The Indian EXPRESS



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The Indian EXPRESS

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FOUR DAYS TO END OF LOCKDOWN **Considerable relaxations May 4 onward, says Centre, clears return home of stranded migrants**

Curbs to be eased in many districts; no movement from containment zones, hotspots

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

IN AN indication of its plans after May 3 when the current phase of the lockdown ends. the Centre on Wednesday said there will be "considerable relaxations" in many districts.

The Union Home Ministry also issued guidelines for movement of stranded migrant labourers, students, and tourists who want to return home Sources, however, said this will not apply to those in hotspots or containment zones.

In a statement, the Ministry said, "New guidelines to fight COVID-19 will come into effect from 4th May, which shall give considerable relaxations to many districts. Details regarding this shall be communicated in coming days."

Curbs are expected to be eased in districts where cases are tapering. The Health Ministry has identified 129 of the country's 736 districts as hotspots. On April 15, at the end of the first lockdown, 177 districts had been notified as hotspots.

The order allowing interstate movement of those stranded comes almost a week after states such as Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh began transporting their migrant labour and students stuck in other states. Wednesday's order said. "Due to lockdown, migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and other persons are stranded at different places. They would be allowed to move."

Incidentally, at a video-conference meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



At a cremation ground in Lucknow on Wednesday, ashes await immersion in holy rivers. Vishal Srivastav

Punjab extends curfew by 2 wks, joins Bengal in lifting some curbs

KANCHAN VASDEV & ATRI MITRA

CHANDIGARH, KOLKATA, APR29

SETTING A possible post-May 3 template, Punjab on Wednesday became the first state to announce a two-week extension of lockdown (until May 17), but said restrictions will be eased for four hours daily, from 7 am to 11 am, in non-containment zones with effect from Thursday. It also decided to allow opening of shops and industries in these areas. Similarly, West Bengal Chief

Minister Mamata Banerjee said experts and doctors are of the opinion that the restrictions should continue till May-end. but announced some relaxations



in non-containment zones from May 4 – including movement of private taxis and buses in green zones, within a district, with a limited number of passengers. Both state governments un-

derlined that the local administration would take the final call on easing curbs.

ABHISHEK ANGAD &

NEW DELHI, RANCHI, JAIPUR,

WHILE THE Centre has allowed

DEEP MUKHERJEE

APRIL 29

Announcing his government's decision in a televised ad-

dress, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said: "The decision on further course of action will be taken after two weeks, depending on the situation. The only solution is social distancing. If it is under control after two weeks, we will take a call."

Singh asked people to maintain discipline and underlined that if they step out, they must wear masks, ensure social distancing and return to their homes by 11 am. "If we have given relaxation, that does not mean you can call your friends home. Social distancing has to be ensured," he said.

Punjab has reported 377 COVID-19 cases and 19 deaths so far. While four districts - Patiala CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Railways readies movement plan,

Warning signs emerge in Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar

EXPLAINED



REVISITING CURVE TO READ LOCKDOWN PAGE 10

Running out

Uddhav dials

PM for help

Mumbai's Wockhardt Hospital has been sealed. Express

Covid fight: Govt system in front, private hospitals do the distancing

PRABHA RAGHAVAN, TABASSUM **BARNAGARWALA**& **ABANTIKA GHOSH**

NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, APRIL 29 OF THE thousands of COVID-19 patients admitted in hospitals around the country, just around 800 are critical, requiring either

Units). Private hos-

stantive weight. That's not all. oxygen support, ventilators or Nationwide, private hospitals treatment in ICUs (Intensive Care employ four out of every five doctors, but the re-

themselves.

From being sealed in the

early stages after their staff

tested positive, like Wockhardt

in Mumbai or the private hospi-

tal in Bhilwara, to refusing to ad-

mit patients, from suspending

services to playing safe, private

hospitals aren't pulling their sub-

pitals, which account for twothirds of hospital beds in India. and almost 80 per cent of available ventilators, are handling PART I less than 10 per cent of this critical load.

This is just one symptom of a larger trend over the last three months: the Rs 2.4-lakh-crore private health care sector has largely been relegated to the sidelines, watching the public health care system - government hospitals, doctors, nurses and paramedics - battle the Covid pandemic.

Behind this are a set of circumstances that range from the nature of government policy on managing the pandemic to decisions taken by the hospitals

NEXT: WHAT'S HOLDING **BACK PRIVATE HOSPITALS IN** THE WAR AGAINST COVID?

Minority institution rights

frain from several PRIVATE cities and towns AND amid the pan-ISOLATED AN EXPRESS SERIES

demic is that they are locking themselves down even when it comes to providing non-Covid health care. From Patna to Mumbai, private hospitals cite many reasons to explain their near absence: lockdown restrictions, lack of in-

ternal protocols to handle the

pandemic, fear of infection to

their own doctors and nursing

staff, unwillingness to risk the

business from non-Covid

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

making Punjab and Haryana farmers switch from paddy

Labour shortage is

ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA & HARISH DAMODARAN JALANDHAR. NEW DELHI APRIL 29

COVID-19 has opened a window of opportunity to wean away farmers in Punjab and Haryana from growing rice to less waterguzzling crops such as cotton and maize.

The driver: Uncertainty over the availability of an estimated million labourers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar who undertake the bulk of the paddy transplanting that begins from mid-June. That, plus the lack of mechanical transplanting options, in contrast to the ubiquitous combines used for both paddy and wheat harvesting, means fewer farmers are likely to take up rice cultivation in the coming kharif season.

Manjit Singh Sidhu has, for



Sowing cotton in a field in Sirsa, Haryana. Express

over a decade, been farming paddy on his 13 acres at Uddat Bhagat Ram village in Punjab's Mansa district. But this time he has decided to sow cotton on 11 acres, limit paddy to 2 acres, that too, subject to getting enough local labour. "I finished harvesting wheat on April 20, and I am waiting for water from the Kotla Branch of the Sirhind Canal (on Sutlei River). They the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

some states push for special trains of time to enter House,

be scaled up to 1,000, with a de-AVISHEK G DASTIDAR, tailed protocol.

While there has been no indication that passenger train services will resume before May 3, the Railways carried out an internal exercise and communicated the plan to top levels in the government

movement of migrant workers in buses, several states have de-According to the plan, each manded special trains, underlinnon-AC train will carry 1,000 ing the sheer numbers of those people per trip - about half the stranded. According to sources, usual number - to ensure adequate social distancing. the Ministry of Railways has also

"Each bus typically carries 25 drafted a plan to operate 400 special trains per day, which can people after following social dis-

tancing. The Railways' detailed protocol also had a paragraph stating that states falling in the routes should allow the movement, screening, controlled embarking etc," a senior govern-

AMITABH SINHA &

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M

PUNE, NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WHILE MAHARASHTRA and

Gujarat have been attracting at-

tention for the rapid rise in cases

of novel coronavirus infection.

states in the east have, for the

first time now, started to show

signs that they could emerge as

potential danger zones as well.

puter modelling results by scien-

tists of the Chennai-based Insti-

tute of Mathematical Sciences

(IMSc) show that though West

Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand still

had a combined case load of less

than 1,200 on April 29, these three

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

states had the highest rate

The latest analysis of com-

ment official said. According to sources, by deciding on buses instead of trains, **LIZ MATHEW** the government has strategically restricted the number of people who can be transported. WITH

"It is just to allow an option of relief for the stranded wanting to travel to their home states, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Russia under lockdown, India's manned space mission trainees confined indoors

SUSHANT SINGH NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WHILE THE four Indian Air Force (IAF) fighter pilots selected to be trained as astronauts for the country's first manned space flight may have been motivated by the adventure of space travel, they would not have anticipated the

series of events triggered by the spread of the novel coronavirus.

A couple of months after their training began at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center (GCTC) in Star City near Moscow, it has been put on hold - and the pilots remain confined to their rooms while Russia grapples with the pandemic. Russia had reported nearly 1 lakh posi-

tive cases, with 972 deaths until Wednesday evening.

"The four astronauts-elect are in good health. The highly professional medical experts of GCTC are constantly observing them," Director General of Glavkosmos JSC Dmitry Loskutov told The Indian Express. Glavkosmos is the CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

said the Chief Minister had expressed unhappiness over the "politics being played" over his nomination to the Upper House of the state legislature. Thackeray, who took oath on

November 28 last year, has, under Article 164(4) of the Constitution. six months to **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY

ing the crisis, sources in New

Delhi said. In Mumbai, sources

in the Maharashtra government

Tuesday evening.

not above law or absolute: SC rules on CMC-NEET

ANANTHAKRISHNANG NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

STATING THAT rights of religious or linguistic minorities to admin-**VISHWAS WAGHMODE &** ister an institution under Article 30 of the Constitution "are not MUMBAI, NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 above the law and other Constitutional provisions", the THE Maharashtra Supreme Court ruled Governor sitting on the state Wednesday that the National Cabinet's recommendation that Eligibility cum Entrance Test Uddhav Thackeray be nomi-(NEET) for admission to gradunated to the Legislative Council, ate and post-graduate medical the Chief Minister dialled Prime and dental courses is "regula-Minister Narendra Modi on tory" in nature and in "national interest" to improve the quality Thackeray sought the Prime of medical education which, it said, has become a "saleable Minister's cooperation in resolvtions by the Christian Medical College, Vellore, and others, the bench of Justices Arun Mishra, Vineet Saran and M R Shah ordered that NEET will be the only exam for admission to the courses and institutions cannot be allowed to conduct their own separate exams over and above NEET.

"We are of the opinion that rights under Articles 19(1)(g) and 30 read with Articles 25, 26 and 29(1) of the Constitution of India do not come in the way of securing transparency and recognition of merits in the matter of admissions. It is open to regulating the course of study, qualifications for ensuring educational standards. It is open to **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

commodity". Disposing a bunch of peti-

THE WORLD



1 MILLION US CASES, TOLL SURPASSES VIETNAM WAR **PAGE 11**

PAGE 1 He dissolved into his part, left no residue...and came home with us **ANCHOR**

SHUBHRAGUPTA NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THERE ARE some obituaries you never, ever want to write. This is one of them. We knew that Irrfan Khan, one of the best actors the world has been privileged to watch, was struggling with a debilitating disease. We knew he was gravely ill. But we also believed that he would rise and shine again, because, how could he not? How could he leave us, this enormously talented human, who with his fine

body of work so enriched our inner lives?

> Wednesday morning at the age of 53, was not just a brilliant actor who dissolved into his part, leaving no residue behind. He also managed to walk off the screen, and come home with us. He made space for himself in our hearts, nestled in unexpected corners, and popped up once in a while, for a chat. Which he would begin, with that characteristic hooded-eyed smile: chaliye baat karte hain. From the very first glimpse

we had of him, in Shyam Irrfan, who passed away on

Benegal's teleserial Bharat Ek Khoi, we knew we were in the presence of someone truly special. He went on to become an integral part of some of Indian TV's most popular serials (Zee's Banegi Apni Baat, Doordarshan's Chandrakanta, and Star TV's Bestsellers), but his heart was always set on cinema. And, over a period of 30 years and more, as he essayed one unforgettable part after another, from Asif Kapadia's striking The Warrior to Shoojit Sircar's Piku, he never let us down. If this sounds like a



gush, yes, it is. An unapologetic, teary-eyed one, because he made things better, even in his no-account parts.

Of his impressive body of work, four films jostle for the top spot for me: Tigmanshu Dhulia's *Haasil*, in which he plays a local Allahabadi student leader; Vishal Bhardwaj's Maqbool, in which he was a mobster-withmany-moods-in-Mumbai; Mira Nair's The Namesake, in which his Bengali bhadralok immigrant finds his place in faraway New York; and Anoop Singh's Qissa, in which he plays a man desirous

of something he could not have. These roles combine not just the 'skills' of a schooled actor, but deep empathy, a generosity of spirit, and an unfettered intelligence, which shone through everything he did, good, indifferent, or flat-out fantastic.

He did everything. Or at least everything that Bollywood brought to his table, after having learnt that this tall, rangy, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

FULL COVERAGE PAGE 13



2 THE SECOND PAGE

The Indian EXPRESS WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM DOWNLOAD APP 🗄 EXPRESS AUDIO VISUAL STORIES DAILY BRIEFING \$77-DESIDPRESS -19 **KERALA WORRIED AS NEW CASES POP UP IN GREEN ZONES** PODCASTS **Decoding India's** Between April 21 and April 27, the state saw 74 new COVID-19 cases added to its tally, taking by surprise CUSTOMIZABLE **NEWS EXPERIENCE** doctors and health officials who had been keeping a watch on the situation. withdrawal of Indian Express rapid tests ******** 4.6 Today's top news **VIDEO OF THE DAY** CORONAVIRUS **NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY CELEBRATING THE LIFE 11 LESSONS FROM THE** In today's episode of the 3 Things podcast, **OF IRRFAN KHAN** PANDEMIC we look at why the government introduced 国新 and then withdrew rapid testing for the Khan owned every **Every country has** Virat Robli reclaims top position SCAN THIS QR CODE TO discovered that a novel coronavirus character he portrayed in ICC Test Batting Rankings DOWNLOAD THE APP on celluloid shutdown is inevitable en oppeel durinatia's Devic South rever ant-cock to the her. 1 proprior in the K.K.

FROM PAGE ONE

Private hospitals

patients, or even the government's own ambiguity in co-opting the private sector.

But, fallen off the radar, they have Bihar, in fact, witnessed an "al-

most complete withdrawal" of the private health sector, which has nearly twice the bed capacity of public facilities

"Forget COVID-19, even regular services have become unavailable," complained Bihar Principal Secretary (Health) Sanjay Kumar on April 19. The state, with India's third largest population, had to issue an order asking all hospitals to resume services.

This was particularly significant also because all three hospitals handling Covid cases in Patna are government hospitals. Vikash R Keshri, Senior Research Fellow, The George Institute for Global Health, said it was also "surprising" since the number of people relying on private healthcare over public for both outpatient and inpatient services in Bihar is "far higher". Private hospitals have 47,000 beds in the state compared with 22,000 of public hospitals.

"The public sector remains the mainstay of the Covid response. The private sector response has been variable. They have expressed interest but to what extent they are actually providing support required needs to be gauged," said K Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India.

Before the outbreak, the private sector accounted for nearly 70 per cent of critical procedures like chemotherapy and dialysis, according to Indu Bhushan, Chief Executive Officer, Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and National Health Authority. Yet, "a lot" of these private establishments facilities. Some patients who show symptoms, which are not very severe, but yet require medical attention, may also be admitted in hospitals.

According to Indian Council of Medical Research, 80 per cent cases in the country show either mild symptoms or are asymptomatic - the latter comprising 69 per cent of all cases. These cases generally do not require hospitalisation, and can return home after quarantining themselves for

two weeks in Covid Care Centres Given the complaints from patients in the city, the municipal corporation had on April 25 issued a circular asking all nursing homes and private clinics to open up. On Monday, the state government held extensive discussions with private hospitals, nursing homes and even clinics in Pune. Subhash Salunkhe, Technical

Advisor to the Chief Secretary of Maharashtra, told The Indian Express, "They are afraid for obvious reasons. They are involved but they can participate further. The Health Minister and the Chief Minister have already assured assistance for Personal Protective Equipment to hospitals and nursing homes."

In Delhi, which has over 3,300 cases, government hospitals are handling almost double the number of ICU patients. Senior officials in the Delhi gov-

ernment's health department said they had received several complaints of private hospitals refusing treatment to patients during the lockdown, and later of compelling patients to get a Covid-negative test report before dialysis.

This prompted the state to issue an order on April 15 warning hospitals and nursing homes in the city of strict action, including cancellation of registration.

While private facilities may em to have remained conspicu-

Relaxations May 4 onward: Centre

Monday, Bihar, Jharkhand and either home or institutional Odisha, which comprise a large quarantine

chunk of the migrant labour Existing lockdown guidelines make no allowance for numbers, had expressed their inability to facilitate their reinter-state movement, but turn home without guidelines the Centre had kept quiet as states recently moved ahead from the Centre in this regard. Releasing the new guidewith arrangements to get lines, Union Home Secretary back their students and migrant labour. Bihar had shot Ajay Bhalla said the movement of those stranded should be off a letter to the Centre at the time, saying the transportaarranged through mutually agreed terms between states, tion was in "utter violation of on sanitised buses, with renational guidelines".

quired social distancing. Only The latest guidelines, howasymptomatic people will be ever, make no mention of allowed to travel and a second trains, which were among the assessment of their health modes of transport states had suggested for large-scale would be done on their arrival in their home states. Based on movement of migrant workers. this, they would be moved to The move comes as states

are finding it increasingly difficult to sustain migrant labour, with work and revenue sources drying up. There have been several instances of migrants desperate to get home resorting to violence in Gujarat and Maharashtra. The Uddhav Thackeray government in Maharashtra had sought arrangements for inter-state transport of labour.

However, the move might end up further impacting plans to open up the economy, which is struggling to do so with the few relaxations announced. Many states have said they would like to open the economy completely in green zones after May 3. The MSME sector,

for example, is heavily dependent on migrant labour.

In its order Wednesday, the MHA said: "All States/UTs should designate nodal authorities and develop standard protocols for receiving and sending such stranded persons. The nodal authorities shall also register the stranded persons within their States/UTs. In case a group of stranded persons

State/UT and another State/UT, the sending and receiving States may consult each other and mutually agree to the movement by road."

It also asked states falling in between to allow the passage of such persons

case they have to impart education, they are bound to comply with the conditions which are equally applicable to all. The regulations are necessary, and they are not divisive or disintegrative. Such regulatory measures enable institutions to administer them efficiently... The quality of medical education is imperative to sub-serve the national interest, and merit cannot be compromised. The Government has the

right for providing regulatory

measures that are in the national

rameter to determine the merit of

States to watch

of growth - measured by their

reproduction numbers – in the

country in the last few days. The

reproduction number refers to

the number of persons who are

infected on average by an al-

As of Wednesday, West

Bengal had 696 confirmed cases

of infection, while Bihar and

Jharkhand had 383 and 107

cases respectively. Together, they

accounted for less than 4 per

cent of the national case load,

which was close to 33,000 on

9,915 confirmed cases; Gujarat,

4,082. Together, they made up

over 40 per cent of the cases in

In contrast, Maharashtra had

Wednesday evening.

the country.

ready infected person.

a student.

interest," the order stated.

which apply to all institutions. In

Active cases do not count the number of people who have recovered from the disease. There were a little over 25,000 active cases in the country on Wednesday.

Sinha's calculations show that the current reproduction number in Maharashtra is 1.5, and in Gujarat, 1.38 – both higher than the national number. The reproduction number for Delhi, another fast-growing state, could not be calculated because of the large variations in daily increase in the case load.

Uddhav

The petitioners had said that become a member of the state unaided minority professional colleges have the fundamental legislature. However, with the pandemic raging, a by-election right to choose the method and cannot be held, and the only way manner of admitting students, subject to satisfaction of the triple to fulfill the requirement is for test of a fair, transparent, and non him to be nominated to the - exploitative process, and that Upper House by the Governor. NEET could not be the only pa-

'He (Thackeray) called the Prime Minister to talk about his nomination. He asked for help saying if it does not happen he would have to resign," a source in Delhi said. According to this source, the PM told Thackeray that he would look into the matter and get more details.

In Mumbai, a senior Shiv Sena leader told The Indian Express: "Uddhavji discussed the current political uncertainty in the state with the PM. He expressed unhappiness over the politics being played over his nomination as MLC at a time when the state is fighting the coronavirus outbreak, and is standing with the Centre in the crisis.'

Asked how the PM had responded, the Sena leader said: 'The PM agreed with the CM's view. We now hope that his nomination will be cleared soon by the Governor."

"The absolute numbers in these states (West Bengal, Bihar On Monday, the Maharashtra Cabinet reiterated the recom-

government said standalone shops, neighbourhood shops and shops in residential areas will be allowed to open on rotation, from 7 am to 11 am. Shops in market complexes and shopping malls as well as barber

Pathankot, New Jain Market in Rajpura and Kacha Patiala, shops will remain closed. Safabadi Gate in Patiala. All shops in rural areas reg-Earlier this week, the istered under the Shops & Punjab government had set up Establishment Act, except those in multi-brand and single-brand an expert committee to formulate a lockdown exit strategy. malls, will also be allowed to Issuing guidelines for reopen with 50 per cent staff strength for four hours daily. suming economic activity in non-containment zones, the In Kolkata, Chief Minister

SAXENA, ASHISH ARYAN AND goofy and grumpy, growl and guffaw. He could be dangerous and maniacal. He was also the loveliest, kookiest, most passionate lover you ever saw. It took the film

house gave Irrfan a chance to

go over to the other side, away

from the raw, visceral gang-

land/heartland tales, and ex-

plore unfamiliar territories. He

lifted brainless comedies

(Rohit Shetty's Sunday) with

the same verve as he did gritty,

hard-hitting tales (Dhulia's

Paan Singh Tomar): it was all

grist to his mill, acutely attuned

Sikdar, too at the NSD. Married for

ing him to Bollywood. Irrfan's work

took him to the world, and he was

the only Indian actor who well and

truly crossed over. He had already

made an early appearance in Wes

Anderson's The Darjeeling Limited

(2007). But the big-and-small parts

in international productions quick-

ened after Danny Boyle's 2008

Oscar-winnerSlumdogMillionaire.

and he showed up in Ang Lee's

magical-realistic tale of survival,

Life Of Pi, and in such franchises as

The Amazing Spiderman and

his heart was. None of these inter-

national outings could truly mine

what Irrfan was capable of. He did

those movies because he could,

but saved the razzle dazzle for his

desi dil-hai-Hindustani outings.

Fully switched on, he came up as

close to us as possible, to start that

conversation, as only he could:

chaliye, baat karte hain.

But home was really where

Iurassic World.

Irrfan met his wife. Sutapa

Of course, there was no confin-

to the world around him.

25 years, they have two sons.

Punjab extends lockdown by 2 weeks Mamata Banerjee announced that standalone shops, including for electronics, books, paint, laundry, hardware, cellphone recharge and paan shops, will be allowed to open in non-containment zones from May 4.

> plex will be allowed to open," she said. "We thought we would take a decision after getting clarity from the central government. But we did not get any clarification. So, we an-

Space mission

Russian government-owned space business company, which signed a contract with the Indian Space Research Organisation

nounced our decision today. It will be implemented from Monday," she said.

She said taxis, with not more than three passengers, and private buses, with not more than 20 passengers, will be allowed to ply in green zones. "Nobody can say when this crisis will end. Most countries have already announced lockdown till the end of May and first week of June. Our experts

the end of May," she said.

Southwest Punjab - mainly Mansa, Bathinda, Muktsar and

and doctors believe that the re-

4,500-5,000 per acre, whereas the migrant workers charge only Rs 2.500." he points out.

"We will only allow standalone shops. No hawkers' corner, market or shopping com-

strictions should continue till

wish to move between one

treating even non-Covid cases had shut down in certain states citing increased costs and reduced footfalls, he said.

"States like Madhya Pradesh, currently struggling with lack of healthcare personnel, and Bihar could do with more private sector intervention here," said Bhushan. "This is the time that the private sector should be looking at a welfare maximisation mode and not a profit-maximisation model. Hopefully, this will happen," he noted.

In Mumbai, the city with the largest number of Covid cases, and also the most deaths, The Indian Express has reported how patients were turned away from one hospital to another, and even Covid-positive patients have had to wait for hours before they could be admitted.

Maharashtra did not bar private hospitals from treating Covid patient but many would just not admit patients with Covid symptoms, fearing they would be sealed by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (BMC).

"In Mumbai, BMC is managing 80 per cent load of patients; the private hospitals are handling 20 per cent," said Suresh Kakani, Additional Municipal Commissioner. Of the 4,574 active cases on Tuesday, 400 patients were admitted in private hospitals, whereas 1,600 were in public hospitals. The remaining 2,500-odd were asymptomatic, not requiring admission.

In fact, as on date, Maharashtra has 187 critical patients, of which Mumbai alone accounts for about 120-125, most of whom require just oxygen support. A split of patients requiring critical care between private and public hospitals was not immediately available.

In India, there are three levels of COVID facilities. The first level comprises quarantine facilities in stadia. hostels. schools and lodges. called Covid Care Centres. This is where most Covid-positive patients are kept. The second and third levels are hospitals with oxygen support, ventilators and ICU

ously absent, especially in certain high burden states, it is not without any reason, say senior executives.

In some cases, facilities are ready and waiting, but some states like Uttar Pradesh have kept them on standby. In a few instances, states like Telangana did not "fully support" the role of the sector initially, either in testing or treatment.

"There was even a time when they (Telangana government) said 'send all your positive patients (to government facilities)'. Now, I think they have realised that in treatment, they need private hospital support. But I think this is just one or two governments. With most of the other governments, there's a great partnership role being played," said Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals Enterprises, India's largest hospi-

tal chain. "I think the private sector has been trying to step up. There was the initial fear – some hospitals got shut down... and with smaller nursing homes also, there were some who were worried. But I think everybody is now ramping up," said Reddy, also the President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry(FICCI).

The sector's biggest pain point, though, is their struggle to operate facilities at a time when their costs have increased, but their revenues have seen a dip.

"I feel very strongly about people trying to pull private sector hospitals down at this point in time, especially when some of us have been trying to continue operations despite incurring operating losses," said Abhay Soi, CMD, Radiant Life Care and Chairman, Max Healthcare.

Said C K Mishra, chairman, of Empowered Group 2, that is in charge of hospital facilities and testing: "The private sector has been assisting the government and it is a very welcome step. Perhaps, we should look forward to more and more private-sector facilities joining the government." (WITH INPUTS FROM ASTHA

and not a really viable transpo tion solution over long distances," an official said.

Railways plan

SHIVAM PATEL IN NEW DELHI)

Raiasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot tweeted on Wednesday: "Long awaited demand of movement of migrant workers has finally been accepted by the GoI. It is a welcome step but until GoI allows Indian railway to operate practically it will not be possible to facilitate smooth and hassle-free transport to their home."

Jalandhar, Ludhiana and

Mohali – have been declared

hotspots, the containment

zones are: Jawaharpur in

Mohali, Pathlawa village in

Nawanshahar, Sujanpur in

Iharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said he had told Railways Minister Piyush Goyal that the state would need special trains to bring back its students and migrant workers. "We are thankful for the MHA order and we are deliberating on our resources. However, I had said earlier that the state is not capable of bringing them back on our own. I had a word with Piyush Goyalji on this matter earlier," he said.

The state estimates over 9 lakh people from Jharkhand, including 6.43 lakh migrant workers, are stranded in various parts of the country.

In earlier interactions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had also raised the demand for special trains.

Officials from Odisha and Uttar Pradesh had also informally spoken to Railway officials on the matter. The Punjab government, too, had raised the demand.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar tweeted in support of the move on Wednesday. "This decision is appropriate and worth welcoming. This was our request and the central government has taken a positive decision," he said.

Welcoming the decision, senior Congress leader Chidambaram sought "sanitised, point-to-point trains" for the purpose as, he said, buses would not be enough.

Irrfan Khan

magnetic-eyed person could transform, into anyone, with a particular kind of magic. He could go high, dive low, get intense, do

industry many years to find Irrfan, (ISRO) in June 2019 for the trainand it isn't as if he was flooded ing of the Indian astronauts.

"The lockdown has strongly with roles from the big studios imbeen recommended for the astromediately after his breakout roles, post 2002, in Haasil and Maqbool. nauts-elect. as well as for the But the filmmakers who GCTC personnel. The decision to did, like his National School of resume the full-scale training will Drama (NSD) mate Dhulia, and be taken after a thorough obser-Bhardwaj, made the most of vation of the epidemic situation in the country," Loskutov said. his, and their own, innate knowledge of the Hindi belt, Russia's President Vladimir Putin long neglected by Bollywood. had initially announced a lockdown until April 30, but extended Their coming together was a great confluence. It brought a it until May 11 on Tuesday, with new language, new robustness the warning that the country had to Hindi cinema, something not yet reached the peak of infections, and "a hard and difficult that old-school Bollywood filmmakers like Mahesh Bhatt path lies ahead". recognised. Bhatt's production

Having started their year-long training in Russia in early February, the four fighter pilots have completed approximately a fourth of their course so far, Loskutov said. Their schedule of training has been met so far, even though the Russian authorities iimplemented the lockdown on March 28. "All astronauts-elect continue working according to their training plan," Loskutov said, adding that the four Indians had "successfully passed the exam on the knowledge of the onboard systems of the manned spacecraft". They are to take the exam in manned spacecraft flight theory, he said, and are "preparing for

the exam independently". Labour crisis

(government) normally release it around April 30, which will enable me to plant cotton," says the 43-vear-old.

Shamsher Singh, from the same village, also plans to only grow cotton on his 8-acre holding, which was entirely under paddy until the 2019 kharif season. Jagsir Singh from Jhumba village of Bathinda district is going for cotton on four of his nine acres, again previously fully planted to paddy.

"The people who transplant paddy are from Bihar and UP. Nobody knows if they will come. Even if the lockdown is lifted on May 3, train services are unlikely to resume soon and I cannot take a risk. While local labourers can be used, they will demand Rs

Fazilka - was traditionally a cotton belt. Many farmers in recent times switched to paddy, thanks to assured minimum support price-based procurement and free power for groundwater irrigation during the cropping season.

This was further supported by the availability of migrant labour for transplanting paddy seedlings, which are first raised in nursery beds for 25-30 days before being uprooted and replanted in the main field.

CMC-NEET case imposing reasonable restrictions in the national and public interest," the bench said.

Article 19(1)(g) grants citizens the right to practice any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business while Article 30 relates to the right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions. "The rights to administer an

institution under Article 30 of the Constitution are not above the law and other Constitutional provisions. Reasonable regulatory measures can be provided without violating such rights available under Article 30 of the Constitution to administer an institution," the bench ruled.

Writing for the bench, Justice Mishra said "the rights under Article 19(1)(g) are not absolute and are subject to reasonable restriction in the interest of the student's community to promote merit, recognition of excellence, and to curb the malpractices. Uniform Entrance Test qualifies the test of proportionality and is reasonable. The same is intended to check several maladies which crept into medical education, to prevent capitation fee by admitting students which are lower in merit and to prevent exploitation, profiteering and commercialisation of education. The institution has to be a capable vehicle of education".

"The minority institutions are equally bound to comply with the conditions imposed under the relevant Acts and Regulations to enjoy affiliation and recognition,

and [harkhand) are still guite low, so they do not seem to be an immediate problem. But I think they need to be taken note of. West Bengal, in particular, stands out even among the three. At the end of March, the growth rate in West Bengal was showing signs of flattening, but now it seems to be on a completely different trajectory. In fact, if we just look at the growth curves in a non-rigorous fashion, it would appear that West Bengal is following the

Maharashtra numbers with a lag of three weeks," said Sitabhra Sinha, who, along with his colleagues at IMSc, has been tracking the disease numbers.

Incidentally, West Bengal also has the fastest doubling time among large states in India, as pointed out in a graphical analysis by The Indian Express on Wednesday. Doubling time refers to the time taken for the number of cases to double.

Sinha said that while the national reproduction number had falled from nearly 1.83 before the lockdown began to about 1.29 now (for the April 20-27 period), West Bengal had a reproduction number of 1.52 (for the period April 18-27). That means that every 100 infected persons in the state has been passing on the virus to another 152 people. Bihar had a reproduction num-

ber of 2.03, and Jharkhand, 1.87. Sinha said that thanks to the lockdown, there were only four states - Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh that were continuing to show a "consistent" rise in growth over time periods longer than a week. Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh also continue to grow, but at slower rates.

"The lockdown has helped in considerably slowing down the growth of the epidemic. Had there been no lockdown, we could have been on a path to reaching a case load of about 1 lakh by the end of this month. Thanks to the lockdown, it seems the number of active cases would remain well within 30,000 by that time," Sinha said.

mendation it had first made on April 9 after a meeting presided over by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. On Tuesday evening, a delegation of the Cabinet met Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, and urged him to nominate Thackeray to one of the two vacant seats in the Council through the Governor's quota.

Sources said the Governor was "non-committal" during his meeting with the leaders of the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi. This. the sources said, may have "forced" Thackeray to speak to the Prime Minister. A senior leader of the ruling coalition said that on Monday night, Thackeray had discussed with NCP leader Sharad Pawar three options going forward.

"The first is to write to the **Election Commission requesting** that the Legislative Council polls which were deferred by it earlier this month due to the lockdown, should be held. Since the election will be unopposed, we also want the EC to reduce the required 21 days' period for holding the poll. The second option is to approach the Supreme Court to ask it to direct the EC to hold polls," the leader said.

The third and last option would be for Thackeray to resign as Chief Minister, then call a legislative party meeting of all three coalition partners to elect him as leader, and form the government once again, the leader said.

"But", the leader said, "we don't think it will come to that. We are hopeful that the Governor will soon nominate Thackeray to the Council."

In New Delhi, a BJP leader said that Thackeray had approached Modi directly because he knows that "it would be the Prime Minister who would be taking the final call on the party's decision". According to this leader, Thackeray wants the "BIP's leaders in Maharashtra who are not willing to cooperate with the Shiv Sena to be directed by Modiji (to do so)".

FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 THE ()UTBREAK THE CITY



Doctors rue overcrowding at Safdarjung

New Delhi: Doctors from Safdarjung Hospital have complained to the medical superintendent claiming that there is overcrowding at the hospital due to unchecked referrals from other hospitals. "We have a no-refusal policy so we take referrals from AI-IMS, RML and other tertiary care institutions," said Doctor Joyutpal Biswas, General Secretary, RDA, Safdarjung Hospital. In a letter, the RDA said, "These referrals are made without prior intimation to the CMO.

SDMC to reimburse hotel cost

New Delhi: South Delhi Municipal Corporation has announced that the civic body will reimburse the cost of stay in hotels for stranded employees. While group A and B employees will be given Rs 2000 per day, Group C and D employees will get Rs 1,100 per day.

3 new cases in Gurgaon, 4 in Faridabad

Gurgaon: Three healthcare workers tested positive for coronavirus in Gurgaon Wednesday, taking the total number of cases in the district to 54. Further, four more people tested positive in Faridabad while Nuh and Jhajjar recorded one case each.

200 migrants heading home stopped over last week

New Delhi: Over 200 migrants and their families

SUB-INSPECTOR DEAD, 46 PERSONNEL POSITIVE; MHA SEEKS REPORT **CRPF's 5-day quarantine call may** have led to Mayur Vihar outbreak

CRPF reduced quarantine for paramedical staff from 14 days to 5, one of them tested positive later

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

A REDUCED period of quarantine, in violation of guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, is being seen as a possible reason for the spread of COVID-19 in CRPF's Mayur Vihar camp, where a subinspector died on Tuesday.

While MoHFW has mandated 14 days of quarantine, the CRPF reduced it to five days for its paramedical staff. This is believed to have led to an infected paramedic, who had returned from Kashmir, being released from quarantine and joining active duty, leading to the spread of the virus in the camp where 46 per-

sonnel have now tested positive. On Tuesday, 55-year-old Mohammed Ikram Hussain, a sub-inspector with the force, succumbed to the infection at Safdarjung Hospital. The entire battalion of over 1,000 personnel, camped at Mayur Vihar, has now been quarantined and the camp sealed. Sources said only half the battalion has been tested as of now, and results of 257 personnel are awaited.



CRPF personnel pay their last respects prior to the burial of Sub-Inspector Mohammed Ikram Hussain, who died of COVID-19, at a graveyard in ITO Wednesday. Praveen Khanna

The Ministry of Home Affairs, sources said, has taken cognizance of the matter and sought a report by May 1.

"Home Minister Amit Shah is personally seized of the matter. He has been taking stock of the situation and has been in touch with the family of the deceased," said an MHA official.

Sources said that following the lockdown announcement on March 24, CRPF issued special orders reducing the quarantine period for paramedical staff from 14 to five days. The order said the guarantine period should be extended if the suspect shows symptoms, else he can be released and put on active duty.

Notably, this contradicts CRPF's own COVID-19 containment SoPs issued mid-March. which mention a mandatory quarantine period of 14 days.

The CRPF's nursing staff member, who was on leave at home in Noida after returning from Kupwara in Kashmir, was asked to join the 31st Battalion of

5-yr-old reunited with parents after 40 days

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PUNE, APRIL 29

Five-year-old Divisha Lal, who was separated from her parents for nearly 40 days due to the nationwide lockdown, was reunited with them after Maharashtra Police provided her and three members of her family special permission to travel from Pune to Delhi amid the lockdown.

Divisha, her brother Tanmay (10) and their grandmother, all residents of Delhi, had come to Pune to meet Divisha's aunt Shalini on March 17. While they were supposed to return on March 23, their flight was rescheduled and the subsequent lockdown extended their stay in the city, as reported by The Indian Express. On April 28, they were finally able to leave for Delhi via road. "After getting police permis-

AT FARIDABAD'S ESIC HOSPITAL Borders shut, staff at coronavirus testing lab suffer

SAKSHI DAYAL GURGAON, APRIL 29

"Unfortunately, by April 16-

Barring the Mayur Vihar

CRPF DG AP Maheshwari did

camp, CRPF has reported just

one more infection, in

not respond to calls and mes-

sages seeking a comment. Shah

had on Tuesday paid tribute to

the sub-inspector saying his con-

tribution to national security

Ahmedabad.

was inspiring.

17. he began showing symptoms

AMONG THE unexpected fallout of the Faridabad administration's decision to seal the district's border from Wednesday was the government-run laboratory at the ESIC Medical College and Hospital in Faridabad – a designated COVID-19 hospital and one of seven laboratories involved in

He added, however, that it is testing for the virus in Haryana. still in the realm of speculation With several of its staff living whether the infection spread in districts outside Faridabad befrom this paramedic only. "The ing turned away or delayed at the CRPF has got his entire family in border, officials fear testing will Noida tested. All are negative. So suffer in the coming days. "COVIDit appears he did not bring the in-19 testing will be most affected if fection from Kashmir. He is bethey stop them from entering as ing suspected as he was the first we are the only government hosto show symptoms and be pital in Faridabad where these tested. It is possible that sometests are being done," said Dr A K one in the camp had asympto-Pandey, Registrar, Academic. matic infection," the official said. As per officials, at least eight

people from the microbiology department, which undertakes the tests, live outside Faridabad. 'So far, they were able to travel using their IDs. Now, we have been told to make arrangements for their stay. However, some of the staff have constraints such as young children or dependent parents," said Dr Pandey.

In the latter category is Dr Charu Jain, Assistant Professor, Microbiology, who travels from East Delhi to work each day, leaving her seven-month-old baby with her mother-in-law. On Wednesday, however, she was delayed by an hour at the border. 'Yesterday, I was given a pass

by the institute but police personnel at Badarpur border refused to let me through. We finally came through another border, where police said I may not be allowed to leave in the evening. This is a problem for me. I cannot stay here even if I am given accommoda-



tion as I cannot bring my baby here," said Dr Jain. She said many of her colleagues, including the department head, were turned away at the border. "We process almost 150 samples daily but we started late

today. In addition, a lot of the staff have not come; we are doing such risky work while being understaffed, leaving scope for error... We cannot work from home and there is no one trained enough to do this job...," she said. Dr Pandey said testing is crit-

ical to contain the spread of coronavirus: "The district administration should favour those providing essential services, especially testing; if you stop testing, the whole purpose of these measures will be negated."

Faridabad Deputy Commissioner Yashpal, however, said a solution is being worked out: "COVID-19 hospitals are already in the special exemption category. When a new plan is introduced, some issues do emerge, but I have spoken to the dean and we have provided some space for staff to stay and made arrangements for their food and other needs... We will also issue special passes to those who need to travel daily. Such passes are also being issued to others exempt from the sealing, such as those involved in

transporting essential items." Wednesday saw complete chaos at the Badarpur border as several people were turned away. Police personnel conducted temperature checks of each person and noted down their details be-

fore allowing them entry. Yashpal said the sealing would be smoother in the coming days: "This was the first day; some issues were expected... I believe regulation will become easier." The district has 50 cases, of which 41 have recovered.

who were heading to neighbouring states were stopped by police on Delhi's roads over the last week. Police said the migrants were either on foot, riding cycles or hiding in trucks.

3 journalists test positive

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said only three of 529 journalists who underwent testing for coronavirus tested positive.

Noida hospital staff allege lack of PPEs

Noida: Health workers from Gautam Budh Nagar district hospital protested at the DM's office alleging lack of PPEs Wednesday. DM Suhaas L Y ordered the hospital's Chief Medical Superintendent to make arrangements. ENS

A journey from Haryana to MP comes to abrupt halt

carrying the bag – walking for a

few hours in the morning, rest-

ing during the afternoon and

walking for a few more hours in

the late afternoon and evening.

They ate where they found po-

lice personnel, charitable groups

and relief workers distributing

Gurgaon-Delhi border on Tuesday

afternoon and have been unable

to move forward since then.

after a spike in Jhajjar, which re-

ported its first seven cases.

The family was stopped at the

24-year-old Aashis Ahirwar with his wife, daughter and nephew at the Delhi-Gurgaon

SUKRITA BARUAH NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

FOUR DAYS into his journey, once this is all over," he said. walking from Rohtak to Madhya They had left with just one Pradesh with his family, Aashis bag containing a set of clothes for

food.

Ahirwar had to make the decision to retrace his steps because of Haryana tightening restrictions at its borders.

border on Wednesday. Renuka Puri

On Sunday, the 24-year-old had begun the journey with his wife, one-year-old daughter and six-year-old nephew. A dailywage labourer, he said he had tried to put off this difficult trek to his village in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district – a distance of 600 km – as much as possible.

"I had saved around Rs 10,000-12,000 over the years and my family made do with that for the last month, during which I had no work. But we have now reached the end of that and have nothing to support

ourselves. Our landlord has been night in a tent provided to police quite supportive but he cannot personnel for shelter by the fill our stomachs, can he? He has main road in Rajokri. Aashis said told us that we can return to him the policemen had offered them some space there seeing his baby daughter. In the heat of the afternoon sun on Wednesday, she each member. Husband and cried uncontrollably. wife took turns – one carrying

"We are just not being althe baby for a while, the other lowed to go forward. They have told us to go back to where we've come from and said the restrictions will be eased a little bit in five-six days and that we should try to make the journey then. We cannot just lie around on the road for the next few days waiting to be allowed to pass through. So I guess we do not have any option but to go back. We have nothing left there, but will just have to find some way to feed ourselves," he said.

Vigilance at the Delhi-Gurgaon On Wednesday evening, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued border was increased on Tuesday an order allowing movement of migrant workers stranded in The family spent Tuesday various places.

Model Town at 1 pm on Wednesday," said Divisha's father Ashesh Lal.

Divisha Lal had travelled

her aunt on March 17

from Delhi to Pune to meet

sion, my children, mother-in-law

and their uncle left Pune on

Tuesday at 10 am and travelled

through Madhya Pradesh,

Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and

Haryana, all the way to Delhi.

Divisha's mother Rachana thanked the Maharashtra government for taking a sympathetic stance on the issue



Police personnel check vehicles at the Faridabad-Badarpur border, Wednesday. The order to tighten movement at the Faridabad border was issued late Tuesday night. Tashi Tobgyal

Delhi says testing delayed at Noida institute: Stop sending samples there

ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WORRIED OVER the pendency of coronavirus test results at the National Institute of Biologicals (NIB) in Noida, the Delhi government has ordered all district commissioners not to send any more samples to the institute till May 3, and to send them to government and private labs in Delhi instead.

The decision comes a day after officials, in a meeting with Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, highlighted that around 200 test results are pending since April 16 at the institute.

"The sudden rise (in cases) happened because there were no results and people kept spreading the infection," said a senior official from the department.

As per officials, pendency in test results is affecting containment of the disease in several areas. "The samples shall be distributed among government and private labs to ensure the results are received within a day," said the official.

Delhi has a testing rate of over 2,000 tests per million population. Officials said even government labs, including the one at Lady Hardinge Medical College, are overburdened. "We are testing over 200 samples a day. Since the guidelines have changed and more samples are being sent from containment zones, the pressure on labs has increased. Our lab is running 24x7, we are also planning to increase capacity. The patient load hasn't increased but the sample load has gone up," said Dr N N Mathur,

As per officials, an RT-PCR test

takes around five-six hours to

complete. At the Institute of Liver

and Biliary Sciences, there are two

labs and around 350-450 sam-

ples are tested every day. "We are

using pool RNA strategy and pool

extraction strategy in our labs.

With this, 8 RT-PCR tests can be

put together and more results will

medical director of LHMC.

come out at one go. We are planning to enhance capacity at the lab. But, while testing is happening across centres, there is still a need to have rapid testing in the city," said Dr S K Sarin, head of ILBS.

The department has also directed labs to provide reports to Integrated Disease the Surveillance Program. Testing and tracking of all fresh positive cases, as well as tracking of repeat samples, is critical to ensure immediate monitoring of all cases. If this information is not collected from labs in a timebound manner, it will lead to a delay in tracing new positive cases," said another official.

AFTER EMPLOYER TESTED POSITIVE Quarantined inside shop at Azadpur Mandi, 17 men await test results

ANANYA TIWARI NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

SEVENTEEN WORKERS quarantined inside shops at Azadpur mandi, including some whose swab samples were taken almost a week ago after their employer tested positive for COVID-19, have been waiting for results and help from the administration.

Expressing distress over the long delay in getting results – they were tested on April 23 – they said they were not even

getting access to food or water inside the shop, which is also their home

Last week, a 57-year-old vegetable trader – who shared a stall at the market with an apple trader – died of COVID-19 at Max Hospital, Saket, where he had been hospitalsed. tried to reach out to the district Seventeen of his employees have been quarantined inside that stall since his death. The

staff said the trader would visit the stall regularly for a few hours daily before he was hospitalised.

A 24-year-old man, one of those quarantined, said it was they who informed the APMC of his death after they got to know of it on April 20. "We made a list of all our names and phone numbers and gave it to the security guard, and even

> administration," he said. The man said it was only on April 23 – three days after the death – that their samples were collected. "It was a struggle to even have our samples taken," he claimed.



Delhi District North Magistrate Deepak Shinde said the results of the employees are still awaited: "The test results are awaited as of now. We got the report of the death of the trader on April 21, sent people for screening on April 22, and took their samples on April 23."

So far, 11 traders from the market have tested positive in

So far, 11 traders from the market have tested positive in the capital. Praveen Khanna

Delhi. Two cases of vendors who came to Delhi from Jhajjar, and another who came from Panipat, have also tested positive. More than 30 employees in six shops have been guarantined in the market after the traders' results were positive. On Tuesday in a review

meeting between the Union and Delhi health ministry officials, the high number of pending tests was flagged as a problem that could potentially result in a situation where the case load becomes unmanageable as till the results are received, contacts of a suspect are not quarantined and tested.

A 50-year-old employee said on Wednesday, "We are finding it difficult to get food. No one is paying us any attention."

Shinde acknowledged they had received complaints about distribution of food: "We did get some complaints of food but have sorted that out now. Civil defence volunteers are there to maintain social distancing. There was a delay in getting their report from the lab."

THEOUTBREAK THE CITY

DELHI ADOPTS NEW PROTOCOL BY UNION HEALTH MINISTRY Those with mild, no symptoms can self-isolate at home: Jain

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE DELHI government Wednesday said COVID-19 patients with very mild or no symptoms can self-isolate at home, provided they have a room where they can stay away from their family members. This includes a separate room with a toilet, officials said

'Not everyone needs to go to a hospital. This is as per the new protocol for those with very mild or no symptoms. They can isolate at home," said Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain.

The Delhi government had started shifting patients, who fit in the above category, to COVID-19 care centres to reduce the burden on hospitals. Across the

care on a 24x7 basis," the minworld, several countries are following a similar protocol.

The guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which the Delhi government plans to follow, have a strict code for those who can isolate at home. Health officials in Delhi are also preparing guidelines for self-isolation. Jain held a meeting on the issue with Principal Secretary, Health; Secretary Health, DGHS; MD of

Lok Nayak Hospital; and Special Secretary Health. "The person should be clinically assigned as a very mild

case/pre-symptomatic case by the treating medical officer. Such cases should have the requisite facility at their residence for selfisolation and for quarantining family contacts. A caregiver should be available to provide

istry guidelines say. At present, of the 3,439 people who have tested positive, 749

are admitted to nine COVID-19 designated hospitals. Of these, 52 are in the ICU and 9 on ventilators. Another 985 are in COVID-19 care centres and 137 in designated health centres.

All those choosing home isolation will also have to download the Aarogya Setu mobile app on their mobile phones, the Centre's guidelines say.

Following the self isolation protocol in the city will not be possible for most people, said an official. "Only in affluent neighbourhoods do we have houses with enough space for a person to isolate themselves. Because family members have to avoid contact as much as they can, the

In talks with states to

let stranded migrants

return home: Kejriwal

patient should have a separate toilet near the room. But those who can ensure this are welcome to isolate at home," said an official.

The ministry also has detailed guidelines for caregivers, who are required to have a communication link with a COVID-19 hospital to make sure it is informed of the progress and also in case the patient starts to develop more severe symptoms. Guidelines also require caregivers and their close contacts to take hydroxychloroquine as prophylactic.

If the patient develops difficulty in breathing, persistent pain/pressure in the chest, confusion or inability to wake up or develops bluish discolorations in the lips or face, they should get in touch with a doctor immediately and go to a hospital.



BEHIND THE SCREEN

A healthcare worker, in protective gear and behind a screen, tests a patient at a hotel-turned testing facility in Hari Nagar, Wednesday. Amit Mehra

HC seeks govt 'Police didn't refer to stand on riots, protests before quarantine seizing my phone' guidelines

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Wednesday sought the Delhi government's response on a plea by a photojournalist questioning its mechanism of implementing COVID-19 quarantine guidelines. The man is a resident of one of the 72 houses that came in contact with a pizza delivery person, who had tested positive on April 14.

tine notice pasted outside his house on April 15 said he was in quarantine from the midnight of March 24-25, when he first had contact with the delivery person, till April 20 – 30 days as against the stipulated 14 days. The plea further said that on April 17, another quarantine notice was pasted on his door. This time, the period specified was April 14-28.

The petitioner sought direcstake". Justice C Hari Shankar issued notice to the Delhi government and sought its stand. "The notice said he was under quarantine from March 24 to April 20, which led to his neighbours ques-

tioning him as to why he was not observing quarantine since March 24," said the plea. "The imposition of a 35-day

quarantine period on a person who had a single defined point of contact with the infected individual, and who lives alone. appears to be arbitrary and reflects non-application of mind," it added. ENS

ARANYA SHANKAR NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

ALL INDIA Students' Association (AISA) Delhi president Kawalpreet Kaur Wednesday alleged Delhi Police did not refer to any chat or conversation on her phone before seizing it, and she wasn't asked anything related to the anti-CAA protests, the Northeast Delhi riots or the arrests of other student activists.

Her organisation Tuesday said police had entered her home and seized her phone "in the name of enquiry into the Delhi communal violence". Kaur confirmed the same on Wednesday.

Asked if police gave any reason for seizing her phone, she told The Indian Express: "Special Cell, through local police, contacted me seeking to seize the phone regarding the FIR no 59 dated 06.03.20. After confiscating my phone, they handed over a handwritten seizure report. They didn't refer to any particular chat or conversation on the phone."

She had earlier written on Facebook: "... police seized my phone citing inquiry into the violence. It was really hard to believe this could happen to me."

Asked if she was questioned about the February riots or the anti-CAA protests, she said, "No questions were asked. The only thing they wanted was my phone. They didn't specify any particular chat or any specific case or instance related to anti-CAA protest or Northeast Delhi

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Check lockdown violations at CWG village: HC

PRITAM PAL SINGH NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE DELHI High Court asked a nodal officer to check for alleged violations of the lockdown and social distancing norms at the Commonwealth Games (CWG) village near Akshardham temple, after it was alleged that residents continued with their walks and jogging within the village and in the adjoining DDA park.

Justice Yogesh Khanna issued the direction on April 27 on an application by a CWG village resident. In the plea, it was alleged that there were repeated violations of the national lockdown directives by residents, who are regularly going out for walks, not maintaining social distancing or wearing masks.

The application was filed in a pending petition relating to RWA elections at the village, on which the High Court, in April last year, had appointed a retired district judge as the nodal officer to act to the limited extent of making payment of essential service charges, including statutory payment to the local authorities.

"In view of the limited powers of a nodal officer, and the CWG village being a gated colony, the directives on lockdown issued by the Government of India and the State of NCT of Delhi were given scant regard by several residents of the village," the court was told.

The plea sought direction to permit the nodal officer to close the access gate from the village to the adjacent DDA park and to take all measures to ensure strict compliance of the lockdown directives, and also to report instances of violation to the local district administration authorities.

The plea said since grocery shops are not available within the CWG village, residents have to go to nearby markets at Mayur Vihar, Pandav Nagar and Ganesh Nagar for buying essential items or get them delivered from there. "Many areas in close proximity to these places are declared corona hotspots by the Delhi govern-

ment," the application stated. Justice Khanna ordered: "The nodal officer to act with the aid and assistance of the facility management service agency and CWGVAOA (CWG Village Apartment Owners' Association) staff to check on any violations. within the village, of the guidelines and to report the matter to the local authority concerned, wherever such action is deemed

Two deaths after 3 days, 125 new cases

ABHINAV RAJPUT & ASTHA SAXENA NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

DELHI REPORTED two COVID-19 deaths Wednesday after a gap of three days, taking the toll to 56. It also saw 125 new cases, with the total count now at 3.439. The rate of infection – number of patients testing positive out of all the people tested on a particular day - stood at 4.1%, down from 9.1% on Tuesday.

A few healthcare workers were among the new cases reported. Five staff at AIIMS, a nurse at the gynaecology department and four security guards, tested positive. AIIMS now has 16 cases. "We have guarantined 15-20 staff members from the department. None of them were posted in the COVID-19 ward," said medical superintendent Dr DK Sharma.A doctor at North MCD's Kasturba Hospital tested positive Tuesday. Seven doctors and four nurses were sent to home quarantine. At Rajan Babu TB Hospital in GTB Nagar, four healthcare workers were guarantined after a nurse tested positive. So far, over 250 healthcare workers across Delhi have contracted the disease.

North MCD spokesperson Ira Singhal said the nurse who tested positive had visited another hospital for dialysis: "They checked her before performing dialysis as she had some symptoms, they

sent her to a government hospital." The nurse was admitted after she tested positive. Though her four primary contacts, including her husband who also works in the hospital, have not shown

symptoms, they have been home guarantined, said Singhal. Meanwhile, after reports that some private hospitals were forcing patients who are admitted to undergo COVID-19 tests each

week, Delhi Health Minister Satvendar Jain said hospitals have been asked to conduct tests only if a patient displays symptoms. A man admitted at Apollo

Hospital in Sarita Vihar had claimed the hospital was forcing them to undergo weekly tests and charging Rs 4,500 for it. Responding to the claims, the hospital spokesperson said: "We had initiated testing for our patients to ensure their safety and that of our staff... With the new Union government directives, we are awaiting the Delhi government's order on testing modalities for patients." The Centre had asked all patients being admitted in hospitals in and around containment zones to be tested irrespective of symptoms.

D S Rana, chairman (board of management), Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said they are testing patients coming for dialysis and chemotherapy: "The idea is to ensure the disease is not transmitted further.'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE DELHI government is in talks with other states regarding the Centre's decision to allow stranded migrants to return home, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said Wednesday. He urged people to remain indoors till details of the plan are worked out. The MHA has directed states to designate nodal authorities and develop protocol for sending and receiving stranded migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and others due to the nationwide lockdown.

"We are in talks with other states with regard to the MHA order concerning migrants... We will update you in a day or two after carrying out complete planning. Till then, please remain indoors and adhere to the lockdown," the CM tweeted.

The national capital had faced a crisis late last month when thousands of migrant workers had gathered at its exit points bordering Uttar Pradesh, such as the Anand Vihar bus terminal, demanding arrangements to return home. In the absence of transport options, thousands streamed out on foot. The MHA had subsequently suspended two senior Delhi government officials for the

@ CPRONCE

5



The CM urged people to stay indoors till a plan is in place

incident, which had also sparked a political blame game between the AAP and the BJP.

The Kejriwal government then notified around 111 government facilities, mainly schools, as shelters for migrants Currently, around 10,040 people are housed in these shelters. The government had also issued orders asking landlords to waive at least a month's rent if tenants happen to be migrant workers or students.

"Instances of landlords forcing students for immediate payment of rent or face eviction have been brought to the government's knowledge. The DMs shall undertake awareness campaign particularly in areas having higher density of workers/migrant workers/students to advise affected persons to lodge complaints... by calling 100," states the April 22 order.

In his plea, he said the quaran-

tions to the Delhi government to strictly adhere to the said guidelines and follow due procedure, "when issues of liberty are at

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tender Notice No.: Sr. DEE/RS/ELS/CNB/2019-20/RET-10 Dated: 27.04.2020

E-Tender Notice

					1
				Sr. No.	E-Tende
Senior Divisiona	I Electrical Engineer/RS/North Central Railway/Kanpur, for and on beha	If of the President	of India, invite the		
ollowing open E	-Tender for the following work up to Tender Opening Date & Time. The de	tails of the tenders	are as under:-	01	07/2020
Tender	Name of Work	Approx	Earnest Money	02	08/2020
No.		Cost(₹)	Deposit (₹)		
ELS-CNB-	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of 04 nos. clean drinking	34,17,204.00	68,300.00		ling Start 28/05/202
2019-20-RET-	water systems (RO+Tanks+Cooler+Stands etc. as per given specification	on/drawing) with 02	years warranty	on 28	3/04/2020.
10	and annual maintenance contract for 03 years after warranty (total 05 yea	rs coverage) at ELS	S/CNB.	Like	e us on : 👎
Completion peri	iod of Work: 60 Months Tender Document Cost: ₹ 3000/- (Rs. Three Th	ousand on l y) Tend	er Opening Date &	10	СННА
Fime: 26.05.202	0 & 11:30 hrs. Note: 1. The complete information along with tender docu	iment of above e-T	enders is available	V	
on website <u>www</u>	.ireps.gov.in up to due date & time of tender opening. 2. Bids, other	than in the form of I	E-Bids, shall not be		site: www.cg IB invites T
accepted agains	t above Tenders. For this purpose, venders are required to get thems	elves registered w	ith IREPS website		rienced firr
along with Digita	I Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Offer rates q	uoted in the form of	fe-tender schedule	Cons	sultancy Se

& duly signed digitally shall be final. No other documents related to offer rates shall be entertained. Tenderers are advised not t attach any document related to offer rates (except undertaking(s) asked). These documents shall be treated as NULL and void nd shall not be considered for evaluation of offer. 4. Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 6. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on th vebsite of IREPS may be approached. 493/20(K)

🚹 North central railway

BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA

www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

Chief Engineer (Bridges Department)

No. Ch.E./20/07/Bridges/GMLR dated :- 28.04.2020

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION (RFQ) (INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)

HONOURABLE Municipal Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai invites "Request for Qualification (RFQ)" from eligible and experienced bidders through e-tendering as detailed below.

DEPARTMENT	Ch. Eng. (Bridges)
e-RFQ/Bid No.	7100177476
SUBJECT	"Request for Qualification (RFQ)" for the work of "Design and construction of Twin Tunnel below SGNP from Amar Nagar, Mulund to Filmcity Goregaon along with Cut & cover Box Tunnel in Filmcity area, Goregaon under the Goregaon Mulund Link Road Project"
Sale of e-RFQ	Start Date: 29.04.2020 from 1100 hrs
	Last Date: 11.06.2020 up to 1300 hrs.
Pre-bid meeting	2000 hrs. on 12.05.2020
	Address- Conference room of AMC (P), 2nd floor, Annex Building, MCGM Head Office, Mahapalika Marg, Fort, Mumbai-400001, Maharashtra, India.
Website	http://portal.mcgm.gov.in
Contact Person	Assistant Engineer (GMLR)
a. Name	1. Shri. Ashok Mali (Mob. no. +91 9820847944) 2. Shri. Sudhakar Hande (Mob. no. +91 9869113088
b. Telephone No. (Office)	022-25962601, Ext. 2006
c. Email	che.gmlr@mcgm.gov.in

RFQ documents are available on MCGM portal http://portal.mcgm.gov.in under e-tender tab. Any queries about the work can be sent on Email address che.gmlr@mcgm.gov.in on or before 09.05.2020 Sd/-

PRO/53/ADV/20-21

Chief Engineer (Bridges) MCGM HELPLINE NUMBER 1800221292 from 9 a. m. to 9 p. m. FOR Homeless/Stranded Migrants/ Workers for food & shelters

WESTERN RAILWAY-BHAVNAGAR DIVISION ER NOTICE FOR ROAD, ROOF & FLOOR IMPROVEMENT No. W/118/NIT/E-Tender/2020-21/WA/03, Date: 28/04/2020 Tender Details are as under Tender Value (₹) EMD (₹) Name of Work er No Bhavnagar Division: Improv of road surface by pro 20-21 88,63,300.00 1,77,300 providing rubberized surface at 10 Nos LCs.

Porbandar: Repairs to roof and 44,96,941.53 89,900 20-21 floor of C& W shed. rt Date: for tender 1. 2- 14/05/2020, Bidding Closing Date: for tender D20.The NIT has been uploaded on Railway Website: <u>www.ireps.gov.ir</u> D-06

ATTISGARH HOUSING BOARD DIVISION JAGDALPUR, BODHGATH COLONY, JAGDALPUR eghb.gov.in, Ph: 07782-231170, Mob: 094242-09020. Advt.No. 70 Dt. 29.04.2020 Technical & Financial offer as per Request for Proposal from qualified and rms (criteria as per in RFP document) for providing "Project Management services" for Proposed Township for NMDC Ltd at Niyanar Jagdalpur (C.G.)

Name of Project Area of Land Approx .Estimated cost put to bid Valu Rs. 1768.56 Crs. RFP for selection of Consultant for Project 118.00 Acres Management consultancy (PMC) for Proposed (47.86 hect.) Township for NMDC Ltd at Niyanar Jagdalpur.C.G.

The bidder has to submit process fee of Rs. 10,000.00 & Bid Security of Rs. 18.00 lakhs bott in the form of DD/BG of any Nationalized Indian Bank with offer. The offer shall be sub mitted either by hand/ Courier/ Speed post in the office of EE CGHB Div. Jagdalpur C.G. up to 4:00 AM dt. 22/05/2020, other conditions may be seen on website Executive Enginee

पश्चिमांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि., विक्टोरिया पार्क, मेरठ

अल्पकालीन ई–निविदा सूचना

नेम्नलिखित निविदाओं के द्वारा निम्नवर्णित कार्य को बाहय एजेन्सी के माध्यम कराने हेतु अल्पकालीन ई—निविदा/ निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है :—

अल्पकालींन ई—निविदा सं.—01/वि.कार्यशाला खं./मेरठ/कार्य/2020—21 विद्युत कार्यशाला खण्ड, मेरठ के अन्तर्गत विद्युत कार्यशाला बड़ौत (बागपत) पर क्षतिग्रस परिवर्तको की मरम्मत में वृद्धि हेतु एक अतिरिक्त विद्युत चालित Hoist की स्थापन एवं अन्य सम्बन्धित कार्य। (नि.मू. रु. ११८००० (जी.एस.टी.सहित), धरोहर राशि–रु 8500.00)

अल्पकालीन ई–निविदा खुलने की दिनांक :–14.05.2020

अल्पकालीन ई–निविदा हेतुँ वांछित धरोहर राशि एवं निविदा शुल्क (18% जी.एस.टी सहित),(अप्रतिदेय) आर.टी.जी.एस. ⁄ एन.ई.एफ.टी. के माध्यम से अधिशासी अभियन्त वेद्युत कार्यशाला खण्ड, मेरठ के नाम से सैन्ट्रल बैंक ऑफ इण्डिया की जेल चुँगी मेरठ स्थित बैंक शाखा में संचालित चालू बैंक खाता सं. 1403900519 (IFSC Code CBIN0282337) में जमा कराया जायेगा। ई–निविदा भाग–प्रथम में कराये गए आर ग़े.जी.एस./ एन.ई.एफ.टी. की पे–इन–स्लिप/रसीद के साथ, अन्य सम्बन्धित प्रपत्रो पेन कार्ड, जी.एस.टी. प्रमाण–पत्र इत्यादि की स्कैनड प्रतियों (pdf format) तथ निविदा भाग—द्वितीय (प्राईसबिड) को ई—निविदा खुलने की तिथि को 14:00 बजे तक www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड किया जॉना होगा। ई–निविदा भाग–प्रथम उसी दिनांक में 16:30 बजे सार्वजनिक रूप से खोला जायेगा। ई—निविदा भाग—प्रथग में सम्बन्धित प्रपत्रों को अपलोड न किये जाने की स्थिति में ई—निविदा क भाग–द्वितीय (प्राईसबिड) नहीं खोला जायेगा। ई–निविदा भाग–प्रथम/द्वितीय खुलन् की दिनांक को सार्वजनिक अवकाश होने पर निविदायें, आगामी कार्य दिवस पर पूर्ववत समय पर खोली जायेगी। किसी एक अथवा सभी ई–निविदाएं एवं निविदा के किसी भाग को बिना कोई कारण बताये निरस्त करने का पूर्ण अधिकार अधोहस्ताक्षरी वे पास सुरक्षित होगा। कृपया वैबसाईट www.etender.up.nic.in पर ई–निविदा र सम्बन्धित समस्त जानकारी, विवरण⁄डाऊनलोड तथा अन्य किसी प्रकार के संशोधन∕विस्तार के लिये लॉगइन करें। वेद्युत सम्बन्धी शिकायतों की सूचना "1912" पर दें।

Remark: www.etender.up.nic.in

पत्रांक 232 दिनांक 29.04.2020 राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें

अधिशासी अभियन्त

विद्युत कार्यशाला खण्ड प.वि.वि.नि.लि. मेरठ violence."

<u>ORTH WESTERN RAILWAY</u> निविदा सूचना

No. M-03-2020-C&W-All वरिष्ठ मण्डल यांत्रिक इंजीनियर (सवम अजमेर भारत के राष्ट्रपति एवं उनकी ओग से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु दिनांक 20.05.2020 को 15.00 बजे तक ई—निविदा (Single backet system) आमंत्रित की जाती है . कार्य का नाम : Annual Maintenance Contract of CUMMINS Diesel Engine of SPART UDZ for two years. (Engine Si No. 25261220 & 25261221 Model NTA 855-R-IESM) 2. कार्य की अवधि : 02 /ears, 3. कार्य की अनुमानित लागत : Rs 26,29,848.80 (Rs. Twenty Six Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousands Figh Hundred Forty Eight and Eighty Paisa only) 4. बयाना राशि : Rs 52,600/- (Rs. Fifty Two Thousands Six Hundred only) 5. ई—प्रस्ताव का खुलन Technical bid) : दिनांक 20.05.2020 क ।5:00 बजे 6. Website particulars /ww.ireps.gov.in 421-SP/20 Please join us on 🎞 📕 /NWRailways

IORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

(Single Packet System) Chief Engineer (Construction)-II Opposite Railway Hospital, Hasanpur Road, North Western Railway, Jaipur 302 006 for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-Tender Tenderer shall on-line submit their original/revised offer before the date and ime of closing of E-tender. 1. E -Tende Notice No. : NWR -HQ-SC-UST-444106888, 2. Name of work with ocation : North Western Railway Carrying out Ultrasonic testing of AT Flash welds as per Indian Railway Standard Specification. 3 Approximate cost of work : Rs. 1,18,67,500.00 **4. Earnest Money to be** deposited : Rs. 2,09,300.00, 5. Completion Period : 24 (Twenty four) months 6. Closing Date & Time of submission of On line E-tender: 15.00 Hrs. on 27.05.2020. 7. Website particulars where complete details of E-Tender can be seen www.ireps.gov.in Note: 1. No manua ender will be accepted. 2. The Earnes Noney Deposit (EMD) and Tende Document Cost (TDC) will be submitte by the tenderer only through net banking or payment gateway only. Note- Fixe Deposit Receipt (FDR), Demand Draft, Banker Cheque, Deposit Receipt will no be accepted as EMD & TDC. The payment is to be made in favour of FA 8 CÁO (C), N.W. Railway, Jaipur otherwise tender will not be considered. 418-SP/20 Please join us on 📶 🔝 /NWRailways is happening in a time when the entire world is in lockdown and it's difficult to hold mass protests and access legal help."

Kawalpreet Kaur is AISA's

Delhi unit chief. Police did

not respond to the incident

She added police did not "in-

dicate anything" on when the

phone would be returned. She

also said police did not ask her

anything about Jamia student ac-

tivists Safoora Zargar and Meeran

Haider, who have been arrested.

"As of now, no questions on the

case were asked to me in any

DCP (Special Cell) Pramod

In her Facebook post, Kaur

Singh Kushwah did not respond

to calls and messages seeking a

said she and AISA had been active

in protests against CAA-NRC-NPR

and they raised their voice for

"peace, democracy and justice"

post the Delhi riots, besides doing

turbing to know police are trying

to intimidate me for my activism,

for speaking in defence of the

Constitution," wrote Kaur,

adding, "Delhi Police action of

seizing my phone is... an attempt

to instill fear among us all... all this

"It is deeply shocking and dis-

form," she said.

comment.

relief work.

appropriate.' The court sought report in this regard from the authorities within four weeks.

SAMAGRA SHIKSHA

STATE PROJECT OFFICE, KBC BOYS HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS, OPP RAITHU BAZAR PATAMATA, VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH

Request for Proposal

e-procurement notice. No. SSA-16021/4/2019-MIS SEC-SSA, dt. 29.04.2020 Samagra Shiksha, Andhra Pradesh is inviting Request For Proposal for procurement and supply of set of note books under the scheme of Jagananna Vidya Kanuka" to all the students (approximately 21 lakhs i number) studying classes VI to X in Government/MMP/ZPF Municipal/KGBVs/Model Schools/Ashram schools/ Residential/Aideo Schools of Education and welfare departments in the State of Andhra Pradesh during the year 2020-21. For details please visit https:/ tender.apeprocurement.gov.in from 01.05.2020. Tender/REP form can be ownloaded from website. Eligible firms shall upload the prescribed format a per the schedules given in the above said site. Contact No. 0866-2428599

V. Chinaveerabhadrudu, I.A.S State Project Director

R.O. No.: 23PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2020-21 Samagra Shiksha, Andhra Pradesh

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), Northern Railway, Moradabad for & on behalf of the president of India, invites single packet open e-tender via vw.ireps.gov.in for the following:- S. N.: 1, E-Tender Notice No.: 48-GST-DE OS-2019C, Name of the Work: Feeding of GST Manual invoices Data on daily pasis of commercial department over Morodabad Division on utility available www.gst.indianrail.gov.in for a period of one year. Cost of tender form should be deposited through payment gateway only: Rs. 2360/-, Earnest mone should be deposited through e-payment gateway only: Rs. 13800/-Completion period of the work: 01 (One Year), Total Estimated cost fo feeding of One GST invoices (Excluding GST): 5.84/-, Date & Time for submission of tender & opening of the tender: Tenders will be received up to 14.00 hrs of 22.05.2020 and opened after 16.00, Website particulars where complete details of the tender can be obtained and tenders will be accepted through: Tenders will only be accepted via e-tendering through www.ireps.gov.in any tender received of manually or through any other mode wi not be considered. Estimated number of total form to be feed = 117165, Notes (1) No any documents related to tender shall be entertained after opening of nder. (2) in case of any difficulty helpdesk and learning center available on th website www.ireps.gov.in may be approached 1018/2020

Serving Customers With A Smile

TAMILNADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION

Head Office: 12, THAMBUSAMY ROAD, KILPAUK, CHENNAI-600 010 Ph.No.(044) 26426773 Email id : <u>tncsc.tn@nic.in</u> CIN:U15137TN1972SGC006157

SHORT e-TENDER NOTICE

No. : BS6/014085/2020

Dated : 24.04.2020 Short E-Tender No.: BS6/014085/2020/TNCSC/20-21/ET-04

Online electronic tender for "Appointment of millers based on the out-tur ratio for the conversion of raw tur into Tur Dal (Split-Husked & Fatka) as pe Agmark Specification for issue under Pradan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojar (PMGKAY)"

Complete e-tender document can be viewed and downloaded through https://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprochome/tncsc and also available in www.tenders.tn.gov.in

The bidders have to participate online bidding only with Digital Signatu Certificate (DSC) of Class-II or Class-III

Registration and further details MSTC LIMITED For contact Phone:25222842/25251910/25261005 e-Mail: mstcsro@mstcindia.co.in

Last Date for Online Submission : 08.05.2020. DIPR/1693/Tender/2020

MANAGING DIRECTOR.







THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 5 THE OUTBREAK NATION





A man feeds monkeys in Jaipur. Rohit Jain Paras

MADHYA PRADESH 3 workers run over by truck while sleeping

Bhopal: Three migrant labourers who were stranded in Rajasthan died a few kilometers away from their village in Ujjain district when a truck ran over them while they were asleep on Wednesday. The trio, including a couple, was part of a group of 12 workers who were dropped near the Madhya Pradesh border by a Rajasthan government bus. Another bus arranged by the Madhya Pradesh government dropped them near Nagda Naka near Ujjain late on Tuesday. Fatigued, the workers had then decided to sleep on the roadside. ENS

UTTARAKHAND Homoeopathy medicines for health staff

Dehradun: Uttarakhand cabinet on Wednesday decided to provide homoeopathic and ayurvedic medicines to frontline health workers to "boost their immunity". Homoeopathy drug Arsenicum Album 30 and ayurvedic syrups of herbs such as Tulsi and Ashwagandha will be procured at a cost of Rs 2.48 lakh and given to medical and nara-medical staff said



The Mumbai Agricultural Produce Market Committee's vegetable market wears a deserted look on Wednesday. Officials have closed roads leading to the market after some traders tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday. Amit Chakravarty

Attacks on frontline workers: UP to bring in ordinance for strict penalty

MAULSHREE SETH LUCKNOW, APRIL 29

THE UTTAR Pradesh government is set to promulgate an ordinance to amend the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, to ensure that those involved in attacks on frontline workers amid the COVID-19 pandemic face stiff penalties, including a jail term of up to seven years and Rs 5 lakh as fine.

Citing the attack on health workers and police in Kanpur and Moradabad, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said, "Attacks on our corona warriors are a serious crime which cannot go unpunished as these warriors are working for the society by put-

ting their lives at risk." That is why we have moved forward to amend Epidemic Diseases Act...," he said.



Speaking to The Indian Express, state Law Minister Brijesh Pathak said that after the Centre amended the Act, each state was supposed to amend rules concerning it. "Uttar Pradesh has decided to implement all provisions, like punishment from six months to seven years and fine imposed in the Central Act. We have decided to bring a fresh ordinance, making the punishment more strict." While the new ordinance will

people to decongest Rainandgaon

guarantine centres – the district

has 58 quarantine camps, hous-

Adityanath

be called Uttar Pradesh Epidemic Disease Control Ordinance, 2020, sources said it would include punishment for offences like spitting, running from quarantine facilities

security personnel or even those engaged in doorstep delivery, are helping people of the state by putting their lives at risk and just a handful of people cannot be allowed to create unrest. He said that he has asked police officers

Chhattisgarh dist throws up first case,

question on transfer during quarantine

not to hesitate in taking action. "Such attacks are a direct challenge to the law and order system, and in no situation, they can be accepted. I had said it earlier too and will say it again that in Uttar Pradesh, all the health workers, security personnel, all the sanitation workers, and even social organisations are working to break the chain of coronavirus... Attacking them is an unpardonable crime," he said, adding that Gangster Act and National Security Act would also be invoked against those involved in such attacks.

and violating restrictions.

The CM said medical teams,

Four held for attack on police team in Kanpur

Lucknow: Minutes after health workers took away nine family members of a person, who had tested positive for coronavirus, to put them in quarantine, local residents Wednesday allegedly attacked a police team deployed at the spot and threw stones in

Jugiyana locality of Kanpur. Police said those who targeted the police personnel demanded that health workers should test the patient's family members at the residence and take away only those who test positive for coronavirus.

Fifty area residents have been booked in a case filed at the local police station.

At 71, highest 24-hour toll; cases doubling in 11.3 days

ionwide lockdown, a source

close to the Health Minister in-

dicated that he is in favour of

continuation of the lockdown.

The source said, "The deci-

sion has not been taken yet on

how the relaxations will be im-

plemented. The Prime Minister

himself is consulting all stake-

holders and taking as many in-

puts as possible.... We cannot risk

a disaster."

col earlier.

on Tuesday.

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

EVEN AS discussions on where each district stands in terms of coronavirus cases and the opening up formula continued in the government, the country recorded its highest 24-hour toll - 71, it was announced on Wednesday.

In all, 1,008 people have died of COVID-19 across the country so far

In the last 24 hours, 1,813 new cases were reported, taking the total number of cases to 31,787, and 7,796 patients have recovered, making the recovery rate nearly 25 per cent.

So far, 7,70,764 tests have been conducted in the country in private and ICMR laboratories.

In an interaction with the Lions Club International members from across the country, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan said that there are "a little over 300 districts in the country with no cases and another 300 with minimal - between 1 and 5 - cases'

He also said that the doubling time over the last three days is 11.3 days.

According to the minister, although the global mortality rate is around 7 per cent, India has so far shown a mortality rate of around 3 per cent, with nearly 86 per cent fatality of patients with co-morbidities.

While the discussion currently is centred around a graded opening up of the na-

17 more deaths, **Gujarat cases** cross 4,000

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, GANDHINAGAR, VADODARA, RAJKOT, SURAT, APRIL 29

SEVEN JOURNALISTS and five state information department officials were among the 317 new COVID-19 cases reported in Gujarat - the highest single-day jump - on Wednesday. The number of cases in the state has now crossed 4,000.

The number of deaths in the state stands at 200 with 17 more people dying on Wednesday. Rajkot reported its first death - a 60-year-old woman with hypertension, who was hospitalised on April 20, died. Her husband and two sons have tested positive, taking the district case count to 58. Nine people died in Ahmeda-

"If you ask the minister perbad, including a 20-year-old womsonally," the source added, "he an and a 65-year-old man with a thyroid condition. Three others would tell you that it may be better to maintain status quo." who died are two men, aged 54 Signalling a change in the and 64, and a 45-year-old woman protocol so far, the Health who had no co-morbidities. Two Ministry has already announced other men, aged 80 and 61, who died at SVP Hospital, had hyperthat offices where a COVID case has been detected need not be tension. A 70-year-old woman closed down, as was the protowho died at Civil Hospital had asthma and hypertension. Another 60-year-old woman to suc-

"If there is a COVID patient in a non-COVID hospital, that facilcumb had lung complications ity can be used after disinfection. along with mental illness. The same process is to be fol-In Ahmedabad, 234 people lowed for any other location tested positive, including five where a COVID patient is deemployees of state information tected. The building can be used department. Of them, two are in after proper disinfection," Joint home guarantine and three at a Secretary Lav Agarwal had said care centre in Samras Hostel.

Vadodara reported 22 new In his interaction with the cases, including seven media-Lions Club members, Vardhan persons. Of these, two are emsaid: "This time the hallmark of ployees of a digital news organour approach has been five-fold: isation who were travelling to (i) maintaining a continuous sit-Vadodara to report on the panuation awareness, (ii) preempdemic. A 24-year-old reporter tive and proactive approach, (iii) and a 54-year-old cameraperson graded response as per continof the organisation tested posiuously evolving scenario, (iv) intive along with their cab driver. ter-sectoral coordination at all Four other local mediapersons levels, and, most importantly (v)also tested positive but are creating a people's movement to asymptomatic and have been guarantined at their homes

Lancet study: No statistically significant clinical benefits of remdesivir in COVID patients

combat this disease.'

ABANTIKA GHOSH NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

It was used in between trial of WHO, under which it is February 6, and March 12, and 237 likely to be used in Indian patients, patients were enrolled and rantoo. domly assigned to a treatment

There are other trials under

Uttarakhand minister Madan Kaushik. ENS

ASSAM Austerity

measures announced

Guwahati: The Assam government Wednesday announced a slew of austerity measures in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. Among the steps are reduction of establishment expenditure -from 20 per cent to 10 per cent of the budget for the first quarter - and suspension of sops to industries. The release of MLA Funds was suspended for the first four months of the fiscal or until further orders. ENS

GARGIVERMA RAIPUR, APRIL 29

tacted by the Rajnandgaon collector and we made arrangements ON TUESDAY, a 58-year-old man for 106 people they sent to our distested positive for COVID-19 in trict," Surajpur district collector Deepak Soni said on Wednesday.

Chhattisgarh's Surajpur – the first confirmed case in the district. In the rapid test, nine others quarantined at the same shelter camp were suspected to have been infected.

A 10th person suspected to raised a question of whether peohave contracted the infection was ple should be allowed to travel housed at a quarantine camp in during their mandatory quaran-Jashpur district. tine period.

Both were green zone districts, and all 12 people had arrived, along many others in a group of around 400, from quarantine centres in Rajnandgaon district on April 17.

"We have sent all patients hardly a "few" days. (man who tested positive and Sahu, however, said: "It is the

those suspected to have been instate's (government's) prerogative fected) to AIIMS-Raipur. I was conwhere people are kept. They were quarantined in Rajnandgaon, were transported by our vehicles, and kept in the guarantine facility in (different) districts. It doesn't break the quarantine." This transfer of nearly 400

According to a Health Department official, guarantine is meant to restart after every instance of travel.

ing nearly 9,000 people – has The man who has tested positive in Surajpur worked as a labourer in Maharashtra's Wardha district and is a resident of Jharkhand. He was guarantined While Rajnandgaon collector in Rainandgaon on April 5 and J P Maurya said the people sent was moved to Jajawal in Surajpur out had completed the required on April 17. The same day, four 15-day guarantine period, state groups of about 100 people each Additional Chief Secretary Subrat were transferred from Sahu said they had been there for Rajnandgaon to guarantine centres in Jashpur, Surajpur, Koriya and Raigadh districts

Explaining why he ordered transfer of so many people to quarantine centres in other districts, Maurya said he decided to make small groups to ensure containment after more than 400 people congregated at one camp. "Quarantine centres work in theory, but in reality everyone wants to go home. We took the decision of sending them to other districts after they started posing law and order problems,"

he said. Maurya also said he had written to senior bureaucrats in the state to help him transfer some migrant workers from Rajnandgaon's quarantine centres. "We also requested the (Union) Home Ministry to allow us to transport migrant workers to their states (of origin), but it was denied," he said.

THE RESULTS of the first randomised control trial for remdesivir, a drug originally developed for Ebola, in patients of COVID-19 are in, and the results are not promising.

In a study in the medical journal The Lancet, Chinese researchers have reported that they could not find any "statistically significant clinical benefits".

The researchers reported: "Although not statistically significant, patients receiving remdesivir had a numerically faster time to clinical improvement than those receiving placebo among patients with symptom duration of 10 days or less. Adverse events were reported in 102(66%) of 155 remdesivir recipients versus 50 (64%) of 78 placebo recipients. Remdesivir was stopped early because of adverse events in 18(12%) patients versus four (5%) patients who stopped placebo early."

group. Of these, 158 patients in 10 hospitals in Wuhan, China, had actually received the drug.

The study, however, was stopped midway by the data safety monitoring board since there were not enough COVID patients left in Wuhan after the outbreak there was brought under control. So the authors high-

lighted the need for larger studies. Remdesivir. developed by Gilead Sciences Inc, a researchbased biopharmaceutical company, is a broad-spectrum antiviral previously tested in humans with Ebola virus and has also shown promise as a drug against the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), both of which, like COVID-19, are caused by coronaviruses. It has been touted as one of the most promising therapies against COVID.

way, including one at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) in Omaha, USA, whose regulatory sponsor is the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health. Prof Bin Cao from China-Japan

Friendship Hospital and Capital Medical University in China, who led the research, wrote: "Our trial found that while safe and adequately tolerated, remdesivir did not provide significant benefits over placebo ... but we are mindful that we were only able to enrol 237 of the target 453 patients because the COVID-19 outbreak was brought under control in Wuhan... restrictions on bed availability resulted in most patients being enrolled later in the disease course, so we were unable to adequately assess whether earlier treatment with remdesivir might have provided clinical benefit."

It is a part of the SOLIDARITY

DATA PRIVACY, OWNERSHIP AND STORAGE

Concerns over Gujarat app, with links to health secy, used to track cases

SOHINI GHOSH GANDHINAGAR, APRIL 29

THE GUJARAT state health commissioner has raised concerns of data privacy, ownership and storage regarding TeCHO+ app, which is being used to upload data on COVID-19 patients.

The software for the app was developed by ArguSoft India Ltd, whose president is Ravi Gopalan, the husband of Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Jayanti Ravi.

Sources in the Gujarat government confirmed that Health Commissioner Jai Prakash Shivahare raised the concern in a communication dated April 16 regarding "TeCHO software", saying that in order to use an upgraded version of it, "certain legal aspects needed to be taken into account like consent of the patient, ownership of the data,

data storage and use. Under the circumstances, in order to increase the coverage of the TechoSoftware application,

there should be an MoU with the developer of the application". Sources said the concern was

regarding sharing of data with Argusoft India Ltd. While Shivahare refused to

comment on the issue, Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel, who holds the health portfolio, told The Indian Express, "I have come across some news reports regarding this but I don't have any information.'

In response to questions sent by The Indian Express. Ravi said any allegations were "baseless" and that "as a matter of principle, I and my husband Ravi Gopalan had decided years back that all work he does for the Gujarat government would be free of cost"

Argusoft India Ltd built



Medical officials in Vadodara's Nagarwada after a person tested positive in the area. Bhupendra Rana

TeCHO+ as a free app and its privacy policy states that the "Service is provided... at no cost and is intended for use as is".

Incidentally, the TeCHO+ "ecosystem" includes two other apps, MyTeCHO and DrTeCHO. with tie-ups with the Gujarat

government. Through MvTeCHO, citizens can register complaints or feedback regarding government health services. The service was temporarily on halt, an official said. DrTeCHO, developed post-COVID-19, is to be used by private doctors to notify SARI (Severe Acute Respiratory Infection) or ILI (Influenza Like Illness) cases.

A screenshot regarding mapping data across TeCHO platforms was shared by the Gujarat Information Department on April 12 on a WhatsApp group with journalists, showing a senior official of ArguSoft, Sethuraman Venkataraman, logged into his account, while showing a spatial distribution of cases.

Earlier, in an order on March 27, signed by the Joint Secretary, Health Department, and issued in the name of the Governor, the Gujarat Health Department had

said, "concerned authorities will have to ensure that private doctors and hospitals upload all information online regarding suspected cases" on DrTeCHO+ app and "violation of this circular will result in proceedings under the Gujarat Epidemic Regulation, 2020".

Subsequently too the government had issued advertisements regarding the app, talking of "mandatory reporting of all Novel Corona virus symptoms or Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) through DrTeCHO app" by all private doctors and private health institutions".

The privacy policy for DrTeCHO says, "If you choose to use our service, then you agree to the collection and use of information in relation to this policy... For a better experience... we may require you to provide us with certain personally identifiable information. The informa-

tion that we request will be retained by us and used as described in this privacy policy. The app does use third party services that may collect information used to identify you."

In her statement to The Indian Express, Ravi said that when she was appointed as the Health Commissioner in 2017, she had informed the General Administration Department that her husband's firm Argusoft had in 2013 developed the ImTeCHO app for the Gujarat government, used as a tracker for maternal and infant health.

It was officially "dedicated to the people" on October 7, 2017. by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from his hometown Vadnagar, Ravi's statement said, adding that the information is also used on the CM Dashboard. Ravi added that the ImTeCHO app was used for "door-to-door surveillance... after COVID-19 pandemic struck and was also used to monitor treatment". "... in the first week of April when the Central government launched a mobile app for the treatment and observation of COVID-19 patients and when governments were directed to use it, instead of TeCHO, the decision was taken at our level to use the Indian government's app".

As of April 21, according to a Gujarat government press release, 3,304 doctors were registered on DrTeCHO+ application.

Dr Kamlesh Saini, state secretary of the Gujarat chapter of the Indian Medical Association. said doctors were expected to enter details such as name, age, phone number, residential address, travel history, co-morbidities or existing health conditions of SARI or ILI cases, as well as the symptoms being exhibited and since when.



THE OUTBREAK 6

UP migrant who died after 2-week State govt procurement gets delayed, journey home farmers in Rajasthan pay the price tests negative

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, APRIL 29

A 35-YEAR-OLD migrant worker who died on Monday after hitchhiking 1,500 km from Mumbai to Uttar Pradesh's Shravasti district over two weeks has tested negative for COVID-19.

Insaf Ali's autopsy could not ascertain the cause of his death. Ali had reached Mathkanwa village on Monday morning. By noon, after complaining of stomachache, he was dead.

"His coronavirus test is negative. The post-mortem was inconclusive. His cause of death could not be ascertained," SP Anoop Kumar Singh told The Indian Express

The police handed over the body to the family. The burial was scheduled for Wednesday evening. After Ali's death, his family was guarantined in a school for touching his body. They were allowed back home on Wednesday after the test report came back negative.

n

DEEP MUKHERJEE JAIPUR APRIL 29

THREE DAYS after returning from the Krishi Upaj Mandi in Rajasthan's Sriganganagar city, 48-year-old farmer Gurpreet Singh Sandhu still can't stop rueing his loss – he had to sell most of his mustard produce of 75 quintals for much lower than the minimum support price (MSP).

"I suffered a loss of Rs 900 on each quintal after selling the mustard at just over Rs 3,500 a quintal at the mandi. Last year, I had sold my produce to the government at MSP of Rs 4,200 a quintal," says Sandhu, a resident

of 8NN village of Srigangnagar. For this year's rabi season, the Centre has fixed Rs 4,425 a quintal as MSP for rapeseed and mustard. However, with the delay in government procurement due to the lockdown, farmers in most areas of Rajasthan are unable to sell their produce at MSP. The Rajasthan State Co-oper-

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD

Tenuer noutle no. 249-11011se (0c-11)/2019 Stum Clearance Board, one sealed short tender consisting of two separate seale covers one for Pre-qualification with EMD to be enclosed in A cover and another for price schedule with name of work dul superscribed to be enclosed in B cover are invited from the registered contractors of TNSCB under Class-I and above o Government Departments/Government undertaking/Public Sector Undertaking, registered as a legal entity in India by th Superintending Engineer, Chennai Circle-II, Tami Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No.5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai 600 00 upto 3.00 PM on 15.05.2020 and the same will be opened at 3.30 PM on same day in the presence of the Tende

LEStimate CER No. 09/IFFA/2020-21
The EMD should be drawn as Demand Draft or Banker's Cheque or FDR or irrevocable Bank Guarantee from any Nationalised/Scheduled Banks, payable at Chennai in the prescribed form in favour of the Executive Engineer mentioned in Column (5). The tender documents can be obtained from the office of the Superintending Engineer, Chennai Cricle-II, TNSCB, No.5, Kamarajar salai, Chennai 600 005 on written requisition along with cost of the tender documents to a value of Rs.16,900/- (Non-Refundable) in the form of Demand Draft or Banker's Cheque upto 3.00 PM, 14.05.2020 drawn in favour of Executive Engineer, mentioned in Column (5). The tender documents are also available at www.tenders.tn.gov.in which can be downloaded from 30.04.2020 to 14.05.2020 upto 3.00 PM. The downloaded tender documents shall be submitted without any alteration, whatsoever it may be, in full shape or otherwise the tender will be liable for rejection. The tender happens to be a holiday, the same will be received and opened on the succeeding working day without any change in the. Clarification, if any on Bid Criteria and other details regarding the tender can be had on all working days from the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Chennai 600 005. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.

DIPR/1705/TENDER/2020

E-Tendering Notice

UP POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD.

The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof

pproximate Val (Including GST (Rs. in lakhs)

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7660.00

18 Months

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EMD (in Rs.)

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SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (CHENNAI CIRCLE-III) Tender Notice No. 249-1/D1/SE (CC-II)/2019 NOTICE INVITING SHORT- TENDER

Name of work/Estimate No

(2) Construction of 702 tenements adopting Type Design 17 K /202

Corporation Dn- 126 under TNHHDP

Estimate CER No. 08/HFA/2020-21

Corporation Dn No. 123 under TNHHDP.

Estimate CER No. 09/HFA/2020-21

No.5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai-600 005

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2 Construction of 1716 Nos of Tenements adopting Type Design

No. 17 K /2020 (Still + 13 Storied) with developments works including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification

arrangements at Pallakumanyam in Greater Chennai



Farmers at the Kishanganj tehsildar office in Baran district after submitting a memorandum requesting an increase in the quantity of wheat and number of tokens issued. Express

ative Marketing Federation Ltd Government data shows that (RAJFED) is procuring mustard as of Tuesday, the average price and gram at MSP of Rs 4,425 and of mustard in the Sriganganagar-Jaitsar, Padampur, Sadulsahar 4,875 per quintal, respectively, but procurement is functional and Sriganganagar mandis was only in a few districts in Kota divi-Rs 3,640, Rs 3,801, Rs 3,711 and Rs 3.765 respectively, much sion, leaving farmers from other lower than the MSP of Rs 4.425. districts like Sriganganagar with no option but to wait or sell their Ranvir Singh Chahar, produce at throwaway prices to Sriganganagar regional officer, RAJFED, told The Indian Express private players at mandis.

that procurement of mustard in the district would start from May 1.

"I couldn't wait till procurement starts. Kharif sowing has started and I need money immediately to purchase seeds and pay labourers for sowing cotton. We have no way of recovering our losses," says Sandhu, who had sown mustard on 16 acres. Sanjay Pathak, general man-

ager, RAJFED, told The Indian Express that this year, in a period of three months, the government has a target of procuring 10.46 lakh metric tonnes of mustard and 6.17 lakh metric tonnes of gram at the MSP. He added that there was a delay of around 15 days in starting the process due to the lockdown.

A total of 2,72,795 farmers are registered with RAJFED to sell their produce at MSP. Online registration was stopped after the lockdown was announced. Among those registered, only 7,547 farmers have been allotted dates for purchase of produce.

Officials said that online registration will begin again from May 1.

Farmers say the delay has hit them hard. At Sodhana village in Baran district's Kishanganj tehsil, 58-year-old Mukesh Paliwal is reluctant to sell 80 quintals of his wheat produce to private players for less than the MSP of Rs 1,925 per quintal. But Ajay Singh Choudhary, another farmer from Kishanganj tehsil, says that due to his urgent need for cash, he couldn't wait. "I needed cash urgently for labourers and other expenses, so I had to sell 500

quintals. The wheat was sold for

Rs 1,743 and Rs 1,661 per quin-

tal – lower than MSP," says Choudhary. FCI general manager (region) Sanjeev Bhasker told The Indian Express that FCI has a target of procuring 17 lakh metric tonnes of wheat in Raiasthan till lune 30. "Till Monday we procured 74,720 metric tonnes of wheat," said Bhasker. FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com





REACHING OUT

RAJYA SABHA Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu has reached out to nearly all members of the Upper House, former Indian Presidents, Prime Ministers, present and former Chief Justices of India, Governors and Chief Ministers of nearly all states, leaders of various political parties and even mediapersons, asking after their health and safety during the lockdown. Part of his "Mission Connect", Naidu has already spoken to 241 Rajya Sabha members, including those who have retired and those recently reelected. He has spoken with former Presidents Pranab Mukherjee and Pratibha Patil as well as former Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and HD Deve Gowda. He has held several video-conferencing calls with Governors to assess the situation during the pandemic in these states. Naidu has also reached out to CJISA Bobde, and his predecessors Deepak Misra and Ranjan Gogoi, now a Rajya Sabha MP.

FOLLOW NO MORE

ABOUT THREE weeks after the White House followed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, President Ram Nath Kovind and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Twitter, the official handle of the White House has unfollowed them all. Around April 10. the White House followed the personal Twitter handles of Kovind, Modi and the PMO. With this, Modi and President Kovind became the only world leaders who were followed by the White House on Twitter. But no more. Besides the three handles, the White House has also unfollowed the Indian Embassy in Washington and the US Embassy in New Delhi. By Wednesday evening, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi took an apparent dig at the government by tweeting about the development - he expressed "dismay" and asked the MEA to look into it.

MAPPING MOVES

THE MHA'S order on inter-state movement of migrant workers and students has created an interesting buzz in the power corridors. Many bureaucrats are saying that the Centre has for the first time displayed the "true spirit of cooperative federalism". They say this is perhaps the only occasion when the Centre has followed a lockdown relaxation model already exercised by a state. The reference is primarily to Uttar Pradesh, which had begun extracting students and migrant workers in large numbers from other states much before the MHA's latest order. Many also pointed to the apparent cue provided in a report in RSS mouthpiece 'Panchjanya', which hailed the way Yogi Adityanath is managing the state during the ongoing pandemic.

E-Tender Notice-02/ECTC/AGRA/2020-21 E-Tender in two parts, Part-I & Part-II valid for four months are invited for the worl Period Earnes Total Date and Date and Name of Work of Money Cost **Fende** Time of Time of Work Submissio opening Cost GST) 8 NÍT harge Increasing Capacity work of (2x160 MVA to 3x160 02 .40.000.0 5900 6590.00 01.06.2020 02.06.2020 Mont /12:00 /12:00 MVA T/F) at 220 KV S/S 690

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

CHENNAI CIRCLE-I

Bihar welcomes govt order on migrants, mum on next steps

SANTOSH SINGH PATNA, APRIL 29

Date: 29.04.202

To whom EMD Tender Schedu cost to be Drav

(5)

Executive

Engineer/

Division VI,

Chennai-04

WHILE BIHAR welcomed the Centre's order on Wednesday allowing movement of labour, students and tourists stranded away from homes across the country, there was no word from it on whether it would arrange for the return of people from the state.

In a statement, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said, "The MHA (Union Ministry of Home Affairs) order is apt and welcome. We will comply with the Central government's protocols on migrants' movement."

Top sources in the Chief Minister's Office told The Indian Express that the government was unlikely to send vehicles to other states, but would arrange to take those who reach its borders to guarantine centres at the block level in their districts.

states like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh last week started making arrangements for the return of students and labour from the state, Bihar had come under pressure to do so. However, the state government had said it couldn't do the same as the Centre's lockdown guidelines forbid it.

Welcoming the Home Ministry's order on Wednesday, Bihar Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi said, "We have

now work accordingly." Bihar DGP Gupteshwar Pandey said while the return of around 10 lakh people, including "around 1,000 students from Kota alone", would be a challenge, they were ready for it. "We have made arrangements to quarantine about 2.5 lakh people. It would be expanded further. We would like the states from where they are coming to conduct screening or COVID tests of all. We can

been asking for this for long. CM Nitish

Kumar had also taken this up with

Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the

recent video-conference meeting. We

had been asking for clarity and will

conduct a second test at our quarantine centres.' Lok Janshakti Party president Chirag Paswan said he had also taken

up the matter with the PM, while the RID claimed the Centre had acted on the "constant pressure put by leader of Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav".

Prayagraj Mela Authority Triveni Bhawan, Triveni Bandh, Daraganj, Prayagraj + 91 532 2500775 / +91 532 2504011, maghmelapmp@gmail.com

RFP for Selection of Agency for Designing and Publication of Administrative Report for Kumbh 2019 by Prayagraj Mela Authority The Prayagraj Mela Authority Invites Bid of Tender No. 22/MM 2019-20 for "RFP for Selection of Agency for Designing and Publication of Administrative Report for

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY Corrigendum Tender Notice No. DRM (Elect.) 78, 79 and 80 (2019-20) issued by this office, which were scheduled to be opened on 22.04.2020 at 15:30 Hrs.,will now be

Hours before testing negative, quarantined railway staffer kills self

An estimated 10 lakh people from Bihar are believed to be stuck in other

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar

states, mostly Haryana, Gujarat, Delhi. Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. As

and Publication of Administrative Report for
Other Terms and condition are same. Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical), EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
t website Https://etender.up.nic.in on
ROPEWAY A SO-YEAR-OLD Railway employee
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The tender documents shall be uploaded on line in 2 cover.
i) Cover 1: shall contain scanned copies of all "Technical Documents eligibility" information
ii) Cover 2: shall contain "BOQ/Financial bid" where contractor will quote his offer for each item 5. Submission of Original Documents: The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft Classifie
towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security/Earnest money Deposit (EMD) and other
Technical Documents with this office as specified in key dates at Sr.No.5 failing which the bids will be PUBLIC NOT
 declared nonresponsive. Bid opening Detail: The bid shall be opened on 26.05.2020 at 11.30 HRs in the office of Executive
Engineer Mandi DivisionNo.II HP.PWD Mandi. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening PUBLIC NO
of the bid as specified the bid will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
7. The bid for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than 120 days after the dead-
 line date for bid submission. 8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for 1. Vinay 2. Kishan 3. Yoget
any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bid-
ders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It maintaining him and not h
is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website permanent employment and family has been humiliate for the latest information related to the tender.
Executive Engineer, society for the tender.
Mandi Division No.II shall be reported on the
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Acting) U167/HP HIM SUCHANA AVAM JANSAMPARK shall not be liable for that. Neeraj Kumar (, C. No. 724, Saket Courts, No.
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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 EXPRESS NETWORK

'Present situation in Kashmir stable but fragile... peace goal for forces'

LIEUTENANT GENERAL BS RAJU took over as GOC of Chinar Corps, which looks after the Army's operations in the Kashmir region, including the highly active Line of Control, on March 2. He speaks to SUSHANT **SINGH** about the situation in Kashmir and the LoC, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Excerpts:

How do you assess the current situation on the LoC? Why has it become active now?

Pakistan has consistently been aiding and abetting infiltration for more than 30 years now. All the terrorist camps and launch pads in PoK are full. These terrorist cadres are desperate to infiltrate with the help of Pakistan Army... Numerous infiltration attempts have been foiled and Pakistan Army is constantly resorting to ceasefire violation to support the terrorist infiltration. Our befitting response to ceasefire violations has been swift, hard and punishing.

Ân impervious Counter Infiltration Grid and our effective response to ceasefire violations have left Pakistan helpless in furthering its agenda.

Isn't it fair to expect that when both India and Pakistan are grappling with COVID-19. the situation on the LoC would be more peaceful and local villagers would be spared? What is Pakistan's gameplan on the LoC?

There is only one reason for the near constant ceasefire violations, Pakistan's attempt to assist more terrorists to infiltrate into India in order to disrupt normalcy in the Kashmir valley. Pakistan Army facilitates these infiltration attempts. Even in times when the world is together in combatting the spread of the pandemic, there is no respite from Pakistan... Our soldiers along the borders are well equipped... We are ensuring that our borders are safe while the

country is fighting COVID-19. The Army along the LoC provides all types of succour and ase to the population. Our





THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

B S **R**AJU GOC OF CHINAR CORPS

Should we expect the situation on the LoC to change anytime soon?

Pakistan's persistence in infiltrating terrorists, proliferating false propaganda are intended to disturb peace and its actions are unlikely to change anytime soon...

What is the internal security situation in the Valley? What are the indicators you are monitoring closely?

The present situation in Kashmir is stable but fragile. Maintaining peace has been the prime goal of all the Security Forces, working in close synergy with each other, ie. Army, J&K Police, CAPF, intelligence agencies and the civil administration. Also, the Awam-Army connect has always been strong due to our ethical conduct and transparency in operations. The situation has been largely normal and no civil casualty due to the Security Forces' action since August 5, 2019, is one example of it. Even now, in our fight against coronavirus, the support and cooperation we have received from the Awaam has

How have the guidelines on **COVID-19 altered your** working routine or that of

been overwhelming.

Start academic session for first-year students in Sept, UGC advises varsities

RITIKA CHOPRA NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE 2020-21 academic session will start one-and-a-half months late for students entering higher education this year.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) on Wednesday released an indicative academic calendar for higher education institutions, suggesting that classes for firstyear students can start by September 1 and for intermediate year students on August 1. It

also indicated that the admission process for fresh batches of students be conducted in August.

UP: BJP MLA 'threatens' man in video, says he hid 'true identity'

MAULSHREE SETH LUCKNOW, APRIL 29

BJPMLA Brijbhushan Rajput, who was seen in a video purportedly questioning a vegetable vendor about his "actual name" and threatening him, told The Indian Express on Wednesday that as a "worker for Hindutva" living in Lucknow, where two "Hindutva leaders" had been killed, he fears for his life and is "extra vigilant" about activities near his residence.

He was referring to the murder of Hindu outfit leader Kamlesh Tiwari in October last year and the killing of another leader in Lucknow.

Rajput said, "I work for cow protection and Hindutva, and there is a threat to my life as well, but I did not say that members of any particular community cannot sell vegetables. I was just concerned about someone hiding his identity.'

In the video that went viral, the MLA from Charkhari in Bundelkhand purportedly asked the vendor to reveal his real name, failing which he would be beaten up. A boy who was with the vendor was asked his name. The boy is heard saying the name, and promising that they would not repeat the act. The MLA is heard

ing the vendor not to return to

and did not have any ID proof'.

his locality.

For the graduating batch, as first reported by The Indian Express on April 26, universities and colleges have been advised to hold their final-year or terminal semester examination from July 1 to July 15 and declare their results end of the month.

For intermediate (read 2nd or 3rd year) students, higher education institutions can hold their semester or year-end examination from July 16 to July 30 and announce results by August 14. June, as advised by UGC, can be treated as summer vacation.

Aside from making changes to the suggested academic calendar, universities and colleges, the UGC clarified, are also free to

MANOJCG&

coronavirus.

MILIND GHATWAI

NEW DELHI, BHOPAL, APRIL 29

ON JANUARY 25, exactly two

months before the first COVID-

On January 31, a day after

India reported its first case of in-

fection in Kerala and the WHO

declared COVID-19 a public

health emergency, the state gov-

ernment decided to make all

those who had returned from

China after January 15 undergo

the third state after Maharashtra

and Gujarat to record over 100

deaths due to COVID-19, and

cities like Indore and Ujjain

emerge as hotspots, what is be-

coming increasingly clear is that

while the state had started gear-

ing up to take on the virus early,

it took its eye off the ball during

As Madhya Pradesh becomes

a coronavirus test

conduct their examination in either offline or online mode and reduce the time from three to two hours. However, the examination should be held "observing the guidelines of 'social distancing' and keeping in view the support system available with them and ensuring fair opportunity to all students", the UGC guidelines states.

In case higher education institutions are unable to conduct term-end exams because of the COVID-19 outbreak, they have been advised to promote students by giving 50% weightage to internal evaluation and the rest to "performance in the previous semester".

vious semester or previous year marks are not available, particularly in the first year of annual pattern of examinations, 100% evaluation may be done on the basis of internal assessments. If the student wishes to improve the grades, he/she may appear in special exams for such subjects during next semester," the UGC guidelines state.

"In the situations where pre-

For research students, vivavoce examinations are expected to take place through video-conferencing. All MPhil and PhD students will get an extension of six months. The lockdown period will be treated as "deemed to be attended" by all students and re-

search scholars.

The 2020-21 academic year may not have a winter break and follow six-day teaching week to make up for the learning time lost due to the classroom shutdown.

Examination for the first semester of 2020-21 is likely to take place in January 2021 and for the second semester in May-June. The 2021-22 academic year is expected to start on August 2.

The UGC guidelines and proposed academic calendar are based on the suggestions of an expert committee led by R C Kuhad, head of Haryana Central University.

Kerala institute gets ICMR nod to test plant extraction for corona cure

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

APRIL 29

EVEN AS the medical research world is looking at a vaccine and drug for coronavirus, a Keralabased research institute is exploring the possibility of a plantbased drug to tackle the virus.

Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), based at Palode in Thiruvananthapuram district, has received the ICMR's approval for testing the effectiveness of the plant's extraction for treatment of coronavirus, according to the institute's director, Dr R Prakashkumar.

The test would be held at National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, he said.

The institute's ongoing project on "anti-viral from medicinal plants of Western Ghats" had found that a compound from a particular plant extraction is effective against chikungunya and dengue, both viral infections. The extraction has effective anti-virus property, the research found.

The findings on chikungunya and dengue is in the stage of patenting, and the project is supported by the Department of Biotechnology, under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology.

Prakashkumar said: "It is not a preliminary research work. We have a lead molecule (that was) found very effective for chikungunya and dengue. Now we are going to address whether that lead molecule is effective for coronavirus as well. We don't want to make any predictions; if we get positive result, it would

be a major breakthrough," Prakashkumar said the name of the plant cannot be disclosed, but it is easily available in Kerala.

The plant extraction would not be given to NIV-Pune - instead the compound of the extraction would be handed over for the crucial test. He said, "We already have the stock of the plant extraction. But we will get the plant harvested again for preparing the extraction afresh so that the lab test gets the desired result."

Prakashkumar said JNTBGRI ill sign an Mol I with NIV-Pune for the test, and the Pune institute has already sent a draft of the MoU. Prakashkumar said they have isolated a molecule and its derivatives. "We had approached ICMR through state Health Secretary Dr Rajan N Khobragade, showing our interest to test this particular molecule against coronavirus. Since the fraction has anti-viral property, it can be checked for



Children sew face masks in Jabalpur on Wednesday. PTI

Noting that the initial momentum was lost, a senior bureaucrat said, "We had started surveying those who had come from abroad by the end of January itself. The Directorate of Health Services issued at least a dozen advisories in February alone. It was much before the

fear factor had set in." On March 3, then Chief Secretary Sudhi Ranjan Mohanty held a video-conference with district collectors and district police chiefs and directed them to ensure medical check-up of all those who had returned from abroad.

the crucial period in March But, soon after, Bhopal was rocked by political ertaken by the politi between the Congress and BJP. "The Kamal Nath government was caught up in saving itself. His Health Minister had rebelled. There were also no cases in Madhya Pradesh. so the political class perhaps took it lightly," a senior official said. The Health Minister at the time was Tulsiram Silawat, a close confidant of Jyotiraditya Scindia, who crossed over to the BJP. Sources said the last official meeting Silawat attended was a Cabinet meeting on March 6. An official currently in the

government said, "We issued directions that there should be no Holi celebrations on March 10. We shut all schools, colleges, malls etc on March 13. But, as

got across messages to both, urg-

you know, all attention was on the political crisis then." À top state official, sources said, had to pull political strings to ensure that the Gair congregation to be held in Indore on March 14 for Rang Panchami was put off. This was a task as the organisers were close to both Congress leader Digvijaya Singh and the BJP's Kailash Vijayavargiya. "We

ing them to impress upon the orers to cancel That is the way things were in complete flux between March 10 and 24," a senior official said

said another senior official, "another 15 days were lost after the Chouhan government took over because there was no clear direction". Chouhan remained the only minister in the state for a month after taking oath on March 23. Now he has a Cabinet of five. Then followed the fiasco of

the entire top-level bureaucracy in the state's health department testing positive, starting April 3. "There should have been threefour teams. but everybody was put in one team, and all of them got infected. So there was no health minister, no principal secretary, health, and no director, health services," said the official.

Chouhan has sought to shift the blame of this too to the previous government, saying, "It appears the health officials were not trained and many of them

got infected themselves.' Chouhan's bureaucratic shake-up included replacement of Mohanty as chief secretary, transfer of Health Commissioner Prateek Hajela (who had earlier headed the NRC exercise in Assam) and a new collector for Indore. One official said the new collector was relatively inexperienced, and took time to get on top of things.

A few days ago, the CM set up a task force on coronavirus eaded by state BIP chief V D Sharma and including only politicians. There is, besides, a 13-member advisory panel headed by activist Kailash Satyarthi and, including a few doctors, which has had only one video-conference with Chouhan so far. Satyarthi's main suggestion has been to ban child pornography. A third team has been formed comprising medical professionals.

19 death was reported in Madhya Pradesh, the state's Directorate of Health Services issued its first advisory to hospitals to be on alert. A second direction followed three days later, asking collectors to form task forces and set up isolation wards for those returning from Wuhan, China, then the epicentre of

How early mover MP lost the plot amid power tussle in March

outreach programmes range from medical help, evacuation, provisioning of rations and other material aid, help in reconstruction of damaged houses and even providing job opportunities to locals. Apart from this. education, skill development and women empowerment initiatives are undertaken regularly. We live with the locals and share the relationship of a 'Humsava' (co-inhabitants), which means that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them through good and not-so-good times.

3 militants killed. 3 security personnel injured in 20-hr Shopian encounter

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, APRIL 29

THREE MILITANTS were killed and three security personnel, including an Army Major, injured in a gunbattle which continued for nearly 20 hours in south Kashmir's Shopian district. Seven people also suffered pellet injuries after clashes broke out near the encounter site.

Police officers said that a cordon and search operation was launched in Melhoora area on Tuesday afternoon. "The encounter concluded today after it started around 4.30 pm on Tuesday," said a police officer.

A J&K Police spokesperson said the "hiding terrorists fired on the search party", triggering the gunbattle. The identity of the three militants is being ascertained. police said.

When the operation began, villagers from a nearby area marched towards the encounter site and clashed with the security personnel on Tuesday afternoon. In the ensuing action by security forces, at least seven people suffered pellet injuries.

units in the field?

All precautions as per guidelines are being followed in letter and spirit by our headquarters and units. Necessary adjustments have been made in our routine and functioning in order to maintain our working and there has been no difference in our efficacy to conduct operations. Along the LoC. all the locations are isolated and to maintain social distancing and isolations norms, there is no problem at all. FULL INTERVIEW ON

www.indianexpress.com

turmoil.

when it wa

The Congress and BJP have Rajput said his security guard traded charges over this period, bought vegetables from the with the Congress accusing the vender. He claimed that when the vender was questioned about perlatter of being more interested mission, he tried to flee. "This in toppling its government in Madhya Pradesh, and the BJP made me suspicious that he was hiding his true identity," the MLA saying that when it came into said. He alleged the vendor, "a power, the state was ill-Muslim, was citing a Hindu name equipped to handle the virus.

Multiple bureaucrats, both Asked about the video, BIP serving and retired, whom The spokesperson Rakesh Tripathi Indian Express spoke to, spoke said, "The BJP does not support about the confusion in Bhopal any discrimination. The MLA is hitting coronavirus efforts in March

SC ORDER ON NEET

Meanwhile, BJP leaders, including Shivraj Singh Chouhan, belittled the threat from the virus. "It's not corona but darona," was a line repeated by many, accusing the Congress of playing up the COVID-19 scare to save its government.

The first case in MP was reported on March 20, in Jabalpur, the day the Kamal Nath government fell.

Apart from 15 days in March,

Ås of Wednesday, Madhya Pradesh's coronavirus figures stood at 2,560 cases and 130 deaths

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

2012, by CMC Vellore among

others, challenging the constitu-

tional validity of the NEET notifi-

cations issued by the MCI and

DCI. Essentially, it was a legal

fight to protect the admission

process it was following since

1946. CMC followed this process

- inspired by selection for forces in pre-

Independent India - with the

help of multiple intern orders

from the Supreme Court from

1993 to 2012, and at least 17

court orders endorsing their se-

armed

coronavirus and its effectiveness

can be ascertained," he said.

ADMIN JUSTIFIES RESTRICTING INTERNET SPEED J&K to SC: Internet used for terror, access not fundamental right eased, if speed is not limited to

just asking for a name."

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

Kashmir

UNDERLINING THAT "Internet is being used" by terror handlers in Pakistan "to support fallacious proxy wars", Jammu and administration Wednesday justified its decision said. The affidavit filed by Shaleen

to restrict Internet in the region to 2G speed and said "right to access the Internet is not a fundamental right". The administration also said

"the type and breadth of access for exercising the right to freedom of speech and expression. and/or to carry on any trade or business under. the constitution. through. Internet can be curtailed" in the interest of security of state, public order etc.

ing 4G Internet speed in the region, the Union Territory Administration told the Supreme Court in an affidavit that curbs on social media had been eased post

the January 10 ruling of the apex special status.

2G, the high speed internet will enable the spread of any fake news/rumors and transfer of heavy data files (audio/video files) will become prevalent which may be utilized by terror outfits for incitement as also in planning attacks," the affidavit

"Current discourses of social

handles are aiming to incite vio-

lence amongst College and

University students," the affi-

(4G) decrease the time of circu-

"High speed internet services

davit said.

Kabra, Principal Secretary Home Department, J&K, said "Pakistan based terrorism handlers..., instigating youth to join terrorism, are using messaging applications to communicate as also to raise the morale of terrorists; however 2G mobile data serv-

ices considerably restrict the use of such Applications. Further, it is submitted that VOIP services/ encrypted messaging, etc. that Responding to petitions seekare utilized for infiltration via

Line of Control as also communication from across the border, depend upon high speed internet". media campaigns infer that Pak

court regarding restrictions imposed in the wake of the decision to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's "Now that the restrictions on

use of social media have been

lation of various photographs, videos, propaganda audios and hence enable the associated content to go viral, with the reaction time of law enforcement agencies to such situations decreasing," it pointed out.

The affidavit said "misuse of data services, applications like WhatsApp and Facebook for mobilizing crowds by anti-national elements has the potential to cause large scale violence, disturb public order and indeed threaten the security of the country"

The administration said "steps taken against the misuse of mobile data services which are prevalent in other parts of the country may not be practical and definitely not suffice in case of J&K".

Stating that only "least restrictive" measures are in place, it added that "even when internet services were restored only with white-listed URLs" after the apex court judgment in January, "it was found that miscreants were using different VPNs but because of low speed mobile data services, were not able to upload files of heavy data containing incriminating and other objectionable videos"

ARUN JANARDHANAN CHENNAI, APRIL 29

A DECADES-LONG legal battle to preserve an admission process that Christian Medical College (CMC) Vellore had been following since 1946 came to an end on Wednesday, with the Supreme Court ruling that all admissions to graduate and postgraduate programmes in medical and dental courses in the country should be based on the National Eligibility-

cum-Entrance Test (NEET). Asserting that NEET was in

the quality of medical education, the apex court disagreed with a key argument of CMC Vellore one of the petitioners – by saying that the NEET regulations do not violate minority rights as the same have been prescribed to weed out the maladies plaguing professional education.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Dr Peter John Victor, Director of CMC Vellore, said they have been following the NEET selection process for admissions in the past two years. "So there is no change in the ex-



Long legal battle to preserve CMC

Vellore's admission process ends

Christian Medical College, Vellore.

isting system," he said.

continue to follow NEET admission process subject to the National Medical Commission Act, which will come in force soon," he said.

While CMC Vellore seems to have no immediate plans to seek a review, the Supreme Court order may impact the Tamil Nadu government's long-standing de-

mand for exemption from NEET. Legal battles may continue over larger questions on minority rights before a larger bench of the Supreme Court. However, the bench on Wednesday held that there was no question of discrimination in respect of minority institutions as both maiority and minority institutions will have to admit students through the common entrance test conducted by the agency appointed by MCI or DCI.

A batch of petitions was originally filed in the apex court in lection process, even after the state government tried to impose a common system. "We had our own nationwide entrance exam followed by an interview session where the aptitude of candidates was evaluated by a group of doctors. Evaluating the candidate's proficiency as a doctor was part of this process. In this manner, we got the best candidates, who were committed to work in rural areas even after postgraduation. Attrition rate of candidates passing out of CMC for a future in a foreign country was also

lowest --- 80 per cent of them serve in India," Srinivasan said.

Krishna Srinivasan, a lawyer who had been fighting the case for CMC Vellore for over three decades, said they are bound to follow the SC order. "We will

Courtesy: CMC

'national interest" to improve

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE I WANT TO ENTERTAIN PEOPLE, BUT WITH SOME SUBSTANCE. — Irrfan Khan

The Indian **EXPRESS**

S FOUNDED BY S RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

AFTER THE DELUGE

It is time to design clear rules for departure from accepted norms of fiscal prudence

RVIND SUBRAMANIAN HAS likened the current economic situation to a "pralay (deluge)", in which the government should spend more than even what it ought to in a rainy day. India, the former chief economic adviser said at an e-Adda event hosted by this newspaper, must plan for a "substantially negative" growth this year that might require an additional fiscal expenditure of Rs 10 lakh crore. He has a point. Corporate indebtedness was already high before the lockdown. Not only will insolvency cases mount further, but even companies facing no significant cash flow issues wouldn't invest in an uncertain public health as well as demand-constrained environment. Banks, too, aren't going to lend, no matter how much liquidity the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may infuse. The burden of non-performing assets, which is set to get heavier in the coming months, makes it impossible for them to finance an economic recovery. Last, but not the least, are households. Faced with layoffs and pay cuts, they would rather save and will be afraid to spend.

Under the circumstances, the onus for ensuring that the wheels of the economy start moving — there's no guarantee of it happening even with all lockdown restrictions being lifted — lies on the government. Without somebody to spend, the economy is in real danger of contraction, which will, in turn, worsen the problem of businesses going bust, joblessness and loan defaults that can spread to the entire financial services industry. The one consolation today is that India is not saddled with its traditional "3F" constraints — food, fuel and foreign exchange — which were triggers for inflation and balance of payments crises. On the contrary, public foodgrain stocks are at an all-time-high, global oil prices have crashed and there is no run on the rupee, unlike during the "taper tantrum" period of May-August 2013. The risks, if at all, are tilted more towards demand-side "deflationary shocks", as Subramanian puts it, than supply-side inflation concerns.

There is a legitimate question, though: If the government has to take up the slack, where will the money for it come from? The finances of both the Centre and states are in a mess, with receipts from tax and non-tax sources hardly covering even existing expenditures. But governments enjoy sovereign borrowing powers that allow fund-raising at rates below that of triple A-rated instruments issued by private corporates, more so in the present risk-averse scenario. Also, there is the option of deficit financing ("printing money") through the RBI subscribing to primary auctions of government securities. There are, of course, costs in such powers being exercised. Past precedents — whether the issuance of ad hoc Treasury Bills to the RBI prior to April 1997 or the stimulus package post the 2008 global financial crisis — do not inspire confidence. This is the time to design clear rules for departure from accepted norms of fiscal prudence. Any stimulus has to be transparent and time-bound.

THE PRICKLY STATE

At a time of crisis, government should welcome, not punish, ideas, criticism. These provide ammunition for the battle ahead

N FACING THE coronavirus challenge, information and ideas are the only ammunition currently available, and should be welcomed and evaluated irrespective of their provenance, whether they originate from within the government or from the public. But a government which has, in better times, sought suggestions directly from the public over the web and through the Prime Minister's app, has become unduly sensitive at a time of grave crisis. When 50 young officers of the Indian Revenue Service forwarded, through their association, policy suggestions, in a report titled FORCE (Fiscal Options and Response to COVID-19 Epidemic) to the Central Board of Direct Taxes and shared them on



The exit dilemma Decision-making under high uncertainty requires

conviction. It is now essential to begin end of lockdown

Deepak Nayyar

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi held his fourth round of consultations with state governments on April 27 to review the COVID-19 situation. The draconian lockdown, which completes 40 days on May 3, was discussed. As in the earlier meetings, several chief ministers urged that the lockdown be extended. While no decision was announced, the lockdown might well continue.

For governments everywhere, more so after the experience of Italy, Britain and the United States, where governments did too little too late, imposing and continuing lockdowns is a risk-averse strategy. If the spread can be curbed, it would bring political kudos. If it is not, the microbe is to blame. It is the equivalent of a one-way option in financial markets, where you cannot lose. This is even more attractive now as it conforms to herdbehaviour by governments worldwide. Of course, exit from a lockdown poses a real dilemma for governments. It is about decision-making under high uncertainty, which requires conviction and confidence.

This dilemma will always be larger than life when there is a single objective of saving lives in a pandemic. But it must also be recognised that the health of people and the health of an economy are interdependent, where both shape the wellbeing of people. Thus, saving livelihoods is an equally important objective. Obviously, getting sick and going hungry cannot be an either-or choice. Everyone would prefer to stay healthy and be well fed. It is the role of governments to strike a balance and reconcile these two objectives, rather than juxtapose them as conflicting, requiring a choice to be made.

Lockdowns, combined with mass-testing, contact-tracing, containment-zones, mandatory-quarantines, can only slow down the speed at which the infection spreads. This might help in countries where public health facilities are robust, yet not adequate for large numbers. But our public health system is poor and could never suffice for our large population if the pandemic spreads. There is no vaccine yet. From development through trials to production will be at least one year, and far longer before it becomes available in sufficient quantities for our massive population.

It is now absolutely essential to begin the process of exit from the lockdown. For one, it would enable the government to find some manage the spread of the virus. So far, morbidity and mortality associated with COVID-19 in India has been much lower than elsewhere in the world. This is possibly attributable to our immune systems, which have antibodies that could be effective in resisting the virus. After all, millions of migrants stranded in megacities or relief camps in cramped spaces have not caught the virus through contagion in large numbers. It suggests that there are already some elements of herd-immunity in India that would grow stronger as the lockdown is lifted slowly.

A calibrated, planned and

phased exit could also help

balance between the twin objectives of saving lives and saving livelihoods. For another, it would help restart the economy, which has been almost completely shut down, and the collateral damage is bound to be far greater if the lockdown is extended.

A calibrated, planned and phased exit could also help manage the spread of the virus. So far, morbidity and mortality associated with COVID-19 in India has been much lower than elsewhere in the world. This is possibly attributable to our immune systems, which have antibodies that could be effective in resisting the virus. After all, millions of migrants stranded in megacities or relief camps in cramped spaces have not caught the virus through contagion in large numbers. It suggests that there are already some elements of herd-immunity in India that would grow stronger as the lockdown is lifted slowly.

The economic and social consequences of the lockdown have been severe. A large proportion of the self-employed, casual workers on daily wages, and informal workers, who constitute 90 per cent of the total workforce, have lost their livelihoods. Demand has dropped sharply as employment has contracted. Supply has been strangled by the massive reduction in output. Government revenues, for both Centre and states, have collapsed. And, even if the lockdown is lifted now, economic growth during 2020-21 would be zero or negative.

For the poor - 75 per cent of rural households and 50 per cent of urban households food security is at risk. It is a matter of survival. Similarly, for micro-small-medium enterprises, their survival is at stake. Large firms, except those with deep pockets, will also struggle. Whatever the government might stipulate, most firms will find it difficult to pay the wages of their employees, for these will only add to their cash losses during the lockdown. Healthcare for patients, except those with COVID-19, has diminished in terms of both access and quality. In education, learning outcomes, already poor, will get worse as schools and colleges remain closed. In every sphere, the short-term effects of the lockdown will have long-term consequences - hysteresis - as future outcomes will be shaped by this past.

For the economy, the sooner the lockdown is lifted the better. But the process of exit from the lockdown will have to be in calibrated steps based on a planned transition path in terms of sequence and speed. In this phasing, the geographical size and diversity of India provide degrees of freedom that are missing in most countries.

On April 27, of the total 736 districts in India, 283 districts had not reported any COVID-19 cases so far, while another 18 districts had no new case in the last 28 days (green zones). Thus, economic activity can resume without restrictions in 41 per cent of our districts. In addition, 48 districts had no new case in the last 14 days while 33 districts had no new case in the last 21 days. Thus, in 11 per cent of our districts that are orange zones, economic activity can be resumed in a phased manner.

Similarly, on April 27, there were nine states, in descending order of numbers, that had more than 1,000 infections: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Rajasthan, MP, Tamil Nadu, UP, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Taken together, they accounted for 80 per cent of the infections and 57 per cent of the population in India. There were 13 states, in descending order, that had less than 1,000 infections: West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Bihar, Punjab, Haryana, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Assam (in the last five, the number of infections was in double-digits). Taken together, they accounted for 12 per cent of the infections and 42 per cent of the population. The distribution of green, orange and red zone districts among states is uneven. The distribution of economic activity across states is also unequal. Even so, there are possibilities.

Economic activity can be resumed in districts without infections and in green zones. The orange zone districts can be brought in as they turn green. The lockdown should continue in states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat and Delhi (with limited relaxations where possible) and in red zone districts, containment-zones or hot spots within cities, as long as necessary.

In this decision to begin exit from the lockdown, PM Modi will need to act with the same confidence as he did when imposing the lockdown.

The writer is an economist and former Vice Chancellor, University of Delhi



COMPASSION, ABOVE ALL

social media, the Centre termed it as a position "contrary to current policies of government", read it as a breach of service rules and instituted an inquiry against three senior Income Tax officers. Some of the suggestions may be controversial, for instance, a hike in income tax rate to 40 per cent for those earning over Rs 1 crore a year for a limited period of time, but the response is repressive and excessively out of proportion. The officers never claimed that their document was official. Publicly dismissing the controversial suggestions would have sufficed if the government wanted to distance itself from the report.

Meanwhile, public questioning of the government's handling of the pandemic in Manipur has landed several citizens in trouble with the law — police have invoked sections of the Disaster Management Act and the Indian Penal Code, including sedition. In one case, it had merely been suggested that a proposed quarantine centre in Imphal should be moved from agricultural land to a disused airstrip. The deputy chief minister was stripped of all his portfolios, amid a controversy over rice allocation under the National Food Security Act during the coronavirus lockdown, apparently for being critical of the chief minister's assurances of adequate food supply. And in Port Blair, a journalist was booked for asking why the phone contacts of COVID-19 patients were being home quarantined. Instead of arresting him, the authorities could have simply explained that tracing call records is one way of discovering a patient's close contacts.

It is generally agreed that long after lockdowns are lifted, nations will have to remain in close cooperation, so that ideas that work in one place can be borrowed and deployed elsewhere. The principle applies domestically, too. Over-sensitive and prickly responses betray insecurity, precisely when governments must project confidence.

HIS OWN PATH

Irrfan pushed back against Bollywood mainstream, made his audience see and believe. His best was yet to be

ITH IRRFAN KHAN'S passing, we mourn the loss of a great actor. He was one of those performers who dig deep into themselves to discover the truth, even when he played the flakiest of characters. He had that very unique, most paradoxical quality, something that all great actors possess: To make his audiences accept the falsity of film as an ineluctable truth, to make them believe.

He began, in 1988, in Shyam Benegal's tele-serial *Discovery of India*. His latest film, *Angrezi Medium* released in mid-March, but couldn't reach the theatres because of the lockdown. He was a cinephile's delight. Critics loved him. But the constraints of finding good work in a film industry which coasted on formula-heavy flicks, and star-driven vehicles were also his constant companion. He began work with directors who broke into Hindi cinema, laterally, just like he had. The mid-'90s Bollywood was on the verge of a massive churn: The mainstream, under the steam of the three young Khans, Aamir-Salman-Shah Rukh, was creating demand and supply for family-friendly, mono-cultural, mono-theistic romances and sanitised social dramas. Pushback was arriving, in the shape of filmmakers who came from the Hindi-speaking heartlands of the North, from Vishal Bhardwaj, Anurag Kashyap, Tigmanshu Dhulia, who wanted to tell their stories, and needed actors who could do the job.

This Khan, who was happy to junk his surname, was finally right where he needed to be. He was capable of being as raw and visceral as the stories he was offered. And soon, he was outstanding. Big Bollywood took notice, and made a grab for him. Big Hollywood wasn't far behind, and cast him in a few mega-budget entertainers. By then, Bollywood had turned new-agey enough for Irrfan to be able to make some of his most exciting work. But his best, combining maturity and "thehraav (gravitas)", was yet to be. Farewell, Irrfan. You made us see.

Nation's fight against coronavirus cannot ignore the chronically sick and vulnerable

SHAH ALAM KHAN

I LIVE IN a suburban, gated (let's call it corona-secure) colony in Noida at the edge of Delhi. I don't have to worry about my livelihood, clean water, food, or money to buy hand sanitiser. For work, I take the expressway to Delhi. A few days after the lockdown was declared, I witnessed a stream of migrant workers and their families on the expressway — men carrying children, women, children carrying younger children and the elderly. Poor people, deprived of their livelihoods, were supposedly walking to their villages, some as far as 200 to 400 km.

Sitaram (name changed) sits in front of my corona-secure colony. He sells balloons and had once told me that he earns about Rs 200 a day. Sitaram lives in a shanty across the road and has three mouths to feed. After the lockdown, his only source of income has dried up. But Sitaram is still lucky — he and his family members are apparently healthy. The lockdown could mean death for a large number of the chronically-ill or those under treatment or awaiting hospitalisation.

I have written in this newspaper about cancer patients who come to metropolitan cities for treatment. Once their funds evaporate, they live on the streets near the hospitals where they are undergoing treatment ('The cancer refugees', IE, July 23, 2018). Hundreds of such cancer refugees live on the street outAccording to a WHO report of 2015, nearly 5.8 million people die every year in India of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). One in

the announcement of the lockdown, the streets and footpaths near the hospital were empty. I'm not sure where this cohort melted away. What is more worrying is that they might discontinue their treatment. It's unfair to compare tragedies, but I feel that the chronically sick are the worst affected in situations such as the current lockdown. According to a WHO report (2015), nearly

side the AIIMS, in Delhi. Within 24 hours of

According to a WHO report (2015), nearly 5.8 million people in India die every year of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Constant evaluation and surveillance hold the key to treating such diseases — this anyway is a difficult proposition in a country like India. After the lockdown, a large number of these patients could have been severely affected.

In 2018, 2.15 million new tuberculosis (TB) cases were diagnosed in India. Imagine the plight of these patients, a large number of whom would be on treatment at DOTS (directly observed treatment short-course) centres and/or at hospital OPDs, which are now either shut down or inaccessible due to the stringent curfew. The resurgence of TB – multiple drug-resistant TB – as a result of not following treatment protocols is well known. It is important that we track the health of TB patients during the lockdown period.

The devotion of my colleagues, students, nurses, ancillary staff, and other members of

the hospital where I work is worth mentioning. It was encouraging that the prime minister asked citizens to clap and clang *thalis* (utensils) as a mark of appreciation for healthcare workers. People responded to the PM's call with gusto. Unfortunately, such appreciation was short-lived — junior doctors of the hospital where I work were asked by their landlords to vacate their premises. There were also reports of a female doctor in Telangana being assaulted by the police who had stopped her for violating the curfew — she was reportedly on her way to work. I wish there was less noise and more assurances about providing equipment to medical professionals.

Physical distancing is imperative to check the spread of the virus. But the lockdown could have been implemented with more compassion. People's health is the responsibility of the state. But at no stage should it resort to methods that hurt the marginalised. The healthcare system of a nation should not be judged by its response to an epidemic but by its commitment to its peoples' health in the long term. A well-oiled healthcare delivery system would have been useful in times like these. But it's never too late to learn from bad experiences.

The writer is professor of orthopaedics, AIIMS, New Delhi. Views are personal



APRIL 30, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM CLIMBDOWN

four Indians runs the risk of

dying of an NCD before they

reach the age of 70. Constant

evaluation and surveillance

preposition in a developing

hold the key to treating

such diseases — this

anyway is a difficult

country like India.

THE ASSAMESE HAVE modified their original stand on the foreigners issue, saying that they do not want their repatriation"but only their detention". This climbdown to an olive branch now offered to the Centre to "diffuse tensions in Assam", student leaders and Gana Sangram Parishad sources said. Denouncing the "occupation army-like behaviour" of the military and police forces in the strongest possible terms, they seriously regretted that while they had revised their stand, the Centre was "not showing any will-ingness to budge from their position". The Assames leaders said that they had changed their position on the repatriation of



Bangladeshi migrants because it would be "inhuman" to do so.

GOLD BONDS

GOVERNMENT MINTS ARE working overtime to refine 13,993 kgs of gold and make bars for refund to the gold bond holders after October this year. The gold had been given by the citizens under the National Defence Gold Bond Scheme in 1965 in wake of the war with Pakistan. About 1.4 lakh bond holders will get back their gold holdings. They were not only getting regular interest on their possession, but the value of gold has skyrocketed during the last 15 years. Prices have gone up from Rs 130 to Rs 1,400 per ten grams.

New Delhi

The finance ministry will refund the precious metal through 1,000 centres.

KOIRALA INTERVIEW

"OUR RELATIONS WITH China will be 'very 'friendly' and our relations with India will be the friendliest," said B P Koirala, Nepal's only democratically elected former prime minister. The man can do it again, become PM, if the Nepalese people vote for multi-party parliamentary democracy in the referendum on May 2. In an exclusive interview to *The Indian Express* on the eve of the elections, Koirala said that "Nepal belongs to the Asian comity of nations. We will have to keep the Americans and Russians at a distance".





9 THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 THE IDEAS PAGE

Learning in a post-Covid world

Economy and society will not be the same after pandemic retreats. Our experiences during lockdown are pointing us in the direction of necessary and possible changes



SCHOOLS STARTED SHUTTING down in China in late January and by the last week of March, all the world's schools were closed. Almost like sunset and sunrise, as the last schools in central African countries stopped working, the Chinese schools began to reopen. Other countries too are opening the doors of their schools cautiously. But there is a great deal of uncertainty in the air everywhere. In India, there are murmurs that schools could remain closed until September or October. And there is the question: What will happen "after all this is over"?

As schools began to shut down in different countries, the immediate reaction was to shift the classroom to homes using whatever technology was possible since people were locked in. There is a lot of thinking, planning, and execution happening in a hurry in every country, including India. Countries or regions or even schools that have more easy access to Internet-devices and learning resources in the appropriate medium of instruction seem to have made the transition to online learning rather quickly although not without some pain. How effective these transitions were and how good the relatively short experience was will have to be analysed not only educationally, but also socially and psychologically. Early reports from China do not paint a rosy picture. Although there are more mobile connections than people in China, only 59 per cent of the mobile connections are with internet and only 47 per cent households in China seem to have PCs or laptops. So, it must have been relatively easy for the Chinese to move to a home-based online learning system, but only for about half the population. I have not seen reports about what happened to the rest, which I suspect live in rural China or are on peripheries of the glittering Chinese economy

In comparison to China, India has about a billion mobile phone connections. Available data indicate that of these, 87 per cent are pre-paid, which gives us a hint about the economic background of the people owning these connections. Of the billion mobile phones, 67 per cent are 3G or 4G internetconnected. Some of these owners also have laptops or desktops at home but they are limited to about 13 per cent households. Our ground-level experience matches with these numbers. In rural areas of Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh although 90 per cent families have mobile phones, depending upon the state, about 40 per cent to 60 per cent of these are regular phones without internet access. So, the Indian population can be divided into several different categories. First, the highly privileged ones with home access to broadband through multiple devices. Second, those with internet access via smart mobile phones. Third, with mobile phones but without internet and finally, those without cell phones. Broadly, this is a problem of 10:40:40:10 division of the population with the ratios varying regionally. In response to this division, various state governments have



turned to radio-television technology of the 1980s and '90s. They are trying to get teachers and students engaged with educational resources on portals through WhatsApp messages and so on. Most efforts are centred around school subject learning although this is really vacation time. In the best of times, the classroom is not effective as various assessments have shown. How effective these hurriedly put together home-learning efforts will be, especially for the lower 50 per cent, is a big question mark. Will the underprivileged lag further behind? If we are talking about "completing the portion", almost everyone will. But there are bigger problems to consider.

These are difficult and stressful times for all. Apart from the discomfort of forced lockin, there is the anxiety about the future among parents. Children can sense these tensions. I would not worry too much about school examination results during this period. Instead, our focus should be on creative learning activities that engage both children and parents and lead to other long-lasting lessons. Relief is needed, not more stress.

Whenever the schools reopen, the sheer relief of going back to schools may also mean there will be the desire to go back to business as usual. But experiences from the shutdown period could be used to modify the education system as we enter a new normal situaIt appears now that the economy is going to change even more drastically. There will be more people dependent on agriculture and rural livelihoods. We need more productive land resources and more rural livelihoods. A large number C R Sasikumar

primary age group where strong foundational skills are learned.

Increasing public access to Internet for school-age learning by creating device libraries is a possibility. Investment in the creation of good contextualised content in Indian languages is a need. Integrating technology in education often means creating more attractive audio-visual textbooks that are really one-way carriers of knowledge. There is a need to recognise that the new technology can do much more and create non-linear paths of learning.

It is said our economy and our society will not be the same from here on. The need for learning skills that will help to survive and thrive in the new economy was already being discussed before COVID. It appears now that the economy is going to change even more drastically. There will be more people dependent on agriculture and rural livelihoods. We need more productive land resources and more rural livelihoods. A large number of people have returned to villages. Some will go back to old jobs while others will need new skills to find work. The education system has to be sensitive to the immediate needs of the youth as we contemplate long-term reforms.

As the economy changes, the need for lifelong learning is becoming more urgent than ever. During the lockdown period, people have learned things that they would never have before. They loved the experience, even if grudgingly. There is going to be individual need to learn new work skills. Our experiences during lockdown are pointing us in the direction of necessary and possible changes. We should reflect on those and act.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"On Monday, global coronavirus cases passed 3 million, meaning one in three patients is in the US. The US government has failed its people and also failed the world." — GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

The ways out

Stimulus package must focus on rural areas and middle-income groups to help generate demand and kickstart virtuous cycle



SUNIL K ALAGH

BY NOW, we have all read about how unprecedented a crisis COVID-19 is — so I wish to get straight to the main issues, and possible solutions. We need to simplify our communication, present a sustainable plan and, above all, implement. Yes, we must continue testing, but I feel that we are sorely lacking in implementation.

There is no questioning the wisdom of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strategy in ensuring a complete lockdown. While the Centre, RBI and states have announced a slew of good plans, why do we still hear of the stoning of doctors, the lack of following of the rules, non-availability of essential food and money for the poor. For me, the answer lies in inadequate communication and implementation. While we all must work in unified fashion, the main onus lies with our elected representatives, right down to the MLA. It is time they earned their votes and the trust that their constituents have placed in them. They must appear at least once a week before the public, after donning masks and gloves and adhering to social distancing norms, to explain in simple terms the government's policies. As the situation is dynamic, they must continuously update the general public of the changes. Making appearances on

TV and giving instructions is not enough. This is the need of the hour. Because the void of information is quickly filled by speculations and rumours, mainly through social media. Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance basically explains that people tend to look for consonance in their action - right or wrong. For instance, we are well-aware of the fact that smoking leads to cancer, but smokers bring about ill-advised consonance by following any 80-year-old doctor who smokes and has no cancer. And so it is, that when some MLAs, MPs and self-proclaimed leaders have weddings, and break the rules as VIPs, the average person wonders, "why can't i?" – thus bringing about consonance to their wrong actions.

The eminent virologist Ian Lipkin has said that complete normalcy will return to the world after a vaccine is developed, which is about a year away. The economy, though, is floundering. So what do we do in the meantime other than communicate as outlined? We should have a very shortterm plan (three months) and a short-term plan (nine months), that will need to be frequently reviewed. government having transparent discussions. All meetings that the prime minister has with the chief ministers should be open like in Parliament. The people are eager to hear not only what the prime minister has to say, but what their chief ministers are planning. Agriculture must be given the top priority - buying of farmers' goods, their transportation and storage. Export oriented industries need to be opened up. Whitecollar workers can work from home, but not the blue-collar workers. They are the backbone of the economy. Migrant workers are grappling with no income and crowded living conditions - with rents to pay and not enough food. They must be provided these basic survival resources. It will be difficult to get these workers back from their homes when the economy opens up. The current Rs 500 per month is not enough, and this should be increased to at least Rs 3,000. The total cost for this entire exercise would not be very high - about Rs 50,000 crore. This is a small price to pay when one considers alternate scenarios which may be disastrous.

In the short-term, a fiscal stimulus needs to be given directly to the rural areas, and taxes must be reduced for the middle-income group to incentivise them to spend and generate the much-needed demand. Stimulus must also be given to the MSMEs in order for them to pay their wages and reopen their operations. Lastly, support must also be given to large industries to open up with specific guidelines, but without any draconian laws or many impediments for either new or existing industries: Nobody will open up or enter if fear is drilled into them.

Where will the money for all of the above come from? We must empower the states to act within the broad guidelines framed by the Centre which cannot, and must not act as a police force. If alcohol is an inco me source, then let the states decide on it. The Centre spends far too little as a percentage of GDP when compared to other countries. Any stimulus must focus on the rural areas and the middle-income groups to not only tide over the crisis, but also generate demand to kickstart the virtuous cycle. Industry will not produce anything without demand, even if it is opened.

As the PM said, "Jaan Hai toh Jahan Hai". The time has come to follow his motto in letter and spirit. A lot of the building blocks have been put in place by the PM. If a new stimulus package manages to keep/bring back workers, it will be an opportunity for us to get back on the path of growth. States, industry and citizens – all of us must support and act as Indians. The future is in our hands and our efforts can make all the difference between jannat (heaven) and jahannum (hell).

tion.

For example, it is observed that wherever less-educated parents have been invited to facilitate their child's learning, they have shown enthusiasm. Parents of young children today are mostly schooled if not educated and are eager to learn to help their children. Parents' role in children's education has to be enhanced by training them in a "continuing education" mode. This is especially true for the children in anganwadis and early of people have returned to villages. Some will go back to old jobs while others will need new skills to find work. The education system has to be sensitive to the immediate needs of the youth as we contemplate long-term reforms.

The writer is co-founder and president of Pratham. Views expressed in the article are personal

A new line of action

India can collaborate with the US and Germany in moulding a new world order

Ram Madhav

ONE HUNDRED years ago, there were no visas and passports for people to travel in Europe, America and their colonies. Then came World War I and things changed — national boundaries became rigid. Economic stagnation, and recession followed. Nationalism turned into ultra-nationalism, leading to another world war. After World War II, we created an interconnected and institutionalised global order. For the last 65 years, despite several hiccups, the world order has remained largely intact.

This pandemic threatens to undo that world order. Just as before, countries are turning inwards, becoming authoritarian. Some political scientists are predicting the rise of a more closed, narrow-nationalist world. Economists are writing off globalisation and free trade.

Where does this pessimism stem from? From a coronavirus virion? Not really. Two countries, considered the most powerful, have shaken the confidence of the entire world. Niall Ferguson, the American historian from the Hoover Institution, had called them "Chimerica". For the last decade or more, China and America have created an economic relationship model that Ferguson compared with Nichibei, the US-Japan economic bonding prominently in existence until the end of the last century. Coronavirus has shown that Chimerica is just a chimera.

The Chinese leadership faces accusations of hiding facts from the world, allowing the virus to cross borders and turn into a pandemic. Till last week, their official figures

. .

stood at 82,000 infections and 4,500 deaths. Derek Scissors of the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington-based think-tank, argues that the number of infections could be as high as 2.9 million instead.

Some countries don't follow any conventional course. China is one of them. It follows what is described as "historical experience". Whatever it is today, is a product of the long revolution that had culminated in Mao capturing power in 1949. The Chinese worldview is guided by three important principles: GDP-ism, China-centrism and Chinese exceptionalism – derived from that revolution.

Deng Xiaoping had reportedly declared in the 1980s that the most important logic is economic development. Chinese economists describe it as "GDPism". The second is Chinacentrism. Mao insisted on independence, autonomy and self-sufficiency. "Ode to the motherland", the famous patriotic song composed by Wang Shen that declares the "grand and beautiful" land of China "over the mountains, across the plains, across the Yangtze and Huang rivers" as the "dear home of ours", is entrenched in the psyche of every Chinese. Third, is Chinese exceptionalism. China doesn't believe in learning from others. China should follow its own wisdom for answers to its problems, its leaders insist.

The Chinese nationalist worldview has a parallel in history in pre-World War II Germany. Ethnic superiority, historical claims and the Aryan exceptionalism were all very familiar to the people of the world in the 1930s. When Hitler occupied Sudetenland, a German-speaking area of the former Czechoslovakia, Europe decided to appease him, rather than confront. Roosevelt was watching from afar when the European nations — like Britain, France and Italy — were celebrating the Munich Agreement. He even praised Hitler saying, "I am convinced that hundreds of millions throughout the world would recognise your action as an outstanding historic service to all humanity".

Unsurprisingly, Hitler violated his promise of "no further aggression" in less than one year, and World War II began. Where Britain was in 1939-40 is where America stands today. The US president Donald Trump allowed coronavirus to devastate its states before finally waking up. As late as February 28, Trump was asking his supporters in South Carolina to not heed warnings about the virus outbreak in America. He was blaming the media for "hysteria" and calling the corona threat "their new hoax". Now, the European nations, having cuddled up to China for "Belt and Road" benefits, are struggling to contain the pandemic fallout.

Interestingly, the countries that stood up to this contagion are mostly the Asian democracies. South Korea led the way, conducting more tests than America on a single day. Singapore undertook extensive testing, making a huge effort to track down any viral symptoms. Hong Kong and Taiwan, with their past experience of SARS fatalities, have taken timely measures to contain the virus effectively.

India, on the other hand, has set an ex-

ample of democratic activism in combating the corona challenge. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, together with his colleagues, is leading from the front, and has successfully implemented a lockdown and social distancing measures, with full popular support. A country with a population of about 1.3 billion has reportedly seen about 17,610 active cases. Modi did not resort to any arbitrary or authoritarian measures though there were deliberate acts of provocation and misinformation like Islamophobia. In the face of such provocations, Modi displayed enormous equanimity, calm and optimism. He proved that democracies with visionary leadership can tackle such challenges without compromising on liberal values.

In the unfolding new world order, India, along with countries like America and Germany, can play a pivotal role in building a world based on "human-centric development cooperation" as suggested by Modi. It is time for a new Atlantic Charter: Environment, healthcare, technology and democratic liberalism can be its foundations.

China has an opportunity today, even as it faces opprobrium globally and unrest within the country. The Chinese Communist Party has a phrase, "Luxian Douzheng" or line struggle. It means power struggle for some, but it also denotes the struggle for a new party line. There were several in the past. Can the world hope for a better one now?

The writer is national general secretary, BJP and director, India Foundation The very short term plan involves the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GLARING GAPS

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

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Reset and reform' (IE, April 29). Through Ayushman Bharat component of PM-JAY, the government has tried to improve tertiary healthcare access for the vulnerable who are insured under the scheme by taking advantage of the hitherto under-utilised private healthcare infrastructure. Public health infrastructure is indispensable for any government to improve the health of its people and over-reliance on private infrastructure won't suffice. This is evident from the examples of South Korea and Singapore, which have effectively contained the spread of COVID-19. Higher spending on public health in general and investment in public healthcare infrastructure, in particular, can't be delayed. Health, along with education, is a pillar on which the health of a society and country depends.

Dimpy Bhatia, Delhi

BETTER TOMORROW

THIS REFERS TO article, 'The other pollution' (IE April 29). The transition into schooling from home has given the younger generation a rightful claim to electronic devices such as mobile

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.

phones with high-speed internet connections. Given their curiousity, children then access images and videos glorifying violence and bigotry. A young mind is a sponge and absorbs all this. Parents and the government an extra responsibility to imbibe outof-syllabus social concepts for the betterment of tomorrow's society and the prosperity of the nation.

Prashant Singh, Rae Bareli

VIRTUAL DISTANCE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial 'School's out' (IE, April 29). There is no way online education can replace physical classrooms, but such is the crisis and need of the hour that online education has become inevitable at all levels. And barring urban locations, online education still remains a distant reality due to various issues like poor internet bandwidth, lack of awareness among students and parents and poor skills of teachers. In both healthcare and education, the COVID-19 crisis has exposed huge gaps. Going forward, both the central and state governments must focus on infrastructure.

Bal Govind, Noida







THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 ΧΡΓΑΙΝΊ THE OUTBREAK



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



JAMMU & KASHMIR

16,619

176

1.24*

*Reproduction

(Low quality fit)

565

CASES

April 27

(APRIL 27)

125

April 7

CASES

(APRIL 7)

number for

April 14-17

OTHER STATES

State	Cases	Deaths	Recoveries
Andaman	10	0	10
Arunachal	1	0	1
Assam	37	1	27
Chandigarh	56	0	17
Chhattisgarh	37	0	32
Daman	1	0	0
Goa	7	0	7
Haryana	308	4	224
Himachal	41	2	25
Jharkhand	105	2	19
Ladakh	20	0	18
Manipur	2	0	2
Meghalaya	12	1	0
Mizoram	1	0	1
Odisha	118	1	37
Tripura	2	0	2
Uttarakhand	54	0	34
Gra	phics: Mith		ing: Kabir Firad ty & Ritesh Kur





KARNATAKA



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 THE OUTBREAK THE WORLD

NEW POLIO OUTBREAK IN NIGER

The World Health Organisation says Niger has been struck by a new outbreak of polio, after the suspension of immunisation activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN health agency reported that two children were infected by the highly infectious, water-borne disease and that one was paralysed

WATCH 1 mn US cases, toll surpasses Vietnam War



In Bangkok. AP

THAILAND **Bangkok to** ease some restrictions

Bangkok: Officials in Bangkok say they are preparing to ease restrictions that were imposed to fight the spread of COVID-19, including the reopening of restaurants under strict conditions. The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration announced Wednesday that it hopes to lift restrictions on eight kinds of establishments it had ordered closed through April 30. The city's plans call for the reopening of restaurants, markets. exercise venues. parks, hairdressers and barbers, clinics and nursing homes, animal hospitals and pet salons, and golf courses and driving ranges.

NEPAL

3 returnees of

Tablighi meet

Kathmandu: Nepal on

test positive

AGENCIES NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, APRIL 29

IT HAS been 100 days since a 35year-old man presented to an urgent care clinic in Snohomish County, Washington, with a fourday history of cough and fever and tested positive for the virus. His was the first case to be

detected. Since then, more than one million people had tested positive in the United States. In that time, residents in

most states in the country along with more than half of all humanity – have been ordered to shelter in their homes in the hopes of slowing the spread of the highly contagious virus and to try to keep hospital systems from being overwhelmed.

The death toll climbed above 58,000 on Tuesday, surpassing the loss of American life from the Vietnam War. as Florida's governor met with President Donald Trump to discuss an easing of economic restraints.

Epidemiologists have estimated that the true number of infections may be about 10 times the known number, and preliminary testing of how many people have antibodies to the virus seems to support that view. Similarly, the official death toll is likely to vastly underestimate the true number by at least sev-



Vice President Mike Pence during a visit to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. AP

eral thousand, according to analysis of mortality data by The New York Times.

While the timeline for the spread of the virus has shifted as public health authorities find evidence that the pathogen was spreading in communities earlier than believed, the speed at which the world has been trans-

formed is shocking. Masks are becoming an accepted part of public life, which is why there was such a backlash on Tuesday after Vice President Mike Pence flouted the Mayo Clinic's protocols on wearing a protective

face covering on a visit there. In the last 100 days, the

global economy has suffered such a swift and sudden decline that economists have had to reach back to the Great Depression for analogies.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, among the latest to lock down his state against the pandemic, has been weighing whether to join other states in a relaxation of workplace restrictions and stay-at-home orders that have been credited with slowing the contagion but which have battered the economy.



US CONSIDERING

AIR TRAVELLERS

The US is considering

by the coronavirus to stop its spread in the

Donald Trump has said.

Trump said this could

be done in coordination

with either the airlines or

Maybe it's a combination

government. "We're working with the airlines.

of both," he said.

country, President

scanning of air travellers from countries hit hard

SCANNING FOR INTL

As the US looks at long-term plans and economic recovery initiatives, misinformation about vaccines is shaping to be a major concern before one is even ready.

The claims range from concerns that vaccine trials will be rushed, to conspiracy theories that Bill Gates wants to use the vaccine to inject microchips in people. Given that a vaccine is widely accepted as the best way to definitively end the pandemic threat, fake news-fuelled resistance to the use of vaccines could have devastating consequences.

Final journeys are getting lonelier, last goodbyes shorter

SRIRAM VEERA MUMBAI, APRIL 29

BEIT a graveyard in central Indore, a funeral home in the midwestern US state of Wisconsin or a cemetery in Italy's northeastern region of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia; the final journeys are getting lonelier and the last goodbyes shorter. At these three COVID-19 hot spots, continents apart, fear is getting the better of grief and even death doesn't provide an escape from

social distancing.

Indore's Hafiz Javed, a cemetery caretaker, says the most discomforting moment for him these days is to watch the coffin pushed, rather than lowered, into the grave. "Everyone stands some distance apart from each other. At times, there aren't enough people to lift the body, so it is difficult to lower them softly. We have to slide them into the pit," Hafiz says. With few relatives attending

burials, the last rites finish quickly. "We instruct family members to pile mud over the body, and once that is done, we rush to finish the job. No one hangs around, there is not much crying," Hafiz says.

At the Malwa mill region's crematorium, too, the pandemic's shadow looms large. Cloth pouches and steel boxes with ashes hang from hooks or sit on the floor. The lockdown means life – and death – are at a standstill.

Family members of the deceased aren't turning up to collect the mortal remains. "Some are waiting for things to open so they can travel for ashes immersion; others are paranoid about infection," says Gauri Kailashpati, a social activist from Indore.

In the US, meanwhile, funerals follow a strict protocol. Wisconsin funeral director John Wenig shares how his son was left speechless by a lady who had lost her husband after 60 years of marriage to COVID-19. "She told my son, 'Are you telling me I can't even have a proper funeral for my husband?' My son said he couldn't even hug the lady who

Failure to stop virus at

source led to 184 countries

Bodies being buried in New York's Hart Island, Reuters/File

had broken down. Rules and precautions, you see."

Elaborate funerals featuring tributes and sharing of memories are a thing of the past.

A US government advisory directs for COVID-19 deceased to be covered in two body bags, and for the face to be covered with a mask."No one really knows if the virus is active and harmful after death; so, these are precautions."

There is also a cap on the number of mourners. A maximum of 10 relatives are allowed in the cemetery. Technology has helped. "We started live-streaming the final rites. I remember the first time we had 38 people, second time it jumped to 167 friends and relatives watching it."

In Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, in north east Italy, Cladio Prescherm is thankful that the worst seems to be over in his region. "All cemeteries are closed here. They are open only when a body is buried. No one is coming to cemetery to lay a rose in these times," Prescherm says.

"Newspapers in Bergamo are filled with death notices, page after page. That tells you the real story of how many people have died."

Prescherm's family have been funeral directors for 150 years now. "Scenes of death and grieving are familiar to me but this has been a strange experience. From fear to sorrow, everything has been different... I think we, as a country, remain shocked by this and need to heal as a group... but first, this virus has to be stopped." **FULL STORY ON**

www.indianexpress.com

COVID-19 death toll

Wednesday said that three persons, who returned from India after attending a Tablighi Jamaat gathering, have been tested positive, bringing the total number of the COVID-19 patients in the country to 57. The three men, who were staying in quarantine after returning from the Tablighi Jamaat gathering in Delhi's Nizamuddin area last month, have been brought to an isolation ward of Narayani Hospital in Birgunj for treatment, according to a govern-

UK now has 2nd-highest across Europe

ANDY BRUCE LONDON, APRIL 29 THE UNITED Kingdom now has

Europe's second-highest official death toll from the novel coronavirus pandemic, according to new figures on Wednesday that cover fatalities in all settings, including in nursing homes.

Some 26,097 people died across the United Kingdom after testing positive for COVID-19 as of April 28 at 1600 GMT, Public Health England (PHE) said. That means the United Kingdom has had more COVID-19 deaths than France or Spain have reported. 'These more complete data will give us a fuller and more up to date picture of deaths in England and will inform the government's approach as we continue to protect the public," Yvonne Doyle, medical director at PHE. said. Such a high UK death toll increases the pressure on Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government which is facing criticism from opposition parties for being too slow to impose a lockdown and too slow to introduce mass testing. In mid-March, the government's chief scientific adviser said keeping the UK death toll below 20,000 would be a "good outcome" Although international comparisons are difficult, the new figures confirm Britain's place among the European countries worst hit hardest by the pandemic. **REUTERS**

STADIUM TESTING

EXPLAINED

SINGAPORE Govt warns

of fake news

ment spokesperson.

Singapore: Singapore on Wednesday warned against spreading fake news and videos about migrants workers, saving this could disturb law and order in dormitories where a large number of foreign workers, including Indian nationals, have been tested positive. Law and Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam warned such videos can lead to serious law and order incidents. He said the authorities are watching those who spread the videos "very carefully". Warning those spreading fake news maliciously, he said, they will be charged if a crime was committed.

Johannesburg residents gather in a stadium to be tested for the virus on Wednesday. South Africa will begin a phased easing of its strict lockdown measures which have been in place since March 27, on May 1. It has over 4,360 cases and 86 deaths. AP

going through hell: Trump 'Life has to go on': How Sweden faced virus

THOMAS ERDBRINK & **CHRISTINA ANDERSON** STOCKHOLM, APRIL 29

SHE STOOD leaning on her cane, briefly resting among dozens of bubbly young Swedes out enjoying one of the first sunny spring days of the year.

"I'm trying not to get too close to people," said Birgit Lilja, 82, explaining that she had left her house to pick up a new identity card in person. "But I trust

them to be careful with me." Trust is high in Sweden - in government, institutions and fellow Swedes. When the government defied conventional wisdom and refused to order a tory orders.

accolades for its handling of the pandemic, and far better than in Britain or France.Yet, on this warm spring day, at least, there was little evidence that people were observing the protocols adding further mystery to Sweden's apparent success.

wholesale lockdown to "flatten the curve" of the epidemic, pubslamming on the brakes, lic health officials pointed to Sweden kept its borders open, trust as a central justification. allowed restaurants and bars to keep serving, left preschools and Swedes, they said, could be trusted to stay home, follow social grade schools in session and distancing protocols and wash placed no limits on public trans-

their hands to slow the spread of the virus – without any manda-

Sweden's death rate of 22 per 100,000 people is the same as that of Ireland, which has earned

While other countries were

port or outings in local parks Gatherings of more than 50 people are banned. Museums

have closed and sporting events have been cancelled. At the end of March, the authorities banned visits to nursing homes.

That's roughly it. There are almost no fines, and police officers can only ask people to oblige. Pedestrians wearing masks are generally stared at as if they have just landed from Mars.

Throughout the crisis Sweden has had enough intensive care units to deal with Covid-19 patients, the minister of health and social affairs, Lena Hallengren, said in an interview. "We have 250 empty beds right now." NYT

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, APRIL 29

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump doubled down on China for failing to tame the coronavirus at its very origin, saying it has led to 184 countries "going through hell", as several American lawmakers demanded steps to reduce dependence on Beijing for manufacturing and minerals.

Trump has been publicly blaming China for the global spread of the "invisible enemy" and launched an investigation against it. He has also indicated that the United States may be looking at "a lot more money" in damages from China than

the \$140 billion being sought by Germany from Beijing for the pandemic.

Leaders of the US, the UK and Germany believe that the deaths and the destruction of the global economy could have been avoided, had China shared the information about the virus in its early phases

"It's in 184 countries, as you hear me say often. It's hard to believe. It's inconceivable,' Trump told reporters at White House Tuesday. "It should have been stopped at the source, which was China. It should have been stopped very much at the source, but it wasn't. And now we have 184 countries going through hell." PTI

Clinton endorses Biden: 'Wish he were president right now'

LISA LERER, MAGGIE **ASTOR & SYDNEY EMBER** NEW YORK, APRIL 29

HILLARY CLINTON, the 2016 Democratic presidential nominee and a political veteran who knows firsthand what it is like to compete against President Trump, threw her support behind Joseph R Biden Jr on Tuesday, the latest party leader to make the case for returning the White House to Democratic hands in November.

"I've been not only a colleague of Joe Biden's, I've been a friend, and I can tell you that I wish he were president right now but I can't wait until he is - if all of us do our part to sup-



PRIMARIES: THE DEMOCRATS

port the kind of person that we want back in the White House," Clinton said on Tuesday afternoon during a virtual town hall-style event with Biden about the impact of the coronavirus on women.

Accepting her support, Biden said: "I really appreciate your friendship. What a, just a wonderful personal endorsement."

The Biden campaign had advertised that the event would feature a "special guest," and on her Twitter account Tuesday, Clinton all but confirmed the endorsement as she disclosed that she

would be appearing with Biden. After Clinton endorsed Biden, the event turned into a

conversation about the coronavirus crisis. With an easy banter that recalled the breakfast

meetings they both repeatedly harked back to, the two shared ideas to support women who were struggling because of the outbreak. "You've been way ahead on

these issues for a long time," Biden said to Clinton – a show of respect that was often returned. NYT

Boris, fiancee announce birth of boy, two days after he returned to work

OTHER TOP GLOBAL STORIES

ASSOCIATED PRESS LONDON, APRIL 29

Picnickers in Stockholm

last week. NYT

BRITISH PRIME Minister Boris Iohnson and his fiancee Carrie Symonds announced the birth of a son on Wednesday, just two days after Johnson returned to work following hospitalisation for the coronavirus.

Johnson's office said Symonds gave birth to a "healthy baby boy at a London hospital" on Wednesday, and both mother and infant were doing well.

Johnson, 55, and Symonds, 32, announced in February that they were engaged and expecting a child together. At the time



they said the baby was due in early summer. No wedding date has been announced.

Symonds, an environmental campaigner and former Conservative Party staffer, also said she was sick for a week with COVID-19 symptoms, though she wasn't tested for the virus.

The baby is the third born to a sitting British prime minister this century. It wasn't immediately clear whether Johnson planned to take paternity leave.

Pak media mogul remanded in judicial custody in 34-yr-old case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LAHORE, APRIL 29

PAKISTANI MEDIA mogul Mir Shakilur Rehman, arrested on charges of illegally obtaining government land here over three decades ago when Nawaz Sharif was the chief minister of Punjab province, has been sent to jail on judicial remand after the country's anti-graft body did not seek his further custody.

Mir Shakilur Rahman, the editor-in-chief of the Jang group which owns some of Pakistan's widely circulated newspapers and the Geo television network, was arrested on March 12 by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and was in its custody till

An accountability court on Tuesday sent Rehman to jail on judicial remand till May 12 after the prosecutor said the NAB did not need him anymore for investiga-

tion, the Dawn News reported. The charges against Rehman relating to the purchase of several plots of land in Lahore go back to 1986 when Sharif was the chief minister of Punjab province.

The NAB alleged that Sharif allowed Rahman illegally acquire more governmentowned-land than he was allowed by law.

On April 27, the anti-graft body had issued an arrest warrant against the embattled former prime minister Sharif in the land corruption case.

The 70-year-old supremo of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, is currently in London for medical treatment. NAB officials said Sharif ille-

gally leased the land to Rehman. At the outset of Rehman's remand hearing on Tuesday, NAB Special Prosecutor Asim Mumtaz told the court that he could not be brought for the hearing as he was admitted to a private hospital owing to bad health.

However, Presiding Judge Jawadul Hassan expressed displeasure over the bureau for not presenting the suspect and also refused to entertain the medical certificate of a private hospital. Later, the NAB brought Rehman to the court in an ambulance from the hospital.





SILVER

The deal consideration was

AGSK spokesman declined to

paid in cash and shares of HUL,

and was completed earlier this

comment on the matter. Hindustan Unilever did not im-

mediately respond to a request

month.

for comment.

 \bigcirc

OIL

§26.15

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

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 12 ECONOMY

SENSEX: 32,720.16 ▲ 605.64 NIFTY: 9,553.35 ▲ 172.45 NIKKEI: 19,771.19 ▼ 12.03 HANG SENG: 24,643.59 ▲ 67.63 FTSE: 6,016.53 ▲ 58.03 DAX: 10,835.21 ▲ 39.58

FINAL REPORT OF TASK FORCE ON NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PIPELINE **2020-25 infra funding pegged at ₹111L cr:** Energy, roads, railways to get lion's share

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

EXPLAINED

ENERGY, ROADS, railways and urban projects would account for the bulk of allocations, involving total estimated infrastructure investment of Rs 111 lakh crore during the five fiscal year period 2020-25. This is according to the final report of the task force on National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) submitted to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday. Of the total project capital expenditure, sectors such as energy (24 per cent), urban (17 per cent), railways (12 per cent) and roads (18 per cent) are pegged to contributed nearly 70 per cent of the infra investments in India.

While Centre and states are expected to have almost equal share in implementing NIP, private sector contribution is expected around 21 per cent, as per a statement by the Finance Ministry. The NIP captures all projects - greenfield or brownfield, under imple-

LALITKJHA

WASHINGTON, APRIL 29

Snapdeal, 4 shopping

complexes figure in US

Notorious Markets List

Aim is to boost infrastructure investments

AGGRESSIVE PUSH towards asset sales, monetisation of infrastructure assets, setting up of development finance institutions and strengthening the municipal bond market are some measures suggested by a government panel to boost infrastructure investments. The panel has drawn up a National Infrastructure Pipeline to bring greater focus in this area, which is crucial to boosting economic growth.

mentation or under conceptualito aid the process of galvanising investments in infrastructure sector sation – costing greater than Rs 100 crore per project. in next five vears.

The task force, headed by Besides strengthening the municipal bond market, an aggressive Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty, has also recompush towards asset sales, monetisation of infrastructure assets, mended setting up of three committees: a panel to monitor NIP deepening of corporate bond marprogress and eliminate delays: a kets, and setting up Development Financial Institutions for infrasteering committee in each infrastructure ministry for following up structure sector, are among the measures that have been recomimplementation; and a commitmended by the government panel tee in Department of Economic

Affairs for raising financial resources for the NIP. Out of the total expected capi-

tal expenditure of Rs 111 lakh crore, projects of Rs 44 lakh crore (40 per cent of NIP) are under implementation, projects worth Rs 33 lakh crore (30 per cent) are at conceptual stage and projects worth Rs 22 lakh crore (20 per cent) are under development. The task force was set up after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day speech last year, highlighted Rs 100 lakh crore worth of infra investment over the next five years to make India a \$5trillion economy.

The summary report for 2019-2025 was released by Sitharaman on December 31, 2019. The final report has revised up NIP from earlier Rs 100 lakh crore "in light of additional/amended data provided by central ministries/state governments since the release of summary NIP report," the Centre said. In its summary report, the panel had suggested effective dis-

pute resolution, contract enforce-

ment and asset monetisation among other reforms for achieving infra investment targets. A critical step in addressing dwindling private sector participation in infrastructure can be institutionalising dispute resolution mechanism to efficiently resolve disputes related to PPP projects. Investments must be made in the institutions created under The Commercial Courts Act 2015, The Specific Relief (Amendment) Act 2018 and the New Delhi Arbitration Centre Act 2019 for speedy resolution, it said. The RBI's latest credit growth

growth in credit outstanding to the infrastructure sector fell to a 19month low of 3.3 per cent. FY20 saw a decline in banks' appetite to lend to infrastructure companies. Data shows in the 11-month period ended February 2020, credit outstanding for the infrastructure sector as a whole shrank from Rs 10.55 lakh crore in March 2019 to Rs 10.18 lakh crore in February 2020, thereby contracting by 3.5

REUTERS WASHINGTON, APRIL 29 pace since the Great Recession as

data shows that year-on-year

product(GDP)reflected a plunge in economic activity in the last two weeks of March, which saw millions of Americans seeking unemployment benefits. The Commerce Department's snapshot of first-quarter GDP on Wednesday reinforced analysts'

The decline in gross domestic

stringent measures to slow the

spread of the novel coronavirus

almost shut down the country.

ending the longest expansion in

the nation's history.

sharpest fall since Great Recession THE US economy contracted in the first quarter at its sharpest clined at a 4.8 per cent annualised

the first quarter, with less than a month of pandemic lockdown for most states, don't ask how far it will crater in the second quarter.' Gross domestic product de-

rate last quarter, weighed down by sharp decreases in consumer spending and a drawdown of in-Americans call for the end of ventory at businesses. That was the lockdown in California the steepest pace of contraction in GDP since Q4 of 2008 - the on April 26. Reuters height of the Great Recession. A deepening downturn in investpredictions that the economy ment by businesses was another major factor in the slump last was already in a deep recession.

"The economy will continue quarter, helping to overshadow to fall until the country opens positive news from a shrinking back up," said Chris Rupkey, chief import bill, the housing market economist at MUFG in New York. and more spending by the gov-"If the economy fell this hard in ernment

'Govt has to step in to protect 11 crore Indians, give hope to MSMEs'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 THE CONGRESS Wednesday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take urgent steps and announce a financial assistance package to protect the wages and salaries of about 11 crore people working in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector, and a paycheque protection programme on the lines of what the US had announced for another 1 crore employees with income of

less than Rs 3.5 lakh a year. Addressing a press conference, Minister former Finance P Chidambaram lashed out at the NDA government for remaining "non-committal on everything". be it an exit strategy after the lockdown, financial assistance to states or a financial package or assistance for businesses. He said monetisation of the fiscal deficit should not

Panna in Mumbai, SNAPDEAL, ONE of India's largest e-commerce companies, along with four Indian shopping complexes have figured in the US' 2020 in Aizawl edition of the Notorious Markets

List for counterfeiting and piracy. Other than Snapdeal, the four markets are Tank Road in Delhi, Heera Panna in Mumbai, Kidderpore in Kolkata and Millennium Centre in Aizawl.

In all, the US Trade Representatives'(USTR)annual list has 38 online markets and 34 physical markets that are reported to engage in or facilitate substantial trademark counterfeiting and copyright piracy

"Snapdeal, one of India's largest e-commerce platforms, is known as a place to purchase counterfeit watches and shoes," the USTR said

The other four are Tank Road in Delhi, Heera

Kidderpore in Kolkata and Millennium Centre

According to a November 2018 survey, 37 per cent of its customers reported that they had received a counterfeit product from Snapdeal

Delhi's Tank Road market was in the Notorious Markets List (NML) in 2019. "Right holders confirm that this market continues to sell counterfeit products, including apparel and footwear. Wholesale counterfeit goods are also reportedly supplied from this market to other Indian markets, including Gaffar Market and Ajmal (han Road (in Delhi)," it said. **PTI**

List of defaulters: Chidambaram accuses FM of taking shield behind technical rules

per cent.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE WAR of words between the Congress and the BJP government over the list of wilful defaulters escalated on Wednesday, with former Finance Minister P Chidambaram accusing Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman of taking shield be-

hind technical rules and asking the government why it has taken the technical loan write-off route for fugitives like Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi and Vijay Mallya.

Hitting back at Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman who had said wilful defaulters were beneficiaries of phone banking under the UPA regime and the Narendra Modi government is chasing them to recover the dues, he also asked the Government "break up the NPAs into pre-2004, 2004 to 2014 and post-2014" arguing that it "will give us an idea ien the loans were given and



Former Finance Minister P Chidambaram. Express file

which loans have become NPA." "You keep on throwing these accusations that all these loans were given during the UPA regime. Is the government seriously sug-

gesting that no loans were given after 2014? Or that all the loans given after 2014 are performing loans? I mean, what do they take the people of India for? We may be stupid, we're not so stupid. Loans have been given after 2014, loans were given prior to 2004 also. Give the breakup?," he said.

Responding to Sitharaman's statement that no loan is waived off and that provisions are made

Impact will be larger since the

receivables is likely to increase

cash stuck in inventory and

in such a scenario

11 of the 27 vulnerable

companies have a debt to

equity ratio of more than 1

for NPAs as per the four-year provisioning cycle laid down by the RBI, Chidambaram accused her of taking shield behind the technical rule and asked why is she applying the technical rule to those who have been declared a fugitive or an absconder. "We understand the technical rules of the RBI. We are not on the technicality ... There are defaulters, there are wilful defaulters, there are wilful defaulters who are staying back in India facing in-

quiries and trying their best to pay back and there are wilful defaulters, who have fled India and are being declared fugitives." 'Your RBI rule can apply

maybe to the first, second and third categories. After four years of full provisioning is made, you can technically write off the loan. That vou can do for defaulters, wilful defaulters and wilful defaulters who have stayed back and trying to face an inquiry. But why do you apply that rule to a wilful defaulter who has fled India and your government has declared him a fugitive?... Why does this rule apply to the Nirav Modis and the Vijay Mallyas and the Mehul Choksis, he said. Taking a dig at the FM, he said "a FM who was silent for the last 37 days has suddenly sprung to life and sprung to the defence of these fugitives. Isn't that a little surprising and ironical?" On Sitharaman's remark that

scheduled commercial banks had written off Rs 1.45 lakh crore in the UPA period, he said: "I am sure between 2004 and 2014, banks were applying the rule and technically writing off 1.6 lakh crore, but by the same token, between 2014 and 2019, Modi government has written off 6.66 lakh crore. So, when you mention 1.6 lakh crore should not the FM also mention the 6.66 lakh crore rupees that her government has written off between 2014 and 2019.....But the point we are asking is, these are fugitives. They fled India under your nose. You have declared them fugitives and absconders. Why are you applying this rule to them?" he said

"The time to make bold decisions to save MSMEs is now. If businesses do not see hope, they will decide to close"

P CHIDAMBARAM FORMER FINANCE MINISTER

be seen as a "no-go area". "The time to make bold decisions to save MSMEs is now. If businesses do not see hope, they will decide to close. The government has to step in today to protect 11 crore Indians and give hope to MSMEs. It is bewildering that there has been absolutely no financial package or assistance announced for businesses since the onset of COVID-19." he said, asking the government to announce Rs 1 lakh crore as wage protection assistance to help MSMEs pay

wages and salaries for April and another Rs 1 lakh crore for credit guarantee fund for MSME

BRIEFLY –

Ex-Fin Secy is

'GSK plans to sell HUL stake' iar with the matter. position in India.

GSK plans to offload part or all

of its 5.7 per cent holding in

Hindustan Unilever Ltd through

a series of block trades, according

struck a deal to buy GSK's Horlicks

nutrition business for \$3.8 billion,

boosting the Anglo-Dutch group's

In December 2018, Unilever

to Bloomberg News.

US GDP contracts 4.8% in Ql,

RUPEE

REUTERS BENGALURU, APRIL 29

GlaxoSmithKline Plc is planning

a sale of its \$3.7-billion stake in

Unilever Ltd's listed India unit,

Bloomberg News reported on

Wednesday, citing people famil-

BRITISH

GOLD

DRUGMAKER

₹41,705

US adds 5 of Amazon's foreign operations to list

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON, APRIL 29

THE UNITED States for the first time added five of Amazon's overseas operations to its list of "notorious markets" where pirated goods are sold. The e-commerce giant dismissed the move as part of the Trump administration's "personal vendetta" against it.

The Office of the US Trade Representative on Wednesday added the Amazon.com Inc. domains in Canada. France. Germany, India and the United

Kingdom to its annual blacklist. USTR cited complaints from US businesses that consumers can't easily tell who is selling items on the Amazon platforms and that the e-commerce company's procedures for removing counterfeit goods "can be lengthy and burdensome.

Amazon fired back with a statement Wednesday: "We strongly disagree with the characterization of Amazon in this USTR report. This purely political

act is another example of the administration using the US government to advance a personal vendetta against Amazon.'

'27 of top 100 companies can't sustain current salary bill

As many as 27 of the top 100 companies listed on the National Stock Exchange will not be able to sustain current wage bill if revenue dips 30 per cent or more, a Deloitte study said

METHODOLOGY Deloitte conducted a study of the top 100 companies listed on the NSE in terms of market capitalisation

Temporary solution: Dip into cash balance or borrow in short term

> All the companies covered have an ability to pay their fixed opex, interest and compensation cost from cash and cash equivalents for about 5.5 months at the median, it said

US places India on 'Priority Watch List' for IP protection

PRESSTRUSTOFINDIA WASHINGTON, APRIL 29

THE US on Wednesday placed India on the Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its Intellectual Property framework on the "longstanding" and "new challenges' that have negatively affected American right holders over the past year

The US placed 10 countries, including India and China, on the list, alleging that enforcement of the intellectual properties have deteriorated or remained at inadequate levels and the Americans who rely on their protection have difficulty with fair and equitable market access. The countries placed on the list by the Trump administration on Intellectual Property (IP) related issues are Algeria, Argentina, Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Venezuela

"The Trump administration is committed to holding intellectual

'LACK OF MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENTS'

The USTR said India had been placed on the 'Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its IP framework.

property rights violators accountable and to ensuring that US innovators and creators have a full and

fair opportunity to use and profit from their work," said US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer after the release of annual Special 301 Report on the adequacy and effectiveness of trading partners' protection of IP rights.

In its report, the USTR said that India had been placed on the 'Priority Watch List' for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its IP framework on the "longstanding" and "new challenges" that have negatively affected US

right holders over the past year.

Fed sticks to zero rate pledge, vows to utilise tools to help economy

REUTERS WASHINGTON, APRIL 29

US FEDERAL Reserve policymakers on Wednesday left interest rates near zero and repeated a vow to do what it takes to shore up the economy, saying the ongoing coronavirus pandemic will "weigh heavily" on the near-term outlook and poses "considerable risks" for the medium term.

"The Federal Reserve is committed to using its full range of tools to support the US economy in this challenging time, thereby promoting its maximum employment and price stability goals," the US central bank said in a statement at the end of a two-day policy meeting held via videoconference because of the coronavirus pandemic

With so much uncertainty around the economic outlook, the

Sidbi launches liquidity window for MSMEs, SFBs, **NBFCs and MFIs**

27 companies won't be able

to sustain current wage bill

revenue dips by 30 per cent

Source:

Deloitte/PTI

from cash profits, if their

or more

₹

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBALAPRIL 29

SMALLINDUSTRIES Development Bank of India (Sidbi) has launched a special liquidity scheme for micro. small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), small finance banks (SFBs), non-banking financial companies and microfinance institutions (MFIs) through banks.

nancial support to banks, NBFCs and MFIs by way of term loans to ensure operational continuity and promote onward lending to MSMEs. The tenor of these loans will be 90 days.

Chairman and Managing Director of Sidbi said, "We were provided a special liquidity window of Rs 15,000 crore by the RBL... The funds will be channalised to MSMEs through eligible banks, NBFCs and MFIs.

Sensex rises 606 points on easing of curbs, Fed meet

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 29

DOMESTIC INDICES rose on Wednesday as global markets edged up ahead of US economic growth figures and a Federal Reserve rate decision while investors seemed buoyed as more governments, including India. planned to ease anti-virus controls and allow some businesses to reopen. The Sensex rose 606 points, or 1.89 per cent, to 32,720.16 and the NSE Nifty Index gained 172 points at 9,553.35

PESB chief much as 52 paise against the dollar to move above the 76 mark to 75.66 in the wake of the improvement in global risk environment.

ued their momentum for the third consecutive session and ended with strong gains tracking encouraging global cues. Oil prices surged after US

crude stockpiles grew less than expected and gasoline posted a surprise draw.Brent crude futures were up \$2.23, or 11 per cent, at \$22.69 a barrel by 12:05 p.m. EDT (1605 GMT). US WTI futures soared \$3.58, or 29 per cent, to \$15.92 a barrel.

contending the returns they had

filed, the refund need not be

processed immediately. The said

tax refunds between AY2012 and

2017 have been withheld by au-

thorities for various reasons, such

as transfer pricing adjustment,

capitalisation of license fees, 3G

spectrum fees, and asset restora-

Vodafone Idea had sought tax

refunds of Rs 4,759.7 crore from

the I-T department, claiming that

its tax returns between AY2012

and 2017 had not been processed

by the authorities despite repeated

Though the SC directed I-T to

process Vodafone Idea's tax re-

funds worth Rs 733 crore for

AY2014-15 within four weeks,

the relief could be short lived. The

department had raised addi-

tional tax demand of Rs 582 crore

for AY2015-16, which is stuck in

reminders on the same.

n obligation.

The rupee strengthened as

SC turns down Vodafone Idea plea for immediate tax refund of ₹4,759 crore

AASHISHARYAN NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

IN A setback to Vodafone Idea, the Supreme Court (SC) Wednesday rejected the telco's plea, asking the Income Tax (I-T) Department to process and deposit tax refunds worth Rs 4,759.7 crore. The apex court said the authorities were justified in holding back refunds until tax returns of the company was perused by the authorities.

The SC, however, asked the I-T department to take a decision on the pending tax refunds as soon as possible.

I-T department authorities have kept tax refunds of the company between assessment year (AY) 2012 and 2017, in abeyance, claiming that the returns of the company for these years were "under scrutiny" and since a notice had been issued to the company

New Delhi: Ex-finance secretary Rajiv Kumar has been named PESB chairperson. PTI Analysts said markets contin-

ILO: 305 million jobs may be lost Geneva: The ILO estimated

305 million full-time jobs could be lost in Q2. AP

ADB approves \$346 mn loan

New Delhi: The Asian Development Bank on Wednesday said it has approved a \$346-million loan to the government to provide reliable power connection in rural areas of Maharashtra. The loan will support the state government's high voltage distribution system programme for new grid-connected rural agricultural customers across the state, said the multi-lateral funding agency. PTI

NMC founder on private probe

Dubai: NMC Health founder BR Shetty said a probe conducted by his own advisors has found alleged fraud at the firm and Finablr.

'Groups urge delay in digital tax'

New Delhi: Lobbying groups have urged India to delay a new digital tax that will hit firms like Facebook and Google. REUTERS

The scheme would provide fi-

Mohammad Mustafa,

litigation.



goals.'

US Fed Chair Jerome Powell. File

Fed said it expects to maintain the

target range for its benchmark

overnight lending rate "until it is

confident that the economy has

weathered recent events and is on

track to achieve its maximum em-

ployment and price stability

During two emergency meet-

ings in March, the central bank cut

its benchmark rate to a range be-

tween zero and 0.25 per cent.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 **3 ALK** ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD



LASTING MEMORIES

THE BEST OF THE BEST

As an actor, Irrfan's range was unparalleled — he could play any character with conviction — allowing him to cross over forms, languages and later, even continents. Here are 10 of his most noteworthy performances:

Among Irrfan's last social media posts is a photo he had tweeted of the cast and crew of his last film Angrezi Medium catching up over a Zoom call, which included actors Radhika Madan, Pankaj Tripathi and Deepak Dobriyal, among others.

IRRFAN 1967-2020

'Gone too Soon' Film industry and fans come together to mourn

Irrfan, Indian cinema's finest actor

ALAKA SAHANI

IS NUANCED acting, his eyes that spoke and a dialogue delivery that was so uniquely his, won him much love and admirers during his versatile career, but on Wednesday, actor Irrfan left the world quietly. As everyone came together online to mourn, few could attend his burial at the Versova cemetery due to restrictions imposed in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak. While media persons stood beyond the barricades outside. present for his last rites were his wife Sutapa Sikdar, sons Babil and Ayan, and 15-20 relatives and friends, including filmmakers Tigmanshu Dhulia, Vishal Bhardwaj, Abhinay Deo and singer Mika Singh.

The 54-year-old was admitted to Mumbai's Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital on Tuesday for a colon infection. An official statement on his passing away said: "Irrfan was a strong soul, someone who fought till the very end and always inspired everyone who came close to him. After having been struck by lightning in 2018 with the news of a rare cancer, he took life soon after as it came and he fought the many battles that came with it."

Irrfan, who received the National Award for Paan Singh Tomar (2012) and Padma Shri in 2011, was diagnosed with neuroendocrine tumour in 2018, for which he underwent prolonged treatment in the UK. In between his treatment, he played the role of a loving father in Angrezi Medium (2020), his last release.

After the news of his death became public, social media was flooded with posts by many of his colleagues in the film industry and his admirers. Filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj, who has worked with him in Maqbool (2003), 7 Khoon Maaf (2011) and Haider (2014), told The Indian Express: "I feared that he (Irrfan) will be gone much before his time but didn't expect that it will be so devastating and ravaging to me personally. It feels as if I am torn into two parts. A part of me has died with him."

Vidya Balan tweeted she couldn't stop crying because Irrfan's performances affected her in "a personal way". Calling him "an incredible talent and gracious colleague", his Piku (2015) co-actor Amitabh Bachchan said his passing away was the "most disturbing and sad news". Actor Shah Rukh Khan, who was the producer of Irrfan's Billu (2009), called him "my friend, inspiration and the greatest actor of our times".

Making an immense contribution to the world of cinema, Irrfan remains one of the most successful crossover artistes, with movies such as The Lunchbox (2013), Slumdog Millionaire (2008), Life of Pi (2012), The Amazing Spiderman (2012) and Jurassic World (2015). Many international personalities, including director Ava DuVernay, paid tribute to him. "Gone too soon. When he is on screen, you can't take your eyes off him. He lives on in his films," tweeted DuVernav

Cinema's Chameleon

TANUJA CHANDRA

IRRFAN THOUGHT long and hard before accepting my offer (for Qarib Qarib Singlle, 2017). He was uncertain if he would be received well in a romantic role at this stage of his life because romance was more of a playing field for the young, he said. If people didn't approve, he wouldn't have anyone to share the flak with other than his own misplaced choice of subject.

Then one morning, while reading the lines of a scene, Irrfan found what he had been looking for. The scene had Yogi call his driver to fetch him after a dinner date. He carried packed food for him and it hit Irrfan. who often shared meals with his staff, that here was a man who cared for people. Yogi loved people, it didn't

CROSSWORD 4105



Irrfan in a still from Qarib Qarib Singlle

matter what they did for a living. This became the reason Irrfan agreed to do the movie. In the editing room, I discovered something

magical. I discovered that Irrfan's performance had a dynamic quality. It changed upon each viewing. The cinematic frames hadn't shifted,

PILORIMS ABOUT

the lines hadn't been altered, the character, the locations, the costumes, they were all the same, and yet, a tiny movement, a fleeting look, the quietest gesture, one hadn't seen before would reveal itself

This was the reason one never tires of seeing this actor on screen, this was the reason that even though his work often has tell-tale signs of 'classic Irrfan', each performance varies. The loss of this magnificent actor is an incomparable one for Indian cinema. He had crossed only some part of his journey of sublime acting. There was so much more for him to explore within himself, to discover. He would have had no dearth of remarkable scripts coming to him for the next couple decades. We can only imagine the kind of beauty he would've brought to our screens. It will be a longing left unfulfilled. But it's no small thing that all he leaves behind will be cherished for a long, long time.

Chandra is the director of Qarib Qarib Singlle

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis

OKAY.

The Quietest Boy in Class Irrfan's friends from NSD remember the actor **DIPANITA NATH**

School of Drama (NSD) take to reach the main auditorium, Abhimanch, a row of photographs used to hang, until a year or so ago, of

past graduates. Whether these were meant to celebrate achievements of pass-outs or goad the current crop towards future excellence was never clear but the displays did offer a glimpse of a number of stalwart performers in their early days. In this gallery was a rare black-and-white shot of Irrfan on stage. The actor had cut his teeth in acting in the



Irrfan from his NSD days NSD Archives



LIFE OF PI (2012): As the adult Pi Patel, Irrfan does not have a meaty role in AngLee's adaptation of Yann Martel's novel. But he

THE LUNCHBOX

(2013): As Saajan

widower whose

Fernandes, a lonely

humdrum life changes

when he receives the

makes every scene he is in count - and Hollywood sat up and took notice.

wrong lunchbox, Irrfan embodies a

quiet grace that lights up the screen.

QISSA (2013): As Umber Singh, whose

his youngest daughter as a boy, Irrfan is

PIKU (2015): As Rana, an unlikely foil to

Deepika Padukone's outspoken Piku,

the talking while he stays in the

Irrfan is content to let bigger stars do all

desire to have a son leads him to raise

not only singularly terrifying but

absolutely terrific.

HAASIL (2003): Irrfan gave a power-packed performance as Ranvijay Singh, a violent student leader at a university in Allahabad.

and struggles to give it up.

THE WARRIOR

Kapadia's debut film,

Irrfan plays Lafcadia, a

Rajasthani feudal lord

who lives by his sword

(2001): In Asif

MAQBOOL (2003): Based on Macbeth by William Shakespeare, the film brought Irrfan widespread acclaim for his luminescent performance as Maqbool, a mafia don's right-hand man who falls for his boss's mistress.



Irrfan who plays Ashoke Ganguli, a first-

generation Indian immigrant to America, who chooses an unusual name and legacy for his first-born child.

PAAN SINGH TOMAR (2012): "You can't take your eyes off him," said The New York Times in its review. As a former army man turned-star athleteturned rebel. Irrfan delivers in everv frame of his action-packed biopic.



was one of the quietest students in the class of 1987. His classmates, such as Bharti Sharma, founder of Kshitij Theater Society in Delhi, used to wonder, 'Pata nahin yeh itna chup kyun rahta hai?' "He never missed any class but he also did not participate in discussions. It was only when he performed that we understood that Irrfan was a person who believed in listening rather than speaking. He had absorbed everything we were taught and was implementing it in his performance," she adds.

Dinesh Khanna, who was a year senior to Irrfan and his close friend, says the actor, who was shy in person, was always trying to push the envelope on stage. His best friend was a studious girl from his batch, Sutapa Sikdar, who would become his wife.

"There was a seriousness about him that's well known but he also had a sense of mischief which we see in his roles," says actor Mita Vashisht.



LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23) You may be under some extra pressure at the moment, but it's all friendly. You



BY PETER VIDAL

strong, something which you

are being urged to be more outgoing, confident in your



A lanky boy with a head of curly hair, Irrfan

halls of this famous Delhi institute.

THEN THEY SHARED A HAR VEST MEAL WITH NATIVE AMERICANS, AND THAT WAS THE FIRST

THANKSGIVING.

IN THE corridor that students of the National



THE NAMESAKE (2007): Based on the novel by Jhumpa Lahiri, the film belongs to



2

4

6

12

15

Passage taken from a

Contenders for the high

At heart an oration shows a

sense of proportion (5)

Don't take legal action for

Every year one may await its

After this month there's

everything to put in (7)

return with added interest (8)

Imposing corporal

punishment(8)

nothing(4,2,6)

pamphlet(7)

jump(12)

Pole position (6)

- paints badly (8) A girl is after one, right (4) 5 Trace misdirected supply (5) 9
- Rattle caused by a loose 10 ratchet(7)
- It won't keep you fully 11
- occupied (4-4,4) 13 Battle suit (6)
- 14
- A dynamic proposition (6)
- 17 Sporting event that has its ups and downs (12)
- 20 Sped too much, and went over the limit (7)
- 21 Concerning a morning's 16 Occasion when spirits are papers(5) called for (6)
- 22 Lockers A to G perhaps Three points go to my (4)opponent(5)
- 23 Call for a rising 19 Offshore spot I stole away to (8) (4)

Solutions Crossword 4104: Across: 1 Desertion, 8 Arena, 9 Mailbag, 10 Rig out, 11 Athens, 12 Flagging, 15 Sanskrit, 18 Emigre, 20 Averse, 21 Tarnish, 22 Elite, 23 Tailoress. Down: 2 Exact, 3 Eileen, 4 Transfer, 5 Naming, 6 Deposit, 7 Castigate, 11 Apostates, 13 After all, 14 Inherit, 16 Kismet, 17 Dinner, 19 Rests.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

___is ideal, it is the work of the imagination. - Marquis de Sade (9))



Answer: Happiness is ideal, it is the work of the imagination. - Marquis de Sade SOLUTION: ALIVE, CROSS, UNPAID, PREACH



YEAH?

ON THE EAST

NERE HAVING

OUGH

CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



Difficulty Level 3s Instructions 9 To solve a Sudoku puzzle, 6 every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes. 9 **Difficulty Level** 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;

3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

ທ

σ

4

UDOKU

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SOLUTION SUDOKU 4194

7	6	8	8	4	3	5	2	1
4	2	3	6	5	1	8	7	9
1	5	8	9	2	7	6	3	4
2	8	4	5	7	9	1	6	3
6	3	5	4	1	8	7	9	2
9	7	1	3	6	2	4	5	8
3	4	2	7	8	5	9	1	6
5	1	6	2	9	4	3	8	7
8	9	7	1	3	6	2	4	5

feelings can be such mess things. It's all a question of relaxing into it, accepting whatever happens. Go with the flow', as they say.

never find easy mainly because

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Your natural instinct for self-preservation is boosted by two very helpful aspects to Venus, the planet which represents your emotional needs and desires. Your intellect and instincts should be functioning as one, so your judgment could be impeccable hopefully.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

You must get your priorities right. First among these is the need to co-operate with other people, whether at work or at home. It therefore follows that you should be as charming as possible. You must be a good listener for that's one of the best ways to see to it that others do take you seriously

CANCER (June 22 - July 23) Not everything works out as expected, but then what would life be like if everything went according to plan? Pretty boring, probably. Bear this reassuring and simple truth in mind over the coming days as

partners, loved ones and colleagues start to play up

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23) This is a time for realism. You should accept that errors have occurred and that you'll soon be in a position to work out who was responsible and why. There is no need to apportion blame, only to prevent the same errors being repeated. In fact, if you learn from your mistakes you

You ought to be able to ensure that partners are never again in a position to force your hand. However, whether such an aim is realistic is another matter. Probably the best you can do is state your case and attempt to win them over to your way of thinking.

ideas and public with your feelings. At all times, come back to the central requirement - the development of your unique talents.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

People you live with can be very difficult to pin down. Sometimes you wonder what they actually want! As it happens, somebody close should soon alter direction, lifting a burden from your mind. Emotionally, professionally and personally, all the pieces of the jigsaw should now be beginning to fall into place.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

There may be few individuals who are genuinely happy with recent discussions and agreements. This is partly because your latent perfectionism is coming out, so you can try to see such discontent as very useful, encouraging the desire to do better next time round.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

You can't stay as you are for ever, neither do vou want to. If new routines or methods are to be accepted, it must be with an option for change in the near future. The point is that it is only when you put your plans into practice that you'll identify the pitfalls.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21- Feb 19)

Secret, hidden or suppressed feelings are once again bubbling over. You should be aware that, even if your behaviour has been impeccable, others could still be annoyed or envious. That may be their responsibility rather than yours, although you might have to sort them out and restore commonsense

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

You still have all your wits about you, thank goodness. In fact you may be able to see sense where other people are completely confused. The only thing bothering you may be a long-distance affair, or even a family connection which is stretching the limits of your affections.





will deserve praise. VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2020 14 SPORT

BOOKIE IN SHAKIB CASE BANNED

ICC handed a 2-year ban to Deepak Agarwal, a franchise owner in the 2018 T10 League held in the UAE, after he admitted to obstructing an ongoing investigation. The Indian businessman was named as the man involved in Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan getting banned last year.

'Difficult' to host Olympics if pandemic not contained: Abe

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE TOKYO, APRIL 29

JAPANESE PRIME Minister Shinzo Abe said on Wednesday that the Tokyo Olympics could not take place next year unless the coronavirus pandemic is contained, as the city's governor called for an extension of the nationwide state of emergency. The International Olympic Committee and the Japanese government last month postponed the Games until July 2021 because of the coronavirus crisis. With the epidemic's worldwide infection rate climbing and experts suggesting a vaccine is a long way off, doubts have been raised about the chances of holding the huge event next year.

'We've been saying the Olympic and Paralympic Games must be held in a complete form, in that athletes and spectators can all participate safely. It would be impossible to hold the Games in such a complete form unless the coronavirus pandemic is contained," Abe said in response to an opposition lawmaker.

Abe's summary of the situation was later underlined by IOC President Thomas Bach.

"The IOC fully agrees with the position of Prime Minister Abe," Bach said in response to a question from Reuters. "From the very beginning of this crisis, we established the principle that the Olympic and Paralympic Games can only be organised in a safe environment for everyone involved. This principle has driven all our decisions so far, and we remain committed to it in the future." Abe has staked part of his legacy as Japan's longest-serving premier on holding the Games and was hoping for a boom in tourism and consumer spending. Japan has gathered some \$3 billion in domestic sponsorship, an Olympic record, and spent close to \$13 billion on preparations.

The prime minister said on Wednesday that the Olympics "must be held in a way that shows the world has won its battle against the coronavirus pandemic," and cautioned that Japan should "brace for a protracted battle".

Tokyo confirmed 47 new infections on Wednesday. The national tally stands at 13,895 infections, including 413 deaths, national broadcaster NHK said.

Abe's comments echoed statements made by other senior Japanese officials this week. Tokyo 2020 president Yoshiro Mori told Nikkan Sports on Tuesday that the Games would be "scrapped" if they could not take place in 2021.

The head of the Japan Medical Association (JMA), Yoshitake Yokokura, told a news briefing on Tuesday that "unless an effective vaccine is developed, I expect hosting the Olympics will be difficult.



MIHIR VASAVDA NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

LEGALEXPERTS and market-watchers, assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sports, feel that the cancellation of this year's Indian Premier League might be the best-case scenario for all stakeholders.

Advising against delaying or shortening of the season, they say that by considering 2020 as a 'zero year', the broadcaster, Star, and BCCI will be able to deal with the present economic uncertainty better and also benefit in the long run.

"Since the pandemic will result in a change of timelines or loss of a season, broadcasters will need to review their contracts with event organisers. They may consider extending the term of their contract to include an extra season where a season has been cancelled," a paper produced by lawyer Nandan Kamath's firm awNK says.

However, BCCI hasn't yet given up on the IPLidea. Earlier this month, BCCI secretary Jay Shah had said: "The BCCI will continue to monitor and review the situation regarding a potential start date in close partnership with all of its stakeholders and will continue to take guidance from the Government of India, state governments and other state regulatory bodies." On the impact of the pandemic on the Star-BCCI deal, a top BCCI official said: "We will keep consulting the government and, based on their inputs, it will be decided if the IPL can take place or not. As for the Star deal, it's too early to talk

about it. However, with most mega sporting events around the world - Olympics, Grand Slam tennis, European football championship-getting cancelled or postponed by a year, the chances of IPL Season 13 taking place seem bleak.

This, according to lawyer Anish Dayal, who specialises in sports law and IPL contracts, is "a clear situation of force majeure". Explaining the legal term, he says, "Force majeure allows the suspension of obligations and this will help both, the BCCI and franchises, to mutually discuss mitigation of the loss that arises."

However, the tricky problem for the BCCI will be the implementation of the 'force majeure' clause in the broadcasting deal with Star that has promised to pay the Indian board ₹16,347.50 crore over five years till 2022.

As part of their 2020 obligation, Star has already paid the BCCI approximately ₹1,500 crore as an advance for this season's IPL. BCCI officials insist that in the case of cancellation, and the enforcement of 'force majeure', the board will return the advance payment. "Of course, we will return the amount," said an official.

Sports lawyer Vidushpat Singhania, managing partner of Krida Legal, says none of the parties may have to pay any penalties if the force majeure clause is invoked. Additionally, they can consider Season 13 as a 'zero year', and negotiate to add an extra year at the end of the contract to recover losses.

"It depends on how the contract is worded

As part of their 2020 obligation, Star has already paid the BCCI approximately ₹1,500 crore as an advance for this season's IPL. Those in the know say that in the case of cancellation, and the enforcement of 'force majeure', BCCI is expected to return a part of or the full advance payment.

Star to re-negotiate deals with advertisers who have already booked IPL slots keeping in mind the original April-May slot. An IPL later in the year could see them changing their minds. A product launch or promotion of seasonal goods can't be expected to be showcased on-air if the IPL's schedule changes.

"In such scenarios, they may be forced to renegotiate on existing bookings, rates and packages," Kamath, who has previously advised the BCCI and other stakeholders on various issues, says

Another predicament that Star could face is the drop in advertising spending in the coming months because of the COVID-19-forced economic slump. There are those who feel that even BCCI might face the same problem. "In case they somehow do hold Season 13 in September-October this year, as it has been proposed, within months they will have to hold Season 14 in April, 2021. These back-toback IPLs will dry up the advertisers. A market dealing with a slowdown will not be conducive for another IPL," says a BCCI member. He goes on to add that the Board, in case it holds an IPL this year, will have to start the process of inviting bids for a new broadcaster in 2021. "The financial slump will mean they won't get good money for the TV deal. Delaying the tender process and pushing back the broadcast rights auction will be a wise decision."

Counting the zeroes in 'zero year'

Experts feel cancelling IPL 2020 will benefit all stakeholders but BCCI not too keen to add extra year to Star contract



The decision won't be so straightforward as a host of other commercial aspects will be decided on whether the season is cancelled or truncated as well as possible visa restrictions, which could have an impact on viewership and sponsor interest. BCCl file

What is force majeure? It's an event beyond the control of a party: something that could not be foreseen at the time of entering into an agreement - in the present circumstances, the COVID-19 pandemic. Is the pandemic a force majeure event?

To trigger the clause, the BCCI will have to prove that it wasn't just inconvenient, but impossible, for them to hold the tournament because of events beyond their control. According to lawyer Anish Dayal, who specialises in sports law and has advised on IPL contracts, the present situation - the COVID-19 pandemic and the government imposed lockdown - "is clearly an event of force majeure".

What happens if force majeure is invoked?

It will give IPL stakeholders - BCCI, broadcasters, franchises, players, and advertisers temporary reprieve as they would no longer be tied down by their contractual obligations.

as part of the deal, the broadcasting behemoth already paid BCCI close to ₹1,500 crore – half of this season's installment.

On the face of it, in case the "force majeure" clause comes into play and IPL gets cancelled, the BCCI will have to refund the advance payment to Star. However, it is open to interpretation. Chances are the BCCI might just return a part of the advance bringing in the image rights **SIMPLY** PUT

Will Starget an extra year in case this season is cancelled?

That's the best-case scenario for Star in the present circumstances. Experts say that in case the tournament does not take place this year. Season 13 can be considered a 'zero year'. An extra year would mean Star getting another the IPL by the BCCI is likely to be treated as force majeure in the context of player contracts. Unless the BCCI decides otherwise, payment obligations to players will stand suspended," says noted lawyer Nandan Kamath.

What happens if the season is postponed and truncated?

According to Vidushpat Singhania, managing partner of Krida Legal, if the IPL is postponed "the

player can still perform his duty, which means the franchises will have to pay the player his full fees"

In case of a truncated season, it will depend on whether there is a clause relating to variable pay. However, it is likely that there will be a pay cut across the board – from player salaries to broadcast payments - in case the IPL season is shortened and/or held behind closed doors.

As per a paper produced by Kamath's firm wNK. broadcasters might also face re-nego-

force majeure can mitigate losses

clause. Those in the know also say that there is also a possibility that the amount could be carried over to next vear and considered as an advance for next season

How suspension of obligations through

We've been saying the Olympic and Paralympic Games must be held in a complete form, in that athletes and spectators can all participate safely. It would be impossible to hold the Games in such a complete form unless the coronavirus pandemic is contained."

SHINZO ABE, JAPAN PRIME MINISTER

If it is a yearly restriction, they will have to negotiate another year. However, if it is seasonwise, then the contract will continue till the particular number of seasons are played,' nghania says.

The idea of contract extension hasn't found takers in the BCCI. "That might not be possible. We will go for a fresh tender once the Star deal ends in 2022." an official said.

However, if the tournament is held in October - an option the BCCI is exploring - it could result in Star losing out on advertising revenue due to a combination of factors, including the gloomy economic outlook, while still having to pay the entire rights fees.

A truncated and postponed IPL will force

This can possibly help the parties arrive at a negotiated settlement by coming to the table with a clean slate, not burdened by strict clauses. "Force majeure allows the suspension of obligations and this will help both, the BCCI and franchises, to mutually discuss mitigation of the loss arising," Dayal says.

What happens to the BCCI-Star deal?

The fate of this deal has worried all IPL stakeholders the most. As is the case with all sporting leagues, it is the media rights revenue that keeps cricket's biggest brand running. In 2017, Star India bought the broadcasting rights of the tournament and promised to pay BCCI ₹16.347.50 crore over five years. Earlier this year.

season to recover its losses.

Will the franchises have to pay the players if the season is cancelled?

The franchise-player contract has two main payment conditions: the player needs to pass a fitness test and has to get a bonafide no-objection certificate from national boards. According to those in the know, the contract does not contemplate cancellation of a season.

In a normal season, a franchise has to pay 60 per cent of a player's fee by April 30. So far, none of the players have been paid for the season. However, if the season is cancelled because of the pandemic, the franchises will probably not have to pay the players. "The cancellation of

tiation and refund requests from their advertisers, who have already booked spots. This means that the advertisement sales for a specific period (for example, a mobile phone launch or summer-specific products) may no longer be relevant if the tournament is held in, say, October. "In such scenarios, they may be forced to renegotiate on existing bookings, rates and packages," Kamath says. Another predicament Star could face is the drop in advertising spending in the coming months. According to reports, before the crisis hit, the broadcaster was selling a 10-second advertisement slot for ₹13-14 lakhs. The slowdown could impact these estimates in case the tournament is held this year. MIHIR VASAVDA

DR ANTHONY FAUCI

'Don't have to act on impulse... we are not ready to have all sports back'

JAMES WAGNER & KEN BELSON APRIL 29

DR. ANTHONY S. Fauci, the leading public health expert on President Trump's coronavirus task force, said this week that it might be very difficult for major sports in the United States to return to action this year. "Safety, for the players and for the fans, trumps everything," he said. "If you can't guarantee safety, then unfortunately you're going to have to bite the bullet and say, 'We may have to go without this sport for this season."

Dr. Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984, is an avid runner who grew up playing basketball and baseball, is a fan of the Washington Nationals and the New York Yankees. He says he will feel comfortable returning to a stadium when the level of infection is far lower than it is now. Excerpts:

Wagner and Belson: When and how can sports return?

What we need to do is get it, as a country and as individual locations, under control. That sometimes takes longer than you would like, and if we let our desire to prematurely get back to normal, we can only get ourselves right back in the same hole we were in a few weeks ago. We've got to make sure that when we try to get back to normal, including being able to play baseball in the summer and football in the fall and basketball in the winter, that when we do come back to some form of normality, we do it gradually and carefully. And when cases do start to rebound – which they will, no doubt - that we have the capability of identifying, isolating and contact tracing.

Sports are a business, and they have a financial imperative. Some governors and mayors have discussed the possibility of sports returning without fans. But there are still hundreds of staff members who have to run the stadium, the clubhouse. What needs to be done to make sure they're also safe?

The things we need to do to the best of our ability are try and keep the six-foot distance and wear face coverings. And do the kind of pure hygiene things you do to prevent the spread of respiratory infections: washing hands frequently; wearing gloves, particularly food service, and they do that anyway; changing gloves frequently. And if you are in a stadium, make sure that if there are people there, they maintain



Anthony Fauci, the leading public health expert on US President Donald Trump's coronavirus task force, said that return of sports must happen gradually. Reuters

that physical distance because the virus doesn't travel that much farther than that. If you can do that, it isn't completely free of risk, but you diminish the risk substantially. The density of the infection in the community will dictate the degree to which you can loosen up. I've said that many times that the virus decides how quickly you're going to get back to normal.

All sports aren't created equal. Golf might be more suited to maintaining distance, but it would be harder in basketball or hockey. What can be done?

You've got to be really creative. That's going to be more difficult and more problematic. But you know, there have been some suggestions that if you want to have a situation where play-

ers are going to have to come into contact, like basketball, there are certain things you can do. It may not work. I'm not saying this is the way to go, but you want to at least consider having players, if they're going to play, play in front of a TV camera without people in the audience. And then test all the players and make sure they're negative and keep them in a place where they don't have contact with anybody on the outside who you don't know whether they're positive or negative.

That's going to be logistically difficult, but there's at least the possibility of doing that. In other words, we said that for baseball, get the players in Major League Baseball, get a couple of cities and a couple of hotels, get them tested and keep them segregated. I know it's going to be difficult for them not to be out in society, but that may be the price you pay if you want to play ball.

Is it even fair to think about sports leagues and teams getting broad access to testing if the general public or other industries aren't getting the same?

I hope when we get to that point, when we're going to try and get the sports figures tested, then we will have enough tests so that anybody who needs a test can get a test.

Sports are an unusual business because athletes are in close quarters for many months. What kind of runway do leagues need to start up again?

That's the reason I stress the idea of testing everybody and having available for them tests from which you can get a result immediately... I don't want to make this conversation sound like it's going to be an easy thing. We may not be able to pull this off. We're going to have to see: Is it doable? Do we have the capability of doing it safely? Because safety, for the players and for the fans, trumps everything. If you can't guarantee safety, then unfortunately you're going to have to bite the bullet and say, "We may have to go without this sport for this season."

Some people are clamouring for sports to resume, including Mr. Trump. Do you think that is the correct impulse?

There's a difference between an impulse and what you're going to do. You don't have to act on every impulse. I would love to be able to have all sports back. But as a health official and a physician and a scientist, I have to say, right now, when you look at the country, we're not ready for that yet. We might be ready, depending upon what the sport is. But right now, we're not. NYT

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