarding SPR mobilisation. For instance, to begin with, there should be clarity on who (or which agency) can define an emergency and therefore order a mobilisation.

Further, in order to mitigate risks better, India should look to diversify its SPR holdings. Diversification can be based on geographical location (storing oil either domestically or abroad), storage location (underground or overground) and product type (oil can be held in either crude or refined form). Storage and transportation costs could To mitigate risks better, India should look to diversify its SPR holdings. Diversification can be based on geographical location (storing oil either domestically or abroad), storage location

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"A country's public image is ultimately earned by its efforts, rather than empty talk or lies. Chinese people should keep calm and maintain confidence and patience."

- GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

Proving the pessimists right

Corona crisis delivers yet another blow to wilting political fortunes of Pak PM



by C Raja Mohan

REPORTS FROM Pakistan claiming that premier Imran Khan's days are numbered are probably just speculation, informed or otherwise. But there is no doubt that the shine has long gone from Khan's government that came to power less than two years ago amid much popular expectations. His indecisive leadership in handling the corona crisis may have tipped the scales for Pakistan's deep state that has always treated the civilian leaders with disdain.

Khan's critics call him the "selected" prime minister. His party did emerge as the largest single party in the July 2018 elections. The army was widely seen as stitching up a majority for Khan in the national assembly and installing him as the prime minister. That does not, however, take away the high personal standing of Khan.

Khan is a genuine national hero in Pakistan. He has much good will around the world, including India. His call to cleanse Pakistan of corruption did find some resonance amongst the Pakistani people. The partnership between Khan and the army seemed a mutually beneficial one. Khan needed the army's support to come to power. And the army could do with a credible face that could confront and delegitimise the old political class, and create the basis for an overhaul of the Pakistani system.

Optimists hoped that Khan's special stature with the people would give him room to bargain with the army that has steadily gained ground against the elected leaders in recent decades. Pessimists, however, were convinced that Khan will find it hard to find wiggle room, and that he will be dumped once his political utility is over.

be dumped once his pointical utility is over. Historical record certainly rests with the pessimists. There was a time, a little over three decades ago, when Benazir Bhutto came to power after the death of General Zia-ul-Haq in a mysterious air crash in 1988. The arrangements that followed the decade-long rule of General Zia were described as a "troika"- an elected PM, a civilian president and the army chief.

In the years before and after General Pervez Musharraf's military rule (1999-2008), the civilians struggled to hold their own against the army. Nawaz Sharif, who him. The civilian president Ghulam Ishaq Khan sacked him in 1993 and Musharraf's coup ousted him in 1999. The current army chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, got the judiciary to remove him from the office on charges of corruption in 2017.

Asif Ali Zardari, who led the Pakistan Peoples Party to power in the 2008 general elections, tried to assert himself when the US forces raided Abbottabad to kill Osama Bin Laden much to the embarrassment of the Pakistan army. But that weak attempt failed and Zardari is now serving out a 15year prison sentence.

By the time Khan came to power, the PM's office had, largely, been hollowed out. None of Benazir's successors have had much say in running national security policies. They are the preserve of the army. The defence ministry was always run by the army. The key foreign policy accounts – India, Afghanistan, China, Saudi Arabia, and the US – were closely supervised by the army. And, as difficult domestic security challenges became serious in the last decade, the army took direct control of law and order in many areas.

After Musharraf, the army learnt to run the system without being formally in charge. That left the civilian leaders with the job of running a competent front office for the army and managing the economy with some effectiveness. Khan, who inherited an economy that was in a bad state, has struggled to put it back on the rails. And the army chief was quickly inserted into the economic decision-making space.

Because Khan had no power, does not mean that he would be spared of criticism. His government has been widely blamed for the "weak responses" of Islamabad to the Balakot attack by the Indian Air Force in February 2019, the Modi government's move to change the constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir last August, and Delhi's pressure campaign at the international Financial Action Task Force that is monitoring Pakistan's commitments to curb terrorism on its soil.

The corona crisis was, arguably, an opportunity for Khan to rise to the occasion and demonstrate his leadership in tackling a grave challenge to Pakistan's economy and security. But, as Khan fumbled, the army moved to quickly sideline him and take charge. This does not necessarily mean General Bajwa has decided that Khan is no longer a useful political asset. That might happen only when the General concludes that the post-corona geopolitical environment, including in Afghanistan, has turned more conducive to direct rule by the Army.

The writer is director, Institute of South

translate into utilisation, which is partly because oil is an expensive commodity most days of the year. In 2019, the average closing price of a barrel of crude was \$57.05. In 2018, it was \$64.90, and in 2017, U\$50.84. Of the existing 10 days of capacity, only about 50 per cent is utilised.

The second issue is with regard to the refinery holdings. In India, the SPR arrangement between the oil refineries and the Union or state governments is not specified well, though most of the refineries that hold stock are publicly-owned companies. In fact, a breakdown of which refineries hold SPR and in what form (crude or refined) or inforbe saved by diversifying geographically. With oil dirt-cheap, if we can purchase more than we can store in our existing facilities, why not go abroad for more storage space?

For instance, one option could be to operationalise, modernise, and add to the oil tanking facilities at Trincomalee in Sri Lanka. Another opportunity would be to enter into a strategic partnership with Oman (Ras Markaz) for oil storage, which would also help India avoid the potential bottleneck of the straits of Hormuz. However, since many of these places could potentially be vulnerable to geopolitical risks, only a small part of India's overall SPR strategy should involve (underground or overground) and product type (oil can be held in either crude or refined form). Storage and transportation costs could be saved by diversifying geographically. With oil dirt-cheap, if we can purchase more than we can store in our existing facilities, why not go abroad for more storage space? This is especially important at this time when every rupee needs to be conserved to get back on a positive economic track and lift the most vulnerable segments of our population. The message is clear: While prices are low, we should fill up our reserve tanks and rent space abroad. The oil will come in handy when prices have gone up — and more importantly, when we need it.

storing abroad.

Diversification could also be in the form

of ownership – either publicly owned

through ISPRL or by private oil companies,

such as ADNOC of Abu Dhabi, which could

fill up the SPR when prices are low and take

advantage of price arbitrage. This could

achieve a degree of price stability and reduce

the cost for India to buy such large quanti-

ties of oil. The only requirement for this to

work is to have a clear contract with the pri-

vate companies about the mandatory mini-

mum level of stock that they should preserve

for use in emergency times. The Takshashila

Institution, an independent think-tank, has

raised several of these issues in a recent

white paper. It serves as a timely reminder

main a priority in the near future, ISPRL

should consider filling up the SPR reserves

right now – and each time the price of Brent

crude oil falls below a certain price, say \$35

per barrel. Buying crude on the forward mar-

ket is another option, but oil prices are in

"contango" — which means that, contrary to

normal times, future prices are higher than

aspirations for growth. The sharp fall in the

price of oil presents an opportunity for the

Union government to increase its SPR stock-

pile and achieve a degree of energy security.

Energy is and will remain vital to India's

To ensure that SPR and oil security re-

for policymakers to take action.

spot prices.

Tharoor is the Lok Sabha MP from Thiruvananthapuram. The author is grateful for substantive and technical inputs from Anupam Manur and Rohan Seth, researchers at the Takshashila Institution

Payal Chawla

A judicious balance

Judiciary has set an example on how to combine social distancing and work

WHILE THE lockdown has been extended, it is unlikely to continue indefinitely. A phasewise opening of the economy is anticipated. But the crisis is neither over nor is the virus disappearing. Not until a vaccine is developed and accessible to all.

The lockdown by the government was timely to ensure the virus's containment. It also bought the government time to organise the much-needed resources to fight the virus. Be it importing or manufacturing PPE kits, including N95 masks, coveralls, goggles, nitrile gloves, ventilators; enhancing testing facilities, permitting door-to-door sample pick-up services by private laboratories or innovations such as AgVa portable ventilators and splinter ventilators — it is all happening and is much-needed. But this is not the sound of the pandemic ending. It is only the beginning.

Despite this reality, it is also not possible to have an indefinite lockdown. The economy simply cannot sustain it. And the success of how we keep this virus at bay will depend on how we balance two antithetical interests — social distancing on the one hand and the continuance of work on the other.

In a surprising but pleasant move, it is the judiciary that has shown us how this antipodal balance can be achieved. No, not by way of a judgment, but by swiftly adapting itself to technology. Long perceived as the monolith reluctant to change, the judiciary has acted with uncharacteristic speed and led by example.

In the run-up to the days of the lockdown, the courts had realised that its corridors would be a breeding ground for the pandemic. They quickly organised themselves to hear only matters of extreme urgency. As the lockdown ensued, courts adopted various technology platforms such as WhatsApp calls, video-mobile, Zoom.us and video conferencing to hear matters. Listing of matters could be done over a phone call to the designated registrar. "While the system is yet not perfect, but it is indeed heartening that even in these difficult times, justice can be accessed," says Jaideep Gupta, senior advocate, who has appeared before the Supreme Court (SC) in hearings conducted through WhatsApp and video-mobile calls. Things are not perfect and there is much to be done. But in all fairness, the system is evolving every day.

Taking cognisance of a letter sent by Vikas Singh, the former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court held that technology "has enabled courts to enhance quality and effectiveness of the administration of justice". The apex court authorised high courts to take such measures as necessary for their continued functioning through video-conferencing and adopt the requisite modalities suitable for their transition, and also for district courts in each state to adopt this model. The SC observed that while "scaling down of conventional operations within the precincts of courts, was a necessity to reduce transmission of the virus", at the same time "access to justice is fundamental to preserve the rule of law".

In recent days, the SC began hearing what it categorised as "short matters", which include tenancy disputes, compensation matters, transfer petitions, bail and anticipatory bail matters. The Delhi High Court and certain tribunals have also further streamlined the process of e-filing and listing of urgent matters.

In the days to come, we anticipate and hope that the courts will expand on the asyet-unwritten definition of "urgency" to permit access to virtual courts to a larger number of litigants. Also, judges must seriously consider operating from their home offices. The process of notarisation and oath commissioners must be dispensed with and filings need to be permitted under the attestation of the concerned lawyer. Such a mode is already in place in certain courts such as the Madras High Court. The courts should also consider dispensing with oral hearings, except in urgent or exceptional matters and decide matters based on pleadings/written submissions, at the very least in those cases where both parties are agreeable and regarding more routine matters. Justice D Y Chandrachud has propagated the institutionalisation of technology even after the lockdown is lifted.

It is hoped that this transition in the judicial model will be an inspiration to other sectors. Of course, there will be sectors, such as manufacturing and construction, where the work-from-home model will not be possible and yet their commencement may be imminent to keep the economy afloat. For them, strict protocols for social distancing, to the extent possible, are already underway and will need to be strictly enforced. The ban on large gatherings, including religious and social ones, must continue.

However, sectors where work-fromhome is an option, such as the services and educational sectors, must take a leaf out of the judiciary's book and mandatorily continue to operate within the confines of the lockdown guidelines. They must recognise their unique place in this moment of crisis and use their skills in confinement — not merely as a duty but as an obligation — for the development and continuance of the economy, while allowing the necessary space for the social distancing of those who have no option but to leave the safety of their homes.

Chawla is a practising advocate and founder of JusContractus, a Delhi-based law firm

rose to prominence with the support of the army, sought to create space for himself on all the three occasions he became the PM. But each time, the deep state humiliated Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DON'T BICKER

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Finding the cure' (IE, April 27). While the tearing hurry for discovering a vaccine to COVID-19 is understandable, countries must be wary of ignoring the standard testing protocol. Also, misgivings among countries since the time the pandemic broke out need to be set aside. This is not a time to blame each other and widen faultlines. Cooperatioon, especially in terms of scientific and medical research, is the need of the hour. Finding a cure and making it available worldwide is imperative.

Vijai Pant, Hempur

PROTECT DOCTORS

THIS REFERS TO the article 'Safety of healers' (IE, April, 27). Mindless attacks on doctors and paramedical staff by COVID patients and their families are beyond comprehension. The government has done the right thing by stipulating seven years of imprisonment for offenders. Doctors and medical staff on the frontline deserve respect. Such attacks happened in the past as well. Malpractice by a few doctors and profiteering by some private hospitals should not cast a shadow over the entire medical fraternity. Those enganging in violence against healthcare professionals must be held to account.

Bholey Bhardwaj, Mumbai

PROVIDE RELIEF

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Humanitarian emergency' (IE, April 27). Providing universal free rations and doorstep delivery of foodgrains in tamperproof packets are both within the capacity of the state machinery. This will ensure nobody is deprived of food in the ongoing crisis. The govern-

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD To encourage quality reader

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

ment can use technological solutions like geotagging to ensure accountability on the ground. Universalising this scheme would make the pilferage in the supply chain redundant, as the abundance of supply with the people would mean no demand for the grade of foodgrain distributed by the PDS in the black market.

Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

INTERNET RIGHTS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'I tweet therefore I'm heard' (IE, April 27). The digital divide makes the state distant from those who need it. Education is the best tool for social and economic mobility. During the lockdown, middle and upper-class child are getting online education but the poor who need it the most are excluded. Likewise in health, the Aarogya Setu app and Google maps provide information regarding corona but those without internet find it difficult to access this basic information.

Suchak D Patel, Ahmedabad



10 EXPRESS NETWORK

UP Police: Constable murders wife, absconds with 3 children

Noida: A UP Police constable allegedly murdered his own wife and absconded with three children on Monday. According to police, Yatendra Yadav, a Dial 112 constable posted in Agra, allegedly shot his wife Saroj following marital discord and has escaped with the children.

Police said Saroj's family alleged that Yatendra had an affair with a woman in Mathura and had allegedly eloped with her. A

case was filed against the police

official in Mathura by the Saroj's family. Following the incident, Yatendra would visit his house in Firozabad less, which led to

disputes in the house. "It is alleged by the deceased woman's father that the policeman committed the murder since he had an extra marital affair... Arrests will be made soon", said an official from Shikohabad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, APRIL 27

Sr.

No

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5.

Item Code

C-01

M-118

T-05

M-124

M-27

M-28

0138/HP

Sd/

REPUBLIC TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami on Monday spent more than 12 hours at a police station and was questioned by Mumbai Police in connection with an FIR over his remarks on Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and the Palghar lynching.

The FIR had been filed by Nagpur Police based on a complaint by the Maharashtra Energy Go sh

Gandhi. I at I stand made it rvthing l e said to story and defamation under relevant secthey are completely satisfied. I tions of the IPC. The case was have cooperated with the investitransferred to Mumbai Police afgation...," the statement said.

E-TENDER NOTICE

CONTROLLER OF STORES

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES, UDYOG BHAWAN, BEMLOE, SHIMLA-171001 E-TENDER NOTICE NUMBER: 04/2019-2020(SP)

Official Website: www.emerginghimachal.hp.gov.in, TELE/FAXNo. 0177-2812613, E-mail ID: tenders-ind-hp@nic.ir

Tenders bids are electronically invited for the supply of following stores items up to 10:30AM on the dates referred

Arnab questioned by Mumbai Police

served the Republic TV

ter the Supreme Court set aside

Goswami's plea that all hate

speech cases against him be

Goswami two notices on Sunday

and, accordingly, he went to the

The investigators served

Investigators had

editor-in-chief two

notices on Sunday

quashed.

He told mediapersons, " don't want to ascribe motive now. But everyone who is watching here today knows exactly that I am on the side of the truth. I stand by every single comment...."

His lawyer Kantawala told the media, "There were lots of questions presented in front of Arnab. There were clips which were shown, the whole television programme was also shown to him and whatever queries he was asked, he has answered each one of them."

Deputy Commissioner of Police Abhinash Kumar (zone III) said, "The Nagpur case got transferred to Mumbai and we are currently probing that. Besides, the investigator has the power to decide for how long he needs to interrogate a person."

Meanwhile, Youth Congress workers Arun Borade and Prateek Mishra, who had allegedly accosted Goswami early Thursday, were granted bail by Bhoiwada Court on Monday.

Affairs' official spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said Monday, "We have seen certain references to India in non-official so-A DAY after a minister from

TWEETS ON ISLAMOPHOBIA FROM MIDDLE EAST NATIONS

Kuwait govt does not support

interference in India's affairs: MEA

cial media handles in Kuwait." Kuwait tweeted a statement by "The Government of Kuwait its cabinet condemning alleged has assured us that they are ethnic attacks against Muslims in deeply committed to friendly relations with India. They also do India, New Delhi on Monday said it has "seen certain references" to not support any interference in India in "non-official social media the internal affairs of India," the handles" from the Middle Eastern MEA spokesperson said. nation and that the Kuwait gov-He was referring to a state-

ment by Kuwait's envoy, Jassem ernment has assured that they "do not support any interference Al-Najem, in New Delhi Monday highlighting the principle of nonin the internal affairs of India". Abdullah al-Shoreka, a minisinterference, as enshrined in the ter in Kuwait's ministry of Islamic United Nations Charter. "Kuwait Affairs, had tweeted Sunday, "The and India share many principles Council of Ministers of the State of in their foreign policies, like respecting U.N. Charter, non-inter-Kuwait condemns the ethnic attacks against Muslims in India". He ference in other countries' affairs had tweeted a letter in Arabic by and respecting sovereignty of nathe Kuwaiti cabinet as well. He had tions," the official news agency of also used the hashtags said, Kuwait quoting "#Islamophobia_In_India" and Ambassador Jassem Al-Najem. "#ArabsExposingRSS" in his tweet. To underline "friendly" ties

with Kuwait. Srivastava also said on Monday that on the request of Kuwait, India had recently deployed a Rapid Response Team there to assist the country in its fight against coronavirus. During its two-week stay in Kuwait, the team rendered valuable medical assistance in testing and treatment of afflicted persons and training their personnel, he said.

"It is therefore important that friendly and cooperative nature of our relations is accurately recognised and misuse of social media is not given credence," the spokesperson said.

This latest incident comes in the wake of similar comments and statements on social media in the Gulf region over the last two weeks, and the Indian government's clarifications in response through its embassies and envoys. It started with Indian envoy to

the UAE last week, and similar clarifications had to be issued by Indian embassies in Oman and Qatar, who also came out to douse the raging controversy over "Islamophobia" in the region.

3 unidentified militants killed in Kashmir, 5 injured in blast at encounter site

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, APRIL 27

THREE UNIDENTIFIED militants were killed in an encounter with security forces at Qazigund in Kashmir's Kulgam district on Monday, officials said.

Police said joint forces on Sunday night launched a cordon and search operation in Qazigund's Lower Munda. ...during search operation hiding terrorists fired indiscriminately upon the search party, the fire was retaliated leading to an encounter," Kulgam police said.

Later, Kulgam police said, "Three terrorists were killed in the encounter and the bodies were retrieved from the site of the encounter, identification vet to be ascertained."

Meanwhile, in the afternoon, at least five people, including four minors, were injured in an explosion near the site. Police said the area was sanitised before forces left the area. "Announcements were made on speakers requesting people not to venture in the area. Banners were fixed and pamphlets were also distributed... Concerned Police officers also informed the sarpanch... Still some people went in and fiddled with the unknown objects resulting in injuries to six persons...," Kulgam

plante by the manatus fill a bit of by					
Minister Nitin Raut over	police station at 9.30 am Monday.				
Goswami's statements in his	In his statement on the				
show on Sonia Gandhi in connec-	Republic TV website, Goswami				
tion with the Palghar incident.	said he was guestioned for 12 and				
The charges include provocation	a half hours. "The interrogation				
with intent to cause riot, promot-	that was done today was about				
ing enmity between two groups	my comments on Sonia Gandhi. I				
on grounds of religion or race, de-	have made it very clear that I stand				
liberate and malicious acts in-	by my comments. I have made it				
tended to outrage religious feel-	absolutely clear that everything I				
ings of any class by insulting its	have said is correct. I have said to				
religion or religious beliefs and	the police my side of the story and				

Name of item

Acids & Chemicals

Jute Mat (Darrie Patti)

Water Proofing Material

police station. ENS TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF A.P. LIMITED, VIJAYAWADA

e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE The APTRANSCO invites on line Bids under e-procurement for supply of ving equipment and the respective specification will be availabl

pro	ocure	ment platform from 28.04.2020 onwards.									
	SI.	Tender	Description	Qty in							
N 1	No.	Specification No.		Nos							
	1	PMM32-e-13/2020	220V, 100AH Battery Chargers	25							

PMM32-e-13/2020 220V, 100AH Battery Chargers Tenderers can have further details and download the tender schedule from e-procurement market place ie., www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in Contact Nos: Chief Engineer/Transmission -0866-2429230 Extns: 2014, 2034, 2042

R. O. No. 15PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2020-21 CHIEF ENGINEER, TRANSMISSION

H.O. "UJJAWAL" MAHARAN	N Limited NI BAGH, GMS ROAD, DEHRADUN-248006 : 0135 – 2763508, 2763808 :0101UR2001SGC025866
TENDER	NOTICE
The office of Executive Engineer (N	laintenance), Maneri Bhali Stage-II,
	aled tenders from interested parties
for following work:	
	ment of Turbine shaft rubber Seals
for 76 MW Turbine at Dharasu power	
NIT-05/EE(M)/MB-II/20-21: Repair	
Drainage pumps at Dharasu Power H	
	1.00, Rs 574300.00 only (taxes extra).
Earnest Money	: Rs 20000/- only for each tender.
Tender Cost	: Rs 295.00/-, Rs 590.00/- only
	Respectively
Last date of downloading the tender	
Last date of submitting the tender	
Due date for opening the tender	
	details kindly visit our website ders are advised to regularly visit our
website for tender notice. Tender	can only be downloaded from our

website & their cost has to be paid at the time of submission Ro. No. 250 Dated 27.04.2020 Executive Engineer (Maintenance)

"Save Electricity in the Interest of Nation"

HARYANA STAFF SELECTION COMMISSION BAYS NO. 67-70, SECTOR 2, PANCHKULA-134151 Phone No.: 0172-2586501, Website: www.hssc.gov.in

Public Notice

Reference Haryana Staff Selection Commission's Advt. No 1/2020 dated 12.02.2020, which was published in various newspapers and also available on HSSC website i.e. www.hssc.gov.in, vide which online application forms were invited for various posts of vari ous departments

It is notified for the information of all concerned that keeping in view the convenience of the candidates Harvana Staff Selection Commission has decided to extend the date for submission of online applications against Advt. No. 1/2020. Accordingly, the candidates may now apply online against Advt. No. 1/2020 through URL address .e. www.recruitment-portal.in/adv12020.html from 20.04.2020 to 15.05.2020 and the closing date for deposit of fee will be 19.05.2020. The other terms & conditions of Advt. No. 1/2020 will remain the

Same.					
Note: The above Notice is also a	available on the website:	www.hssc.gov.in			
Place: Panchkula Dated, the 20th April, 2020	Sd/- Under Secretary Haryana Staff Selection Commission				
	80727/HRY.	Panchkula			
OFFICE OF THE	S.E. (P&W). SHE	REE SINGAJI			

THERMAL POWER PROJECT, MPPGCL, Dongalia Dist. Khandwa (MP) E-mail ID: sepnw.sstpp1@gmail.com, Phone 09425611006 TPP/MF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER Website: <u>www.mppgcl.mp.gov.in</u>] Tender Particulars / Estimated EMD & Last date

M-118(01) Mechanically Gabion Boxes Only Manufacturers can participate (Mechanical Woven. Double Twisted, Hexagonal Mesh Gabions) Agriculture Machinery Agriculture Implements/Tools Only Manufacturers can participate 21.05.2020

NOTE: The detailed instructions in respect of processing of e-tender are available on department website https://hpter All the user Departments/Boards for whom this tender has been invited are advised to go through the e-tende notice and schedules which are being uploaded on the website and to see if any clerical mistakes/change in specification is required and the same may be reported immediately to the undersigned for issuing of necessary corr gendum

Controller of Stores Himachal Pradesh

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **E-Procurement Notice**

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, Shimla, Division No.I, HPPWD, Shimla-3, H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender	Time Allowed
1.	Up-gradation of road from Tipra to Jagroti Km. 0/00 to 6/00 including 15.00 span Bridge at RD. 2/720 (SH:- Construction of retaining walls, C.D. work, P/L WBM G-I G-II and G-III Bitumen concrete, V-shape Drain, parapets logo sign board km. Stone and C/O 15.00 mtr span bridge at RD. 2/720 including approaches)(Under NABARD RIDF-XXV).	2,39,34,485/-	2,71,900/-	5,000/-	545 days

ity of Bid Document and mode of submission: The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website: https://hptenders.gov.in. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: https://hptenders.gov.in. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders

Rs. 1,000/- inclusive of all taxes & duties through e-payment Rs. 5,310/- inclusive of all taxes & duties through e-payment (Non-refundable) Date of Sale (On Line) From 28.04.2020 at 15:00 hrs. to18.05.2020 upto 16:00 hr On 08.05.2020 at 15:00 hrs. at Northern I ICD/Tughlakabad. ICD/Tughlakabad. IOn or after 11.05.2020 on www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL only ate & Time of Submission of tender 19.05.2020 upto 15:00 Hrs. ate & Time of Opening of tender 00.2020 upto 15:00 Hrs. criteria and other details please log on to **www.concorindia.com** or **eprocure.gov.in** ard.com/CCIL Bidders are requested to visit the websites regularly. CONCOR reserves the righ with derwitzard.com/CCIL_ Bloders are requested to the state of Group General Manager (C&O)Northern Region ct any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof Group General Manager (C&O)Northern Region Garden Reach Shipbuilders

Responding to this tweet,

Union Ministry of External

& Engineers Ltd. (A Govt. of India Undertaking, Ministry of Defence) Regd. Office: 43/46, Garden Reach Road, Kolkata 700 024

भारतीय कंटेनर निगम लिमिटेड Container Corporation of India Ltd. (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) (A Govt. of India Undertaking) ICD, Tughlakabad, New Delhi – 110 020

TENDER NOTICE(E-Tendering Mode Only)

CONCOR invites Online Open E-Tender in two bid system for Point to Point Road transportation and fovement of Double Decker Locks at MMLP Kathuwas (CMLK), Rajasthan'. The bid document may be ownloaded from the website (www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL) on Payment of Rs.1000/-online.

2+2+1 years Rs.5,00,000/- through e-paymer

CON/NR/TC/RTO/CMLK/2020 Rs. 4,07,47,067/- (excl. GST) per annum

(1) NIT NO. SCC/AJK/OT(Press)/CanteenService.HR/025/N.ET-1067

Due date for NIT No. 1 & 2: 21 days from date of publication 1. Details will be available in e-tendering portal https:// eprocuregrse.co.ln and websites https://www.grse.ln/ index.php/tender.html & https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/ 2. Any addendum/corrigendum to this tender enquiry will be published in above on public and



(1) INT NO. SCC/ASI/OT (PTESS)/Califeeride/Vice.nk/02/3/k.eff/106/ NAME OF JOB: BIENNIAL RATE CONTRACT FOR PROVIDING LUNCH AND OTHER ALLIED SERVICES IN GRSE CONTRACTOR'S WORKMEN CANTEENS
 (2) NIT NO. SCC/AS/OT (PRESS)/CAR.HIRE/012/N.ET-1121
 NAME OF JOB: BIENNIAL RATE CONTRACT FOR HIRING OF DIESEL CARS AT GRSE KOLKATA
 Due date for NIT No. 1 & 2: 21 days from date of publication

can participate. Only Manufacturers can participate. 20.05.2020 21.05.2020

Only Manufacturers can participate. 21.05.2020

Estimated Cost Period of the contract Earnest Money Deposit Cost of Document Tender Processing Fee 20.05.2020 20.05.2020 Manufacturers/ Authorized Dealers

कॉनकॉ conco

Tender No

SHUBHAJIT ROY

NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR ONLINE BIDDING

"In pursuit of Excellence and Quality in Shipbuilding" Visit us at : www.grse.in

in above websites only.

igainst each item and will be opened on same date at 11:00AM. If the opening date happens to be a closed day then he tenders will be opened on the next working day. The descriptions given below are in brief. The Complete details including tender form, tender schedules (referred in e tendering as Bill of Quantity) and terms & conditions will be available for downloading from 04.05.2020at 05.00 PM onwards from website https://hptenders.gov.in. The bid shall be filled in electronic format on the schedule-"A" (BOQ) of the con erned item on the website https://hptenders.gov.in.The cost of tender formRs.500/-per set which is non-refundable and Earnest Money shall be submitted in the tender(s) by using of net banking/ RTGS & NEFT modes of payments only Who can Participate Date of Openin in the Tender of Tender 20.05.2020 Only Manufacturers can participate. Gabion Boxes & Gabion Mattresses Only Manufacturers can participate.

	Cost (Rs.)	EMD & Tender Cost Rs.	of online	or 9 3.	already poss						Wangtoo Substation Deadline for Bids: 15.06.2020, 15.00 hours (local time) Opening of Bids: 15.06.2020, 15.30 hours (local time) 1. The HP Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. (HPPTCL) now			
			submissio		. Date of Or	nline Publication	06.05.2020 18.00 hrs.		יין וך <u>-</u>	invites seal	led bids from eligible I	bidders for:		
Procurement of LED Lightings for Illumination System for CHP at	17,33,352.00	43,400/-&	29.05.2020 Up to	D 2	2. Document	Download Start and End Date	06.05.2020 18.00 htd. upto	20.05.2020 16.00 hrs.				Quarters Type 1 & Type 2 at		
2x600MW, SSTPP Dongalia		1000/-	15:30 hrs	3	Bid Submi	ssion Start and End Date	06.05.2020 18.00 hrs. upto	20.05.2020 16.00 hrs.				tion Type 3 & Type 4 at Bhabha development, sewerage system,		
(T-2020_MPPGC_86200) Procurement of Carb Clad Coated set of slide gate (disc) and Seat for	10,36,550.00	26,000/-	26.05.2020	- 4	 Physical S Tender Do 	ubmission of EMD and Cost of cument	21.05.2020 upto 10.30 hrs.			water supp Assurance	bly arrangement and a	all electric installation with Quality ct under HPPTCL (complete		
Equalizer Valve installed in AHP of		& 1000/-	Up to 15:30 hrs	5	5. Date of op	ening of Technical Bid	21.05.2020 11.00 hrs.			Package)."	n period is 18 months	(E40 dovo)		
SSTPP, MPPGCL, Dongalia (T-2020 MPPGC 86148)		1000,		6	6. Date of op	ening of Financial Bid						will be conducted in accordance		
Design Supply Frection testing	88,53,637.00	2,21,400/	26.05.202	0 4.	TENDER D	DETAILS:						Envelope Bidding Procedure and		
and commissioning of SPS (Special Protection Scheme) for		& 2000/-	Up to 15:30 hrs			Documents shall be uploaded On-			2.		all Bidders from India. ed NIT indicating B	Iidder's Qualifying Requirement,		
400KV/220KV switchyard PH-1 & II, SSTPP, MPPGCL, Dongalia (T-2020 MPPGC 86138)		2000/-	15.50 118		ii) Cover-2	I shall contain scanned copies of al 2 shall contain "BOQ/Financial Bid	s", where Contractor will quote	his offer for each item.		Scope of V HPPTCL w	Vork, procedure for su vebsite.	ubmission of Bids is available on		
Procurement of AC & DC MCB's and	23,05,272.00	57,700/-	25.05.202	0 5.		DN OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS: 1 cost of bid document and (b) orig						d inspect the Bidding Document, uty General Manager (Contracts)		
its auxiliary contact installed at different PMCC, DB & Sub DB of		& 1000/-	Up to			ocuments in the O/o Executive Eng						ing working days startingfrom		
Unit# 3 & 4, 2x660 MW, SSTPP,		1000/-	15:30 hrs			Sr. No. 3 on Tender Opening Date) to 14.06.2020.			
Stage-II, MPPGCL, Dongalia. Of L&T/ABB/Schneider/ Siemens/				6.		NG DETAILS: The Technical bids sl ngineer, Shimla HPPWD Shimla, H.					al Manager (Contract smission Corporation			
havells/legrand only make (T-2020_MPPGC_86137)					advised to b	e present along with original docum	ents at the time of opening of ter	nders. If the office happens	s Hin	mfed Bhawan	n, Panjari, Shimla,			
Annual work contract for shifting of	22.07.113.00	55,200/-	19.05.202			d on the date of opening of the bids	as specified, the bids will be op	pened on the next working			esh, India-171005			
filled Hydrogen cylinder from l	,0,,,10.00	&	Upto	17		ame time and venue. the work shall remain valid for acco	eptance for a period not less that	n 120 davs after the dead		I. No.: +91-01 x No.: +91-17	77- 2633784, 77- 2831284			
Hydrogen plant to TG building and empty cylinders back to H2 plant		1000/-	15:30 hrs		line date for	bid submission.		-	E-r	mail: dgmcon	tracts@hpptcl.in,			
and filling of air/gas in generator for 2X600 MW, SSTPP, Khandwa				8.		s can be seen in the bidding docun due to system failure beyond its cor				ebsite: www.h	pptcl.com	(Er. K.N Sharma)		
(T-2020_MPPGC_82641)						bid updates, the Employer shall no						DGM (Contracts)		
Procurement of Complete assembly of 100NB Dual Disc Valves	12,49,288.00	31,300/-	18.05.202	0		rs' responsibility to verify the websit				22/HP	E-m	nail: dgmcontracts@hpptcl.in		
for installation in buffer hopper		& 1000/-	Up to 15:30 hrs	. E	ligibility crite						NORTHERN			
for unit 01 of AHP, 2X600MW Unit of SSTPP Dongalia(T-2020_		1000/	10.00 me	Í		dders must have successfully comp cost during the last five years ι					TENDER			
MPPGC_85715)						ated damages or compensation).	inder Govi. Department State C	i Central F30,5 (withou		vitation of To				
For extension & other details, the bidde of GoMP at <u>www.mptenders.gov.in</u>	ers are requeste	d to please	e visit e-porta	u	. (ii) The ex	ecutive Engineer reserves the right	to accept/reject any tender/app	lication or all tenders with		N.I.T. No.	01 (A,B,C,D)/20-21 da	dering (E-Procurement Systems) ated 27.04.2020		
SAVE ELECTRICITY		SE	E (P&W)		out as	signing any reason.		3958/H.P.			,	stem with 1000 litre per hr capacity for 3		
			- (with its location	years in the S/O SSE/V			
CO TAMIL NA SUPERINTEND	DU SLUM C				-II)		J SLUM CLEARA CHENNAI CIRCLE-III	NCE BOARD	 		system at NRM & Ra	contract for two years of fire fighting all Niwas in the S/o SSE/W/S M Marg &		
NOTICE INVITING SHORT- TEND			331 /D1/SE(CC-II		Date: 27.04.2020	NOT Tender Notice No. SCB / 105 / HD / SE (CC-III) /	ICE INVITING SHORT- TENDER	Date: 27.04.202		-	C) Provision of security	arrangement at ECO Park in the S/o		
For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, one sealed short te for price schedule with name of work duly superscribed to be enclosed in B or Government undertaking / Public Sector Undertaking registered as a lenge of the sector of the s	ender consisting of two separat cover are invited from the reni													
Government undertaking / Public Sector Undertaking, registered as a legal er Salai, Chennai - 600 005 upto 3.00 PM on 14.05.2020 and the same will be or	atity in India by the Superinter	istered contractors of	of TNSCB under Class -I a	and above or G	iovernment Departments /	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl			r III		SSE/W/SMM under AE			
	ntity in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day	istered contractors of nding Engineer, Che y in the presence of t	of TNSCB under Class -I a ennai Circle-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm	and above or G	iovernment Departments / e Board, No.5, Kamarajar		rice Bid with name of work duly superscribed	in both covers are invited from eligibl	r III	-	D) Repair to non standa	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff		
SI. Name of work/Estimate No.	ntity in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day	istered contractors of nding Engineer, Che y in the presence of t Ap (Includi	of TNSCB under Class -I a ennai Circle-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm pproximate Value ing GST) (Rs. in lakhs)	and above or G Slum Clearanc iittee. EMD	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for F Contractors who are in the field of Construction In Departments / Government undertakings / Gove	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribed dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB rnment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Gov	in both covers are invited from eligibl under Class-I and above or Governmer vernment / Public Sector undertakings	r e t		D) Repair to non standa quarters in so SSE/Wo	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff orks/Tcamp underADEN/E-II		
Si. No. Name of work/Estimate No. (1) (2)	ntity in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same da	istered contractors of nding Engineer, Che y in the presence of t Ap (Includi	of TNSCB under Class -I a ennai Circle-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm pproximate Value	and above or G I Slum Clearanc iittee.	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD /	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl. Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for P Contractors who are in the field of Construction In Departments / Government undertakings / Gover Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings / Co Circle-III, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No.	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribed dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB rnment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Go WDD and registered as a legal entity in India, by 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600 005 upto 3.00	in both covers are invited from eligibl under Class-I and above or Governmer vernment / Public Sector undertakings / the Superintending Engineer, Chenna PM on 13.05.2020 and the same will b	r e t / i 2 /	Approx. Cost	D)Repair to non standa quarters in so SSE/WoA)1930855.24	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff prks/Tcamp under ADEN/E-II B) 4987139.35		
(1) (2) Construction of 384 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 37	ntity in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day	istered contractors of nding Engineer, Che y in the presence of t (Includi toreyed)	of TNSCB under Class -I a ennai Circle-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm pproximate Value ing GST) (Rs. in lakhs) - Period of contract	and above or G Slum Clearanc iittee. EMD (in Rs.) (4)	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for F Contractors who are in the field of Construction Ir Departments / Government undertakings / Gover Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings / Corp	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribeä dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB mment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Go WD and registered as a legal entity in India, by S, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600.005 upto 3.00 e of the Tender Scrutiny Committee and bidders /	in both covers are invited from eligibl under Class-I and above or Governmer vernment / Public Sector undertakings the Superintending Engineer, Chenna PM on 13.05.2020 and the same will b their authorised agents	r e t i i 2 4	Approx. Cost of work	D) Repair to non standar quarters in so SSE/Wo A) 1930855.24 E C) 4993052.97 C	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff orks/Tcamp under ADEN/E-II B) 4987139.35 D) 9493057.77		
Construction of 384 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 3 including internal and external water supply, sanitary and developments works at Perumbakkam Phase-V Scheme in to	ntity in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day 7-B & 37- F / 2019 (G+7 St electrification arrangemer	istered contractors c nding Engineer, Che y in the presence of t (Includi toreyed) nts with	of TNSCB under Class - I annai Cirole-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm pproximate Value ing GST) (Rs. in lakhs) - Period of contract (3)	and above or G Slum Clearanc ittee. EMD (in Rs.)	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl. Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for P Contractors who are in the field of Construction Ir Departments / Government undertakings / Gover Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings / Cl Circle-III, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No. opened at 3.30 PM on the same day in the present	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribed dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB mment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Go WD and registered as a legal entity in India, by 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600 005 upto 3.00 e of the Tender Scrutiny Committee and bidders / Annocumate Tender Va	in both covers are invited from eligible under Class-I and above or Governmert vernment / Public Sector undertakings the Superintending Engineer, Chenna PM on 13.05.2020 and the same will b their authorised agents tue EMD To whom EMD/	r e t i i 2 4 e c 3 E	Approx. Cost	D) Repair to non standa quarters in so SSE/Wo A) 1930855.24 E C) 4993052.97 C (It should be in the formation of the standard strength of the standard strength of the strengt of the strength of the strength of the strength of the	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff prks/Tcamp under ADEN/E-II B) 4987139.35		
(1) (2) Construction of 384 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 33 including internal and external water supply, sanitary and	ntity in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day 7-B & 37- F / 2019 (G+7 St electrification arrangemer Chengalpattu District und	istered contractors c nding Engineer, Che y in the presence of f (Includi (Includi toreyed) hts with der HFA	of TNSCB under Class -1, mail: Crial-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm pproximate Value ing GST) (Rs. in lakhs) - Period of contract (3) 3757.00 15 Months	and above or G Slum Clearanc iittee. EMD (in Rs.) (4)	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl. Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for P Contractors who are in the field of Construction In Departments / Government undertakings / Gover Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings / Co Circle-III, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No.	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribed dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB mment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Go WD and registered as a legal entity in India, by S, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600.005 upto 3.00 e of the Tender Scrutiny Committee and bidders / Approximate Tender Ya (Including GST@12%)	in both covers are invited from eligibl under Class-I and above or Governmer emment / Public Sector undertakings / the Superintending Engineer, Chenna PM on 13.05.2020 and the same will b their authorised agents une	r e t i i 2 4 e c 3 E	Approx. Cost of work Earnest	D) Repair to non standa quarters in so SSE/Wo A) 1930855.24 E C) 4993052.97 C (It should be in the fo Only. Note :- FDR w invited on IREPS as p	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff orks/Tcamp underADEN/E-II a) 4987139.35 b) 9493057.77 orm of net banking or payment gateway vill not be accepted as EMD for tender per Railway Boards letter no 2015//CE-I/		
(1) (2) (1) (2) Construction of 384 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 33 including internal and external water supply, samilary and developments works at Perumbakkam Phase-IV Scheme In or PMX (PAP). Estimate CER No. 01/HFA/2020-21. Construction of 256 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 37 internal and external water supply, samilary and electrification works at Perumbakkam Phase-V Scheme in Chengalpathu D	nthy in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day 7-B & 37-F / 2019 (G+7 St electrification arrangemer Chengalpattu District un 7-C/2019 (G+7 Storeyed) in arrangements with develo	istered contractors c y in the presence of t (Includi toreyed) toreyed) toreyed) toreyed) toreign f toreign f toreig	of TNSCB under Class -1 mail Critell, Tamil Nadu the Tender Scrutiny Comm pproximate Value ing GST) (Rs. in lakhs) . Pertod of contract (3) <u>3757.00</u> <u>15 Months</u> <u>2414.00</u>	and above or G Slum Clearanc iittee. EMD (in Rs.) (4)	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl. Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for F Contractors who are in the field of Construction Ir Departments / Government undertakings / Gove Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings / Cl Circle-III, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No. opened at 3.30 PM on the same day in the present SI. No. Name of work/Estimate (1) (2)	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribed dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB mment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Go WD and registered as a legal entity in India, by 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600 005 upto 3.00 e of the Tender Scrutiny Committee and bidders / No.	in both covers are invited from eligible under Class-I and above or Governmer remment / Public Sector undertakings the Superintending Engineer, Chenna PM on 13.05.2020 and the same will b their authorised agents tue tue tue temp fin R to the temp fin R to the temp	r e t i i 2 4 e c 3 E	Approx. Cost of work Earnest	D) Repair to non standa quarters in so SSE/Wo A) 1930855.24 E C) 4993052.97 C (It should be in the fo Only. Note :- FDR w invited on IREPS as p CT/5/1 dated 31.08.20	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff orks/Tcamp under ADEN/E-II B) 4987139.35 D) 9493057.77 orm of net banking or payment gateway ill not be accepted as EMD for tender ber Railway Boards letter no 2015//CE-I/ 216).		
(1) (2) (2) Construction of 384 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 33 including internal and external water supply, sanilary and developments works at Peruntabakam Phase-V Scheme in of PMAY (AHP). Estimate CER No. 01/HFA2020-21. 2 Construction of 256 Nos of Tenements adopting type design 37 internal and external water supply, sanilary and electification works at Perumbakkam Phase-V Scheme in Chengalpattu D Estimate CER No. 02/HFA2020-21.	nthy in India by the Superinter pened at 3.30 PM on same day 7-B & 37-F / 2019 (G+7 St electrification arrangemer Chengalpattu District und 7-C/2019 (G+7 Storeyed) in arrangements with develo District under HFA of PMAY	istered contractors 2 y in the presence of t (Including toreyed) toreyed) toreyed) ths with der HFA including ppments ((AHP).	01 TNSCB under Class -1, 1 mail Croite-II, Tamil Nadu the Tender Soutiny Comm proximate Value (3) - Period of contract (3) 	and above or G Slum Clearanc ittee. EMD (in Rs.) (4) 18,89,000/-	iovernment Departments / te Board, No.5, Kamarajar To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn	For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Cl. Pre-qualification with EMD and other one for P Contractors who are in the field of Construction Ir Departments / Government undertakings / Gover Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings / Cl Circle-III, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No. opened at 3.30 PM on the same day in the present SI. No. Name of work/Estimate (1) (2) 1. Construction of 700 tenements (G+4 stor	rice Bid with name of work duly superscribeä dustry and are registered contractors of TNSCB mment / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Go WD and registered as a legal entity in India, by Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600.005 µpto 3.00 e of the Tender Scrutiny Committee and bidders / Approximate Tender Va (Rs. in lakhs) Period of contract (3) ed) adopting TD.09C,	in both covers are invited from eligible under Class-I and above or Governmer remment / Public Sector undertakings the Superintending Engineer, Chenna PM on 13.05.2020 and the same will b their authorised agents Iue) EMD (in Rs.) To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn	r e t i i 2 4 e c 3 E	Approx. Cost of work Earnest	D) Repair to non standa quarters in so SSE/Wo A) 1930855.24 E C) 4993052.97 C (It should be in the for Only. Note :- FDR wo invited on IREPS as p CT/5/1 dated 31.08.20 C A) 38600.00 B	ard out house kitchen, toilet etc of staff orks/Tcamp under ADEN/E-II B) 4987139.35 D) 9493057.77 orm of net banking or payment gateway ill not be accepted as EMD for tender oer Railway Boards letter no 2015//CE-I/ 016). b) 99800.00		
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police said in a statement. Dr Rafi Ahmad Salati,

Medical Superintendent, Sub District Hospital Dooru said the five injured were brought to the hospital. "We have referred three injured to Anantnag hospital for specialised treatment." Earlier, Kashmir Police Zone tweeted that four militants had been killed in the Sunday en-

counter. However, on Monday morning, those posts were deleted, with police later saving in a release that the body of one militant "associate" was recovered from the encounter site.

Classifieds

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public is hereby informed that my clients Sh. Jagdish Lal Chugh s/o Late Sh Ramji Dass Chugh & Smt Varsha Chugh w/o Sh Jagdish La Chugh r/o 9/2214, Ground Floor Street no 10, Kailash Nagar, Delhi-37 being fod wurth dorcgaral behavior Street no 10, Kailash Nagar, Delhi-31 being fed up with derogatory behavior and mal-treatment of their son namely Prateek Chugh and daughter in law Omna Chugh and thus severe/end all their relationship from their son and daughter in law from this day onward and hereby discown their son and daughter in law from their above said property and also from all other movable and immovable for the act of their son and daughter in law. If their son and daughter in son and daughter in law, shall be doing so at his/her own isk/responsibility and my clients shall not be responsibile in any manner.

Praveen Malik, Advocate Ch. No. 646, Lawyers Block, Saket Complex, New Delhi-110017, Mob: 9811937937

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public is hereby nformed that my clients Sh. Sunder informed that my clients Sh. Sunder Lal Chugh S/o Late Sh Ramji Dass Chugh & Smt. Kiran Chugh w/o Sh Sunder Lal Chugh r/o 9/2214, First Floor, Street no 10, Kailash Nagar, Delhi- 31 being fed up with derogatory behavior and mal-treatment of their son namely Nikhil Chugh and thus severe/end all their relationship from their above said property and also from all other movable and immovable property and shall not be responsible for the act of their son. If anybody deals with their son, shall be doing so at his/her own ris/responsibility and iis/her own risk/responsibility and ny clients shall not be responsible any manner.

Praveen Malik, Advocate, Ch. No. 646, Lawyers Block, 10017, Mob: 9811937937

New Delhi

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 **L**EXPLAINED

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

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Why is the death rate higher in some countries than others?

of any disease is measured is by seeing how many deaths it is causing. In the case of COVID-19. which has now infected over 30 lakh people in 185 countries and regions and killed close to 2.1 lakh, this burden has varied widely - countries have reported very different case fatality ratios (CFR), which is the number of deaths divided by the number of confirmed cases.

While many things about the novel coronavirus remain unknown, broadly speaking, CFR depends on three broad factors:

First is the number of people tested. Testing rates have been different in different countries - India continues to be among the countries where testing is widely seen to be inadequate. More aggressive testing identifies more asymptomatic infected persons, and people with milder, less noticeable symptoms. Since CFR relies on the number of confirmed cases (which is a specific number) and not the total number of cases (which can only be an estimate), more testing lowers the ratio.

The second factor is demography. As a general principle, any virus poses a greater threat to those with weaker

ONE OF the ways in which the burden immunities, and a vast majority of deaths from COVID-19 have been of people with co-morbid conditions. Older people are more vulnerable; indeed, the virus has wreaked the greatest havoc in populations that are older.

Finally, the strength and capacity of healthcare systems matter greatly. Countries like Italy or Spain saw their hospitals overwhelmed, and unable to adequately care for the flood of patients. In India, where resources are limited and critical care capacities constrained, the danger from an uncontrolled spread is that much greater.

In absolute numbers, the US caraccounting for nearly a third of all cases. Spain and Italy follow, together In terms of observed CFR, a differ-

ent set of countries leads the chart. According to the Johns Hopkins University coronavirus resource centre dashboard, the highest mortality is in Belgium (15.4%), followed by France (14.1%) and the UK and Italy (13.5% each). The CFR of the US is 5.7%.

Belgium's deaths per 1 lakh population are 62.11, the highest in the world, followed by Spain (49.63), Italy (44.09) and France (34.17).

Assam

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SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER Why rapid tests are off, again

After allowing rapid tests in certain zones, ICMR has asked states to return test kits to suppliers. A look at how such tests work, why states have been demanding it, and how their debate with ICMR has unfolded

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

ON MONDAY, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) put an end to the question of rapid tests when it told the states that the newly procured kits for such tests had failed quality checks and should be returned to the suppliers.

This effectively brings the curtains down on a long conversation on rapid testing between the states and the ICMR, at least for the time being. A look at the tests, how the conversation started and where it stands internationally.

What is a rapid test?

A rapid test essentially is a test that takes less time than the 8-9 hours that the standard RT-PCR test result takes. In the Indian context, a rapid test means the serological tests with kits that India had imported from China, which have now failed quality tests.

The difference between the two procedures is that the RT-PCR test looks to find the virus in nasal or throat swabs of the patient, while the serological test usually looks for antibodies in the blood, which the body develops to fight the virus. Blood has two components, a matrix called plasma and the blood cells. The plasma minus the components of whole blood that cause it to clot, known as serum, is examined in a serological test.

According to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, "Serology tests are blood-based tests that can be used to identify whether people have been exposed to a particular pathogen. Serologybased tests analyze the serum component of whole blood. The serum includes antibodies to specific components of pathogens, called antigens. These antigens are recognized by the immune system as foreign and are targeted by the immune response."

The serological test is faster, taking less than 30 minutes, while the PCR-based test takes up to nine hours. The long wait time is also because the nasal or throat swab is first subjected to a screening test to decide the family of the virus; if that test confirms that it is a coronavirus, then a second test is done to ascertain if it is indeed the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV2.



Blood sample taken in a slum area in Kolkata last week. Since then, ICMR has said newly imported rapid testing kits have failed quality checks. Partha Paul

The Health Ministry as well as the ICMR have reiterated several times that the "gold standard" for diagnosis is RT PCR, and the serological tests should be used only for the purpose of generating epidemiological data or for surveillance in hotspots.

Are there different kinds of rapid tests?

While these commonly look for antibodies developed against the virus, rapid tests (also known as point of care immunodiagnostic tests) can also seek to detect the presence of the virus itself. More specifically, the latter kind of rapid test looks for viral proteins expressed by the SARS-CoV2 virus in a sample taken from the respiratory tract of a person. If the presence of the protein is detected, it is inferred that the virus is present too.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO): "There is another, more common type of rapid diagnostic test marketed for COVID-19; a test that detects the presence of antibodies in the blood of people believed to have been infected with COVID-19. Antibodies are produced over days to weeks after infection with the virus.

The strength of antibody response depends on several factors, including age, nutritional status, severity of disease, and certain medications or infections like HIV that suppress the immune system. In some people with COVID-19, disease confirmed by molecular testing (e.g. reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction: RT-PCR), weak, late or absent antibody responses have been reported."

This is the test kit that India had imported.

What has India's stand on rapid tests been, and how has it evolved?

Kerala was one of the earliest states to announce rapid tests. States like Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh too pushed the ICMR for a direction to follow the "South Korea-China model" of rapid tests, until the ICMR gave in earlier this month. On April 4, the ICMR said rapid tests could be used in areas reporting clusters (containment zones) and in large migration gatherings/evacuees centres.

However, after the kits rolled in from China, complaints started pouring in from the states. On April 21, while asking the states to suspend the tests for a few days pending

field testing, Dr R R Gangakhedkar, head of epidemiology and infectious diseases at the ICMR, said: "We have been getting complaints that when the serological tests are being done on the blood samples of people who have already tested positive in the RT-PCR test, the accuracy ranges from 6% to 71%. This needs to be investigated.'

He added: "This is a first generation test developed in just three-and-a-half months and needs refinement, yet the variations cannot be ignored. We will send personnel from eight institutes to the field to validate the kits. Meanwhile, we have advised the states not to use the tests for the next two days till we come out with an advisory."

What has been the global experience for rapid tests?

Singapore was the first country to use rapid tests, while South Korea has been the standout example. In its containment strategy, South Korea aggressively used mass testing, including with serological kits, to reduce the number of cases. Experts say they used their experience of SARS and MERS to take quick and decisive action. While it is testing that has earned it global praise, it is also a fact that South Korea's success was as much because of its hospital infrastructure that was already ramped up during the earlier outbreaks. Even in Daegu, where the country's 31st patient became an index for some 1,100 contacts, hospitals were clogged but hospitalisation rates remained high.

The WHO has been cautious about rapid testing. In a scientific brief on April 8, it said: "However, before these tests can be recommended, they must be validated in the appropriate populations and settings. Inadequate tests may miss patients with active infection or falsely categorize patients as having the disease when they do not, further hampering disease control efforts. At present, based on current evidence, WHO recommends the use of these new point-of-care immunodiagnostic tests only in research settings. They should not be used in any other setting, including for clinical decision-making, until evidence supporting use for specific indications is available.'

The WHO brief covers rapid tests that detect both the virus and the antibodies developed against it.

In homemade masks, two fabrics better than one

KABIR FIRAQUE NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines two size ranges for droplets through which respiratory infections can be trans-WITH SURGICAL and N95 masks in short mitted - 5-10 microns in diameter (respiratory droplets) and less than 5 microns in diameter (droplet nuclei). One micron is a millionth part of a metre. It is respiratory droplets (the larger size range) that are thought to be the primary route of COVID-19 infection. Airborne trans mission, which is through droplet nuclei (the smaller size range), was not reported in a large study in China, the WHO notes. It says airborne transmission may be possible "in specific circumstances and settings in which procedures... that generate aerosols are performed". The bottom line is that while infection through the smaller droplet nuclei has not been ruled out, the evidence so far is that this virus spreads mainly by latching on to the larger respiratory particles.

HOW FABRICS FILTER PARTICLES



ment. The researchers measured the number and size of particles in the air before and after passing through the fabric.

The best performance was by one layer of tightly woven cotton sheet combined with

INDIA COUNT: 28,380 (886 DEATHS) **REST OF INDIA TOP 10 STATES** Andaman and Nicobar Islands 33 Arunachal Pradesh

2185

ries the greatest burden of COVID-19, accounting for over 14% of global cases.



Union Health Ministry update as of 11 pm, April 27. Some states may have reported higher numbers. Only states/UTs with at least one case listed above. 6362 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

supply, the Health Ministry recently published an advisory on how you can make your own face cover at home. For material, the Indian advisory recommends cotton. while the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend "cloth face coverings" without specifying the fabric.

Now, a study has examined the ability of various materials to keep out respiratory particles - and by extension the novel coronavirus – and identified a combination of two fabrics as possibly the best: either cotton plus natural silk, or cotton plus chiffon. If the fit is good, such homemade masks can effectively keep out aerosol particles, the researchers report in the American Chemical Society's journal ACS Nano.

Why size matters

An aerosol is a suspension of particles or droplets in the air. The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through respiratory droplets, particularly

Testing the fabrics

At the University of Chicago, molecular engineer Supratik Guha and colleagues tested common fabrics, alone and in combination, for their ability to filter out aerosols that are simi-



Cotton acts as a mechanical barrier to particles; silk or chiffon act as an electrostatic barrier. ACS Nano

lar in size to respiratory droplets. They used an aerosol mixing chamber, which produced particles ranging from 10 nanometres to 6 microns in diameter. One nanometre is a billionth part of a metre. For context, 10 nanometres would fall within the WHO definition of droplet nuclei, while 6 microns would qualify a particle as a respiratory droplet.

A fan blew the aerosol across various cloth samples, at an airflow rate corresponding to a person's respiration at rest, the American Chemical Society said in a statetwo layers of chiffon (90 per cent polyester and 10 per cent Spandex). The cotton-chiffon combination filtered out 80-99% of the particles, depending on particle size. This is close to the performance of an N95 mask material, the researchers said.

When the chiffon in the combination was replaced with natural silk or flannel, or when the experiments simply used a cotton quilt (rajai/razai) with cotton-polyester filling, the results were similar, they said.

Why it works

Tightly woven fabrics, such as cotton, can act as a mechanical barrier to particles, the researchers explained. Fabrics that hold a static charge, like certain types of chiffon and natural silk, serve as an electrostatic barrier.

The researchers, however, stressed the importance of a properly fitted mask. Even a 1% gap between the face contours and the mask reduced the filtering efficiency of all masks by half or more.

------ AN EXPERT EXPLAINS -------The number of tests required per day cannot be the same across India



Lee Hilborne

We constantly hear in every country, bar South Korea, that it is not testing enough. What does it really mean?

Testing in this context is generally driven by the need for data to make public health determinations and provide some guidance to individuals wondering if they had immunity. We need to have enough testing as communities - same in US and India - to, with reasonable certainty, understand how many people at any one time are acutely infected, whether or not they have symptoms. Since people without symptoms can spread the infection, it's important to have this insight.

It doesn't mean we need to test everybody all the time, but we need to have a big enough sample to have a reasonable degree of certainty that the numbers are correct. Knowing who is infected will give us better information on the RO (rate of spread), understand the risk at present, and also look at infection as efforts are made to ease social restrictions.

Then we need to know how many people have antibodies, and presumed immunity. This is important to determine when "herd immunity" exists and how far we are from that goal. That number needs to be informed by the RO and rate of transmission because you need a greater number of people immune if the RO is higher. I don't think we will have approached herd immunity until there is an effective vaccine given that the numbers we are seeing now vary from under 10% to just over 20% in the US, depending on the location. Because there is variation by location, that's the reason having the data by geographic area is important.

Are the number of tests per day linked

to determining the date of the opening of the lockdown?

Not the number per se, but the extent to which the number informs us with good probability that there is a reduced risk of continuing to spread the virus. The number of tests per day would be determined by ascertaining statistically the number of people with active infection in a region. In areas where there is more social crowding, the number of people with active infection would need to be lower because each one has a greater risk of transmitting disease due to proximity to others.

So what is that requisite number of tests per day for a country like India with a population of 1.3 billion to decide on opening the lockdown?

As discussed earlier, I don't think it's by India as a whole, but numbers would be different in Mumbai, Delhi, and other large cities. Probably fewer in smaller areas, and those with less risk. I am working with some colleagues now to try and determine

this with greater precision.

RT-PCR and the antibody tests - which of these two is more important for containing the spread of COVID-19?

As I mentioned, both are important because they provide different information. Long term, the antibody test may be more important but during an acute infection, the most important thing to know is who has active disease, and that's the question the RT-PCR test answers. The need to know who has the infection in the population, even if asymptomatic, means we should be examining presumed healthy individuals, not just those that are sick.

Based on the test results that you have seen and analysed, what are the big things that have registered with you?

We know that the positivity rates we see underestimate the true infection because what is reported are those that test positive and negative. But because many who might have mild symptoms don't get tested,

that information is very biased. Similarly, the mortality rate is overstated because the denominator includes just those tested. Also, because collection is not perfect, there are some people with the infection who may have a negative RT-PCR test. For the antibody test, I think it supports the notion mentioned above - because the prevalence of antibodies is considerably greater, even though still low, than would be suggested by those who have positive results.

What is the problem with antibody test kits? There seem to be all kinds of reports about the unreliability of these tests.

This is a Buyer Beware situation. There are reliable tests on the market and there are unreliable or "junk" tests. I don't want to speculate on the motivation for putting out lousy tests. Normally when we bring a test to market, there are strict evaluations that come first. Because of the emergency there was a relaxation of those requirements. It does suggest that a reasonable amount of oversight is in the best interest of the public

to protect us all from dangerous tests, the same as for drugs and medical devices.

Is the problem with the test kits imported from China?

Again, it's not that the products are made in China – but rather whether they are made properly with the right amount of quality control, production standards and consistency. Because many of the initial tests were developed in China, some were good and some were bad. Purchasers should make sure that their vendors have recognised good manufacturing practices.

(Dr Lee Hilborne is Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at David Geffen School of Medicine at University of California-Los Angeles, and Medical Director of Quest Diagnostics at Southern California. He was formerly president of the American Society for Clinical Pathology, and a member of US CDC's Clinical Laboratory Improvement Advisory Committee. He spoke to Sushant Singh)

New Delhi



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 12 THE OUTBREAK THE WORLD

INDIAN-AMERICAN MADE US ENVOY TO OECD US President Donald Trump has nominated senior Indian-American diplomat Manisha Singh as America's next envoy to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Singh, 49, is currently Assistant Secretary of State for Economic

and Business Affairs at the State Department

WATCH Boris back at work, warns against relaxing virus restrictions too soon

Imran Khan

PAKISTAN Imran changes

media team amid criticism

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday changed his media team for the second time since coming to power in 2018 amid mounting criticism of his government for failing to address the key issues of the country. Prime Minister Khan appointed Senator Shibli Faraz as the new information minister of the country. Faraz is the son of eminent Urdu poet late Ahmad Faraz. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) for information and broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan was also removed and was replaced by former military spokesman Lt Gen (retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa.

ADITI KHANNA LONDON, APRIL 27

PRIME MINISTER Boris Johnson on Monday warned against re-

laxing the coronavirus restrictions too soon as the country was still facing a moment of "maximum risk", in his first remarks since returning to work after contracting the disease that has killed over 20,000 in the UK.

While declaring that the tide is being turned on the coronavirus pandemic in the country, he urged the British public to contain their impatience against the crippling lockdown.

'We are beginning to turn the tide...There are real signs we are passing through the peak," said Johnson, in an upbeat address to the nation on the steps of 10 Downing Street.

"I ask you to contain your impatience because I believe now we are coming to the end of the first phase of this conflict," he said, promising "maximum transparency" on the decisions to be taken as the UK enters phase two of the Covid-19 fightback, which will involve one by one firing up the "economic engines" of the UK economy.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson speaks outside 10 Downing Street on Monday. Reuters

infections.

Johnson said the UK has "so far collectively shielded our National Health Service" and "flattened the peak" - but he could not yet say when or which restrictions would be lifted. Iohnson wanted to send out

a clear message that this is the moment of "maximum risk", making it imperative that no steps can be taken to ease up And comparing the fight to

someone being attacked, he noted: "If this virus were a physical assailant, an unexpected and invisible mugger - which I can tell vou from personal experience, it is - then this is the moment when we have begun together to wrestle it to the floor. "And so it follows that this is the moment of opportunity,

can press home our advantage, it is also the moment of maximum risk.

"I know there will be many people looking at our apparent success, and beginning to wonder whether now is the time to go easy on those social distancing measures...I entirely share your urgency, it's the government's urgency and yet we must also recognise the risk of a second spike." PTI



mosques in areas free of coronavirus

REUTERS LONDON, APRIL 27

IRAN PLANS to reopen mosques in parts of the country that have been consistently free of the coronavirus outbreak as restrictions on Iranians gradually ease, President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday.

Iran, one of the Middle Eastern countries hardest hit by the pandemic, will be divided up into white, yellow and red regions based on the number of in-AGENCIES fections and deaths, Rouhani

In US, conflicting messages stoke confusion in states

NEW YORK TIMES NEW YORK, APRIL 27

China targets US response

Beijing: China is fighting back against calls for an in-

vestigation into its role in

the global pandemic, cit-

ing faults with the US re-

sponse to the outbreak

and calling for Washington

respond to people's con-

cern from the U.S. and the

international community.

Perhaps the World Health

Organisation can also be

invited in to assist in the in-

vestigation," Foreign

Ministry spokesman Geng

The Xinhua News

Shuang said on Monday.

Agency also ran a com-

mentary accusing US

Republicans of seeking to

gain political points by at-

tacking China. AP

"We hope the U.S. will

itself to admit error.

AS SEVERAL states moved ahead with plans to tentatively restart their economies, many Americans were confronted with yet another new calculation on Monday. After weeks of being told to simply stay home, they would now have to decide how to make sense of conflicting messages from local politicians and public health officials.

Dr Deborah L Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, cautioned that Americans should expect some form of social-distancing guidelines to continue for months.

"Social distancing will be with us through the summer," she said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press." Her comments came after Vice President Mike Pence suggested that the coronavirus epidemic would be under control

the country, the pressure to

ease restrictions will only grow

as the economic pain deepens,

"I think by Memorial Day restlessness grows and spring Weekend we will largely have turns to summer. this coronavirus epidemic behind us," he said late last week. While states and localities face different challenges across

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo of New York laid out a broad outline on Sunday for a gradual restart of the state that would allow some "low risk" businesses upstate to reopen as soon as mid-May.



Anti-shutdown protesters in San Diego. AP

Pelosi endorses Joe Biden for president



THAILAND Lowest number of cases in past six weeks

Bangkok: Thai health authorities on Monday reported the country's lowest number of new cases of the coronavirus in more than six weeks, as the government considers easing some restrictions imposed to control the spread of the virus. Nine new confirmed cases were reported, the smallest single-day increase since March 14. Thailand has confirmed 2,931 cases, including 52 deaths. Officials said a proposal will be submitted to the Cabinet on Tuesday for easing restrictions.





CHINA TO FOCUS ON HIGH-RISK GROUPS

Medical workers collect swabs from high school teachers for tests at a school in Hubei province, China, on Monday. China

NZ has won battle against transmission: PM

will focus testing on high-risk groups such as people from infected areas or with symptoms, a top official said. Reuters

U.K. SAYS IT WON'T EXTEND E.U. TALKS DESPITE OUTBREAK

THE BRITISH govt insisted Monday it won't extend the deadline for striking a post-Brexit deal with the European Union, despite the upheaval due to Covid

CABINET OFFICE

Minister Michael Gove said 'it is still entirely possible' to seal an agreement by the December 31 deadline

THE EU is considerably more pessimistic. Michel Barnier, chief negotiator, called a round of talks last week 'disappointing'

BARNIER ACCUSED the UK of refusing to 'engage seriously' on fundamental issues.

by the end of May.

SINGAPORE

Tally crosses 14,000 after 799 new cases

Singapore: Singapore's coronavirus tally reached 14,423 on Monday after 799 new cases were reported with majority of them being foreign workers, including Indians, residing in dormitories, which have emerged as the hotspots for the transmission of the disease in the country. Releasing the latest figures, the Ministry of Health said that the vast majority of cases are work permit holders residing in foreign workers' dormitories. Fourteen of the latest cases are Singaporeans or permanent residents (foreigners)

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WELLINGTON, APRIL 27

PRIME MINISTER Jacinda Ardern on Monday claimed New Zealand had scored a significant victory against the spread of the coronavirus, as the country began a phased exit from lockdown.

There is no widespread, undetected community transmission in New Zealand," Ardern declared. "We have won that battle." After nearly five weeks at the maximum Level Four restrictions with only essential services operating – the country will move to Level Three late on Monday. That will allow some businesses, takeaway food outlets



Jacinda Ardern

and schools to reopen.

But Ardern warned there was no certainty about when all transmission can be eliminated, allowing a return to normal life. Everyone wants to "bring

back the social contact that we all miss", she said, "but to do it confidently we need to move



Strict curbs, widespread testing credited for progress

STRICT MEASURES implemented early into the pandemic's timeline played a key role in helping New Zealand contain the outbreak. The country began quarantining all incoming travellers starting March 14 (then among the toughest measures). It began locking down on March 23 and implemented its toughest "level 4" lockdown on March 25. Experts said widespread tenting also played a key role, with the country reportedly having one of the highest testing rates per capita in the world.

slowly and we need to move cautiously.

"I will not risk the gains we've made in the health of New Zealanders. So if we need to remain at Level Three, we will."

The easing of restrictions came as New Zealand, a nation of five million people, reported only one new case of COVID-19 in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 1,122 with 19 deaths.

OTHER TOP GLOBAL STORIES

said, according to the presi-NEW YORK, APRIL 27 dency's website.

Activities in each region will be restricted accordingly, so an area that has been consistently free of infections or deaths will be labelled white and mosques could be reopened and Friday prayers resumed, Rouhani said.

He said the label given to any region in the Islamic Republic could change and he did not specify when the colour-coding programme would come into force.

Deputy Health Minister Irai Harirchi said in an interview with state TV on Sunday that 116 counties in the country could be considered white at the moment and 134 yellow.

Iranians have returned to shops, bazaars and parks over the past week as the country eases coronavirus restrictions, with the daily increase in the death toll below 100 since April 14. The toll rose by 60 over the past 24 hours to 5,710.

NANCY PELOSI, the speaker of the House, endorsed Joseph R Biden Jr on Monday as the Democratic Party continued to coalesce around its presumptive presidential nominee.

In a video released on Monday morning, Pelosi drew on her years of working with Biden behind the scenes on legislation when he was Obama's vice president, describing Biden as "a leader with the humility to seek expertise and science, and the confidence to act upon it."

Meanwhile, Indian-American Congress- woman Pramila Jayapal endorsed Biden's 2020 White House bid, saying he is a dedicated public servant with the ability to unite Americans. Jayapal is the first Indian-American woman to be elected to the US

House of Representatives. "He(Trump) and his administration have demonstrated repeatedly – and most recently in

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi



their disastrous response to COVID-19 - an inability to govern, make tough decisions, speak the truth and unite the country in common purpose. Any progress toward a better future requires defeating him this November," she said.

He found one of Stalin's mass graves, now he's in jail

ANDREW HIGGINS SANDARMOKH (RUSSIA), APRIL 27

THE DAY began, like many others in her childhood years, with hours of tramping through an insect-infested forest with the family dog while her eccentric father, Yuri Dmitriev, wandered off to hunt in vain for corpses buried among the trees.

On that day more than 20 years ago, however, Dmitriev, an amateur but very determined historian, finally found the gruesome prize he had long been searching for – burial mounds containing the remains of political prisoners executed by Stalin's secret police.

"Everything started here," said Dmitriev's 35-year-old daughter, Katerina Klodt, during



The forest at Sandarmokh in Russia where thousands of victims of Stalin were executed. NYT

a recent visit to the forest at Sandarmokh. "My dad's work has clearly made some people very uncomfortable.'

friends and supporters dismiss as blatantly fabricated charges of pedophilia, an accusation that has frequently been used to discredit and silence voices the

Russian authorities do not like.

Dmitriev is now in jail, awaiting trial on what his family,

plained last year that the jailed historian's life work - the commemoration of Stalin's victims at Sandarmokh forest - had created an "unfounded sense of guilt" and

the work of foreigners, not just the Soviet secret police.

Sponsored by the Military Historical Society, a state-funded organisation notorious for its nationalist take on Russian history, the diggers were looking for evidence to support a highly contested theory put forward by two Karelia historians. They argue that the thousands of people buried at Sandarmokh are not all Stalin's victims but also include Soviet soldiers executed by the Finnish Army during World War II.

With the 75th anniversary on May 9 of the Red Army's victory over Nazi Germany and its allies like Finland, the suffering inflicted on Russia by its own rulers has become an unwanted distraction from memories of the country's immense wartime sacrifice against foreign enemies.

President Vladimir V Putin and is besieged by external foes, want them focused on crimes committed by foreign aggressors.

Dmitriev, meanwhile, has

been sitting in a pretrial detention centre in Petrozavodsk, the capital of Karelia. Late last month, a municipal court – sealed off to visitors because of the coronavirus - extended his detention for another three months.

Klodt said she had no doubt about her father's innocence and blamed his travails on his stubborn insistence that all victims be remembered, not just those killed by foreigners. Sitting on a bench near a tree pinned with an American flag commemorating a man from San Francisco executed in Stalin's Great Terror, she pointed with disgust at a snow-covered hole dug by the Military Historical Society as part of its search for Russians killed by Finland.

"I am so tired of this circus." she said. "I don't understand what they are trying to prove." NYT

New Delhi

Rumours of Kim Jong Un health untrue: South Korea

ASSOCIATED PRESS SEOUL. APRIL 27

SOUTH KOREA'S government has dismissed rumours that

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is in fragile condition, as speculation about his health intensifies amid the North's silence on his whereabouts

There are concerns, particularly in Seoul and Washington, about what would happen to North Korea and its nuclear programme if anything had actually happened to Kim.

For South Korea and the US, Kim's absence would mean the departure of a man they've dealt with over the past two years to try to achieve the North's denuclearisation, though talks have

fidently say that there are no unusual developments" in rival North Korea that would back up speculation about Kim's health, his ministry said on Monday. On Monday, North Korea's state TV broadcast said Kim sent

Unification Minister Kim

Yeon-chul told a closed-door fo-

rum in Seoul that South Korea

has "enough intelligence to con-

stalled in recent months.

his thanks to workers and officials at a tourist resort construction site on the east coast. The unification minister's

comments are a reiteration of earlier South Korean statements that Kim Jong Un appeared to be handling state affairs normally and that no unusual activities had been detected in North Korea.

his officials do not deny the horrors of the Stalin era, but intent on convincing Russians their country





An official in Karelia com-

ouflage uniforms visited the same forest last summer to do their own digging, uncovering the remains of 16 corpses that they hope will prove that the killing at Sandarmokh was, at least in part,

SILVER

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Crisil lowers

growth forecast

Mumbai: Rating agency Crisil

on Monday nearly halved its

GDP forecast for India to 1.8

per cent for 2020-21 while

projecting total losses of Rs

10 lakh crore or Rs 7,000 per

person due to "disastrous"

lockdowns to control COVID-

19 pandemic. The agency

had a GDP growth estimate

of 6 per cent for FY21, which

was last revised to 3.5 per

cash reserve ratio by 100 bps to 3

per cent and a targeted long term

repo operations (TLTRO) worth Rs

1 lakh crore, it said the steps were

focussed on easing the tight mon-

etary conditions building up in the

economy but the financial market

repo rate and capital market in-

struments, such as benchmark G-

sec, AAA corporate bond, com-

mercial paper of NBFCs, which

were either flat or declining since

the beginning of March 2020, started inching up after 13 March

2020. The spread rose abruptly in

the range of 50-80 bps on the next

day of RBI's Monetary Policy state-

ment and have remained there-

about since then. It is due to this

kind of risk aversion that deploy-

ment of TLTRO funds so far has

largely been into the bonds issued

by public sector entities and large

rounding the pandemic, the

agency expects the risk aversion

to continue, saying that the funds

available under TLTRO 2.0 may

also not flow to the targeted seg-

ment i.e. investment-grade bonds,

commercial papers, and non-con-

vertible debentures of NBFCs,

Given the uncertainty sur-

corporates," Sinha said.

... the spread between the

reacted otherwise.

cent in late March. PTI

by half to 1.8%

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 3 ECONOMY

SENSEX: 31,743.08 ▲ 415.86 NIFTY: 9,282.30 ▼ 127.90 NIKKEI: 19,783.22 ▲ 521.22 HANG SENG: 24,280.14 ▲ 448.81 FTSE: 5,850.44 ▲ 98.21 DAX: 10,606.92 ▲ 270.83

DIVESTMENT WATCH-**OIL MARKETING COMPANIES**

Sliding crude prices, struggling global energy cos deter govt's **BPCL stake sale plan**

EXPLAINED

Adequate

take time

financial stress.

valuation may

SLUMP IN crude oil prices

may create fresh challenges

for privatisation of BPCL as

refineries and oil companies

across the world are facing

Despite the fall in oil

prices, leading analysts ex-

the medium term. Also,

pect demand to decline over

many refineries globally are

prices make exploration of

filing for bankruptcies as low

SUNNY VERMA& **KARUNJIT SINGH** NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE CENTRE'S plans to sell its entire stake in BPCL are expected to face hurdles as the unprecedented slump in global crude prices may deter international interest in the state-owned energy major in the near term, as per a senior government official and sources in the energy industry. The government may have to wait longer for bids at an attractive valuation as major international energy players are battling the financial stress caused by disruption in the crude oil market.

Industry sources said many refining companies globally have filed for bankruptcies recently, creating a negative spiral for energy assets. Since January, a total of 10 companies, including Whiting Petroleum and Echo Energy Partners in the US, have filed for bankruptcies. As prices of crude fall, domestic oil marketing companies (OMCs) such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) typically tend to benefit from it. But this is the first time that despite oil prices hitting new lows, OMCs had to shut their refining plants and lower their capacity due to the nationwide coronavirus-induced lockdown. This is the first time that refineries in India are running at low capacity of 25-30 per cent, industry sources said.

Shutting down of refineries is a big challenge as costs of restarting them rises significantly. On April 12, the

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies agreed to reduce production by 9.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in May and June -

nearly 10 per cent of global supply. However, even this could not stop further fall in oil prices due to the demand collapse, with the International ergy Agen v projecting demand to shrink by 29 million bpd this month alone. This has created a tough scenario for BPCL's stake sale to go through at an attractive price in medium term. An analyst at a leading brokerage firm, who wished to remain anonymous, said "the government would likely want to wait for the valuation to improve," adding that major global upstream players, such as Saudi Aramco, who were thought to be interested in purchasing a stake in BPCL would have to cut capital expenditure and acquisition targets, given the impact on their businesses from the fall in crude prices Steep fall in demand means the valuation for BPCL would remain depressed for some time. "Even when demand recovers, I don't think refining margin will recover

'NO DECISION ON MONETISING PART OF THE FISCAL DEFICIT' Going beyond 3.5% fiscal deficit target 'unavoidable': RBI Governor

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAL APRIL 27

RESERVE BANK Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said meeting the fiscal deficit target in FY21 is going to be challenging and the central bank has not yet made a decision on its monetisation. While several economists and former top officials of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have suggested the government overshooting its fiscal deficit target due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown, Das said that going beyond the 3.5 per cent target for fis-

cal deficit for the current fiscal year becomes "unavoidable" "We will deal with it keeping

the need to preserve the strength of the RBI's balance sheet, and most importantly, the goal of macroeconomic stability, our primary mandate," Das said in an interview to Cogencis.

When asked whether the RBI would monetise part of the fiscal deficit through private placement

in view the operational realities,

oil and gas unviable. Given that BPCL will be a sort of a model case of privatisation, the government may have to wait to get adequate valuation for its stake sale.

soon," he said.

Shares of BPCL fell nearly 55 per cent from the high of Rs 549 on November 21, 2019 to Rs 253 on March 23, 2020 as the lockdown led to a crash in stock markets. It has since recovered to the Rs 350-level per share, still 36 per cent lower from November highs.

The Centre, last month, invited expressions of interest (EOIs) from interested parties with a net worth of at least \$10 billion for the strategic sale of BPCL – one of the largest oil marketing and oil refining companies in India with a refining capacity of 38.3 million metric tonnes per annum or about 15 per cent of the coun-

400

try's total refining capacity. Divestment of the government's 52.98 per cent equity stake in BPCL forms a key part of its Rs 2.1-lakh crore disinvestment target for FY21. Finance Ministry officials did not reply to queries seeking comment for this story. "The valuation for BPCL will be lower due to the current situation and this has partially been reflected in the stock prices. Earnings for BPCL in Q1 would definitely be impacted by lower marketing volumes," said Mayur Matani, equity analyst at ICICI securities, adding that once economic activity recovers, BPCL would do well on the marketing front as its marketing margins would benefit from low crude oil prices. "Even if crude oil prices touch \$30-\$40 per barrel, it is a very good scenario for the marketing business (once demand picks up). So, in the near term, there will be some pain. Nobody who is willing to invest right now is actually looking for results in the next six months," he said.

US WTI crude plunges 18%,

when entering the chakravyuh"

Das also allayed fears that the central bank would resort to withdrawing accommodation quickly. "To ensure the markets don't read me differently and think that RBI is going on a tightening mode, let me make it very clear: the exit has to be well-timed, when you are confident that things are working

and near normal." he said. He said the RBI is ready to take more measures to improve flow of credit to small non-bank financial companies (NBFC) and microfinance institutions (MFIs). The MFIs is still there, the RBI chief said. "That is an issue that is very much on our table. We will take further measures as necessary to address that challenge."

The Reserve Bank had finetuned the targeted long-term repo operations (TLTRO) and announced 'TLTRO 2.0' aimed at directing funds to NBFCs through banks. However, the first TLTRO 2.0 saw demand for just about half of Rs 25,000 crore on offer. The RBI was aware that the demand may not be as good as other repo operations, despite some additional incentives, Das said. "We had a sense that the response may not be as good as TLTRO despite the additional incentives such as exemption from being reckoned as adjusted net bank credit."

"The auction results convey a telling message, which is that the banks are not willing to take on credit risk in their balance sheets beyond a point. We are reviewing the whole situation and based on that, we would decide on our approach." he said.

ROBUST INVESTMENTS OVER LONG TERM: Though challenging in the short term, it is expected to remain robust over the longer term

Challenges for cross-border VC investment: Travel and movement

Inability to conduct face-to-face meetings

Source:

\$6 billion: Inflow of VC investments into the

Asset quality could come under stress, says

Ind-Ra: FY21 growth to hit 29-yr low of 1.9%, slip into negative territory if lockdown extended

 \bigcirc

OIL

§26.15

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

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

₹

RUPEE

Ra) has cut the country's FY21

from end-June 2020, GDP growth

and non-tax revenue due to lockdown and slowdown, along with the need to provide fiscal stimulus, will "destabilise the fiscal arithmetic of both union and state governments", Ind-Ra said. "Even without any significant fiscal stimulus, Ind-Ra expects fiscal deficit of the government to escalate to 4.4 per cent of GDP in FY21 (FY21 Budget Estimate: 3.5 per cent of GDP) and a stimulus package of INR4 trillion would push it to 6.0

that GDP may come back to the January-March FY20 level only by October-December FY21, due to resumption of normal economic activities during July-September FY21 and festive demand during October-December FY21.

On the recent measures taken by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) that included a cut in reporate by 75 basis points (bps), cut in the



International firms and corporates, which contribute a major amount of VC to India, waited in the March quarter to see how COVID-19 affects them, thus deferring many VC deals

FPIs continue to be sellers as markets rise

'VC inflows tumble to just \$2.2 bn in Mar quarter'

Hit by coronavirus-driven uncertainties, VC investments in the country plunged to a meagre \$2.2 billion in the March 2020 quarter, a KPMG report said

"The mantra of coming out of the chakravyuh has to also be thought through very carefully and be factored in

SHAKTIKANTA DAS GOVERNOR, RBI

the hard-to-exit battle formation

challenge of ensuring flows to

from the epic Mahabharata.

mid- and small-sized NBFCs and

GOLD

₹41,705

INDIA RATINGS & Research (Ind-

growth forecast to a 29-year low of 1.9 per cent from 3.6 per cent estimated earlier, assuming that the partial lockdown to counter the COVID-19 pandemic will continue till mid-May. In case the lockdown continues beyond that, Ind-Ra then expects gross domestic product (GDP) growth to slip into negative territory, contracting to a 41-year low of 2.1 per cent. "... if the lockdown continues beyond mid-May 2020 and a gradual recovery takes root only

may slip further to negative 2.1 per cent, lowest in the last 41 years and only the sixth instance of contraction since FY52," Sunil Kumar Sinha, principal economist, Ind-Ra said. Many global and domestic research agencies have already cut India's growth forecast for this fiscal. The IMF expects the Indian economy to grow 1.9 per cent, while the World Bank has made a projection of 1.5-2.8 per cent.

On the fiscal front, lower tax per cent of GDP."

The agency, in its report, said

with at least 50 per cent of the total amount going to small and mid-sized NBFCs and microfinance institutions.

O4 RESULTS



Major fundraises recorded in

March quarter: \$400 million by Byju's \$110 million by Unacademy ■ \$150 million by mobility firm

Bounce Likely hot sectors of venture capitalists:

edutech

country — a record — during the December 2019 quarter

Education technology, or

Auto-tech

fitness

restrictions

in-person due diligence and

KPMG/PTI

venture capital (VC) investments may be

Health-tech related to



of bonds or issuance of any speci-

fic pandemic bonds, Das said, "We

have not taken any view on the

subject. When the time comes, we

will take a judicious and balanced

view, keeping in mind the param-

the impact of the pandemic, Das

pointed out that it was as impor-

tant to make plans for exiting the

extraordinary measures that are

undertaken in response to a situ-

ation. "The mantra of coming out

of the 'chakravyuh' has to also be

thought through very carefully

and be factored in when entering

the 'chakravyuh'," he said, citing

Talking about steps to combat

eters I set out earlier.'

SLOW DEAL FLOW IN Q2:

on liquidity boost to MFs IndusInd Bank MD-CEO continued to sell but the extent of **ENSECONOMIC BUREAU** selling has reduced and the net MUMBAI, APRIL 27 outflow till April 27 is at \$408.6 million. This, some market ex-FOREIGN PORTFOLIO investors perts said, may suggest that FPIs (FPIs) continued to remain sellers still believe in India's consump-

in domestic equity markets, even tion story. Other experts believe the conas the benchmarks rose on Monday on the back of the tinued selling in emerging mar-Reserve Bank's announcement of kets is because investors want to a Rs 50,000-crore liquidity suppile up on cash due to the on-goport for mutual funds and in aning pandemic. The F&O segment ticipation of a fiscal package. The recorded a turnover of Rs 7.15 lakh Sensex ended the day 415.86 crore against the six-month averpoints, or 1.33 per cent, higher to age of Rs 14.42 lakh crore. The close at 31,743.08. The Nifty50 cash market turnover stood at Rs closed 127.9 points, or 1.40 per 45,740.8 crore against the sixcent, higher to settle at 9,282.3. month average of Rs 39,134 crore. Meanwhile, the rupee appre-

According to provisional data, FPIs sold equities worth \$120.3 ciated by 21 paise to close at 76.25 million. Domestic institutional inagainst the US dollar on Monday. vestors (DIIs) bought equities tracking positive domestic equiworth \$150.02 million. They were ties and weakening of the large sellers in March, pulling out American currency in the over-\$8.3 billion. In April, FPIs have seas market. FE WITH PTI

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 27

> INDUSIND BANK could see asset quality deteriorate as a result of the disruption to the economy after the COVID-19 outbreak, MD and CEO Sumant Kathpalia said Monday. Speaking to the media in his first post-results interaction, Kathpalia indicated the private sector lender's credit costs could go up to as much as 180 basis points (bps); in a business-asusual scenario, the lender's credit cost would have ranged around 120-130 bps, he said.

Kathpalia said offering projections on loan growth, at this juncture, would be incorrect, "I somehow think all of us are in this situation of perfecting our balance sheet and making sure our collections are on track and our

The bank's net profit fell 16% year-on-year to **₹302 crore in the March** quarter as a result of

portfolio remains as an asset. We are not seeing any high delinquencies."

higher provisions

IndusInd Bank's net profit fell 16 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) to Rs 302 crore in the March quarter as a result of higher provisions. Its net interest income increased 45 per cent y-o-y to Rs 3,231 crore and net interest margin increased 10 bps sequentially to 4.25 per cent. Total advances grew 11 per cent v-o-v to Rs 2.07 lakh crore as on March 31, 2020 and total deposits rose 4 per cent y-o-y to Rs 2.02 lakh crore. FE

'UAE tells banks to

REUTERS DUBAI, APRIL 27

UNITED ARAB Emirates lenders have been told by the central bank to freeze the accounts of NMC Health shareholder BR Shetty and his family, three sources with mid-1970s and has become the largest private healthcare provider

Its shares, which NMC plans to delist in London, were suspended after more than halving in value since December, when shortseller Muddy Waters questioned

The UAE freezing directive, which was issued by the central

HDFC Life | Adani Power profit slips 14.3% to ₹312 cr

Mumbai: HDFC Life on Monday reported a 14.3 per cent decline in its net profit at Rs 311.71 crore in the March guarter due to fall in investment income. In the year ago period, the private sector life insurer had reported a profit after

tax of Rs 364.01 crore. The investment income fell to negative Rs 10,229.92 crore in the quarter as against an income of Rs 3,755.6 crore in the year-ago period. For FY20. profit remained flat at Rs 1,295 crore. HDFC Life's new business premium grew 15 per cent to Rs 17,239 crore in FY20 as against Rs 14,971 crore in 2018-19.

"We believe that insurance remains a multi-decade opportunity with significant potential," the company's managing director and chief executive officer Vibha Padalkar said. PTI

Sebi reduces filing charges for draft papers, broker turnover fees

Mumbai: In order to help market participants tide over the current situation due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) announced reduction in broker turnover fees.

At the same time, the market regulator also announced reduction in filing fees on offer documents for public issues, rights issues and buyback of shares.

Sebi in its circular on Monday stated that benefits of reduction in broker turnover fees will automatically be passed to the investors as well. The broker turnover fee will be reduced to 50 per cent of the existing fee structure for the period June 2020 to March 2021. **FE**

reports loss of ₹1,312.86 crore

New Delhi: Adani Power Monday reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 1,312.86 crore for the quarter ended March 31, mainly due higher operating cost.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 634.64 crore in the year-ago quarter, Adani Power said in a BSE filing. Its total income slipped to Rs 6,327.57 crore in the quarter from Rs 8,077.89 crore in the year-ago period. Total expenses in March quarter stood at Rs 7,980.17 crore as compared to Rs 8,162.01 crore in same period of 2018-19.

An official said that the loss is mainly due to rise in operational costs in the quarter and entire fiscal. The company's consolidated net loss stood at Rs 2,274.77 crore in 2019-20 compared to Rs 984.40 crore loss in 2018-19. PTI

BRIEFLY – Deferral of GST, **GAAR** reporting

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department on Monday deferred for the third time the requirement for companies to include in their I-T audit report the details of the GST and GAAR.

Lawsuitagainst WiproinUS

Washington: A group of five former employees of Wipro in the United States has filed a class action lawsuit accusing the Indian IT company of "employment discrimination" against individuals who are not South Asian and who are not of Indian origin. Wipro, headquartered in Bengaluru, has over 14,000 employees in the US. PTI

Brent hovers near \$20 a barrel BRENT CRUDE hovered around \$20 a barrel and US crude plunged

18 per cent on Monday, driven lower by skittish investors fleeing the US benchmark due to lack of available storage to deal with a COVID-19-induced collapse in demand. Even as governments worldwide are taking tentative steps to lower restriction on movement to help economies rebound, fuel demand remains weak.

REUTERS

NEW YORK, APRIL 27

US West Texas Intermediate crude futures fell \$3.14, or 18.5 per cent, to \$13.80 a barrel by 1742 GMT. Brent crude slid \$1.40, or 6.5 per cent, to \$20.04 a barrel.

Meanwhile, global stock markets rose on Monday as investors cheered news that more countries and US states were looking to ease



A guard stands next to a money changer in Tokyo, Japan. The Bank of Japan, on Monday, announced expansion of its stimulus program. Reuters

lockdowns and the Bank of Japan expanded its stimulus program, while the price of oil continued to crumble as storage runs out. The Dow Jones Industrial

Average rose 1.21 per cent to 24,063.47, the S&P 500 gained

1.36 per cent to reach 2,875.31 and the Nasdaq Composite added or

1.2 per cent to settle at 8,738.51. The pan-European STOXX 600 index rose 1.77 per cent and MSCI's gauge of stocks across the globe gained 1.64 per cent.

SP Infra to sell 317-MW solar assets to KKR for ₹1,554 crore

New Delhi: Infrastructure devel-Pallonji oper Shapoorji Infrastructure Capital (SPInfra) on Monday announced a Rs 1.554crore deal with global investment firm KKR to sell five solar assets with a total capacity of 317 megawatts.

According to a company statement portfolio comprises 169 megawatts (MW) in Maharashtra and 148 MW in Tamil Nadu.

The SP Infra has the signed definitive agreements with KKR, under which the company will sell five operational solar energy assets to KKR for a total consideration of Rs 1,554 crore (\$204 million), the company said.

More details of the investment have not been disclosed. The transaction is subject to customary approvals. **PTI**

freeze accounts of NMC founder Shetty, others'

eral former executives including ex-CEO Prasanth Manghat and his family, two of sources said.

knowledge of the matter said. NMC, founded by Shetty in the

in the UAE, was placed into administration this month.

its financial reporting.

this month

the UAE, was placed into administration

bank last week, extends to two other NMC shareholders, Khalifa al-Muhairi and Saeed Mohamed Butti Mohamed al-Oebaisi, the sources, who had seen the order,

NMC, founded by BR

Shetty in the mid-1970s

and the largest private

healthcare provider in

told Reuters. The directive also calls for the

freezing of bank accounts of sev-

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020 14 SPORT



From my point of view, I'm very pessimistic that the circuit can resume a normal activity. In tennis, you need to travel every week, stay in hotels, go to different countries."

RAFAEL NADAL

Ombudsman wants administrator

Citing 'financial irregularities and wilful contempt' in DDCA, he asks Delhi High Court to supersede Apex Council

NIHALKOSHIE NEW DELHI, APRIL 27

THE DELHI and District Cricket Association's (DDCA) ombudsman Justice (retired) Deepak Verma has asked for the appointment of an administrator to run the conflict-ridden state unit, citing financial irregularities and wilful contempt of orders passed by him and the court.

In his letter to the Delhi High Court, the ombudsman said the administrator, once appointed, would supersede the DDCA's Apex Council. Members of the council and the ombudsman have been at loggerheads over the debarring of four officials and the status of the state cricket unit's standing counsel.

"It is for everyone's information that owing to the current mess and the situation created in DDCA including but not limited to financial irregularities and wilful contempt of Orders passed by Ombudsman and High Court, I have made a reference to the Hon'ble Delhi High Court to intervene in the affairs of DDCA. I have further requested the High Court that present Apex Council be superseded and an Administrator be appointed (whosoever the High Court deems fit)," he wrote.

The state body has been in the news for the wrong reasons after it came to light last week that its general secretary Vinod Tihara has been jailed since mid-March. Tihara was arrested by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence for allegedly violating GST norms and was lodged in a Meerut jail. The constant squabbling between members has resulted in DDCA's legal bills running into crores of rupees, while coaches and other support staff remain unpaid for the previous cricket season. The move by the ombudsman to request the high court to put an administrator in charge comes after weeks of differences between Justice Verma and apex council members, who have accused him of passing 'one-sided orders' and 'failing to recognise resolutions passed by a majority'.

In March, Justice Verma had order a forensic audit of the DDCA for the past five years after a tender worth Rs 6.5 crore was awarded to a contractor for modernisation of the bar, restaurant, member's lounge and cricket library. He took the decision when he received no response from Apex Council members after he asked them to submit all documents related to MSL Jangid JV, the contractor. A direc-



For several years, DDCA has never been far from scandals and squabbles. The above picture was taken during a protest against the then DDCA administrators in 2009. File

tor and member of the infrastructure committee visited the given address of the contractor in Noida and claimed that no such company existed at the site. He also informed the ombudsman of the same. "I would like to point out that since the complaints were primarily made against the agreement (between DDCA and MSLJangid JV), it would be proper to conduct the forensic audit in relation to the said agreement first, followed by detailed and comprehensive audit of the entire DDCA," the ombudsman said in an order dated March 20.

Justice Verma also stated that a copy of his letter to the Delhi High Court, asking for an administrator to be appointed, was submitted to standing counsel Gautam Dutta so that he could present the hard copy to the high court. The court has listed May 1 as the date to consider the ombudsman request.

Dutta said: "The Hon'ble Ombudsman has issued a reference to Hon'ble Chief Justice, Delhi High Court to dissolve the Apex Council

and appoint an Administrator at DDCA, given the situation at DDCA. It was listed today before HC. The judge recused. Now to be listed on 1 May before the parent bench which had passed the status quo orders on 13.03.2020."

The continuation of Dutta as the standing counsel has been a bone of contention as the Apex Council had removed him from his post earlier this month and claimed it to be a majority decision.

Members debarred

However, on April 15, the ombudsman debarred four members of the Apex Council -Apurv Jain, Nithin Gupta, Alok Mittal and joint secretary Rajan Manchanda - from administrative and financial work or taking any decisions related to DDCA. The ombudsman also stated that "Mr Gautam Dutta shall continue to perform his functions as DDCA standing counsel at least till the time the complaints pending before me attain finality." Verma added that the "resolution to remove the standing counsel was unlawful as the persons who have presented and approved the resolution are facing a disciplinary inquiry before me".

Manchanda said that he would knock on the door of the court to stop the appointment of an administrator. "The ombudsman has been interfering in the day-to-day affairs of the Apex Council and the DDCA, which is not acceptable. We will challenge his decision to ask for an administrator. At the same time, we are ready to co-operate with any inquiry the ombudsman wants to conduct but if he wants us to submit any papers, then I request him to wait till the lockdown ends as all relevant documents are at the DDCA office,' Manchanda said.

If HC appoints an administrator, it won't be the first time the DDCA is headed by a former judge. In 2016, Justice Mukul Mudgal was appointed as observer and a year later Justice Vikramajit Sen took over as administrator.

Akmal deserves his three-year ban, reckons former great Abbas

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY KOLKATA, APRIL 27

FORMER PAKISTAN greats have little sympathy for Umar Akmal following the latter's threeyear ban from all forms of cricket on corruption charges. Pakistan legend Zaheer Abbas tore into Akmal for his tendency to "misbehave" and his failure to report corrupt approaches despite being a senior cricketer.

"How can you say he is a great talent when he isn't following the rules? If you aren't following the rules, then you aren't a great player. Great players always follow the rules. Sachin Tendulkar, for example. If you aren't following rules, you are doubtful about your career, Abbas told The Indian Express.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday banned Akmal for not reporting spotfixing offers ahead of this year's Pakistan Super League (PSL). "Umar Akmal handed three-year ban from all cricket by Chairman of the Disciplinary Panel Mr Justice (retired) Fazal-e-Miran Chauhan," PCB said in a tweet. He was provisionally suspended on February 20.

The former Pakistan captain also opined that in all likelihood Akmal wouldn't be playing for Pakistan again. "I think his international career is all but over. He deserved the punishment." he said.

"He (Akmal) wasn't a junior player. He was playing for Pakistan for a long time. He must have been told by the PCB about the ICC Anti-Corruption rules many times - what to do when a corrupt approach is made. But he was ignoring it. PCB got to know that somebody (a corruptor) was trying to get hold of Umar. Later on he confessed, but it was too late," Abbas said.

The PCB formally charged Akmal with two breaches of its Anti-Corruption code for two unrelated incidents on March 20. The charges come under Article 2.4.4 of the Board's Anti-Corruption Code, which deal with the failure to disclose(without delay)"full details of any approaches or invitations received by the Participant to engage in Corrupt Conduct" to the PCB's Vigilance and Security Department.

At a hearing at the National Cricket Academy, he represented himself, while the PCB was represented by lawyer Taffazul Rizvi.



Umar Akmal has featured in 16 Tests, 84 T20s, and 121 ODIs for Pakistan.

Akmal's career has been littered with disciplinary issues - including public criticism of former Pakistan head coach Mickey Arthur – for which he received fines and suspensions. But this is for the first time that the middle-order batsman has been sanctioned for breaching the Anti-Corruption code. In 2018, however, Akmal told Samaa TV that he had been offered \$200,000 by bookmakers to leave alone two deliveries during Pakistan's 2015 World Cup opener against India. "... every match I play against India, they offer me money to make some excuse and opt out of the game," he had said.

Stormy petrel

Akmal is a case of a talent gone awry. From the very beginning he used to misbehave. But when I was the Pakistan team's chief batting consultant during a tour to Dhaka some years ago, he didn't show any misbehaviour in front of me," Abbas said.

Somehow, corruption code breaches keep surfacing in Pakistan cricket. From Saleem Malik to Umar Akmal, it's a long list; Pakistani cricketers banned for corruption. "The PCB does have a robust anti-corruption programme. Akmal was caught because PCB was keeping an eye on him. But if Pakistan were stricter on those players who started matchfixing, I think this (corruption) would have gone a long time ago," he remarked, without taking names.



- 13 Consents, but will be a long
- time coming round again (6)15 She's possibly recalled in a
- famous children's story (10)
- 18 Keep up support (8)
- Vocal comeback in the choir 19
- (4)20 He may be spotted laughing
- (5)
- 21 Report of big air crash 17 Kind of apple tree (4)) (7)

Solutions Crossword 4102: Across: 1 Joint action, 9 Dialect, 10 Arena, 11 Lead, 12 Complied, 14 Spirit, 16 Tongue, 18 Eighteen, 19 Scum, 22 Train, 23 Saracen, 24 Penetration. Down: 2 Omaha, 3 Noel, 4 Author, 5 Teaspoon, 6 Opening, 7

It's as rapid a variety as a

Salesman fortified with

12 Ruth and I are upset about

He may go to pot (6)

liquor is superseded (8)

politician making a success

Mother is upset over our love

desire(10)

(7)

affair?(5)

11

14

houseplant enthusiast may



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MARVIN by Tom Armstrong HOW DID WELL, IT TOOK HIM. NO, HE SCORED MARVIN DO AT THE ENTIRE PRACTICE, HE A GOAL? SOCCER PRACTICE? BUT HE FINALLY KICKED DID IT IN THE END THE BALL

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in which other people are closely involved. The only trouble is that it also heightens your imagination while reducing your grasp of the facts. You may turn this to your advantage.

should listen to have to be a mind-reader to pick up the full significance of their words and thoughts. and at the very least you'll be forced to read between the lines. But. then, that's the best way to pick up the messages that have passed partners by.

You have a few days in which to

ponder the future. The mood of the moment is

meaning rather than listing the

facts. After all, what you really

want is for partners to actually

AQUARIUS (Jan 21- Feb 19)

Your stars are nicely

hopeful. Perhaps you

adventurous and

certainly very

rather poetic, so you may

concentrate on conveying

understand you.

think, talk and

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

thing you need now.

If the current working pattern of your life does not live up to expectations, or if you do not feel that you are being adequately rewarded, it's because you are not drawing on your personal skills. Do something about it. And if

someone else has the best ideas then listen carefully.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) The Moon

deal with business, exploit every opportunity to socialise, travel and expand especially anything your spiritual horizons. The only trouble could be caused by rising costs, so just keep an eye on your commitments and don't promise more than you can afford.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Soon you will hold most of the trump cards. For now, your hand is not very much stronger than partners', which means that you cannot afford to squander your opportunities or waste your many talents. By tomorrow time will have moved on and you might have missed your chance - for another month.













can leave all dull and boring matters for next week and

encourages you to

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23) At the moment, you what partners are