



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

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GROUP



DOMESTIC AIR TRAVEL RESUMES MONDAY

Air fares capped for 3 months, web check-in, face mask, and Aarogya Setu approval must

Airlines say price caps will result in shortages like in railway services

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE Ministry of Civil Aviation Thursday said it would implement a fare cap for domestic air travel for three months citing a possible surge in airfares due to pent-up demand. It also issued standard operating procedures with specific pre-flight, in-flight and post-flight guidelines that include arriving at the airport at least two hours prior to departure time, mandatory use of face masks, clearance from Aarogya Setu app and compulsory web



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HOW FLYING WILL CHANGE

REACH airport at least 2 hours before departure
FACE MASKS mandatory inside airport and throughout flight

THERMAL screening while entering airport
VULNERABLE people like very elderly, pregnant women, etc. advised against flying

AAROGYA SETU clearance must for compatible devices, or fill self-

declaration forms
ONLY ONE cabin bag; trolleys to be allowed sparingly

WEB CHECK-IN necessary to enter terminal
FRISKING will be minimum contact
SANITISATION before entering aircraft

NO MEALS, magazines, newspapers, retail sales inside aircraft

Why the govt changed its mind in just three days and allowed flights

PRANAV MUKUL & ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AN IMMINENT threat of more than one airline folding up, both on account of the extended lockdown and little to no relief in the economic package announced by the Finance Minister

EXPLAINED

last week, is learnt to be the reason behind a sudden reversal in the Centre's stance over a span of just three days, government officials

told *The Indian Express*. On Sunday, May 17, the government announced domestic travel will remain prohibited till

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Big surge in Chinese transgressions, most of them in Ladakh

INCIDENTS ON LINE OF ACTUAL CONTROL				
YEAR	WEST	EAST	MID	TOTAL
2019	497	138	28	663
2018	284	89	31	404
2017	337	119	17	473
2016	208	71	17	296
2015	342	77	9	428

(Western, Eastern, Middle sectors)

SUSHANT SINGH
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AS TENSIONS RUN high in eastern Ladakh, official data show there has been a marked increase in the number of Chinese transgressions into the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

The first four months of this year, according to official data, witnessed 170 Chinese transgressions across the LAC, including 130 in Ladakh. There were only 110 such transgressions in Ladakh during the same period in 2019.

But in 2019, the year when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met at Bishkek and Mahabalipuram, there was also a 75 per cent surge in Chinese transgressions in Ladakh — 497 as against 284 transgressions in 2018.

Nearly three-quarters of the transgressions, data since 2015 show, have taken place in the western sector of the LAC, which falls in Ladakh. The eastern sector, which falls in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, witnessed almost one-fifth of the Chinese transgressions.

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNNY



EXPRESS NETWORK

OVER ONE MONTH, COVID HITS MORE DISTRICTS, MOST IN BIHAR, UP [PAGE 5](#)

THE WORLD

GLOBAL CASE COUNT
CROSSES 5 MILLIONCHINA: WUHAN-STYLE
CURBS AFTER NEW
OUTBREAKS[PAGE 14](#)

Covid distress: High Courts ask questions while SC is restrained

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AS THE Covid lockdown translates to widespread distress, several High Courts, Madras to Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka to Gujarat, are raising questions of officials and governments.

On May 15, hearing a plea seeking the safe return of over 400 migrant workers detained at the Maharashtra border to Tamil Nadu, a division bench of the Madras High Court put 12 questions to the state and the Centre on how it was dealing with the migrant crisis set off by the lockdown.

"One cannot control his/her tears after seeing the pathetic condition of migrant labourers

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

JUSTICE MORE
COMPASSIONATEBY FALI NARIMAN
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shown in the media for the past one month. It is nothing but a human tragedy," the court noted. The questions ranged from seeking data on just how many migrants were stranded or walking on highways to what steps are being taken to ferry them home.

The same day, a division bench of the Andhra Pradesh High Court hearing a public interest litigation seeking its

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Nagaur district scoring the highest. Today, as a Covid red zone with 221 cases, five deaths and 126 recoveries, it's an illustrative example of how lockdown government schools, hamstrung by inadequate digital resources and infrastructure, are keeping learning going amid the pandemic.

One of the foot soldiers is Sushma, principal of Nagaur's Hudeel Senior Secondary School. She ensures that WhatsApp messages, sent directly from the education department in Jaipur, land in the two groups. Of course, it is a one-way push unlike the interactive video ses-

the state and seeking financial relief to tide over the crisis.

On Thursday night, the Prime Minister's Office tweeted that Modi would travel to West Bengal and Odisha on Friday to take stock of the situation. "He will conduct aerial surveys and take part in review meetings, where aspects of relief and rehabilitation will be discussed," the tweet read.

The PM is scheduled to land in Kolkata at 10 am, after which, sources said, he was likely to

hold a meeting with Chief Minister Banerjee. They are also likely to visit Bashirhat in North 24 Parganas, one of the affected areas.

Earlier in the day, after a meeting she presided over at the state secretariat, Banerjee said: "It is a huge loss and I would request the Central government and all others to extend help and cooperate with us. Our Union Home Minister called me on phone this afternoon. We spoke about the devastation and he as-

sured all help. I would also request the Prime Minister to visit and carry out a surveillance of Sunderbans and adjoining areas."

Saying the cyclone hit the state when it was already dealing with the twin challenges of Covid-19 and the return of stranded migrants, the chief minister said, "We need money for relief and we need it now, not later. I had set up a Rs 200-crore Covid-19 fund, but we have already spent Rs 1,000 crore.

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TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

LOCKDOWN DAY 58 **CASES: 1,12,359** RECOVERED: 45,299 DEATHS: 3,435
TESTS: 26,15,920 DOUBLING RATE: 13.45**



KEY STATES TO WATCH	TOTAL CASES	SURGE IN 24 HRS	7-DAY AVG. GROWTH*	DOUBLING RATE**
■ Maharashtra	39,297	2,161	6.12%	11.76
■ Gujarat	12,539	398	4.41%	16.32
■ Delhi	11,659	571	4.67%	15.42
■ Tamil Nadu	13,191	743	5.24%	13.74
■ Rajasthan	5,902	170	4.90%	14.69
■ West Bengal	3,103	142	4.44%	16.23

* Compounded Daily Growth Rate over last 7 days ** Calculated over 7-day growth

CONCERN	CAUTION	A GLIMMER
MAHARASHTRA: 4 days of 2,000+ new cases; growth rate well above national average.	BIHAR: Growing at a fast pace; now has 1,800+ cases. Could be next trouble state.	PUNJAB: Just three new cases on Wednesday; currently one of the slowest growing.

Based on daily data by Centre, ICMR, state governments

Nyay scheme: Chhattisgarh transfers Rs 1,500 cr to a/cs of 19 lakh farmers

GARGI VERMA & MANOJ CG
RAIPUR, NEW DELHI, MAY 21

LAUNCHING A direct cash transfer scheme for farmers under the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojna, the Chhattisgarh government said on Thursday that it had transferred the first tranche of Rs 1,500 crore in the accounts of



Rs 13,000 per acre for cane farmers, says CM Baghel

about 19 lakh farmers.

Under the scheme, Rs 5,750 crore will be disbursed in four instalments to farmers of 14 differ-

ent crops in the state.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said sugarcane farmers will get a grant of Rs 13,000 per acre, while paddy farmers will get Rs 10,000 per acre.

A senior government official said they were still collating the data for other crops, including maize.

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Maharashtra takes 80% beds in private hospitals, caps charges for treatment

TABASSUM
BARNAGARWALA
MUMBAI, MAY 21

AFTER NEGOTIATING for several days with private hospitals, the Maharashtra government Thursday night issued a notifica-

tion taking over 80 per cent beds in private hospitals and nursing homes across the state.

In Mumbai alone, this will open up around 4,400 hospital beds in the private sector. The city has been struggling with a shortage of beds to treat critically ill Covid-19 patients.

With 41,642 Covid-19 cases, Maharashtra accounts for a third of all cases in India. The notification covers hospitals run by charitable trusts, including all the big Mumbai hospitals such as H N Reliance, Lilavati, Breach Candy, Jaslok, Bombay Hospital,

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US deports Qaeda man al-Awlaki's aide to India

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY & NAVJEEVAN GOPAL
NEW DELHI, CHANDIGARH, MAY 21

AN AL-QAEDA operative from Hyderabad, who has been convicted in the United States for financing activities of the slain Yemeni preacher and al-Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki, has been deported to India.

Mohammed Ibrahim Zubair, 41, a resident of Toledo in Ohio, US, was deported to India on a special flight that landed in Amritsar on May 19. He was escorted by Indian agents.

Zubair is "Sharjah born", but is an "Indian national", with his parents tracing their roots to Hyderabad, a top Punjab Police

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PAGE 1
ANCHORUMA VISHNU
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AROUND 9 am, two WhatsApp groups in Hudeel, a gram panchayat in Nagaur district of Rajasthan, came alive. One is of parents, the other of teachers and education officials. Messages range from an NCERT video on "body movements" for Class 6 to a YouTube link on remainder theorem for Class 9.

Last year, Rajasthan topped national rankings for Class 8 math and language outcomes in NITI Aayog's School Education Quality Index, with

LOCKDOWN
LESSONS

AN EXPRESS SERIES

PART 2

sions of private schools in metros, but at least it's some way to reach out to students, she says.

"Our teachers have been assigned five families each, whom they call and find out if they have trouble with the assignments and the links," says Sushma, who, as Panchayat Elementary Education Officer (PEEO), is in charge of eight schools in the gram panchayat.



As part of Rajasthan's SMILE programme, 13 lakh families across the state get learning material on WhatsApp. *Express*

At the end of the day, she compiles feedback from teachers and students and sends it to block-level officers from where it goes to the district and then the state capital.

Among the parents in the Hudeel WhatsApp group is Sarita Kumawat, 32, a mother of three, who has a B.Ed and an MA. She helps her daughter with the links on her Samsung phone. "Earlier, I didn't give her the phone much, but now she has free access. Anyway, this is at least better than doing nothing and watching TV," says Kumawat, whose husband is a technician with the Rajasthan

Roadways in Sikar.

The Nagaur programme is part of the Rajasthan government's Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement or SMILE, an e-learning plan launched on April 13. School Education Secretary Manju Rajpal says at least 13 lakh families across the state are connected through these WhatsApp groups.

Rajpal admits there are limitations. Of the 13 lakh who get the messages, barely 2 lakh use them. Many don't have smartphones. "And even among families with devices, it's usually the man who has the smartphone and is less invested in the child's

education. But we are trying and learning as we go. For instance, on weekends, we send revision videos, followed by a quiz. We also send a Google form every day, asking for feedback from students," Rajpal says.

More interactive is what the Delhi government is trying in tune with its record on education reforms. The state has tied up with a tech partner to start live YouTube sessions for an estimated 1.6 lakh senior students in state-run schools.

For an hour and a half last Saturday, Abrar Ahmad, a geography lecturer at the Kalkaji

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3 THE OUTBREAK THE CITY

FRESH GUIDELINES ISSUED FOLLOWING REPORTS OF DELAYS

Trace contacts the same day as patient tests positive: Delhi govt

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE DELHI government has issued a fresh standard operating procedure to make sure contact tracing of patients who have tested positive for Covid-19 in the city is completed on the same day.

The guidelines were issued after the health department found that there were delays in reaching out to patients due to wrong information being updated on the ICMR portal.

The city reported over 500 new cases for the third consecutive day, with 571 fresh cases recorded in the last 24 hours – the highest in one day. The total cases are 11,659. On Thursday, 18 more deaths have been updated by the government, taking the toll to 194 in the city. The city has



Asha workers are also involved in contact tracing. *Tashi Tobgyal*

reported 1,605 cases – 13.8% of the total cases – in the last three days.

The order has been issued to all district magistrates, state surveillance officers, district surveillance officers (DSOs) and chief district medical officers

(CDMOs). “It has been brought to notice that there are delays in reaching out to Covid-19 patients, as reported on the ICMR portal, by district surveillance units due to wrong allocation of the district on the portal. Once a patient is found positive, there

needs to be immediate action,” stated the order issued by Dr Nutan Mundeja, director-general of health services (DGHS), Delhi government.

As per the guidelines, the state surveillance unit should provide the district-wise list of patients to each district by 10 am. In cases where details are missing, officers have been asked to make efforts to provide complete information and submit details by noon. CDMOs have been directed to provide human resources to DSOs to complete the task.

“All positive patients must be contacted, and appropriate next steps such as sending to hospitals/Covid care centres/health centres or initiating process of home isolation should be done latest by 10 pm on the same day. Action taken for each patient has to be updated by 10 pm. If any pa-

tient is not being contacted by 10 pm, or the development in the case is not updated, disciplinary action will be initiated against the DSO,” the order stated.

Out of the 11,659 cases so far, 5,567 people have recovered and 2,739 people are under home isolation with mild or no symptoms. The recovery rate in Delhi is almost 48%, higher than the national average, which is around 40%.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted Thursday that soon, the number of patients who have recovered will be more than active cases in the national capital.

“I am so proud of our team of doctors and nurses who have provided the best possible treatment to our Covid patients. Delhi will soon have more recovered patients than the number of active cases,” he said.

MALLICA JOSHI & SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, MAY 20

A CALL each day to ask about symptoms, reminders to check body temperature regularly, detailed instructions on isolation, and government monitoring to ensure guidelines are followed – this is what the option for isolating at home means for Covid-19 patients, who are either asymptomatic or have mild symptoms.

Sidhartha Agarwal, a 22-year-old MBA student, tested positive for Covid-19 on May 4 and was placed in home isolation. The Central Delhi resident has no idea how he got the disease. “I had a slight fever and got tested. I got my reports on May 4 and the district administration contacted me a few days later. By then, I had already isolated myself in my room. The district health officer asked me about symptoms; since I only had a slight fever, I was asked to isolate at home,” he said.

Delhi has seen 11,659 Covid cases so far, of which 5,898 are active. While only 1,802 are admitted in hospitals, 2,739 have been advised home isolation. Another 630 are in Covid care centres.

For those under home quarantine, daily monitoring is key.

Agarwal’s sister also tested positive and is in isolation in a different room. Their mother has not contracted the infection and is their designated caregiver.

“District administration officers ask about my symptoms every day. I had a fever for a couple of days but nothing more than that. I was asked if there was a separate room in my house, with an attached toilet, where I could isolate myself. I am lucky that I had those facilities and was allowed to stay at home. After a couple of days, my sister also tested positive and she is also under home isolation. We get calls every day, asking us about our health. We have been assured that if we develop moderate or severe symptoms, we will be taken to the hospital,” he said.

Apster, which declares that a patient is in isolation, has been pasted on the door of the house. As per guidelines issued by the

HOME ISOLATION: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHO CAN BE CLEARED FOR IT

- Patients who have been clinically assigned as asymptomatic or those with very mild symptoms
- Should have a caregiver, also for monitoring



NORMS TO BE FOLLOWED

- 16 days of mandatory home isolation
- Poster marking house as one where a Covid-19 patient is staying
- Daily calls by team assigned by district surveillance officer to check for new symptoms

- Patients to wear a mask at all times
- If symptoms develop, patient is to be shifted to a Covid hospital/health centre in an ambulance
- Patient under isolation, caregiver to ensure utensils, clothes are separated

state and centre, patients are allowed to self isolate only if they have a separate room with an attached toilet. Utensils and clothes of patients have to be washed separately, and numbers of officers have to be given to the patient and the caregiver to reach out in case they need anything. No family member is allowed to go outside the house.

A Delhi government spokesperson said checks and monitoring are rigorous.

A 33-year-old nursing officer, posted at a Covid-19 ward of a government hospital who tested positive May 11, has received calls from an ICMR official, two dispensaries, Health Ministry helpline 1075, a control room set up by Delhi government in Dwarka Sector 10, and the civic body.

“I am under home-isolation as I am asymptomatic. I finished my Covid-19 ward duty on May 3, and returned home to my family of 10, including my 85-year-old grandmother and two nieces aged 5 and 8 years. I have been in isolation since,” said the Bijwasan resident, over the phone.

When she got her test results, she visited the government hospital and met the CMO and was advised home isolation. “In the form, I filled in my 29-year-old sister’s name as my primary caregiver. I have an attached bath-

room with my room, and my sister brings in everything for me, including meals,” she said.

On May 11, she got a call from a 1075 helpline official, who inquired about how she is managing to isolate at home. “Then someone from a dispensary in Dwarka called too, then another dispensary also called. I get a call daily about my health update, and finally I told them that if I feel sick I will let them know. An ASHA worker also called. Once, an official also came over to check my temperature,” she said.

After a Covid-19 sticker was posted outside her house, the woman said her house and the area around it was sanitised: “I feel good there is a mechanism in place and I am being looked after. It’s a huge relief mentally.”

The Delhi government is using services of a call centre to make calls to those under home isolation, and a team is sent to assess if the house is fit for isolation.

“We are not relying only on calls made by the call centre but also on our own officers since there aren’t so many cases of home isolation right now. We had developed an app to track if patients are home. We also ask them to send us photos to ascertain they are home,” said South Delhi District Magistrate B M Mishra.



FOOD RUSH

Migrants in line to receive food from NDRF personnel in Dadri, Wednesday. *Gajendra Yadav*

Law officers tussle over representing police in court

PRITAMPAL SINGH
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

TWO SENIOR law officers were involved in a tussle in Delhi High Court over the question of who would represent the Delhi Police in a petition concerning the alleged illegal custody of a 25-year-old under UAPA, in the absence of functioning of special courts.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Aman Lekhi told the court Wednesday that he has got an oral communication to represent the Delhi Police Commissioner in the habeas corpus petition by Aquil Hussain, seeking direction to produce his sister Gulfisha Fatima, who has been under continued detention since she was arrested on April 9.

However, Delhi government standing counsel (criminal) Rahul Mehra informed the bench, comprising Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rajnish Bhatnagar, that he has a serious objection to the ASG’s

The HC bench orally observed that such issues should not have come up and sought the SC’s Constitutional bench order on the appointment of Special Public Prosecutor

submission. Contending that he has mandate under the law to represent the Delhi Police before the High Court, Mehra submitted that he would file his reply to the petition.

The bench orally observed that such issues should not have come up and sought the Supreme Court’s Constitutional bench order on the appointment of Special Public Prosecutor, saying, apart from issue raised in the petition, it would also decide this aspect.

The bench issued notice to the Delhi government and Delhi

Police and listed the matter for further hearing on May 29.

“Notice is accepted on behalf of respondents. We may state that both Amit Mahajan, Central Government Standing Counsel, and Rahul Mehra, Standing Counsel for GNCTD, accept notice...” We permit both Mr Mahajan and Mr Mehra to file replies... in a week,” the order said.

The controversy has cropped up before the High Court on many occasions, recently on matters related to lodging of FIRs in the hate speech and on the petition by JNU student Sharjeel Imam, who has also been booked under UAPA.

Fatima was arrested in connection with an FIR registered over an anti-CAA protest in Jafrabad on February 22.

As per the NIA Act, offences under the UAPA can be tried only by a special court constituted under the NIA Act. The petitioner’s counsel Mehmood Pracha argued that only a special court could remand a detainee to custody.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE DELHI Police Special Cell arrested a 24-year-old Jamia student on Wednesday, under Section 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), for allegedly instigating crowds by giving speeches in different areas where anti-CAA protests were on. A few days ago, the student, Asif Iqbal Tanha, had also been arrested by the Crime Branch for allegedly instigating a crowd in Jamia Nagar on December 15 after which violence erupted in the area.

Police claim he was among those who organised an anti-CAA protest in Jamia Nagar.

Tanha was arrested on May 17 by the inter-state-cell of the crime branch, as his name was mentioned in the FIR registered at Jamia Nagar police station on December 15. Police said the FIR was registered following a complaint by Inspector Upender Singh, who has mentioned the names of Tanha, former Congress MLA Asif Khan, three local politicians – Ashu Khan, Haider, Mustafa – AISA member Chandan Kumar and CYSS member Kasim Usmani.

“He was sent to judicial custody by the crime branch. On Wednesday, the special cell moved an application for his police remand. After taking his police remand, they first made his



At the anti-CAA protest in Jafrabad in February. The student was accused of “instigating” crowds by giving speeches in different areas where anti-CAA protests were on. Archive

Conclude proceedings against DMC chief in 2 weeks: HC to Delhi govt

PRITAMPAL SINGH
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE DELHI High Court Thursday directed the Delhi government to conclude within two weeks the proceedings related to the removal of Delhi Minorities Commission (DMC) chairman Zafar-ul-Islam Khan in “accordance with law”.

Delhi Police has booked Khan for sedition over his alleged “provocative remarks” on social media. Khan’s tenure as DMC chairman will end in July.

A bench of Justice Manmohan and Justice Sanjeev Narula further expressed unhappiness over delay on part of authorities, which did not issue

showcause notice to Khan, despite the L-G ordering action.

The court disposed of one prayer sought by the petitioner seeking to remove Khan from the post of DMC Chairman, directing “respondents No.1 and 2 (Delhi Minorities Commission and GNCTD) to conclude the process under Section 4(4)(f) of the DMC Act against respondent No 3– Mr. Zafar-ul-Islam Khan in accordance with law in two weeks.”

On the prayer made by petitioner Vikram Gahlot to declare the DMC Act as “ultra vires”, the bench issued notice to the Centre, Delhi government, DMC and Khan. It listed the matter for hearing on June 23, directing the governments and others to file counter affidavits in two weeks.

Plea seeks release of Tablighi foreigners

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

A PLEA seeking release of 916 foreign nationals, who participated in the religious congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz event and are held in institutional quarantine since March 30 despite testing negative for Covid-19, has been filed in the Delhi High Court. It is likely to be heard on Friday.

The petition, filed Thursday, by 20 of the 916 foreigners, including Mohammad Jamal, said that the continued detention violates the “very fabric of liberty”.

The petition, listed before Justice Navin Chawla on Friday, challenged a May 9 order of the Delhi government’s Department of Revenue which had directed for handing over of 567 foreign

nationals, presently held in institutional quarantine but have tested negative, to the custody of Delhi Police as per directions of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The petition claimed the order is ultra vires to the right to equality before law and right to life and liberty.

“The reason for extreme urgency is that the...festival of Eid is coming in another two-three days. If the 916 foreign nationals, including the petitioners, are allowed to remain in alleged quarantine all confined and isolated, the same will result into an infringement of their fundamental rights,” the plea filed through advocate Ashima Mandla said.

It said FIRs were lodged by the Delhi Police in relation to the Markaz congregation against unknown persons.

Lok Nayak withdraws order asking doctors to vacate hotels

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

DELHI GOVERNMENT’S Lok Nayak Hospital has withdrawn its order asking healthcare workers to vacate hospital-provided accommodation or pay extra charges for overstaying. “The order has been kept in abeyance,” stated the corrigendum issued by the hospital’s medical director Thursday.

According to sources, healthcare workers at Delhi government-run hospitals will continue to stay in hotels during their quarantine period as per protocols issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Earlier this week, the Delhi government had issued an order doing away with the two-week quarantine for healthcare workers after Covid duty. It had said only those who have “high-risk” exposure will be quaran-

lined. This, it had said, was in line with the updated guidelines of the Union Ministry of Health.

The administration at Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital has also decided not to issue any such orders to doctors. “We will act after discussion with residents and staff on hospital-provided accommodation,” said a senior doctor.

Centre-run hospitals, meanwhile, are still following the order. On Thursday, Lady Hardinge Medical College asked doctors to vacate hospital-provided accommodation at hotels immediately. “The hotel facility during post-duty period days in Covid and suspected Covid zones provided to healthcare workers is hereby withdrawn, and occupants are directed to vacate their rooms immediately. The overstay, if at all, will be recovered from their salaries,” the

order stated.

However, the administration added that there is no change in instructions related to healthcare workers presently at COVID-19 facilities and they will be provided the hotel accommodation in the duty period days.

The Ministry’s decision to end the 14-day quarantine has riled a section of healthcare workers. Resident doctors at RML Hospital have decided to wear a black band at work in protest against the order. Doctors have been asked to vacate hotels by May 25.

On Thursday, the Federation of Resident Doctors’ Association wrote to Delhi Health Minister Satyendra Jain requesting him to make amendments to the quarantine guidelines. It has also decided to hold a protest on Friday.

NOTICE

1. It is notified by means of this notice that TA-42979Y Lieutenant Tadasmi Koul aged about 35 years, S/o Shri Rajinder Koul, R/o A-wing, Whitehorse Society Mori Road, Mahim West, Mumbai, Maharashtra- 400016 (First address available in official records) and A-181 Ground Floor, Today Blossoms 1, Sector-47 Gurgaon, Haryana- 122018 (Second address available in official records) was granted commission in the Territorial Army on 16 Jun 2015.
2. Whereas, the aforementioned Officer has failed to attend 'Annual Training Camp' for Training Years 2016-17 and 2017-18 despite the various 'Call Up Notices' issued to him by 109 Inf Bn (TA) MARATHA LI for embodiment under Rule-20 of TA Act Rules-1948 (Revised Edition 1976) and also that, as per Rule-14(d) of TA Act Rules-1948 (Revised Edition 1976), the Territorial Army Officers who do not attend 'Annual Training Camp' for two consecutive years without securing the exemption, as provided in Sub Rule 2 of Rule-20 of the said Rules and also the Officers who cannot present any valid reason, justifying their absence from such training, may be discharged from Territorial Army Service.
3. Whereas, as per the terms of engagement, it has been found that the Officer has neither attended 'Annual Training Camp' for Training Years 2016-17 and 2017-18 nor was granted valid exemption from attending these 'Annual Training Camps' by the Competent Authority and that being the case, it is hereby informed through this notice and the Officer is also called upon to submit his defence, if any, in writing as to why he should not be discharged from Territorial Army Service in accordance with Rule-14 (d) of TA Act Rules 1948 (Revised Edition 1976).
4. In case, no reply is submitted by the Officer within 30 days of publication of this Notice, it will be assumed that the Officer has no reason to urge against his discharge from Territorial Army Service and action as deemed appropriate will be taken ex-parte by the competent authority.

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as Capital First Home Finance Limited) CIN : L65110TN2014PLC09792 Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 FAX: +91 44 4564 4022. Authorized Officer – Mr. Rohit Dudgeja Contact Number – +91-7838324723	
APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Capital First Limited now IDFC FIRST Bank Limited, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 26.06.2020 , for recovery of INR 87,65,400.62 As on 30.11.2018 due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Home Finance Limited) from M/S INDIRA SERVICES PROPRIETOR INDIRA SINGHINDIRA, VATAN SINGH, SIDDHARTHINDIRASINGH (Borrower-Co-borrower(s)). The Reserve Price will be INR 50,00,000/- and the Earnest Money Deposit will be INR 500000/-	
DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY BEARING SITUATED ON 3RD FLOOR, OLD KH NO-163 (NEW KH.NO-339KA/14 MIN) PLOT NO-141 (BHAGIRATHIPURAM) AT MAUZAL DEHRADUN For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in IDFC FIRST Bank website i.e. www.idfcfirstbank.com . Disclaimer: Please note that the said notice is issued for sale of immovable property only and IDFC FIRST Bank Limited has no right to sale the movable assets, if any, present at the immovable property.	
Date : 21/05/2020 (Formerly known as Capital First Home Finance Limited)	Sd/- Authorised Officer IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

BRIEFLY
Delhi Police plans to lower aid for positive cases by 90%

New Delhi: The Delhi Police is planning to reduce sanctioned amount for police personnel testing positive for coronavirus by 90% — from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 10,000 per personnel — after a surge in cases in the force, said an official on Thursday. Over 250 policemen have been infected so far. A senior police officer said, “At a meeting, it was decided the sanctioned amount should be reduced. The department already helps them with medicines and treatment.” Aid for families of deceased police personnel has been increased — from Rs 7 lakh to Rs 10 lakh.

Court refuses JNU teacher’s plea for early hearing

New Delhi: A Delhi court has refused to grant early hearing on a plea seeking registration of an FIR in a matter related to the attack on students and teachers by masked persons on JNU campus on January 5, saying only urgent matters were to be taken up due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1st Covid death in Gurgaon

Gurgaon: Gurgaon recorded its first coronavirus death late Wednesday evening — a 33-year-old resident from Sector 53. Twelve new cases were recorded in the district on Thursday.

Mandoli Jail sees first case

New Delhi: Mandoli Jail reported its first Covid-19 case after a 50-year-old staffer tested positive Wednesday. ENS

‘CAN’T DEPRIVE SAFETY NET TO OVER 5 LAKH’
HC asks construction worker welfare board to renew membership

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

OVER 5 lakh construction workers in Delhi, who fell off the safety net under the watch of the city’s welfare board, cannot be deprived of benefits just because they were unable to renew their annual registration with it, the Delhi High Court has said.

In its order, the court has directed the Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board — which comes under the Labour Department — to take steps to renew the membership of all workers, so that the associated benefits help them cushion lockdown-induced loss of earnings.

The order came on a PIL filed by rights activist Sunil Kumar Aledia — citing a report published in *The Indian Express* on April 2 — on the steep fall in membership of the board between 2015 and 2020 due to lack of annual renewals, a complicated membership form, and a verification drive.

The report highlighted how the assistance of Rs 5,000, which the Centre had advised states to transfer into the accounts of workers registered with the board, means little as the membership of lakhs of workers have lapsed over the last five years, despite the fact that the board has corpus of over Rs 2,000 crore.

“It, thus, appears that only a fraction of the originally registered construction workers have been able to avail of the ex-gratia relief granted by the respondents, due to them not having renewed their registration. This is not a satisfactory state of affairs, and the respondents are obliged to take effective steps to encourage construction workers — who are otherwise eligible — to renew their registration so that the intended benefit can reach them as well.”

“We are of the view that in view of the prevailing lockdown and, since the print media is practically out of action, it is essential that all earlier registered



The Indian Express report dated April 2.

construction workers, which were 5,39,421 as on 30.09.2018 (and others too may have registered thereafter) minus those whose registrations are now live, should be sent out appropriate communication through SMS on their registered mobile numbers — informing them of the decision of the government to make ex-gratia direct transfers to their registered accounts, and they should also be informed of the manner in which they could renew their registration,” the HC said on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the government has been directed by the court to send the messages, preferably in Hindi, within four days. It has also directed the board to make its website bilingual, expressing concern over the fact that it is in English now, “considering the strata of the society from which the construction workforce comes”.

“We are, therefore, of the view that the Board should disburse the ex-gratia amounts, as disbursed since March 2020, even to those registrants whose registration may have lapsed but are subsequently renewed by the Board after due verification,” the court added.

The board has so far been able to transfer Rs 5,000 each to

39,600 workers, whose memberships are active, in the months of April and May. Currently, it is carrying out an online drive to register more workers, having informed the court about the difficulty for workers to access the internet.

Every state has one such welfare board which runs an array of welfare schemes for them, funded by the cess collected from projects under the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess Act, 1996.

Under the Act, a building worker is eligible for registration only if he or she has been engaged in building or construction work for not less than 90 days during the preceding 12 months. The registration has to be renewed annually.

The 12-year form that every worker is expected to fill involves sharing Aadhaar number details; and Aadhaar numbers of their family members; present and permanent address proof; address of last workplace where the applicant worked over 90 days; name and contact details of contractor; details of registered union of which the applicant is a member; colour photographs of self and family members; and details of bank account, among others.

Gurgaon relaxes guidelines for RWAs: Entry of visitors, outdoor walks allowed

SAKSHI DAYAL
GURGAON, MAY 21

ENTRY TO visitors and “all personnel”, including domestic helps; relaxations in walks for residents and pets — these are some of the major changes made in the fresh guidelines for RWAs issued by the Gurgaon district administration for Lockdown 4.0 on Thursday. Use of Aarogya Setu app, meanwhile, continues to be mandatory. According to the old guidelines, while entry of “non-essential visitors”, including “family/non-family visitors/trainers/urbanclap, etc” had been advised to be “limited”, the fresh

LOCKDOWN 4.0
RWA GUIDELINES

- Entry of all personnel, including helps, permitted
- Entry to complex permitted for all visitors
- Residents permitted to take walks outdoors but following some protocols
- Pets can be taken out, with sanitary measures
- Delivery of newspaper, milk with “due caution”
- Operation of children’s play areas left to discretion of residents

guidelines allow “entry to the complex for all visitors (family/non-family/trainers, etc.)” other than in containment zones. The guidelines, however, say “they are subject to social distancing protocols”.

The relaxation on entry of outsiders is also reflected in the guidelines given regarding perimeter control. While the earlier guidelines had stated that “strict measures” were to be put in place “to ensure controlled movement of population in and out of the colony”, the new guidelines state only that “adequate security” must be deployed “to check for vehicle/people/labour movement with

thermal screening and checking of asymptomatic persons”.

Regarding staff, “entry of all personnel, including domestic help, is permitted” to the “discretion of the residents”.

“However, it is strongly advised that their thermal screening be done at the gate and PPEs, like masks and gloves, be provided to them by the RWA. Furthermore, it is preferable that full-time maids be employed, with one maid-one house system in place to avoid unnecessary movement of persons,” state the guidelines.

Deliveries from e-commerce websites continue to be permitted only at building lobbies.

Govt dept says need to improve data capturing of those having daily meals

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE “DATA capturing” of people having lunch and dinner at hunger relief centres in the capital remains incomplete, according to Delhi’s revenue department, which has said the absence of these details may impair contact tracing in the event of someone attached with food distribution testing positive for coronavirus.

This internal communication, shared with Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, assumes significance in light of the fact that an average of nine lakh people turn up at these centres — numbering around 1,800 — twice a day for cooked lunch and dinner, mostly rice and lentils or *rajma*.

According to the revenue department note, issued by its legal and judicial wing, the need to capture data — essentially the name and contact number of beneficiaries — was mandated by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs through an order dated April 19.

The following day, on April 20, Sisodia had written to the District Magistrates, underlining the need to maintain these details. On May 6, he wrote again, raising the fact that data had not been captured “despite his earlier note”.

“In his note dated May 6, the Deputy CM has observed that data pertaining to beneficiaries in hunger relief centres has not



Homeless and daily wagers served food in Delhi. Tashi Tobgyal

been captured fully despite his earlier note dated April 20. Data capturing is required as per the direction of Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India vide order dated April 19, 2020. The data is absolutely essential for the purpose of contact tracing in the eventuality of anyone found with Covid-19 at any of the hunger relief centres. It is seen that data has been captured only to a very little extent,” the revenue department note, dated May 18, states.

The department requested the DMs to expedite the process and make their submissions within two days. “All DMs shall ensure that we capture the contact details of each and every beneficiary to meet any eventuality related to

contact tracing, which is absolutely essential for containment of corona pandemic. All DMs shall capture the data and submit the same within two working days. The data shall be collected and entered in the weblink by two civil defence volunteers in each hunger relief centre,” the note added.

A Delhi government spokesperson said there are 1,800 hunger relief centres in Delhi, where roughly nine lakh gather for lunch and dinner every day. The centres are mostly located in government- and MCD-run schools, teachers of which have been taking the lead in food distribution along with staff of revenue department and civil defence volunteers.

On April 19, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced that every volunteer attached with distributing meals will be tested, after one such person had contracted the infection. “Imagine how many people he may have infected. We have now decided to carry out rapid testing at the centre among people who come to that particular centre. I am assuming the same set of people come to get food at that centre. And across all the food centres, volunteers and others distributing food will also be part of rapid testing,” the CM had said.

Around the same time, the food department had also put under scanner staffers of 13 schools and 41 PDS shops after a food inspector’s kin had tested positive.

While data from all 11 districts was not immediately available, there are around 460 hunger relief centres catering to a population of 1.25 lakh in South district, 80 catering to around 50,000 people in East district and 127 catering to around 1 lakh people in Central district. The North district administration said there are 116 hunger relief centres under its jurisdiction, where around 80,000 to 90,000 people come for lunch and dinner.

Officials of South, East and North districts claimed they have the database. A Central district said, “Our civil defence volunteers at each hunger relief centre take contact details of all beneficiaries.”

एफसीआई अरावली जिस्म एण्ड मिनास इण्डिया लिमिटेड
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) गिनौरा — II कम्पनी
मामुसिंह राजगीरी मार्ग, पावडा, जोधपुर (राज)
फोन नं 0291-2544392, वेबसाइट: www.fagnil.nic.in

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

फेगनिल के निम्नलिखित कार्य: (1) ठेकर, मोहनपुर-II, खाल एवं विमानपुर-ए जिस्म खान से आरखोम जिस्म अगुली (2) खुनाबपुरा प्रभम एवं खुनाबपुरा नम से पावडा जिस्म अगुली (3) सुनपुरा खान साहू से चतर प्रेश के विमिन गलव खली पर बरेश पावडा जिस्म के परिवहन के कार्य हेतु न-बाली जगली के लक्ष औनालान निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। (4) पूरा जानकारी के लिए www.fagnil.nic.in पर www.eprocure.gov.in वेबसाइट पर देखें। किसी भी प्रकार का संशोधन/बुल-बुल बाबत सूचना कम्पनी की वेबसाइट पर प्रकाशित की जायेगी। **महाराष्ट्र**

RITES LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)
BHUBANESWAR - 751024
CIN: L74899DL1974GO007227

Notice Inviting e-Tender

The Group General Manager (Civil), RITES Ltd, Bhubaneswar, invites on behalf of **M/s. MCL, Lakhnapur Area**, online percentage rate bid on two packet system for the following work(s):
NIT No. RITES/BBSR/MCL/LAKHANPUR/OT-02/2020 Dated: 22.05.2020
Name of Work: **"Earthwork in formation, Construction of Major & Minor bridges, retaining wall, drains, supply of PSC sleepers, Turnouts Sleepers, Supply of Ballast, PWay fittings & Track Linking Works, Construction of building and Allied works for proposed siding for Dispatch of Washed Coal from proposed Washery at Lakhnapur Area of MCL."** Estimated cost: **Rs. 102,00,82,838.95**, Earnest Money: **Rs. 25 lakhs** Period of Completion: **12 (Twelve) months**, Last time and date of submission of bid: **15:00 Hrs (IST) of 16.06.2020**.
The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website: <https://etenders.gov.in> / eprocure/app.
Addendum/Corrigendum, if any, shall be hosted online only.

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
A-11, Sector-24, Noida-201301
Phone: 01220-2412294, Fax: 2412397 | CIN:L74899DL1974GO007417

Pre-qualification of Parties for CS-Lye & Liq. Chlorine

National Fertilizers Limited intends to Pre-qualify a local manufacturer for supply of Caustic Soda Lye and Liquid Chlorine to NFL units situated at Nangal, Bathinda, Panipat & Vijapur. For eligibility criteria & other details please visit our website www.nationalfertilizers.com or www.eprocure.gov.in. The Last date for submission of documents is 30.06.2020 up to 02:00 p.m. Corrigendum (if any) will be displayed on our website only.

Executive Director (Materials)

NFL : Farmers' Friend, Nation's Pride

Petronet LNG Limited

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) FOR SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR DESIGN, DETAILED ENGINEERING, SUPPLY, CONSTRUCTION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF 100 KLD STP AT PETRONET LNG LIMITED, DAHEJ

Interested parties are requested to visit our website www.petronetlmg.com for detailed eligibility criteria along with other necessary details for issuance of Tender document.

Note: PLL reserves the right not to issue the tender document and/or accept or reject any or all the bids at any stage of the process and/or modify the process without assigning any reasons on its sole discretion. No separate notification shall be issued in press. Bidders are requested to visit the website regularly to keep themselves updated.

Deputy General Manager (C&P)
PETRONET LNG LIMITED
GIDC Industrial Estate, Plot No. 7/A, Dahej, Taluka: Vagra,
Distt. Bharuch 392130, Dahej, Gujarat, Tel No: 02641- 670231 / 9662526299
E-mail id:- materials@petronetlmg.com

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT
Engineering Wing
(Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, 1st Floor, PHI Building,
Seshadri Road, Bengaluru-560 001, (Telephone No.080-22274892
E-mail: cehksdrp@gmail.com & cehksdrp-hfw@karnataka.gov.in)

No: **HPWD/EW/EIC/TA-1,2&3/AE-1/MGPLS-TLH-TND/157/2020-21** Date: **19.05.2020**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Engineer-in-Chief, HPWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru invites tender bids from eligible Class-I contractors and above registered in KPWD in two tender document system in e-procurement for the following works.

Sl. No.	Description of Work	Amount put tender (Rs. Lakhs)	EMD (Rs. Lakhs)
1	Supplying Laying, Fixing, Testing and Commissioning of Medical Gas Pipe Line System inclusive of Civil and Electrical Works for 50 Beds to Taluk Level Hospitals in Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban, Chikkaballapura, Chitradurga, Davanagere, Kolar, Ramanagara, Shimoga and Tumkur Districts (44 Nos. of TLH).	2068.00	21.00
2	Supplying Laying, Fixing, Testing and Commissioning of Medical Gas Pipe Line System inclusive of Civil and Electrical Works for 50 Beds to Taluk Level Hospitals in Mysuru, Chamarajanagara, Chikkamagaluru, Dakshinakannada, Hassan, Kodagu, Udipi & Mandya Districts (36 Nos. of TLH).	1692.00	17.00
3	Supplying Laying, Fixing, Testing and Commissioning of Medical Gas Pipe Line System inclusive of Civil and Electrical Works for 50 Beds to Taluk Level Hospitals in Dharwad, Bagalkot, Belgaum, Gadag, Haveri, Uttarakannada & Vijayapura (41 Nos. of TLH).	1927.00	19.30
4	Supplying Laying, Fixing, Testing and Commissioning of Medical Gas Pipe Line System inclusive of Civil and Electrical Works for 50 Beds to Taluk Level Hospitals in Ballari, Bidar, Kalaburagi, Koppal, Raichur & Yadgir Districts (25 Nos. of TLH).	1175.00	15.00

Stipulated period for Completion (including monsoon): **45 days (Each Work).**
Calendar of Events: (1) Last date for receipt of tenders: **03.06.2020 upto 16.00 Hrs.** (2) Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **05.06.2020 at 16.00 Hrs.**
The tender details can be downloaded from the e-Procurement platform. Tenders shall be submitted electronically at www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in and Earnest Money Deposit and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the e-procurement platform to participate in this tender.
Note: (1) All the rights are reserved by the undersigned for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids / individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. (2) Henceforth, any changes in the schedule / contents will not be published through news papers and further changes will be updated only on e-procurement portal.

Sd/- Engineer - in Chief, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru.

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG e-Procurement Notice

The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Nagrota Bagwan invites online tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following works: through online e- tendering process:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs)	EMD (Rs)	Cost of tender form (Rs.)	Time Limit
1.	Providing Separately Water Supply Scheme to Vill Serathana, Rounkhar & Jassour in Tehsil Nagrota Bagwan Distt. Kangra HP (SH-Drilling lowering of assembly and development of 2 Nos Tube Well 80 Meters deep)	3849339/-	65240/-	400/-	3 Months

Last date of filling /Uploaded the tender through e-tendering : 30.05.2020 upto 11.00 A.M and opened on same day at 11.30 AM
The tender forms and other details conditions can be seen from the website <https://nptender.gov.in>

Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Nagrota Bagwan (H.P)

0540/HP

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT e-Procurement Notice INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The **Executive Engineer HPPWD Jubbil Distt Shimla H.P.** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender	Time	Eligible Class of Contractor
1	C/O Balance Work and Metalling & Tarring on Dochli Boudi Badhauli Rakha Bathah Road Km 0/0 to 25/10 under NABARD RIDF XXV (SH-Improvement Of Formation Deficiency/C/O Retaining and Breast Walls/C/O Cross Drainage Works, Providing and laying Kharanja Soling/Sub Base Course (G-I) Base Course (G-I) & G-I, Providing Tarring Work,Road Side Drain, Essential Parapets and Dumping Structures Km 0/0 to 25/10)	Rs. 1,20,85,270/-	Rs. 153400/-	Rs. 5000/-	12 Month	Class B&A
2	Restoration of rain damages on Katinda Giltari road Km 0/0 to 16/900 (SH- C/O retaining wall at RD 1/482 to 1/525)	Rs. 35,44,921/-	Rs. 71000/-	Rs. 1500/-	3 Month	Class C

Tender document and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <https://nptenders.gov.in> by the firm/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.

Key Dates:

1.	Date of Online Publication	28.05.2020 11:00 HRS
2.	Document Download Start and End Date	28.05.2020 11:30 HRS upto 11.06.2020 17:30 HRS
3.	Bid Submission Start and End Date	28.05.2020 11:30 HRS upto 11.06.2020 1800 HRS
4.	Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	12.06.2020 upto 1030 HRS
5.	Date of Technical Bid Opening	12.06.2020 1100 HRS
6.	Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by Opening of Financial Bid.	Date to be announced

Executive Engineer HPPWD Division Jubbil, Distt Shimla H.P on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

0509/HP

Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Vibhag NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Online bids on items rate basis are invited by the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Nahan on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, in electronic tendering system in two covers for the under mentioned work from the contractors/firms of appropriate class enlisted with Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Vibhag.

Sr. No	Description	E/ Cost	E/Money	Time	Cost of Form
1	Providing Sewerage with sewerage treatment plant in Triokpur SADA area in Tehsil NahanDistt. Sirmour (H.P) (SH:-Supply and erection of pumping machinery, D/system, soft starter, RCC OHSR, R/main and Pump house for drinking water supply scheme).	1,96,84,320	2,29,500	9 Months	1,500/-
2	Providing LWSS HPPLC Colony in GP Dadahu in Tehsil NahanDistt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Supply and erection of pumping machinery with allied accessories: R/main, C/O storage tank, Pump house, R/wall and B/wall).	18,32,754/-	35,000/-	6 Months	400/-
3	Improvement/Augmentation of WSS Own Khadri from LWSS Panjhal 1st stage in Tehsil NahanDistt. Sirmour HP (SH:- C/O Pump house and Toilet, Main Storage tank 25000 ltr, pumpwell 10000 ltrs and 2 No. public Hydrant post, Protection work nd Laying, Jointing and testing of GMS pipe in Distribution system).	15,46,447/-	30,700/-	6 Months	400/-

1. Tender documents and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <http://nptenders.gov.in> by the firms/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.
2. As the bids are to be submitted online are required to be encrypted and digitally signed, the bidders are advised to obtain Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from suitable vendors or from any authorized agency at the earliest.
3. **Key dates will be as under:-**

1	Date of Online publication	14/05/2020 AT 5:00 PM
2	Downloading of e-tender Documents	From 14/05/2020 at 5:00 PM up to 9:00 AM on 08/06/2020
3	Date of submission of e-tendering	From 14/05/2020 at 5:00 PM up to 11:00 AM on 08/06/2020
4	Physical submission of earnest money deposit and cost of tender documents	Up-to 11:00 AM on 08/06/2020
4	Date of opening of Cover-1 (Eligibility criteria) and Cover-2 (Technical bid)	08/06/2020at 11:30 AM
5	Date of Opening of Financial Bids Cover-2	Shall be intimated separately.

Note:- Other Tender information may be checked online portal website: www.hptender.com

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division Nahan

0496/HP **HIM SUCHNA AVAN JANSAPARK**

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY E-Notice of Invitation Tender

Divisional Railway Manager, N.W.Ry. Bikaner for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed open tender for the following works on the tender shown as below: **Tender No.: S&T/BK/NE-167R. Name of Work with its Location: "Provision of Location boxes for safety equipments of operating department at big yards over Bikaner Division". Approx. Cost of Work: 1118393.15 Earnest money Rs.: 22370/- Date & Time for submission of Tender & opening of tender: Up to 15.00 Hrs. of 12.06.2020. Website from Which complete Tender details can be seen & download: www.reps.gov.in. [504-AJ/20]**
Please join us on f NWR Railways

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM

No. W-7/E-Tender/03/ Open/ Corrigendum/ DNR/20-21 Danapur, the 20.05.2020.

Please refer to Open Tender Notice No. W-7/E-Tender/03/ Open/ DNR/ 20-21 dt.28.04.2020 which is now schedule to be open on 29.05.2020. The notice regarding Affidavit clause may read on reps website as under:- "The requirement of submission of notarised affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper (wherever applicable) in tenders issued through IREPS- Works module has been dispensed with. The bidders will however have to provide a simple certificate (wherever applicable) in the prescribed format. The link for downloading the prescribed form is available in the Eligibility Tab on the bidding interface under Document Verification Clause". Other terms & condition will remain un-changed. Divisional Railway Manager(Engg), Danapur. PR/0188/DNR/Engg.C/20-21/28

WESTERN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION OF TOE WALL AND STONE PITCHING, DRAINS AND PATHWAY

E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CE (C)/II/ADI/ VG-SIOB/51 (NIT) Date: 19.05.2020. Dear Chief Engineer (Construction) III, Near Sahar Kotda Police Station, Saraspur, PO: Railwaywara, Western Railway, Ahmedabad - 380 002 for & on behalf of President of Union of India invites E - Tender No.: E-Tender No. Dy. CE(C)/II/ADI/ VG-SIOB/51; (i) Name of work: Balance work such as construction of Toe wall and stone pitching, drains and pathway etc. between stations Sadla - Ja Pipli in connection with Viramgam - Samakhiali Doubling project. (ii) Approximate cost of Work: ₹ 6,20,76,939/-; (iii) Earnest Money: ₹ 4,60,400/-; (iv) Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) months (Including Monsoon) (v) Closing time & Date for submission of Bid: Submission of E-Tender: 12.06.2020 up to 15.00 Hrs; (vi) Opening Time & Date of Bid: Opening: 12.06.2020 up to 16.00 Hrs; (vii) Website particulars Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office: www.reps.gov.in Office of Dy. Chief Engineer (Construction) III, Near Sahar Kotda Police Station, Saraspur, PO: Railwaywara, Western Railway, Ahmedabad - 380 002, Telephone No.: 079-2282 1510

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5 THE OUTBREAK NATION



CORONA WATCH



Passengers on a government bus in Chandigarh.

Kamleshwar Singh

MAHARASHTRA Mumbai constable dies of Covid-19

Mumbai: A 55-year-old constable of the Mumbai police succumbed to the coronavirus on Thursday, an official said. The constable was posted at the Vile Parle police station and had tested positive for the virus early this month. He was undergoing treatment at a private hospital since May 9, but died on Thursday. This is the 11th death of a policeman from Mumbai due to COVID-19 and the 17th in the Maharashtra police force. Earlier in the day, a 43-year-old police constable succumbed to the deadly infection at a hospital in Pune, while a woman constable died in Thane. **ENS**

MADHYA PRADESH Newlywed woman tests positive

Bhopal: Three days after getting married, a Bhopal woman tested positive for the coronavirus, prompting authorities to quarantine 32 persons, including the groom in Mandideep, an town near the state capital. After the incident, the government said baraatis will not be allowed to travel in buses and warned of FIR for similar violations in future. The woman had fever before the marriage but was on medication and appeared to have recovered. **PTI**

NAGALAND State gets its first Covid testing lab

Kohima: Nagaland on Thursday got a state-of-the-art lab for testing of Covid samples, officials said. Samples from the state were so far sent to Assam and Manipur for testing. Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio inaugurated the laboratory at the Naga Hospital Authority Kohima. With two machines, 90 tests can be conducted in the laboratory per day. The tests will begin Friday. Nagaland has no active case. **ENS**

Over a month, Covid hits more districts, most in Bihar and UP

KARISHMA MEHROTRA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AS THE influx of migrant workers to their native places gains momentum and the national lockdown eases, there is a telling change in the geographical spread of Covid-19 positive cases over the one month since April 22 when the Health Ministry last released the national district-wise case load.

This has implications in Covid management across states and will also affect allocation of resources in fighting the pandemic.

An analysis by *The Indian Express* of the key changes shows:

■ Of the roughly 300 districts with no cases on April 22, more than half (174) now have at least one case with an average of 23 cases in each district. This means only one in six districts may now be Covid-free.

■ Of all green zone districts with no cases on April 22, districts in eastern India, which happen to be the key destinations for a substantial section of migrant workers, now make up the largest chunk reporting at least one case since April 22.

■ For example, 23 zero-case districts in Bihar on April 22 have reported at least one case. The number for the other states: UP (20 districts), MP (19), Odisha (13), Jharkhand (12) and



Headed to Bihar from Delhi on Thursday. Abhinav Saha

Chhattisgarh (9).

■ Unlike heavy case-load states, the spread in these migrant native states are not concentrated in a few districts but spread across a larger number of districts.

These patterns that have emerged during the last one month are expected to shape the trajectory of the spread across the country as a more liberal easing of Lockdown 4.0 plays out.

On April 22, about 200 districts had less than 10 cases - these now have an average of 40 cases. The next tier (150 districts with 10-50 case load on April 22) now have on average of 100 cases. Likewise, the 30 districts

that had between 50 and 100 cases now have an average of 220 cases.

While these numbers are small compared with those in urban hotspot districts, the key trend experts are looking at is how the spread of the virus in eastern states is considerably more evenly distributed across the state than in the high case load states where most of the cases are still concentrated in a few urban centres straining their respective municipalities.

In April end, almost all states (except for Tamil Nadu) had almost 70 per cent of their cases in their top three districts. Now that number is 50 per cent of cases in their top three districts.

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar do not exhibit such concentration in few cities. Indeed, they haven't contained even 30 per cent of their cases in the top three districts. Half the cases in the two states are spread across their top nine districts.

The *Indian Express* reported last week that most Shramik trains (carrying an estimated 8 lakh migrants) ferried a large number of migrant workers from districts in red zones to green zones, and that returning migrants in Odisha and Bihar were showcasing high positivity rates.

Continuing the trend, other formerly Covid-free districts are now showing cases in Odisha (13 districts), Jharkhand (12), and Chhattisgarh (10). The only non-eastern state in the list of highest new Covid districts is Madhya Pradesh, with 20 districts with no cases earlier now having at least one.

In assessing the data using the Health Ministry's new zoning parameters provided to states on Monday, Uttar Pradesh has both an unusually low testing rate for its population and a high positivity rate (positive samples out of total samples). Even though Bihar has a relatively low positivity rate, the rate has grown sharply and has the lowest testing per lakh population of all major states. Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat have high and rising positivity rates.



Migrants workers in Vadodara maintain social distancing after arriving at the city's railway station to catch a special train to their home state. Bhupendra Rana

Govt looks at resuming more trains, Rlys to start booking tickets

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AFTER ANNOUNCING the move to restart 100 pairs of trains from June 1, bookings for which started on Thursday, the government is gearing up to restore around a similar number of more trains soon after in a bid to bring back normalcy into the economy.

With a large number of non-AC coaches already being used by Shramik Specials, and a huge number consumed by restoration of the 100 pairs of mail/express trains, it is expected that the next set of train services to be resumed will have the AC class services.

Around 1,200 pairs of regular mail/express trains remain to be

restored.

The signal from top levels of the government now is to accelerate the return to normalcy and restoration of trains services, without compromising gains of the lockdown, officials said.

In the spirit of things, the Railways on Thursday decided to open ticket booking counters across India in a phased manner so that sale of tickets offline can restart. It had already decided to open food stalls and canteens at stations a day earlier.

"We have to take India towards normalcy. We are developing a protocol to identify stations where counters can be opened. We have to ensure that there are no large crowds gathering at counters to book tickets, so we are

WHO: HCQ, chloroquine not proven in treatment

Will review evidence on HCQ and take a call, says ICMR

ABANTIKA GHOSH
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE WORLD Health Organization has warned that neither hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) nor chloroquine (CQ) are proven drugs in treatment or prophylaxis for Covid-19. The adverse effects, on the other hand, are well documented, it said.

The warning comes two days after US President Donald Trump said he is on the drug, and at a time when India is going through heated discussions within the government on whether to reconsider the use of HCQ in the light of emerging evidence or whether to extend the prophylactic use to include the vulnerable population such as the elderly.

On Wednesday, Dr R R Gangakhedkar, director of epidemiology and infectious diseases at Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), said, "We will review the evidence (on HCQ) and take a call."

India has in the past discussed population-level prophylactic use of the drug. There have also been recent discussions whether to advise its use by vulnerable populations once lockdown is lifted. However, the adverse cardiac reactions are a big concern.

WHO executive director Dr

Michael Ryan said during the daily Covid briefing on Wednesday: "Every sovereign nation with effective regulatory authorities can advise citizens on the use of any drug...hydroxy-chloroquine and chloroquine are already licensed products. But they have not as yet been found to be effective in Covid-19 or in prophylaxis.... There are warnings by many authorities on potential side effects."

He said many countries have limited HCQ to clinical trials under supervision of clinicians in hospital settings, "however, it is for each national authority to weigh and assess the evidence."

HCQ and CQ, along with beta interferons, form one arm of the multi-country solidarity trials that are being carried out under the aegis of the WHO. Among countries which have allowed use of HCQ are the US (where it has been allowed for emergency use in hospital), France (on prescription), Brazil, Russia, South Korea etc. India has exported the drug to 55 countries.

India currently advises use of HCQ and CQ — a combination made famous by Trump's high praise — for patients in ICU. However, it is not advised for children below 12 years, pregnant and lactating women. It is also advised for use in healthcare workers involved directly in Covid care and family members of confirmed Covid patients in-

involved directly in their care.

Among known side effects of HCQ are alterations in heart rates, intestinal problems, headache, dizziness, hallucinations, etc. That is one of the reasons why the government scientific community in India has been divided on the advisability of wider prophylactic use of HCQ.

"There are some suggestions to broaden the prophylactic use of hydroxychloroquine to vulnerable populations such as the elderly and those with comorbidities, especially since lockdown and closure of schools colleges, etc, cannot continue indefinitely. However, there are also fierce oppositions to that — the problem is hypertension and diabetes are known comorbidities and one of the documented side effects of HCQ concerns the heart," a source said.

On Thursday, 5,609 fresh coronavirus cases were reported across the country, taking the total to 1,12,359 cases; 132 deaths have been reported in the last 24 hours.

In an observational study funded by the NIH, HCQ was not found to be very effective in reducing COVID severity.

However, there have been studies comparing deaths in countries that have allowed HCQ with those that have not to claim that the former showed lower death rates.

After labour law reforms, MP gives relief to workers

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, MAY 21

FOLLOWING CRITICISM over the recent amendments to labour laws, the Madhya Pradesh government on Thursday said legal consent was necessary before workers are asked to work overtime, made overtime wages double the normal wages and increased the notice period before retrenchment from one month to three months.

Labour reforms by BJP-ruled states such as Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh have come under criticism from certain quarters, compelling the governments to take another look at some of the provisions.

An official said no relaxations have been made in provisions related to health and safety of workers.

Laws that come in play during industrial mishaps will remain in force and provisions related to timely payment of wages, equal pay for equal work to women labourers, weekly off, paid leave and 26-week maternity leave with wages will continue, the official said.

The reforms in Madhya Pradesh focused on curtailing the interference of the labour department by doing away with the need for multiple inspections, allowing self-certification and giving time-bound and on-line permissions to attract investors. A senior bureaucrat in



Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

the labour department told *The Indian Express* that opposition to some measures taken by Uttar Pradesh had also put pressure on Madhya Pradesh.

Madhya Pradesh has allowed industrial units to increase shifts from eight to 12 hours per day. Factories that were earlier required to keep 61 registers and file 13 returns under various labour laws have been allowed to keep one register and file one return. Now, more than one trade union can hold discussion with the management to resolve disputes instead of going to the labour court.

The state has sent a proposal to the Centre to introduce compounding for punishment of various offences under the Industrial Disputes Act to ensure resolution of disputes without going to court. It has also sent a proposal under the Contract Labour Act to register only those contractors who employ 50 or more workers.

SUCCESS AT PUNE'S SASSOON GENERAL HOSPITAL

Covid patient recovers via plasma therapy

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS
PUNE, MAY 21

A 47-year-old woman, who was the first Covid-19 patient to receive plasma therapy at Sassoon General Hospital, has tested negative for the disease.

The woman has multiple comorbidities including hypertension, hypothyroidism and obesity. According to highly-placed sources, she has tested negative after two rounds of tests but will be kept under observation at the government hospital.

She has been shifted out of the Covid ward but not been discharged yet.

State Health Minister Rajesh Tope tweeted on Thursday that

The 47-year-old patient has been shifted out of the Covid ward but not been discharged yet

the plasma therapy conducted on a Covid-19 patient at Sassoon Hospital has been successful.

Convalescent Plasma Therapy is an experimental procedure for Covid-19 patients in which plasma, a blood component, from a recovered Covid-19 patient is transfused to a critically-ill patient. The blood of a person who has recovered from Covid-19 develops antibodies to battle the virus. This therapy uses antibodies from the blood of a recovered coronavirus patient to

treat another critical patient.

People who have fully recovered from Covid-19 for at least two weeks are encouraged to consider donating plasma.

According to authorities of Sassoon General Hospital, a 51-year-old man, who was the first patient to fully recover from coronavirus disease, donated the blood plasma.

"I have recovered ... and fortunately did not have any major symptoms. So, as part of my social responsibility, I decided to donate my blood," the 51-year-old man told *The Indian Express*.

He and his wife were the first Covid-19 patients reported in the state. They had been admitted to Naidu Hospital along with their daughter, and had subsequently recovered and been discharged.

The man said he has been informed that his plasma would be used to treat two critically-ill patients.

The plasma was infused in the 47-year-old patient on May 10 and 11 (200 ml each on both days). On May 20, the plasma was infused in another patient.

This is part of the clinical trial approved by the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for convalescent plasma therapy across the country. The DCGI had given the nod for the trial to see if this could be a potential treatment for the infection.

Officials of the Indian Council of Medical Research had earlier said that there are no approved therapies for Covid-19, including plasma treatment, and hence it is still in the experimental stage.

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, MAY 21

THE MADRAS High Court on Thursday quashed several criminal defamation proceedings moved by the state government against media houses, saying that the state cannot use criminal defamation cases to throttle democracy.

Hearing a batch of 25 petitions filed by media houses seeking to quash proceedings in criminal defamation cases filed between 2011 and 2013, Justice Abdul Quddus said, "If the state becomes an impulsive prosecutor in criminal defamation matters that too in an era of social media where there are scores of abusive contents made

against public figures, the sessions court will get clogged with innumerable matters which are sometimes vindictive in nature only to settle scores with opposition political parties."

The court reiterated that a state will have to show utmost restraint and maturity in filing criminal defamation cases. It said that criminal defamation procedures can be invoked only in cases where there is foolproof material and when launching of prosecution under Section 199(2) CrPc is inevitable.

Criticising the tendency of governments to use criminal defamation as a weapon against media, the court said, "This menace will have to be curbed and nipped in the bud."

"The criminal defamation

law is meant for a laudable object in real cases of necessity and cannot be misused by using the state as a tool to settle scores of a public servant/constitutional functionary over his or her adversary. A public servant or a constitutional functionary must be able to face criticism," said the court. "The state cannot use criminal defamation cases to throttle democracy."

The Hindu, Nakkheeran, Times of India, Dinamalar, Tamil Murasu, Murasoli and Dinakaran were among the media houses who had petitioned the court. The news reports that faced criminal defamation in the first three years of late J Jayalalithaa's regime between 2011 and 2016 include: a report about an attack on a Tamil magazine by AIADMK

activists, publishing a statement issued by the then Opposition leader Vijayakanth accusing the then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa of "running a government through statements", an interview with a woman who claimed to be the daughter of Jayalalithaa, and calling Jayalalithaa a "beef eating Brahmin", which the magazine had claimed was referring to words of her own mentor M G Ramachandran in her early political career.

Justice Quddus reminded that the prosecution must also consider themselves as agents of justice. "There should not be on the part of the public prosecutor a blind eagerness for, or grasping at a conviction. Prosecution does not mean persecution," he said.



CHANGING STYLE

CRISES CERTAINLY change the style of functioning of leaders. Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, during his time in government, was reluctant to speak to the media outside Maharashtra. On Thursday, however, Fadnavis interacted with Delhi media on a web platform, during which he blamed the Uddhav Thackeray government's 'lack of initiatives' for not bringing investment, and rubbished Thackeray's call for sons of the soil to take up jobs of migrant workers who had returned home. The interaction, attended by BJP vice-president Vinay Sahasrabudhde, was meant to give a different perspective on Maharashtra, sources said.

FLIGHT FILLIP

EARLIER THAN expected resumption of air travel has brightened the prospects of normal meetings of department-related standing committees of Parliament. During a meeting on May 7, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had agreed that if normal meetings are not feasible in the near future, video conferencing would be explored. If most state capitals are connected by flights, normal meetings of committees may become a reality soon. On May 18, secretaries general of both secretariats briefed Naidu and Birla on issues regarding virtual meetings.

A STEP FURTHER

ANNOUNCING THE Rs 20 lakh crore relief package, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had stressed the need for being "vocal for local" to set the country on the path of self-reliance. On Thursday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh took this mantra a step forward. Speaking to representatives of India's defence industry about their problems, Singh mentioned Modi's slogan, and added, "We have to have indigenous products, 'vocal for local', but before that in our own life, local has to be focal. That is, we have to adopt swadeshi products in our life." Singh acknowledged that the lockdown had disrupted manufacturing and supply chains, and mentioned steps taken by the RBI, the government, and his ministry to ease the situation.

Gujarat's biggest Covid hospital delayed info on deaths, say kin

RITU SHARMA & SOHINI GHOSH
AHMEDABAD, MAY 21

AT 44-YEAR-OLD Umesh Tamaichi's home in Kubernagar, shock has overtaken grief. The lawyer at Ahmedabad Metropolitan Court was six feet tall, a fitness freak, with no history of any ailment. He died of Covid-19 on the morning of May 16 at the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital but the family got to know about it only by evening.

"My brother died in the morning and we received a call from someone in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation in the evening asking us to check, saying that 'he might be dead'. When we checked at the hospital, they confirmed his death," said Kalpana Gadgekar, Umesh's sister.

When the family members asked why they were not informed, the authorities said the hospital tried to reach them on the mobile number provided but failed to connect, said Gadgekar.

This has become the common reason given by Gujarat's biggest Covid hospital for delayed reporting of deaths of patients to relatives. Tamaichi's mobile phone and watch were missing, about which there was no response from the hospital. The family filed a complaint of theft on May 18.



Officials of the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital say a system has been put in place to keep relatives in the loop. *Express*

OSD of the hospital, Dr MM Prabhakar, told *The Indian Express* on Thursday that a system has been put in place to keep relatives in the loop about the death of Covid patients. Until then, there were several complaints about the hospital not passing on timely information to the relatives.

Azharuddin Shaikh, a resident of Rakhial, a containment zone, who lost his 75-year-old father on May 12, said, "As per hospital records, my father died at 4.30 am, but we received a call six hours later. The family is put through trauma, first because of this delay and then running from pillar to post to claim the body." Shaikh

Amphan wreaks havoc: Power supply, phone connectivity disrupted in Kolkata

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MAY 21

A DAY after cyclone Amphan wreaked havoc, residents of Kolkata woke up to scenes of the destruction Thursday. Over 5,000 trees, hundreds of lamp posts and traffic signals were uprooted. Due to heavy rain, several areas were inundated and there was no power supply in some areas.

At the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International airport, two hangars and a small private aircraft have been damaged. A portion of the airport was inundated.

"Two unused dilapidated hangars collapsed. The airport became operational from noon. We will be operating cargo, evacuation and emergency flights. People engaged in maintenance work are working round the clock to repair the damage," a senior airport official told *The Indian Express*.

According to Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC), over 5,000 trees were uprooted across the city and hundreds of lamp posts damaged. The uprooted trees blocked several arterial roads.

"Over 5,000 trees were uprooted and several houses have collapsed. The city has never witnessed a bigger disaster," said Firhad Hakim, state Urban Development Minister and chairman of the KMC board of administrators.

With electricity poles uprooted, several areas of the city suffered disruptions in power supply. Telephone lines were snapped, broadband services hit and the mobile phone network too faced disruptions.

Meanwhile, operations have resumed at both docks of Kolkata Port. A statement by Kolkata Port Trust said, "Operations resumed at Kolkata Dock System at 10 am, one ship departure took place at 12.30. Cargo handling operations also on, but due to tree falling at various places across city, not many trucks are coming in..."



A man salvages his belongings from the rubble of his shop in South 24 Parganas district. *Reuters*

Their lives broken, people in coastal areas say Covid-19 priority no more

SANTANU CHOWDHURY
TAJPUR, MAY 21

A DAY after cyclone Amphan lashed the coastal areas of West Bengal, destroying livelihoods and inundating agricultural land, people worst-hit by the calamity said on Thursday that social distancing and precautions to prevent Covid-19 are no longer a priority as they try to rebuild their lives.

At Shankarpur, the storm uprooted several trees. The road parallel to the beach and connecting Shankarpur to Tajpur had boulders the tall waves had broken off the embankment. An excavator was clearing them from the 7-km road.

At Tajpur, the uprooted trees blocked several roads. With relief not in sight, local residents got to work with axes and daggers. None of them wore masks. "We have lost everything. First, our liveli-

hoods and now our houses. We cannot think of social distancing at this time. It is no longer a priority for us. We have to work together to remove trees. There is no time to think about coronavirus," said Mriganka Ghosh, who plies an e-rickshaw.

Sukanta Adhikari, 18, sat on a log beside a public toilet at Tajpur, hands on his head. The tin-roof shanty Sukanta's family lived in has been flattened. "Our shanty has been destroyed. All my school books are soaked," said the youth, whose family has taken shelter at a shelter where 300-odd people have been accommodated.

Several people had gathered at the canals along Digha-Contai Road to catch fish in waist-deep water. "All vegetables and rice stocks have been destroyed and there is no hope of getting relief material soon. Fish will be the only source of food today," said

Shantiram Mandal, showing his catch.

Fisherman Shyamal Nandi was seen walking with a wooden log on his shoulder. He pointed at his damaged boat and said, "I have to first repair my boat with this log. I cannot go out to the sea unless the boat is ready. The storm has snatched our livelihood."

Sixty-year-old Tapan Bhunia, a farmer at Mandarmani, recalled the "night of horror". "It was more ferocious than last year's Bulbul. My 10 bighas of agricultural land is submerged. All my crops are destroyed."

With several electric poles uprooted, power supply has been cut off to prevent incidents of short circuit. NDRF personnel are using chainsaws to cut the uprooted trees blocking roads.

Several mud houses have collapsed and in many areas, trees have fallen on houses.

Bills piling up, 700 NRIs in India seek govt help to return to UAE

ANKITA DWIVEDI JOHRI
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

FOR THE past seven years, Mazhar Khan, a resident of Lucknow, has been working with a software firm in Dubai on a work visa. On March 10, he made a last-minute plan with his wife and three-year-old daughter to visit India for a cousin's wedding, and hasn't been able to return since.

"Both India and UAE stopped international flights soon after," Khan (35) says. "I am in a financial crisis. My company has announced a salary cut, and my landlord in Dubai has refused to defer our rent. I have paid large utility bills."

Khan is among approximately 700 non-resident Indians living and working in the UAE, who are now "stranded" in India because of the travel ban in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. With several restrictions being lifted in the fourth phase of the lockdown in India, and passenger flights to some destinations resuming in the UAE, many NRIs have taken to social media to urge the Prime Minister, Ministry of External Affairs and officials in UAE to help them return. They have been voicing their concerns using hashtags like #expatshometouae, #UAE_OUR_HOME, and #bringback-uareidents, which have been



All flights in India were stopped in March. *File*

trending on Twitter since Monday but are yet to get a response.

Connected through a WhatsApp group now, a large section of the NRIs are now in Maharashtra (165), Kerala (83), Tamil Nadu (75), apart from Karnataka (63), Delhi (42) and Gujarat (41).

Like Khan, Ashish Gupta (32) came to Mumbai to attend a family function on March 17 with his wife and two children. He was living in the UAE for two years on an 'investor visa', visiting India two-three times every year. "We have been living at a relative's home for two months, with no certainty about our return," said Gupta.

"There is a lot of uncertainty in business. Bills and salaries are piling up," he added.

In Chennai, Vishnu Priya (26) has been waiting to reunite with

Bengal to get more flights under Vande Bharat: MEA

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE CENTRE on Thursday said West Bengal will get more flights as part of the government's Vande Bharat Mission in the next few weeks, after questions were raised on non-availability of flights to the state.

The Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said two flights will come from Dhaka to Kolkata on May 27 and June 1. "As we go along, further flights are planned from Europe, the UK and from other destinations," he said.

Briefing reporters about the second phase of the mission from May 16 to June 13, Srivastava said, "We are looking to bring back our nationals from 47 countries on 162 flights. In this phase, we are including places like Istanbul, Ho Chi Minh City, Lagos, etc, and increasing flights to the US and Europe. We are also looking at developing Frankfurt as a hub."

Srivastava said the government is also receiving Indian nationals stranded abroad on flights from other countries that are coming in to evacuate nationals of those countries. He said: "We are bringing back our nationals from far-flung areas like Argentina, South Africa, Peru, Mongolia, etc. In fact, a flight from Buenos Aires arrived early this morning – at 2.35 am – with 62 Indian nationals. About 300 pilgrims from Ladakh arrived on 17 May onboard Mahaan Air flight from Iran.

"Other flights from Djibouti and Hong Kong have brought in our nationals stranded in those places."

As of Thursday, Srivastava said, 23,475 Indian nationals have returned under this mission. They include 4,883 workers, 4,196 students, 3,087 professionals among others. There are 2,59,001 people registered to return from 98 countries.

her husband in Dubai, who was recently diagnosed with COVID-19. They had arrived in Chennai to consult doctors about a surgery for their four-year-old son.

Since end April, UAE has eased its lockdown restrictions. Most of the NRIs in India, including Khan, Gupta and Priya, have filled out forms on the UAE government's website to return home. "But most of those have either been rejected or are still 'under process'," said Gupta. "We want the Indian government to take up the matter with the UAE, and allow flights to take us back."

As per the official blog of Air India Express, under Vande Bharat Mission the airline has scheduled at least 16 flights to Dubai and Abu Dhabi between May 16 and 23. However, Gupta said they had not got any tickets. "Bookings are not open," he claimed.

"For repatriation flights, passengers are being identified by embassies and based on that the airline does the ticketing," said G Prageesh, Chief of Corporate Communications at Air India Express.

The MEA has been bringing back Indians stranded overseas. For Indians at home, who want to return to their country of work, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and embassies of respective nations are coordinating efforts.

Nyay scheme

Baghel said that 90% of the beneficiaries are marginalised farmers, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, and the poor.

"We have also decided to include landless agricultural labourers in the second phase of the scheme, and have constituted a committee headed by the chief secretary to prepare a detailed action plan for it," he said.

In the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections last year, the Congress had promised to implement a minimum income support programme called NYAY. Now that Chhattisgarh has become the first Congress-ruled state to implement the scheme, there will be pressure on the party's governments in Rajasthan and Punjab to follow. The move will also prompt

the Congress to project an alternative welfare model, especially since the central government has not been keen on direct cash transfers.

Signalling this, Rahul Gandhi, who attended the video conference to launch the scheme along with party chief Sonia Gandhi, said the Chhattisgarh government had "set an example for the entire country on how to help people in the time of crisis".

"I had requested Prime Minister to provide financial aid to poor people instead of loans, as they need cash more than credit. Chhattisgarh is the first state to transfer financial aid directly into the accounts of farmers. We all know that the economic condition of the state is not that good. Despite that, the Chhattisgarh government has decided to provide relief to farmers," he said.

"This is not a decision of one

person, it is the voice of Chhattisgarh. People of Chhattisgarh have expressed their needs and guided us towards this decision," he said.

"The scheme aims to support farmers and economically weaker sections of society, provide them opportunities to live a dignified life and alleviate poverty. It marks the beginning of a new era of prosperity for farmers of the state," Baghel said. The inauguration of the scheme coincided with Rajiv Gandhi's death anniversary.

"The Chhattisgarh government has taken a great step to support poor, tribal people and farmers. The decision to include rural, landless labourers in the second phase of the scheme is commendable," Sonia said.

In an article in *The Indian Express* earlier, Baghel had said: "I believe that the more cash we transfer into the bank accounts

of farmers, villagers, poor and tribal with the ideology of Nyay scheme, the same amount will strengthen the rural base of the economy. All the nations of the world affected by Covid-19 are on this path of recovery but unfortunately, the structure of the Indian central government is debt-based and it is not proving to help reduce the challenges for the states."

On Thursday, Baghel said that in the last 18 months, his government had transferred nearly Rs 40,700 crore into farmers' accounts in the form of payment against paddy procurement, loan waiver, crop insurance, irrigation tax waiver and bonus.

Last year, the government had promised Rs 2,500 per quintal to paddy farmers, which was Rs 800 more than the central government's price. "Looking at the Covid-19 crisis, we decided

to pay for sugarcane, maize and other crops too," said a senior state government official.

Nagaur to Delhi

Government Boys Senior Secondary School, sat in front of his laptop explaining the chapter on 'Economic Activities' to Class 12 students.

Ahmad and his two co-teachers log in from their homes through Zoom, which is beamed live on to YouTube. In between slide shows and quick posers, the teachers brief students about questions that are likely to appear in the Board exams. In a chat box below, messages from students flow thick and fast. At the end of the class, Ahmad asks students to rate his class with a thumbs-up emoji or on a scale of 1 to 10.

For someone who has taught for over three decades and is "not

very technologically sound", Ahmed has been quick to learn. "This is definitely exciting. I have to make Powerpoint presentations and think of ways to make the class more appealing – these are things we would have never done in a regular set-up," he says.

Shailendra Sharma, Principal Adviser to Director, Education, in Delhi, says the department has enlisted around 60 senior teachers such as Ahmad for the live virtual classes.

While insisting that these classes are not a replacement for classroom learning, Sharma says, "The whole point is to engage with students who are transitioning to Class 12 so that they are not anxious about losing out in a crucial year. So that when school reopens, they can refresh and move beyond what they have learnt."

But for every story of opportunity that this crisis presents,

there is one of exclusion. "Barely 20 per cent of the 550 children in the panchayat are able to access these resources," says Sushma, the principal at the Nagaur school, talking on the phone from a Covid care centre set up in a school in the panchayat.

According to government data, only 30 per cent of all households in Nagaur are on these WhatsApp groups.

A few districts away, in Karimpur village in Rajasthan's Dhaulpur, a district which, along with Nagaur, scored high on learning levels in the NAS survey, Rakhi, 11, hasn't heard of any special classes.

"Online? We have our vacation, we sit around all day doing nothing," she laughs, quickly moving on to the biggest event in her life – "apni bakri ko bachchi hui hai (our goat has given birth)". Her father, a daily-wage labourer,

has been out of work for months now. The family doesn't have a smartphone and hasn't heard from her teachers.

While Rakhi may represent the yawning divide that makes online learning seem like a lofty target for many, there is an unmistakable sense that given the circumstances, an online classroom empowers – more than one that is empty and locked.

Says a Rajasthan government officer who has been closely associated with its learning programmes, "When you say only 30 per cent of children in, say, Nagaur attend online classes, that may look small. But for these parts, that's a huge leap – from absolutely no learning to 30 per cent online learning. The gap is closing faster than we think."

TOMORROW: EXPERTS WEIGH IN: ODDS MAY BE TOUGH BUT CHANGE IS COMING

The Indian **EXPRESS**

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

TAKING OFF

Decision to reopen air travel is welcome, an important step
towards restarting economic activity

IN LINE WITH the decision to slowly reopen parts of the economy, on Wednesday the Centre announced the resumption of domestic flights from May 25 in a calibrated manner. The move will come as much-needed relief for the beleaguered airlines industry — commercial flights have been suspended since March 25, with only cargo and special flights being allowed to operate in the intervening period. To begin with, airlines will operate with only a fraction of their flights, slowly scaling up thereafter. However, with the virus continuing to spread, and households likely to curb their discretionary spending owing to the prevailing economic and health uncertainty, it is difficult to estimate the extent to which demand for air travel will revive in the near term. Metros such as Delhi and Mumbai, which are the worst affected by the virus and account for an overwhelming share of the total air traffic in the country, may not see demand recover meaningfully in the near term. Till the pandemic scare abates, routes where the virus spread is more are likely to be less in demand. Further, as India will not be issuing any visas anytime soon, international operations of the domestic carriers will also remain shut.

The Central government has also taken a decision to regulate airfare, with a range being prescribed for each route. For instance, the Delhi-Mumbai airfare is capped between Rs 3,500 to Rs 10,000. The government's rationale for doing so is two-fold: First, to ensure that tickets don't become exorbitantly priced for the consumer, and second, to prevent the stronger airlines from using their financial muscle to indulge in pricing that will hurt the financial viability of the competition, driving them out. While extraordinary times may well call for extraordinary measures, it must be pointed out that price controls are counterproductive in the long run. They inevitably lead to problems of shortages, rationing, deterioration of product quality, and even black markets. As such, governments should avoid the temptation of setting prices and, instead, allow the market to function. It's best not to distort market prices. Issues of "predatory pricing" are best left to be examined by the Competition Commission of India, which takes into account market dominance, as well as underlying cost structures. Perhaps realising the consequences of such interventions to "correct" prices, the government has also notified that the fares will be fixed only for a period of three months.

With the virus yet to be contained, airlines as well as airports will need to ensure that the standard operating procedures on health and safety of passengers are followed strictly. The onus is also on passengers to ensure compliance with the laid out protocols. Discipline will need to be maintained, and norms of social etiquette will have to be adhered to strictly. The critical challenge is to control the spread of the virus, while allowing economic activities to restart.

A DIPLOMATIC OPENING

Consensus at WHO shows it is possible to construct a middle
path amid deepening confrontation between China and America

THE UNANIMOUS RESOLUTION approved by the World Health Assembly on Tuesday night, calling for an inquiry into the origin and spread of the coronavirus and the international community's response to it, masks a more complex diplomatic story. That the US and China have agreed to the resolution after prolonged acrimony in recent weeks over the origin of coronavirus, is indeed a surprise. The US wanted members of the World Health Organisation to pin the blame on Beijing for keeping the world in the dark about the nature of the virus that broke out in the Chinese city of Wuhan at the turn of the year, letting it spread to other countries, and manipulating the WHO leadership into inaction. China, which vehemently denied these charges and proffered accusations of its own against the US, rejected the talk of any inquiry.

The real source of the consensus on the resolution is the enormous damage inflicted by the virus. It has already infected nearly 5 million people and killed nearly 3,50,000 around the world. To make matters worse, it has ground the global economy to a sudden halt and heaped unprecedented misery on the world's population. No wonder most nations want to know where the virus came from, how it spread across the world, and the role that the WHO, as the world's pandemic watchdog, played. As opinion among member-states converged in favour of an inquiry, China signalled a measure of flexibility. The US knew that insisting on a more stringent language would have meant no resolution at all.

The credit for generating the consensus must go to the EU and Australia that piloted the move at the WHO and other middle powers like India which extended early and strong diplomatic support. The middle powers have a bigger responsibility in the days ahead as the next round of contestation begins on the terms and conditions of the inquiry. Although the resolution has strong enough claws, there is bound to be an unending diplomatic squabble on its interpretation and implementation. India, which will take charge of the rotating chair of the WHO's Executive Board for a year, will have its hands full in guiding the organisation through its most difficult moments. Besides ensuring a productive inquiry into the corona pandemic, Delhi needs to develop a practical agenda for reform and revitalisation of the WHO amidst President Donald Trump's threats to permanently cut off funding and walk out of the forum. This week's consensus at the WHO shows it is possible to construct a middle path in the deepening confrontation between China and America and that the middle powers can exercise global leadership.

NEW ZEAL

Jacinda Ardern is setting an example, dealing with coronavirus
crisis with openness, clarity and empathy

THIS WEEK, JACINDA Ardern became the most popular prime minister in New Zealand's history. In the first poll conducted after the country's strict four-week lockdown, Ardern's approval rating was up to nearly 60 per cent, and her party, Labour, was at 56.5 per cent. That's serious political capital and PM Ardern has used it to float an idea for labour reform that others could learn from — a four-day week.

Given the number of people working from home, and the slowdown in consumption caused by COVID-19, a four-day week could potentially reduce the burden on families as well as help the economy. Flexible work hours would mean that people have more time to spend on leisure, fewer overheads for employers and generally less stress during trying times. Unlike many other countries facing distress and lockdowns, New Zealand seems to be open to the idea that producers are also consumers, and their health and well-being — mental and physical — will be the ultimate driver of the economy.

Ardern's popularity, both in her country and beyond, has been based on what she represents. She became the first woman leader in history to give birth in office and "bring her baby to work" — in her case, the parliament. After the Christchurch attacks, she made sure to speak to minorities, reassuring them that the government stood with them. The manner in which she has handled the COVID crisis has now added to her appeal: She imposed the lockdown early, New Zealand has just had 21 deaths from the virus, and the number of new cases is now so small as to be negligible. Throughout the crisis, she has been speaking to her people and the press, answering questions — her leadership style standing in stark contrast to other democracies, where demagoguery seems to be standing in for empathy.



FALI S NARIMAN

A REPORT FROM Karnataka in *The Indian Express* of May 20 reads like a breath of fresh air: A division bench of the High Court of Karnataka, presided over by its chief justice, questioned the state government's decision not to fund the travel of migrant workers if their home states do not deposit funds for train fares. The bench also required the state government to clarify the legality of its refusal to pay the fares of migrant workers from states like UP, Bihar and Jharkhand despite the Centre laying down rules for reimbursement from destination states. It asked the government whether it wanted to take a stand that a migrant worker who had no income and was not in a position to pay the railway fare would not be allowed to travel home by the Shramik Special trains.

The Karnataka Government had argued — though unsuccessfully — that the high court cannot intervene because the Supreme Court, when directly approached under Article 32, had refused to intervene on the issue of migrants walking home due to the lack of transport arrangements. Earlier, three orders separately passed by different benches of the highest court had declined to give any direction to the majoritarian government at the Centre to make transport available to migrant workers; it also failed to suo motu implead the concerned states so as to enable the apex court to issue directions to state governments to ensure humanitarian relief and so put an end to the degrading spectacle of starving migrant workers walking hundreds of miles to their homes.

The highest court also failed to notice that it was a soft-hearted Parliament (way back in 1979) that had enacted a special law regulating the employment and conditions of

Why a recent Karnataka high court order is
compulsory reading in Covid times

The Karnataka Government had argued — though unsuccessfully — that the high court cannot intervene because the Supreme Court, when directly approached under Article 32, had refused to intervene on the issue of migrants walking home due to the lack of transport arrangements. Earlier, three orders separately passed by different benches of the highest court had declined to give any direction to the majoritarian government at the Centre to make transport available to migrant workers.

service of "migrant workers": A class of oppressed persons deserving of protection of the state where they are employed.

That judges of high courts across India are soft-hearted got established during the internal Emergency of June 1975 when judges in six high courts in the country, namely the HCs of Delhi, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Allahabad, Karnataka, and Rajasthan refused to accept that oppressive laws and orders were no longer reviewable by courts. However, these judgments of six high courts were overruled by the Supreme Court of India in *ADM Jabalpur* AIR 1976 SC 1207 by a Constitution Bench of five judges (4:1). But *ADM Jabalpur* is no longer good law. It, too, stands overruled by a nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court (*Puttaswamy vs Union of India*; (2017) 10 SCC 1).

But, to me, a most disturbing trend in recent times is another 2017 decision of the highest court. In May 2017, seven judges of the Supreme Court of India, invoking its contempt jurisdiction under Article 129 punished a sitting judge — Justice C S Karnan — of one of India's oldest superior courts, the High Court of Madras, by sending him to jail for contempt of the Supreme Court (reported in 2017 (1) SCC 1). This had never happened before and I venture to hope that it never happens again!

True, Justice Karnan had persistently defied judgments and orders of the Supreme Court. He had also indulged in scurrilous, irresponsible and un-substantiated allegations — against judges — not only of the Supreme Court but also against the judges and the chief justice of his own high court — the High Court of Madras. The justices of the Supreme Court of India were (justifiably) very angry.

But as had been said before, "If, as a judge, you are tempted to be angry, you must remember the great Lord Eldon, who sat for twenty-five years as Lord Chancellor of England; in 1787, as plain John Scott, the lawyer, he argued a case in the Equity Courts — *Dering vs. Earl of Winchelsea* — thirty-five years later the case was cited to him when, as Lord Eldon, he was presiding in the Court of Chancery. Eldon said he remembered the case: '...and very angry I was with the decision; but I have lived long enough to find out that one may be very angry and very wrong.'"

The decision in Justice Karnan's case is "very wrong". It is a one-off decision which I hope will never be replicated. Under our Constitution, high courts are not subordinate to the Supreme Court — although decisions of the Supreme Court are binding on the high court. A judge of a superior court under the Constitution who is vested with the power to commit for contempt of court cannot himself or herself be committed for criminal contempt as defined in the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971. In fact, this had been previously so held by a full bench of the High Court of Patna in 1981 (AIR 1981 Patna 65), and then reiterated by a bench of three judges of the highest Court in 1988 (1988 (1) SCC 1): Alas, the judgments of the Patna High Court (1981) and of the Supreme Court (1988) were not even noticed, much less dissented from, in Karnan's case!

I salute the judges of the Karnataka High Court for their humanitarian approach. Like Abou Ben Adhem (in the poem by James Hunt) "May their tribe increase!"

The writer is a constitutional jurist and senior advocate, Supreme Court



RAKSHITA SWAMY

FORTHE LOCKDOWN HAS resulted in a massive loss of livelihoods, and the 400-million strong unorganised workforce is the worst hit. A significant part of this workforce has migrated to cities from rural areas. With the allocation of an additional Rs 40,000 crore as part of the stimulus package, the Union government has finally acknowledged the importance of MGNREGA. The most important part of MGNREGA's design is its legally-backed guarantee for any rural adult to get work within 15 days of demanding it. This demand-based trigger enables the self-selection of workers and gives them an assurance of at least 100 days of wage employment.

The additional financial support for MGNREGA needs to be fully appreciated. But, it is also important to put it in context. Since 2012, an average of 18 per cent of the annual budgetary allocation for MGNREGA has been spent on clearing pending liabilities from the previous years. Even this financial year began with pending wage and material liabilities of Rs 16,045 crore. An allocation of Rs 1 lakh crore for FY 2020-21 would mean that approximately Rs 84,000 crore is available for employment generation this year. This will still be the highest allocation for MGNREGA in any year since the passage of the law. However, the allocation, which amounts to 0.47 per cent of the GDP continues to be much lower than the World Bank recommendations of 1.7 per cent for the optimal functioning of the programme.

Given the scale and depth of the current crisis, this additional allocation too will be under stress, as both the number of people demanding work and the number of days of work they demand will go up dramatically. Nevertheless, since enough funds are now available to meet at least the immediate de-

A MOMENT TO REVIVE MGNREGA

Additional allocation must be supplemented with steps to make it more effective

mands for work, the government must undertake some immediate steps to ensure the MGNREGA lives up to its potential.

First, state governments must ensure that public works are opened in every village. Workers turning up at the worksite should be provided work immediately, without imposing on them the requirement of demanding work in advance.

Second, local bodies must proactively reach out to returned and quarantined migrant workers and help those in need to get job cards.

Third, at the worksite, adequate facilities such as soap, water, and masks for workers must be provided free of cost. For reasons of health safety, MGNREGA tools should not be shared between workers. The government should provide a tool allowance to all workers — some states are already providing such an allowance.

Fourth, procedures for implementing MGNREGA must be simplified but not diluted. The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of decentralised governance. Gram panchayats and elected representatives need to be provided with adequate resources, powers, and responsibilities to sanction works, provide work on demand, and authorise wage payments to ensure there are no delays in payments.

Fifth, as per a study by the RBI, more than half the districts in the country are underbanked. The density of bank branches in rural India is even more sparse. At this time, payments need to not only reach bank accounts on time, but cash needs to reach the workers easily and efficiently. The limited coverage of bank infrastructure in rural areas must not be made a hurdle. Attempts to distribute wages in cash, sans biometric authentication, must be rolled out.

Sixth, there needs to be flexibility in the kinds of work to be undertaken, while ensuring that the community and the workers are the primary beneficiaries. While many governments will possibly prioritise individual land-based works to comply with instructions of physical distancing, it is important to also keep community works going to ensure that landless workers are not crowded out of the programme.

Over the last few years, MGNREGA had begun to face an existential crisis, engineered by successive governments capping its financial resources, and turning it into a supply-based programme. Workers had begun to lose interest in working under it because of the inordinate delays in wage payments.

With very little autonomy, gram panchayats had begun to find implementation cumbersome. Barring a few exceptions, state governments were only interested in running the programme to the extent funds were made available from the Centre. Allocating work on demand, and not having enough funds to pay wages on time was bound to cause great distress amongst the workers and eventually for the state too. As a result, state governments had begun to implement MGNREGA like a supply-driven scheme, instead of running it like a demand-based guarantee backed by law. With nearly eight crore migrant workers returning to their villages, and with an additional allocation for the year, this could be a moment for the true revival of MGNREGA. A revival led by workers themselves.

The writer works with the Social Accountability Resource Unit and is associated with the Peoples' Action for Employment Guarantee (PAEG)



MAY 22, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM UNREST
CURFEW WAS CLAMPED ON Howli, a small town about 130 km from Gauhati following clashes between supporters of the All-Assam Minority Students Union (AAMSU) and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU) resulting in injuries to 10 persons (according to UNI, troops have been placed on the alert in Assam as tension mounted in several areas following group clashes). Violence continued unabated in the commercial centre of Tinsukia for the fifth day taking the death toll to five. While the army carried out a flag march in Tinsukia, reinforcements of the Border Security Force and Central Reserve Police were rushed to Howli and Nagarbera,

about 100 km from Gauhati, as tension mounted.

IC APPOINTMENT

THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE is expected to be appointed to discuss ways to settle the Afghanistan problem and to undertake consultation on the matter. The official spokesman of the Islamic Conference, Kacem Zaheri, said that this proposal is contained in a draft resolution approved by the political committee for final consideration and adoption by the full session. The proposal includes that the chairman of the Islamic foreign ministers' conference should be the chairman of the proposed ministerial committee.

SOUTH KOREA RIOTS

THOUSANDS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT protestors, many armed with rifles and machine-guns, battled with soldiers and police in Kwangju. Army troops killed at least 11 persons and wounded 63 others as the protestors took control of almost the entire South Korean city. The martial law command announced that demonstrators had raided several armouries containing hundreds of automatic rifles and M-1 carbines, along with ammunition, and a number of light machine-guns. The announcement said two light machine-guns were set up on the top of Chonnam University's hospital building, and was used to fire on troops.

9 THE IDEAS PAGE

Reforms the farmer needs

The problems farmers face are rooted in structural constraints. Location-specific policies, well-directed investment, and better-functioning agricultural institutions are needed



MEKHALA KRISHNAMURTHY

LAST WEEK, FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman signalled the Union government's intention to enact a new central law that would override existing state regulations that restrict the farmer from legally selling to anyone other than a buyer licensed by the local Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC). The decision to push for a central law comes after dissatisfaction with two decades of partial and uneven reforms by different states.

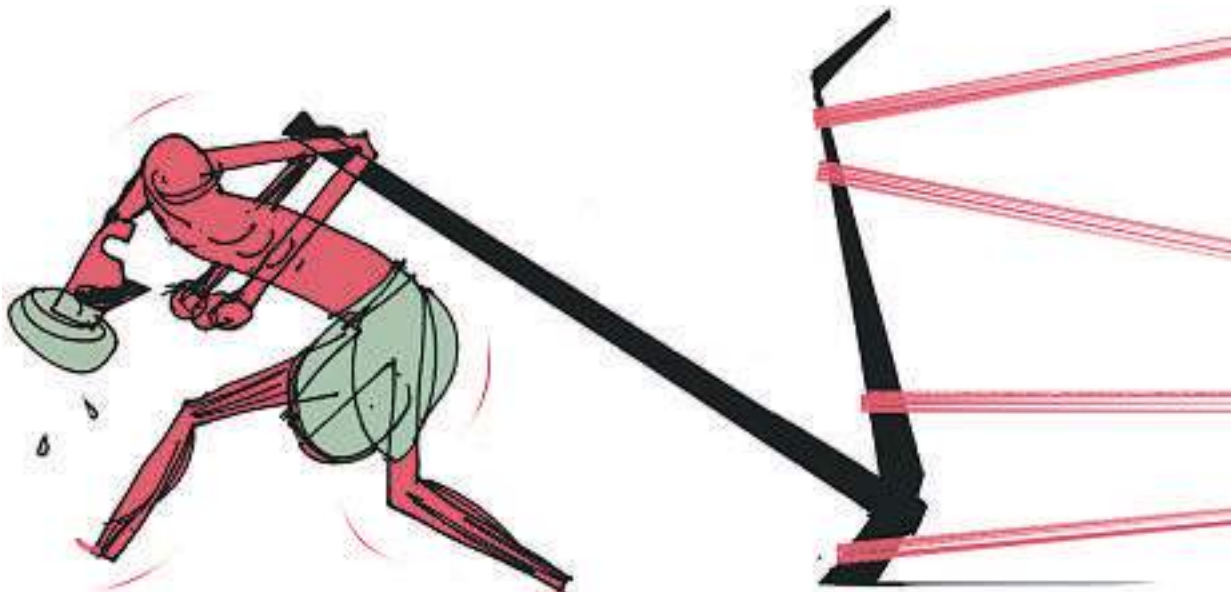
In the haste to rid ourselves of old edifices, one must not fail to learn from this long and varied regulatory history and the distinct and diverse realities of agricultural markets on the ground. If this moment is to be a watershed for Indian farmers, we must not begin by overstating the power of legal reform in guaranteeing economic freedom and outcomes. The problems farmers face are not only a result of vested, monopolistic interests, but are rooted in larger structural conditions that significantly weaken their terms of engagement in agricultural markets. The former may be addressed by regulatory intervention. But the latter will need location-specific policies, well-directed investment, and well-functioning agricultural institutions. It is hard to imagine how either can be achieved without a great deal of consensus, coordination and capacity in which the states will need to play a major role.

The dominant narrative laments the fact that farmers are forced to sell their produce only to licensed APMC traders. But the reality is that even today the majority of Indian farmers, especially small and marginal cultivators, sell their produce to small-scale and largely unlicensed traders and intermediaries in the village or in local sites of exchange outside regulated market yards. But, if farmers are bound by law to sell in APMC mandis, why are so many of them selling outside?

At least part of the answer is that India still doesn't have enough mandis. Over the decades, most states in general, and specific regions in particular, have hugely under-invested in the basic infrastructure required to create viable, primary wholesale markets within easy physical reach of farmers. The 2017 Doubling Farmers Income Report estimates that in addition to the current 6,676 principal and sub-market yards under APMCs (also woefully limited in terms of infrastructure) India needs over 3,500 additional wholesale markets. Approximately 23,000 rural periodic markets (or haats) have also suffered long-standing neglect.

So, the new allocation towards market infrastructure must be fully utilised to build up an appropriately designed physical marketing ecosystem, especially in remote regions. Most importantly, unlike in the past, this process should engage deeply with farmers and traders in each location to avoid misdirected and misplaced infrastructure and assets.

Of course, there is no denying that where



CR Sasikumar

APMC mandis do exist and have established themselves as dominant market sites, mandi committees have typically done everything in their power to restrict competition. Obtaining a licence for a new entrant — whether a regional trader, processor, national or multinational corporation, or farmer producer organisation — has most often proved to be a bureaucratic nightmare and a costly affair. This is where regulatory reform to remove conflicts of interests, enable the entry of new buyers, and facilitate the flow of trade both within and outside the mandi system is absolutely crucial. No state has done enough in this direction, but here too there are cautionary lessons.

Complete deregulation, as we have seen in the decade following Bihar's repeal of its APMC Act in 2006, does not necessarily transform agricultural markets and spur competition. Even after all restrictions were lifted, there was little uptake in direct procurement by formal players in the state. When corporations entered the maize market in a big way, they chose to buy from larger traders and aggregators and not from farmers. Most farmers have seen little change in marketing practice and continue to sell to village traders as they had done before the repeal. Where private markets have emerged — mainly for horticultural produce — they are constituted and run by local traders and commission agents. But across the system, traders complain about deteriorating infrastructure while the regulatory vacuum has led to the proliferation of brokers to deal with counter-party risk in growing and dynamic commodity markets such as maize.

Where states have undertaken some degree of regulatory reform instead of repeal, for instance in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, we do observe, at least to some extent, the fruits of competition. In the early 2000s, when MP granted ITC a licence to set up procurement hubs outside mandi yards, farmers not only gained from price competition, but also from electronic weighing and quick payments, as mandis upgraded in response. But ITC's procurement channel was understandably restricted to select commodities (and qualities), seasons and farms within its own commercial strategy. These limitations revealed the mandi's comparative advantage as a permanent multi-buyer, multi-commodity market for all local pro-

Against the popular demonisation of small traders and intermediaries, over a half-century of scholarship on India's agricultural markets has shown that they exist - and persist — because they are able to respond — in cash, credit, time and place — to the multiple needs of farmers and firms across the interconnected domains of production, marketing, processing and consumption. This is not to say that they do not exploit farmers when the opportunity arises. It is to point out that new, organised and technologically driven procurement and marketing systems will only work as actual options for producers if they manage to address the real constraints that farmers face on the ground, especially access to credit, inputs, storage, transport, and timely payments.

ducers. The key lesson to draw from studies of direct procurement and contracting is the need for a regulatory architecture that enables both new and existing systems to respond, adapt, and compete.

The same holds true for intermediation. Against the popular demonisation of small traders and intermediaries, over a half-century of scholarship on India's agricultural markets has shown that they exist — and persist — because they are able to respond — in cash, credit, time and place — to the multiple needs of farmers and firms across the interconnected domains of production, marketing, processing and consumption. This is not to say that they do not exploit farmers when the opportunity arises. It is to point out that new, organised and technologically driven procurement and marketing systems will only work as actual options for producers if they manage to address the real constraints that farmers face on the ground, especially access to credit, inputs, storage, transport, and timely payments. Most of these constraints originate in the relations of land ownership and access and the limits and exclusions they impose on smallholding farmers and landless cultivators. Simply put, farmers will not be in a position to exercise any newly granted regulatory freedom in the market if they cannot overcome these constraints. Equally, while increasing competition for intermediaries is desirable, their elimination is a misguided — and indeed dangerous — objective if one does not respect or replace the roles and risks that they cover.

Finally, as we can clearly see today, agriculture is at the very heart of the essential economy and our food system runs on the backs of small-scale producers, traders, commission agents, processors, wholesalers, retailers, and labourers. Regulatory reform to increase competition must not degenerate into re-regulation that unduly favours large-scale consolidation and channel control by erecting new barriers to entry and operation for agro-commercial MSMEs. We must recognise and strengthen the diversity, dynamism, enterprise, and resilience of India's agricultural markets.

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WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“The US presidential election has aggravated the difficulties of the global COVID-19 fight. There used to be shameless elections in Europe's history that destroyed order and peace. Hopefully, the US will not make humanity repeat the same mistakes.” — GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

A ministry for migrant labour

In this crisis, government has been groping in the dark on the migrant issue. This must change



ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has introduced words and phrases that have now become deeply familiar to us: Corona, quarantine, thermal screening, tracing, testing, isolation, vaccination and, most prominently, “stranded migrant workers”.

At regular intervals, we have been witnessing heart-rending visuals of weary migrants painfully trudging along roads — people who have been compelled to set out on arduous journeys to reach their native villages, which they had once left for “greener pastures”. These migrant workers have been contributing towards the development of the nation by the sheer sweat of their brow, their labour, so that India could move towards the goal of becoming a trillion dollar economy.

The irony of fate is that when these very nation builders sought a little assistance from the country in their quest to reach their humble abodes, we failed to provide them food, shelter and conveyance.

The media has done no more than merely train the spotlight on their harrowing journeys. These are people who were crushed, mowed down and fated to die of exhaustion — from starvation really. This is a blot on humanity and an ignominy for the country. The glaring distinction between two Indias has palpably come to the fore.

In India, there is no dearth of hype and hyperbole. Swami Vivekananda had once said, “an ounce of practice is worth twenty-thousand tonnes of big talk”. The entire post-lockdown scenario vindicates the fact that the lockdown was a half-baked, knee-jerk exercise that has resulted in an unprecedented human disaster on a scale unseen since Independence. This could have been averted had there been a well-thought out plan in anticipation of the magnitude of this looming corona menace. Can we ignore the fact that if these migrants do not return to their workplaces after the lifting of the lockdown, several critical economic activities will take a hit? The structure of our economic activities has evolved in such a manner that migrants — from within or outside their respective state — have an integral role to play.

The question is whether the government has comprehensive data about the migrant workers of our country. It appears that the government is emerging from a stupor and groping in the dark about the status and significance of the migrants.

On the one hand, these workers have lost their livelihoods abruptly. Their hard-earned money — otherwise remitted to their homes to cater to the needs of their families, and means of survival for them-

selves — was wiped out instantly. Now, shorn of everything, these migrants have been mobilising the cost of their return journeys home by selling their family valuables. The stringent lockdown is like a double-edged sword for them: Their sources of income have dried up, and the little resources back home are not sufficient to help them withstand the hardship of the situation. It appears to me that the “medicine” to counter coronavirus has, in our case, become more deadly than the virus itself.

The lockdown has forced us to think specifically about migrants, whether they are skilled or unskilled workers, blue-collar workers or white-collar workers. All migrants face difficulties. Appropriate facilities should thus be created at all places to address their problems. There is a need to match demand and supply for their skills, and the employers have to be sensitive enough to create required facilities for them. Hence, a law is needed to deal with any adversities that the migrant workers may confront in future in a holistic manner. Migrant workers must be able to believe that this is a country for all, without any discrimination. They do not require mercy, they should be allowed to live with dignity.

The current crisis also makes us think about the need to have a separate ministry for migrant affairs, dealing with domestic migrants only. The UPA government was innovative enough to create the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to give proper attention to the various issues faced by Indian expatriates. It helped to ameliorate the conditions of Indians working abroad to some extent. Likewise, we must pay attention to domestic migrants. A dedicated ministry for migrants affairs will have the complete database of the migrants — their place of origin, the place they have moved to, skills they possess, etc. This information can be leveraged to plan our cities, towns and train movements better. This can help in generating appropriate employment, besides ensuring traceability and helping to organise their housing, transport and food in times of crisis. This ministry can coordinate with the respective states about the migrants. Across the world, migrants keep moving in search of better economic options. Therefore, we may also study how other countries have fared on this front.

The focus of the UPA has always been the poor and the downtrodden — how to transform their lives and raise their standards of living, thus pulling them out of penury and insecurity. As we have been reading about the plight of the migrants during the lockdown, it has prompted us to think more about them. We have realised that in order to better focus on their affairs, in all situations and all times, it is best to have a separate ministry of migrants affairs.

We should also bear in mind that the lockdown has been promulgated under the disaster management act of 2005, which was conceptualised by the UPA in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami.

The writer is leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha



ARUN MAIRA

THE 20TH CENTURY'S great management thought leader, Peter Drucker, used to consult CEOs of the largest companies in the world and presidents of nations. Whenever he met any leader, he would always first ask them for their opinions, and not facts. Because smart people know how to find facts that fit their opinions. Drucker comes to mind these days with the government's moves to reform India's labour laws. The government and its advisers seem to be moved by ideology, not facts.

The facts on the ground have been revealed by the moving scenes of millions of migrant workers who were abandoned by their employers after Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared a nationwide lockdown. Data about India's labour regime had been presented by many researchers before, but these figures were ignored. Images of jobless workers and their homeless families scrambling to reach their homes, far away from where they were employed, have starkly revealed now the fragility of their contracts with their employers. The workers were used and discarded.

All Indians with compassion for their fellow citizens must ask: Who will benefit if employers are given even more freedom to hire and fire? The problem is not in the laws. It is in the mindset of those who advocate such reforms. In 2013, the Planning Commission asked Bain & Company to conduct an objective study of enterprises in India. The management consultancy firm was asked to test the hypothesis that the long-term perform-

Take the worker on board

Workers, and those who speak for them, must be heard on labour laws

ance of the companies, who treat their employees as long-term assets is better than the ones who consider workers as a burden and as costs to be adjusted, whenever sales drop. The companies were compared with their peers in the same industries. The hypothesis was validated. The companies that invested in their workers, and held on to them as assets, did much better, even though they went through the same dips in the business environment as their peers did.

Around the same time, Maruti, one of India's most enlightened employers, was shaken by violent unrest. The issue was the treatment of contract workers in a Maruti factory. They were not paid the same wages as permanent workers doing the same work and did not have the same rights to represent their needs to the management because, legally, the contract workers were not the company's employees.

The Bain study had revealed that the practice of engaging workers through contractors to work alongside permanent skilled workers had permeated all the best employers in the country. In fact, in many companies they accounted for over 50 per cent of the workforce. The unions complained that this was an unfair labour practice. It reduced the cost of workers no doubt. However, the Bain study had revealed that the companies' profits would be only marginally reduced if all workers were paid similar wages. Employee costs constitute less than 20 per cent of the companies' costs and, within employee costs, the share of compensation of CEOs and senior ex-

ecutives was often half of the total. (CEO compensation had risen to over 300 times the salary of a worker in many companies; in the early 1990s, it had been less than 20 times.)

While workers within the factories of large employers were not being fairly treated by enlightened employers, conditions of workers outside were worse. Large companies employ very few people. Most of the employment their business generates is outside their factory walls, in tiers of suppliers, down to hundreds of tiny and informal enterprises. Labour laws provide even less protection to these millions of workers outside, whether in payment of their wages, their safety, or their rights of association.

Against this backdrop, unions and employers began a series of dialogues in 2013. They agreed that both sides were interested in the growth of Indian enterprises. They would listen to each other so that they could agree on norms and regulations that would give employers requisite freedom to improve the competitiveness of their enterprises while ensuring fairness for workers.

A truth the dialogue revealed was that the unions were not speaking on behalf of the 4 per cent of India's fortunate workers in permanent employment in large companies. These unions were asking enlightened employers to consider the conditions of the 96 per cent others — the contract workers within their companies, as well as the masses of workers employed outside. Outsourcing of employment to contractors and outsourcing of production to small firms are strategies for

reducing costs. Since India's social security systems are very weak, masses of workers suffer whenever there is a downturn. The unions appealed to these big businesses to consider all Indian citizens, not only their own employees and shareholders, when they proposed changes in India's labour law regime.

The Overton window (named after public policy expert, Joseph Overton) is the range of policies politically acceptable to the mainstream population at a given time. The slackening of India's GDP growth, as well as economists' data that employment was declining, did not wake up the government to the vulnerability of India's workers. Nor did the appeals of the unions. After many years of demands by a section of economists and business lobbies for making it even easier for large employers to fire their workers, the Overton window seems to have opened a bit to consider the plight of 96 per cent of India's workers. It is tragic that pictures of millions of workers abandoned by the system were necessary to wake up many more Indians to speak up against the foolhardy scheme of suspending India's ineffective labour laws.

India must remain a democracy. Workers, and those who speak on their behalf, must be heard while framing or changing regulations. Their voices must not be silenced by ordinances.

Maira is a former Planning Commission member and author of Transforming Systems: Why the World Needs a New Ethical Toolkit

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CITY IS HOME

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'In the city I feel no fear,' (IE, May 20). While there is obnoxious politics being played over providing transport to the migrants, there are thousands of migrant women, who would rather continue to live in the cities for freedom and safety. For most of them, returning to villages is tantamount to surrendering to a relentless cycle of patriarchal oppression and domestic violence. Rather than compelling them to relocate to rural India, equipping them with the necessary documents to avail government help seems like a better option for now.

Sunil Macwan, Ahmedabad

CENTRE'S CAGE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Reward the people' (IE, May 21). Kashmiris are not children to be 'rewarded' for not being naughty. The abrogation of Article 370 was meant not to help but control Kashmiris. BJP members actually otherwise Kashmiris. Its leaders talk about making brides of Kashmiri women as if they are non-Indian commodities. Kashmir was "run by its people" when its people elected state governments. Now, under the suppressing hand of the Centre, the steel frame is a cage.

Yusuf Ghazali, Patna

APATHY AND NEGLECT

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Relief and reform' (IE, May 21). The article is make-believe. If the government's re-

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ported benefits have reached the most vulnerable people, why are migrant workers and daily wagers still on their way to their far-flung home states? The so-called packages are for the upper class and for the under class are only food packets.

Tarsem Singh, Mahilpur

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Relief and reform' (IE, May 21). The authors' elaboration of the Narendra Modi government's Rs 20 lakh crore stimulus has mentioned migrant workers only once with reference to Rs 13,000 crore transferred to states to finance the costs of running quarantine homes and shelters for them. It obfuscated the humongous suffering and tragedy of migrant workers in the past two months writ large of the face of the nation.

LR Murmu, Delhi



@ieExplained #ExpressExplained

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

How your flight experience changes, what you pay

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

AFTER ALMOST two months of flights being grounded, the government has allowed airlines to resume them from Monday. But there will be restrictions and strict procedures: flights will run at only one-third of pre-lockdown capacity; passengers, airlines and airports will need to follow standard operating procedures issued by the Ministry of Civil Aviation; passengers will also need to adhere to health protocols prescribed by the destination state or Union Territory government, which would include whether or not they need to go into quarantine after landing.

While India's largest airline IndiGo opened up bookings from 10 pm on Thursday, other airlines were yet to do so; AirAsia India said it would start on Friday.

What airports will flights initially connect?

While the government has allowed airlines to operate from all airports, the airlines will take the final decision on which airports to include in their network depending on demand. This will depend on a number of factors, including whether the respective states have allowed complementary mobility infrastructure such as public transport to and from airports. According to some airline officials, flights on some trunk routes such as Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Bengaluru, Mumbai-

Bengaluru, Ahmedabad-Mumbai, etc may be resumed initially

What will be the air fares?

The government has issued a price cap and a floor to keep the fares under control, given that there will be a surge in demand that, if left to market forces, could cause fares to skyrocket. Additionally, 40 per cent of the tickets on any flight will have to be sold below the median price. Fare limits have been divided into seven bands according to the flight duration. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued a set of fare buckets with the ceiling and floor for each band (see box).

How does the pre-flight experience change?

To begin with, passengers have been asked to report at least two hours before departure time. It will be mandatory for passengers to wear a face mask, and a self-declaration or safe status on Aarogya Setu app (for those with compatible devices) will be obtained to ensure that the passenger is free of Covid-19 symptoms. Passengers with "red status" on the app will not be permitted to travel.

While entering the airport terminal building, the passenger will have to undergo thermal screenings. At the airport, no physical check-in at the counters will be allowed. Only those passengers with confirmed web check-in will be allowed to enter the airport. Further, the passenger will also be required to print

FARES* BY DURATION, UPPER & LOWER LIMITS

Duration	Lowest	Highest
Up to 40 min	Rs 2,000	Rs 6,000
40-60 min	Rs 2,500	Rs 7,500
60-90 min	Rs 3,000	Rs 9,000
90-120 min	Rs 3,500	Rs 10,000
120-150 min	Rs 4,500	Rs 13,000
150-180 min	Rs 5,500	Rs 15,700
180-210 min	Rs 6,500	Rs 18,600

ROUTES

Up to 40 min: Bengaluru-Chennai, Bhopal-Mumbai, Agartala-Guwahati, Delhi-Jaipur, Delhi-Chandigarh etc

40-60 min: Delhi-Srinagar, Ahmedabad-Mumbai, Bengaluru-Goa, Hyderabad-Mumbai, Kolkata-Patna etc

60-90 min: Bengaluru-Mumbai,

Delhi-Patna, Bengaluru-Pune etc

90-120 min: Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Hyderabad, Delhi-Kolkata, Bengaluru-Ahmedabad, Kolkata-Bengaluru, etc

120-150 min: Delhi-Bengaluru, Goa-Delhi, Bengaluru-Patna, Mumbai-Patna, Hyderabad-Guwahati etc

150-180 min: Delhi-Imphal, Dibrugarh-Delhi, Delhi-Calicut, Bengaluru-Guwahati etc

180-210 min: Delhi-Coimbatore, Delhi-Thiruvananthapuram, Delhi-Port Blair etc

**Economy class fares, exclusive of user development fee, passenger service fee and goods and services tax. These fares are not applicable on UDAN flights*

the baggage tag and affix it prominently on the baggage. Passengers have been advised to carry minimum baggage as use of trolleys will be permitted sparingly. In addition, only one cabin baggage item will be allowed.

The Ministry has strongly advised passengers not to arrive at the airport at the last minute given that it is expected that

processes will be slower than before. For security check, arrangements have been made at airports to guide passengers to walk through the pre-embarkation security screening. Security staff have been instructed to practice "minimum touch" concept to reduce physical contact with the passengers. The government has advised vulnerable

people such as very elderly, pregnant women or passengers with health issues to avoid air travel. There will be a waiting area after the security hold area where passengers have been advised to maintain social distancing and sanitisation protocols. Chairs for seating will also be open, but those marked "not for use" should not be occupied.

Food and beverages, and retail outlets inside the airport terminal building will be open but passengers have been advised to maintain hygiene and social distancing.

While boarding, passengers will need to self-check-in using their boarding passes by scanning it at the equipment near the boarding gate. Passengers will be provided a safety kit comprising three-layered surgical masks, face shield and sanitisers from their airlines at the boarding gates. They will be asked to wear the mask, face shield and sanitise their hands before proceeding to the boarding gate.

How does the in-flight experience change?

Inside the aircraft, no meal services will be made available, nor will newspapers, magazines, and even on-board sale of items being prohibited to minimise physical contact. Passengers have been advised to minimise use of the lavatory and to avoid any non-essential movement in the aisles.

Passengers will not be allowed to consume any eatables during the flight except on grounds of health requirements. Additionally, water bottles will be made

available by the airline in the galley area or on the seats.

If any passenger feels uncomfortable or fatigued, or has a cough, it should be brought to the notice of the crew.

Airlines have been advised to clean and sanitise the lavatories after every one hour of flight and to clear the seat pockets of all items except the safety card, which will be replaced or sanitised after every flight.

Upon landing of the flight, the airlines have been asked to ensure that passengers exit in a sequence to avoid any bunching.

How does the post-flight experience change?

The baggage will arrive in batches and the passengers have been advised to wait in the hold area. The airport operators have been advised to put social distance markings like a circle, square around the baggage collection carousel. Further, they have been told to ensure staggered placement of baggage on the arrival carousel. Upon landing, passengers will be allowed to take only authorised taxis to leave the airport.

Most importantly, they will need to adhere to health protocols as are prescribed by the destination state or Union Territory government. This will determine whether or not an arriving passenger should undergo a quarantine period. A senior Civil Aviation Ministry official said that ideally the passengers need not undergo repetitive quarantining but the ultimate decision will rest on the states.

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Back to school in Europe

Schools in a number of European countries have begun to reopen. A look at why it was felt necessary at this stage, how countries have addressed various concerns, and where India stands on reopening schools

RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

ON SUNDAY, India decided to keep schools closed for another two weeks. In Europe, millions of children are returning to classrooms.

Why are schools reopening in Europe?

Most countries have imposed strict lockdown measures to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. School closures are central to any government's efforts to restart the economy. It is difficult for adults to go back to work if schools and daycare centres are still closed, French Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer said in a statement on May 4.

This is why countries like Norway, Denmark, Poland and France are reopening schools by bringing back the youngest first. "Younger children need parents to look after them, thus causing a lot of people having to stay home from work to care for their kids, with great economic and social consequences both for the families and for society... and older children and young adults can easier have distant learning via computers and telephones," Frode Forland, specialist director in infectious diseases at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, told *The Indian Express* in an email. Norway opened elementary schools on April 27.

Also, the welfare costs to keeping schools open are far greater for students from underprivileged backgrounds. When schools close, their nutrition is compromised.

Will reopening make children vulnerable?

Scientific research on children with Covid-19 is still an emerging area. Published studies so far indicate that incidence among kids is low compared to adults, but older children report more cases. According to a report published by the John Hopkins Centre for Health Security this week, that summarises findings of published literature, in the US, "among 2,572 pediatric COVID-19 cases, 15% occurred in children who were under 1 year old, 11% occurred in children ages 1 to 4 years, 15% occurred in children ages 5 to 9 years, 27% occurred in children ages 10 to 14 years, and 32% occurred in children ages 15 to 17 years".

Infected children do not fall as severely ill as adults, with most recovering without hospitalisation. However, the precise role of children in the transmission of the virus is unclear.

CALLS FOR CAUTION: A study headed by Germany's leading virologist, Christian Drosten, has found that infected children have pretty much the same concentration of the virus in their respiratory passages as adults. "Based on these results, we have to caution against an unlimited re-opening of schools and kindergartens in the present situation," states the study involving 3,712 patients.

In the US, Anthony Fauci, the country's leading infectious disease scientist and member of the White House coronavirus task force, has urged a cautious approach to reopening schools.

CALLS FOR REOPENING: Some experts are calling on governments worldwide to allow all children to go back to school. Saul Faust, Professor of Paediatric Immunology & Infectious Diseases at the University of Southampton, writing in the *BMJ Journals* online this month, called for reopening of schools as "children do not appear to be super-spreaders".

"Society has to reopen, children need to return to school as there are negatives for many



A teacher conducts an online lesson in Nantes on Wednesday, while a child attends class physically. A small section of French children are returning to school. Reuters

of having to stay at home and we need to be able study transmission dynamics in all ages to help us learn how to manage this virus. Slowly opening schools in a controlled way will be of low risk to children's health and less risk to teachers than the risk to many other workers when on public transport/in other work environments (and may be less risk to teachers who would be impacted by other professionals and workers returning to work)," said Faust, in an statement updated on Sunday.

According to Christian Wejse, an associate professor in the Department of Infectious Diseases at Aarhus University Hospital, the consensus in Denmark — the first European country to reopen schools — is that "children are not considered important to the epidemic". "The consensus in Denmark is that children may be susceptible to Covid-19 but generally have a very mild course of the disease, often without any symptoms, and therefore also not likely to be infectious, and children are not considered important to the epidemic. We have had very few hospital admissions in the age group 0-19 years and it is well documented, that although asymptomatic transmission may occur, it occurs quite rare and is not a likely driver of the epidemic," he told *The Indian Express* by email.

What does school life look like in Europe?

Schools are required to follow guidelines issued by the health authorities of their respective countries. Measures include a strict hand hygiene routine for students, no entry of parents into school buildings, outdoor classes and a physical distance of at least one metre between two desks.

DENMARK: In Denmark, large morning assemblies are avoided. When grades 1 to 5 were opened from April 15, each pupil had her desk set two metres apart from her nearest neighbour. This was changed last week to one metre to fit in students of grades 6 to 9. Students are expected to wash hands immediately after entering school premises, in between periods, before and after eating, before leaving for home and after every time a

student coughs or sneezes into her hands, under Danish Health Authority (DHA) guidelines. The DHA has also created videos offering tips to parents and to children directly.

School playgrounds are demarcated into zones with young students allowed to play only in small groups, preferably with the same set of friends every day. Handshake, high fives, kiss on the cheek or a hug and sharing of toys and food are prohibited. Students of one class are discouraged from mingling with their counterparts in other classes. Children leave classrooms at staggered times. Toilets are cleaned twice daily and all frequently-touched surfaces are disinfected twice daily.

FRANCE: France, which is progressively opening schools starting with kindergartens and elementary schools from May 11 and secondary schools from May 18, has capped the maximum student strength of a classroom at 10 students for preschools and 15 for others. Parents are expected to take their child's temperature every day before leaving for school.

Masks are prohibited for nursery students, not recommended for elementary school students and compulsory for teachers and staff.

Aside from a strict handwashing routine, a minimum distance of one metre is mandated between desks, contact sports are banned, and classrooms are to be ventilated before students arrive, during each recess, at lunchtime and in the evening during cleaning. Parents are not allowed into school buildings.

Is it compulsory for parents to send their children to school?

No European country has made it compulsory for parents to send their children to school. But the decision to reopen schools was met with some resistance. After France announced its decision, more than 300 mayors in the Paris region signed an open letter to the President criticising the timeline as unrealistic and saying schools would need more time to implement the hygiene guidelines.

In Denmark, Facebook groups were created by parents objecting to the reopening. In

Norway, the government-owned broadcaster NRK aired a poll in the third week of April that found 24% of parents did not want to send their children back to pre-school and 13% said they were unsure.

Are there any findings to suggest that school reopening has led to a rise in cases in Europe?

Here, Denmark's experience is the most useful, since schools here have been open for a month. According to Wejse, the country has seen no increase in the epidemic after the reopening on April 15 and no major outbreaks in schools. "There was an increase in R, the reproductive rate, from 0.6 to 0.9 between April 10 and April 20, but this measure is estimated from hospital admissions, and therefore considerably delayed. So the increase in R could not be based on school reopenings, but rather less physical distance during the Easter holiday. Also, it was fluctuations in R below 1, so it only affected how steep the falling epidemic curve was, it was still a falling curve, and we saw no increase in the number of positive tests or admissions," he told *The Indian Express*.

When R, the reproduction number, is less than one, it means one infected person is likely to cause less than one new infection, and so the spread will decline.

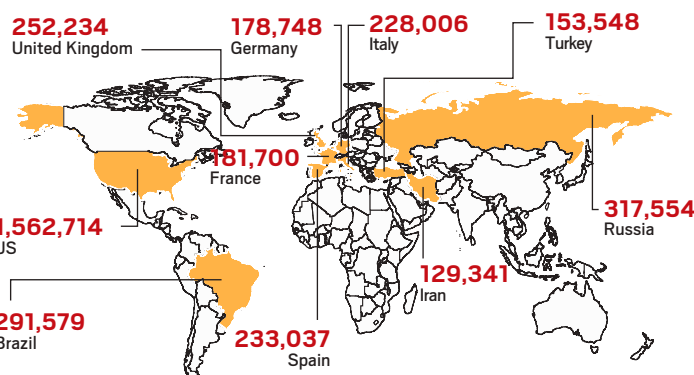
Norway too, Frode says, has "not seen an increase in the spread of the virus since the schools re-opened".

What about schools in India?

Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs on Sunday extended the classroom shutdown for another two weeks, till the end of the month. There hasn't been much public debate on reopening of schools in the country, although some have expressed an inclination to get students back in June. Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti has written to the HRD Ministry seeking permission to reopen Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas from June 8. The Kerala and Gujarat governments too are keen on getting students back in June. However, no announcements are expected unless the Home Ministry clears reopening.

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

THE WORLD



TOTAL CONFIRMED: 5,047,377

DEATH COUNT: 329,816

Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11 pm on May 21

How lockdown has impacted Indian farmers, their yields

SEEMA CHISHTI
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS of a survey of more than 1,000 agricultural households across 12 Indian states show that 60% of those who did harvest reported a yield loss, and 1/10th of them could not harvest in the past month. More than half (56%) of the farmers said the lockdown has impacted their ability to prepare for the upcoming sowing season.

Half of them reported they were "concerned about being able to afford inputs, particularly seeds and fertilizer," and more than one-third (38%) were concerned about labour shortages. About one-fourth said they were "storing their crops instead of selling them due to the lockdown". The study has found small/marginal farmers were significantly less likely to be able to sell crops as compared to large farmers.

The Public Health Foundation of India, Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health and Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (Hyderabad) completed the telephone survey between May 3 and May 15, covering

1,429 agricultural households in 200 districts. The same households will be surveyed one month and then two months from now.

Dr Lindsay Jaacks, Assistant Professor at the Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health, said the preliminary findings were "worrying" but there was "a shimmer of hope in all of this, and that is the many people who have mobilized to support informed policy outcomes that can benefit farmers and farmworkers. With the planting season coming up in a month, time is of the essence".



PAPER CLIP

NEW RESEARCH

Key findings

■ 10% could not

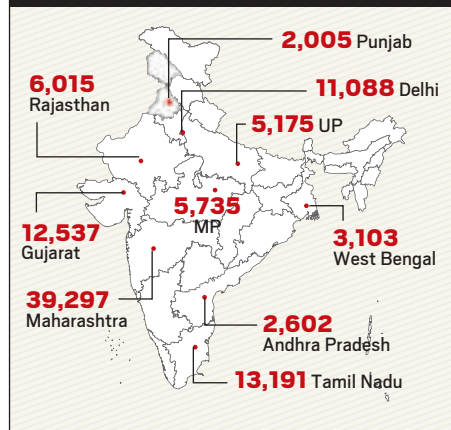
harvest their crop in the past month and 60% of those who did harvest reported a yield loss.

■ 1 in 4 farmers reported storing their crops instead of selling them due to the lockdown and 12% were still trying to sell their crops.

■ 56% of farmers reported that the lockdown has impacted their ability to prepare for the upcoming sowing season. In particular, 50% of these said that they were concerned about being able to afford inputs, and 38% were concerned about labor shortages.

INDIA COUNT: 112,359 (3,435 DEATHS)

TOP 10 STATES



REST OF INDIA

Andaman and Nicobar Islands	33
Arunachal Pradesh	3
Assam	170
Bihar	1674
Chandigarh	202
Chhattisgarh	115
Dadar Nagar Haveli	1
Goa	50
Haryana	993
Himachal Pradesh	110
Jammu and Kashmir	1390
Jharkhand	231
Karnataka	1462
Kerala	666
Ladakh	44
Manipur	25
Meghalaya	14
Mizoram	1
Nagaland	1052
Odisha	1
Puducherry	18
Telangana	1661
Tripura	173
Uttarakhand	122

Union Health Ministry update as of 11 pm, May 21. Most states may have reported higher numbers. Only states/UTs with at least one case listed above.

45,300 PATIENTS DISCHARGED IN 32 STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES

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

INVITATION FOR BID**(IFB)****GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
CENTRAL ROAD FUNDED PROJECTS****INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING**

1. The Executive Engineer, Dehra Division, HPPWD Dehra, invites bids for construction of works detailed in the Table below:

Name of work	Approximate value of work (Rs)	Bid Security (Rs)	Cost of document (Rs)	Period of completion
1	2	3	4	5
Balance work of Widening & strengthening of Jawalamukhi Dehra, Jawali Raja Ka Talab road Km 12/10 to 29/10 under CRP Job No. CRP HP-2017-18-117 (SH- Removal of formation deficiency, including of pavement to intermediate-lane Extension of Cross drainage structure, P.L bituminous Macadam and bituminous concrete, C/O Parapets, drain, road side furniture etc. in Km 12/10 to 29/10).	7,54,50,283/-	7,87,000/-	5,000/-	Eighteen Months

2. Period of availability of Tender on-line/Date & Time of on-line bid submission and Date & time of opening of Bids are as given below:

Availability of Tender on-line for bidding	Last Date & Time for on-line Submission of Bids	Date & Time of Opening of tender
From To		Technical Bid Financial Bid
04.06.2020 10.00 AM	19.06.2020 06.00 PM	20.06.2020 11.30 AM 2020 PM

- For detailed terms and conditions of the notice inviting bids refer to our web site <https://hptenders.gov.in>
- The eligible bidders who do not possess DSC (Digital Signature Certificate) may get the same issued from approved agencies and for any other query may contact helpline No. 01970-233116.

Executive Engineer,
Dehra, Division HPPWD Dehra,
on behalf of
Governor of Himachal Pradesh

0544/HP HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK.

HIMACHAL PRADESH, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

Ph. No. 01905-272269 Fax:- 272862, Email: ee-dhar-hp@nic.in

No: PW-DPD-CB-Tender/2020-670-72 Dated: 15.05.2020

The Executive Engineer, Dhamarpur Division, HPPWD Dhamarpur, Distt: Mandi (H.P) on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering systems from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the work as detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (In Rs.)	Starting Date for Downloading Bid	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Deadling for Submission of Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	C/O staff quarter at PHC Sajaopiplu Tehsil Dhamarpur, Distt. Mandi (H.P.) (SH- Construction of 02 Nos Type II quarters).	23,57,060/-	03.06.2020	43,000/-	17.06.2020
2.	Construction of ChalaalKharon road KM 0/0 to 2/555 (SH- Providing and Laying WBM-G-11 and 20 mm thick premix carpet surfacing in KM 0/0 to 2/555)	23,46,526/-	03.06.2020	43,000/-	17.06.2020
3.	Construction of Science block at Govt. Sen. Sec. School Chothara . (SH- C/O Building portion, Water Supply, Rain Harvesting Tank and Site Development)	99,99,563/-	03.06.2020	1,32,500/-	17.06.2020
4.	Construction of Science block at Govt. Sen. Sec. School Gaddidhar (SH- C/O Building portion, Water Supply, Rain Harvesting Tank and Site Development)	99,73,944/-	03.06.2020	1,32,500/-	17.06.2020
5.	Construction of Science Block Govt. sen. Sec. School Thira. (SH- Building portion, Water Supply, rain harvesting tank and site development)	98,27,144/-	03.06.2020	1,31,500/-	17.06.2020

The bidders are advised to note other details of tender from the department website [www.hptenders.gov.in](http://hptenders.gov.in).

Executive Engineer,
B&R HPPWD Division, Dhamarpur (Mandi)
(on behalf of Governor of H.P.)

0468/HP

PRESS NOTICE**NOTICE INVITING BIDS FOR ROAD/BRIDGE/BUILDING WORKS**

Executive Engineer, Bharwain Division, HP. PWD, Bharwain-177109 on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, invites on line e-tenders on item rate basis from approved and eligible contractors registered in CPWD/ HPPWD for the following works:

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of Documents	Time Allowed for Completion (Months)	Time & Date Opening of Technical Bid	Class of Contractors
1	C/o 4 Nos. bridge over Mawa Sindhian Saghna, Ghanani & Amboa Khad on Una Gargret road (SH: C/o RCC T-beam bridge 90.035 meter (Total span 6x14.50 each) double lane bridge over Amboa Khad at RD 10/450) under Nabard-XXV	33499042/-	367490/-	5000/-	Eighteen Months	11.30 A.M. on 16.7.2020	Class- A
2	C/o 4 Nos. bridge over Mawa Sindhian Saghna, Ghanani & Amboa Khad on Una Gargret road (SH: C/o 45.00 mtr (3x15.00 mtr) span integral bridge over Mawa Sindhian Khad at RD 5/670 & C/o RCC T-beam bridge 44.714 mtr span (3x14.50 mtr each span) double lane bridge over Saghna Khad at RD 4/580) under Nabard-XXV.	31773858/-	350250/-	5000/-	Eighteen Months	11.30 A.M. on 16.7.2020	Class- A
3	C/o Govt. Tehsil building at Ghanani Divstt. Una (SH: C/o Main building, WS & S.I. site development, septic tank and rain water harvesting tank etc)	13753934/-	170050/-	5000/-	Eighteen Months	11.30 A.M. on 16.7.2020	Class- A
4	C/o & M/T link road Repoh to Sandhari Karap Gondpur Badoh Mairi Gurudwara (Portion Repoh to Karap 0/0 to 2/0) (SH: C/o 3.00 mtr RCC slab culvert at RD 1/440 & C/o 900mm dia RCC Hume pipe culvert at RD 1/675, 1/810 and 2/150) under MNP	1307761/-	26200/-	500/-	Three Months	11.30 A.M. on 30.06.2020	Class- C & D
5	C/o link road to village Sarda Aranalw km 0/0 to 6/0 (SH: C/o CC pavement at RD 0/515 to 0/615) under SCCP.	1192853/-	23900/-	350/-	Three Months	11.30 A.M. on 16.07.2020	Class- C & D

- Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://hptenders.gov.in> from 06.07.2020 (5.00 P.M.) to onward.
- The bids can be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://hptenders.gov.in>, w.e.f. 07.07.2020 to 15.07.2020 upto 6.00 P.M. The bids received will be opened at 11.30 A.M. on 16.07.2020 in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- Bid document along with general terms and conditions of the work can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://hptenders.gov.in>.
- The bidders are advised to quote rates inclusive of GST as applicable. GST shall not be paid extra.

-HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK-0555/HP

Govt. of Bihar**Bihar Aapda Punarwas Evam Punarnirman Society (BAPEPS)**

1st Floor, R.C. Singh Path (West Boring Canal Road), Patna-800001, BIHAR.

Telephone: (0612) - 2547021/2547998

Request for Expression of Interest (Consulting Services – Firms Selection)

Country : India

Name of Project : Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project

Loan No. : Cr. 5696-IN

Assignment : Internal Audit for the financial year 2020-21 & 2021-22

The Government of India has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project (BKBDP) (Credit 5696-IN). The Bihar Aapda Punarwas Evam Punarnirman Society (BAPEPS), a Society established by the Government of Bihar (GoB) and registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 acting as a State Project Management Unit (SPMU) is presently implementing BKBDP in five districts of Bihar viz. Araria, Madhepura, Purnia, Saharsa and Supaul through its implementing agencies namely Bihar Rajya Pul Nirman Nigam Ltd. (BRPNL), Rural Works Department (RWD), Water Resources Department (WRD) and Animal & Fisheries Resources Department. BAPEPS intends to engage the services of a Chartered Accountant firm for Internal Audit of BAPEPS & Project Implementing Agencies for BKBDP for the year FY 2020-21 & 2021-22 extendable up to another one year based on satisfactory performance & mutual consent.

The Chartered Accountant firm as Internal audit firm will look into the Project Internal Audit and provide its professional opinion as independent auditors on the matters of Project fund utilization, eligible expenditure for financing of the projects, IuFRs submitted are in agreements with the books of accounts & Procurements done are as per World Bank (WB) norms. It will also insure that the internal financial control under the Project is taken care of as per WB norms as laid down in the approved financial manual for the Project.

The Project Director, BAPEPS, now invites eligible consulting firms i.e. Chartered Accountants ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The short-listing eligibility criteria are: The firm must (a) be empanelled with Comptroller & Auditor General of India (C&AG) for audit of major PSUs; (b) have at least 10 years of existence as a practicing firm including experience in Internal Audit; (c) have at least 5 full time Partners with at least 2 being fellow CAs (as per ICAI's certificate as on 1.1.2019); (d) have the strength of 15 full time Qualified/Audit staffs (e) have a minimum average annual turnover of Rs. 50 Lakh (INR Rupees Fifty Lacs) in the immediately preceding 3 (three) financial years (turnover should be net of GST); (f) have at least 3 (three) years' experience in audit assignments in Social / Rural Externally Aided Projects / Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Preference will be given to those firms who have carried out Internal Audits of Govt./Corporate entities in Civil Construction Sector having a turnover of Rs. 25 crores or more in the immediately preceding 3 (three) financial years.

Expression of Interest shall provide abridged CVs of the proposed team members, their previous experience in similar type of assignment with relevant supporting document and the financial statement of the organization through last 3 years balance sheets.

The Consultants can download the Draft ToR and format for furnishing the above information from www.bapeps.in and can obtain further information at the address given below between 10:00 to 17:00 hrs. on working days.

Interested firms must provide details that meet the criteria above, such as organizational profile, its structure, details of qualifications, experience and number of key staff appropriate for the assignment and documentary proof substantiating the credentials claimed. Short listing will be done strictly on the basis of the information provided.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of The World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers (January 2011 – Revised July 2014) ("Consultant Guidelines") setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)** set out in Consultants Guidelines.

Expression of Interest, titled as "Expression of Interest for Internal Audit for the financial year 2020-21 & 2021-22", must be delivered, in written form (in person, or by mail or by e-mail) to the following address up to dated 23-06-2020 till 15:30 hrs.

To,
The Project Director,
Bihar Aapda Punarwas Evam Punarnirman Society
Indira Bhawan, 1st Floor R.C.Singh Path,
(West Boring Canal Road) Patna-800001, BIHAR.
E-mail: bapeps.bkfrp1@gmail.com

PR- 01337 / (Planning) 2020-21 Deputy Director (Finance)

नोबल कोरोना के संघर्ष में विरतत जागरणी एवं सहयोग हेतु Toll Free No. **104** पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

सादा मोबाइल - संघर्ष किरी तरकी अननकत अजवा सुनाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर संपर्क किया जा सकता है।

अभिलेखी के सहयोग एवं सदस्यता हेतु ब्रह्म समाज विभाग का Toll Free No.: **18003456138**

12

Marketing & Communications Department, Corporate Centre,
State Bank Bhavan, 8th Floor, Madame Cama Road, Mumbai - 400 021.**CORRIGENDUM**

Please refer RFP for empanelment of Public Relation Agency (RFP No.CC/M&C/2020-21/01), the same was published on 05.05.2020 in this newspaper. **Corrigendum** details are available on our website: <https://bank.sbi> under "Procurement News".

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager
(Marketing Operations)

Place: Mumbai
Date: 22.05.2020

STATE INDUSTRIES PROMOTION CORPORATION OF TAMILNADU LIMITED
19-A, RUKMANI LAKSHMIPATHY ROAD, EGMORE, CHENNAI - 600 008.
CIN U74999TN19715GC005967

Tender Notice NIT.No.05/CW/DO/T.No.06/2020-21 Dt.19.05.2020
For and on behalf of State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited, sealed tenders are invited under "Two Cover System" for the following work from Civil Class-I State level Civil Contractors registered in State/Central or quasi Government Organisations having experience in similar nature of works. Tenders will be received upto 3.00 PM on 23.06.2020 and the same will be opened on the same day at 3.30 PM.

Name of Work	Approx. value of work	EMD
Formation of new roads with RCC Box culvert & RCC side drains, providing water supply arrangements and street light arrangements in extended area at SIPCOT Industrial Complex, Thoothukudi.	Rs. 621.00 lakhs	Rs.3,20,500/-

EMD in the form of DD drawn in favour of SIPCOT Ltd., payable at Chennai.
The tender Schedule can be Downloaded at free of cost from the website: www.tenders.tn.gov.in and www.sipcot.in

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, SIPCOT, CHENNAI-8

DIPR/1862/TENDER/2020

THE H.P. STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED

Totu, Shimla-171011

No: 428/P&I-8/15-XXIII Dated: 20.05.2020

Short Term Tender Notice

E-tender is hereby invited for the purchase of Raw material of Bakery Biscuits as Vanilla Powder-6qtl., Baking Powder-17qtl., Salt-29qtl., Oats-40 Qtl., Custard Powder 9 Qtl., Bakery Shortening-1260qtl., Sugar-1400qtl., and Ajwain-14 qtl for the 1st qtr of 2020-21 on FOR Basis at Milk Plant Totu, Shimla.

The Bid document is available online on 23.5.2020 upto 12.00 PM and bid should be submitted in online mode on website hptenders.gov.in Bidder would be required to register in the above web-site hptenders.gov.in which is free of cost. For submission on bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying Authorities (CA). Aspiring Bidders should visit in <https://hptenders.gov.in> & <https://hpmilkfed.org> for complete details Bidders should also check the website from time to time to note the Corrigendum, if any.

Sd/-
Managing Director

NORTHERN RAILWAY**Tender Notice**

The Deputy Chief Engineer/Survey & Const.-II, Tilak Bridge, Northern Railway, New Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender for the following work:

Full name of work	Hiring of 01 (one) Number Vehicle for Three (03) Years i.e. (Jeep/Gypsy/Tata Sumo type or similar make) for the use of XEN/S&CT/J Northern Railway, Tilak Bridge, New Delhi.
Approx. Cost	Rs. 17,01,637/- (Rs. Seventeen lakh one thousand six hundred thirty seven only).
Completion period	36 months (Thirty Six months)
Earnest Money amount	Rs. 34,000/- (Rs. Thirty four thousand only)
Sale/availability of tender document on Rly. Website	Tender document will be available on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 01.06.2020 to 15.06.2020 upto 11.30 hrs.
Last date/Time of opening of tenders	15.06.2020 upto 11.30 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS web site w.e.f. 01.06.2020 to 15.06.2020.
Date and time of opening of tender	15.06.2020 at 11.30 hours, (immediately after close of uploading of tender (D2) in the office of Chief Administrative Officer/Const. N.Rly, Kashmir Gate, Delhi-110006.

This notice is available on www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in web site and documents on www.ireps.gov.in site is available.
Tender Notice No. 58 S/S&CT/JK/Vehicle/XEN/2020 Dated : 18.05.2020 1146/2020

Serving Customers With A Smile**NORTHERN RAILWAY****TENDER NOTICE**

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	NIT-02(A,B)-20-21-W-2
Name of work	A). Execution of At welds in loop lines/sidings under ADEN/SMQL & GZB. B). Complete renewal / through Sleeper/Renewal of points and crossing of 1in8.5, 1in12 & 1 in 16 laid with any type of sleeper with fan shaped T/ou with PSC Sleepers in the section of ADEN/GZB.
Approximate Cost of Work	As per IREPS Notice
Earnest Money	As per IREPS Notice
Completion period	As per IREPS Notice
Cost of Tender on Cash/buy post	As per IREPS Notice
Date and Time for submission of tender & opening of tender	02.06.2020 to 16.06.2020 upto 15:00 hrs. Opening of tender 16.06.2020 at 15:00 hrs.
Similar Nature of work	As per IREPS Notice
Website Particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
NIT-02(A,B)-20-21-W-2 Dated : 18.05.2020	1144/20

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Office of Superintending Engineer
3rd Circle P.W.D. Pithoragarh
National Competitive Bidding
(E-tendering)

Latter No 1770/ 62M 03/2020 Date 20-05-2020

Short Term Tender Notice

The Superintending Engineer 3rd Circle, Public Works Department Pithoragarh invites tender through E-Tendering (Single Bid System) on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available form date 23-05-2020 & onward on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (in Lac)	Cost of Tender (in Rs.)	Validity of Tender	Period of Completion	Contractor's category of registration
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Renewal work of Pithoragarh Jhulaghat motor road from Km. 2, 3, 9 and 10 by SDBC in District Pithoragarh under financial year 2020-21	2.40	5000.00 + 18%GST	120 Days	06 Month	Category 'B' or Above for Road works in any State Govt./Govt. of India/ Govt. Undertaking
2	Renewal work of Chandak Chhera Digloli motor road from Km. 1.00 to 4.00 by SDBC and Km 6.00 to 10.00 by P.C. in District Pithoragarh under financial year 2020-21	2.54	5000.00 + 18%GST	120 Days	06 Month	Category 'B' and Above for Road works in any State Govt./Govt. of India/ Govt. Undertaking

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of President of India, Principal Chief Engineer, Head Quarters Office, North Western Railway near Jawahar Circle, Jagatpura, Jaipur-302017 (Rajasthan), invites e-tender of www.ireps.gov.in website for following. 1. **Tender No. : NWRMTC202101, Description of stores :** Supply of different types of wear plates for new modified BCM-714 and 727 track machine, **Tender Value :** Rs. 7,36,050/- (Rupees Seven Lakh Thirty six thousand fifty only). **Earnest Money :** Rs. 14,730/- (Rupees Fourteen thousand seven hundred thirty only). 2. **Tender No. : NWRMTC202102, Description of stores :** Supply of Accelerating value required for various track machines, **Tender Value :** Rs. 5,60,500/- (Rupees Five Lakh sixty thousand Five hundred only). **Earnest Money :** Rs. 11,210/- (Rupees Eleven thousand two hundred ten only). 3. **Tender No. : NWRMTC202104, Description of stores :** Supply of different types of brake shoe for various track machines, **Tender Value :** Rs. 2,16,557.20/- (Rupees Two Lakh sixteen thousand Five hundred fifty seven and twenty paise only). **Earnest Money :** Rs. 4,340/- (Rupees Four thousand three hundred forty only). 4. **Tender No. : NWRMTC202105, Description of stores :** Supply of different types of Hydraulic pumps for various track machines, **Tender Value :** Rs. 65,46,988.56/- (Rupees Sixty five Lakh forty six thousand four hundred ninety eight and fifty six paise only). **Earnest Money :** Rs. 1,30,940/- (Rupees One Lakh thirty thousand nine hundred forty only). 5. **Tender No. : NWRMTC202106, Description of stores :** Supply of different types of Pneumatic Value and cartridge air dryer for track machines, **Tender Value :** Rs. 1,75,016.52/- (Rupees One Lakh seventy five thousand sixteen and fifty two paise only). **Earnest Money :** Rs. 3,510/- (Rupees Three thousand five hundred ten only). 6. **Tender No. : NWRMTC202107, Description of stores :** Supply of Disc Clamp roller, Pneumatic operated grease gun, Shadow board trolley and lining roller for track machines, **Tender Value :** Rs. 4,54,475.76/- (Rupees Four Lakh Fifty four thousand Four hundred seventy five and seventy six paise only). **Earnest Money :** Rs. 9,090/- (Rupees Nine thousand ninety only). **Date & time of Tender Closing : 10.06.2020 (15:30 hrs.)**, Note : The details of tender & conditions may be seen on Railway website "www.ireps.gov.in".

501-AJ/20 Please join us on [f](https://www.facebook.com/NWRRailways) [i](https://www.instagram.com/NWRRailways) [y](https://www.youtube.com/NWRRailways) /NWRRailways

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
BUILDING (C & M) CIRCLE, MEDICAL WORKS, TRICHY
FOURTH TENDER EXTENSION NOTICE, DATED: 20.05.2020
The tender for the 2 works in the tender Notice No.31/2019-20/ BCM/ MW/ TRV/ Dated: 16.03.2020 has been published in Newspaper. It is informed that the due date of receiving and opening tender bids have been extended upto 3.00 PM on 03.06.2020 and will be opened on 03.06.2020 at 3.30 PM. The tender schedule will be downloaded upto 02.06.2020 6.45 PM. All other details may be downloaded from the following websites : www.tenders.tn.gov.in for www.tenders.gov.in Other conditions remain unchanged.

Superintending Engineer, P.W.D.,
Buildings (C & M) Circle, Medical Works, Trichy

BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD (POWER WING)

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
NIT No.: E-53/BSL/PR-1960
Tender Authority: Sr. Exen., Elect. & W/Shop Divn.: BBMB, Sundernagar.
Scope of Tender: M. S. Nut & Bolts with Washer for Dredgers
Documents Download End Date 03.06.2020 at 11.00 AM
Date/Time of Opening of Tender 03.06.2020 at 11:30 AM
The detail of NIT may be seen/download from BBMB Website www.bbmb.gov.in or www.bbmbproc.aabcprocure.com
882 - PR - BSL - 3 For your Better Tomorrow Save Energy Today

THE PUNJAB STATE BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING
Plot No. 1-A, Sector 36-A, Chandigarh.
Phone: 0172-2622586, 2615389

E-TENDER NOTICE
COMPUTER BASED/INTERNET BASED ONLINE EXAMINATION
E-tenders are invited for Computer based/Internet based Online Examination. For participating in the above e-tender, the firms should visit web site <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> 22.05.2020 onwards for tender document and corrigendum (if any) in future.
The last date of online submission of e-tender is 09.06.2020 upto 5.00 pm.
Sd/- Secretary
890-CPB


TAMIL NADU ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(Government of Tamilnadu Undertaking)
4th Floor, LIA Building, No.735 Anna Salai, Chennai-02.
Email: ridc2005@yahoo.co.in Phone No:28520000.
TENDER CORRIGENDUM DATED 21.05.2020
As per this office tender notice No.1/CPRR/ADE/2020-2021 dated 20.04.2020, for Consultancy Services for Monitoring Land Acquisition and Resettlement and Rehabilitation of Chennai Peripheral Ring Road Section II and III was published on 21.04.2020, due to Administrative reason, the tender submission and opening for the above services has been postponed to 08.06.2020 till 4.00 P.M (office clock) and all other conditions remains same.
Place: Chennai
Date: 21.05.2020
DIPR/1867/TENDER/2020
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TNRIIDC.

कार्यालय अगिशासी अभियन्ता, केन्द्रीय मण्डल, उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान, जल भवन, बी ब्लॉक, नेहरू कालोनी, देहरादून
पत्रांक:- 55 / ई-निविदा निरस्तीकरण / 2020-21 दिनांक:-21.05.2020
ई-निविदा निरस्तीकरण सूचना
इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 53 / ई-निविदा / 2020-21 दिनांक 19.05.2020 से विभिन्न सामग्री की आपूर्ति/कार्य हेतु दिनांक 15.06.2020 को आमन्त्रित निविदा को COVID-19 (global pandemic) के कारण पूरे देश में प्रभावी लॉकडाउन के मध्यनजर अग्रिम आदेशों तक निरस्त किया जाता है।
अधिशासी अभियन्ता

मुख्यमंत्री नि



BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD
 (IRRIGATION WING)
CORRIGENDUM-III NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
 NIT No. : 602/2017S
 Name of Office : Sr. Executive Engineer, BC Township Division, BBMB, Mangal Township, Distt. Ropar-140124(Punjab)
 Name of Work : Construction of Museum and National Training Hydrology Centre at Mangal Township.
 Last Date/Time of Sale/Availability of Documents
 Download end date & time 16.06.2020 at 11:00 hrs.
 Last Date/Time of Online Bid Submission 16.06.2020 at 11:00 hrs.
 Date & Time of Online Bid Opening 16.06.2020 at 11:30 hrs.
 For Detailed NIT/Terms & conditions etc. please visit/download from BBMB website www.aproc.punjab.gov.in & www.bbmb.gov.in
 1121-PR-Bhakra Dam-6 For your Better Tomorrow Save Energy Today



कार्यालय मुख्य महापंचायक, निर्माण विंग
उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम
 (सहायक सरकार का उद्भाग)
 403/1 इन्दिरा नगर, देहरादून -248001 ईमेल : cgmnmawing@yahoo.com, gmnimawing@gmail.com फोन:- 01195-2784075


Government of Uttarakhand "e" procurement Notice
 Letter no.-: 970/Nivida/Garh./142 Date: 21.05.2020

S.No.	Name of Works	Estimated Cost	Period of Completion
1.	Bid Identification No. : 968/ Nivida (Garhwal)140 Dated : 21/05/2020 Construction of Govt. Polytechnic (Phase-I) at Jassowala, VikasNagar, Dehradun (UK)	960.00	18 MONTHS
2.	Bid Identification No. : 969/ Nivida (Garhwal)141 Dated : 21/05/2020 Construction of Science Block at Govt. PG College, Dakpathar, Dehradun (UK)	545.00	18 MONTHS
3.	Name and Address of Officer Inviting the Bid:- Chief General Manager, Construction Wing, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, 403/1 Indira Nagar, Dehradun		
4.	Date and time of Availability of Bid Documents in the portal:-	23/05/2020 - 12.00 Hrs.	
5.	Pre Bid Meeting	28/05/2020 - 11.00 Hrs.	
6.	Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal :-	05/06/2020 - 17.00 Hrs.	
Details of subsequent addendum/ corrigendum/ cancellation etc. may be obtained from the website.			
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "https://tendersuttarakhand.gov.in"			
General Manager (Garhwal)			

E - TENDERING PRESS NOTICE.
 The Executive Engineer, Civil Division No.V, Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi. Near Paryavaran Complex, Saidulajab New Delhi 110030 invites on behalf of President of India, on line percentage rate tender from approved and eligible contractors registered with Irrigation and Flood Control Department up to **3:00 P.M on dates mentioned as below.**

- NIT 02/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190728_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Removal of obstructions from covered drain 1st, 2st & 3rd 60 Feeta roads at village Molarbund Badapur area. E.C.Rs. 15,40,116/- Earnest Money Rs 30,802/- Period of Completion 270 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
 - NIT 03/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190733_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Removal of obstructions from the drain at Molarbund Senior Secondary School to Meethapur pond & Durga builder gate in Badapur area. E.C.Rs. 15,14,846/- Earnest Money Rs 30,297/- Period of Completion 270 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
 - NIT 04/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190734_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Removal of obstructions from Luv Kush Chowk to Ali Drain in Badapur area. E.C.Rs. 13,78,043/- Earnest Money Rs 27,561/- Period of Completion 270 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
 - NIT 05/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190737_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Cleaning / Removal of obstructions from the drain at Molarbund Senior Secondary School to Meethapur pond & Durga builder gate in Badapur area. E.C.Rs. 15,14,846/- Earnest Money Rs 30,297/- Period of Completion 270 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
 - NIT 06/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190740_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Removal of obstructions from the drain at Meethapur Primary School to Meethapur Pond & Molar Bund Senior Secondary School to Haryana Boarder in Badapur area. E.C.Rs. 11,25,155/- Earnest Money Rs 22,503/- Period of Completion 270 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
 - NIT 07/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190742_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Cleaning / Removal of jungle from RD 0 metre to RD 3550 metre on both sides of RME (from Madanpur Khadar to Jaipur police post). E.C.Rs. 7,71,975/- Earnest Money Rs 15,440/- Period of Completion 120 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
 - NIT 08/2020-21/EE/CD-V/Acs/(ID No. 2019_IFC_190747_1 (Percentage rate). H.O.A:- 2711 Non Plan. N.O.W.-: Removal of obstructions from Tanki Road (Meethapur Chowk to Haryana Border) & Tanki road to Ali Drain in Badapur area. E.C.Rs 23,56,901/- Earnest Money Rs 47,138/- Period of Completion 270 Days. (Date of opening 23.05.2020).
- Note:-**
- The enlistment of the contractors should be valid on the last date of opening of tenders. In case the last date of opening of tender is extended the enlistment of contractor should be valid on the original date of opening of tenders.
 - Earnest Money in physical form i.e. deposited at FDR/Banker cheque /Demand Draft of schedule bank issued in favour of EE CD V I&FC Deptt. should be deposited in the office of EE CD V I&FC Deptt. Govt. of NCT of Delhi Saidulajab near Paryavaran complex New Delhi 30. On or before the last date and time.
 - Details of above mentioned work can be seen and downloaded from website <http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
 - Tender submitted through e-procurement portal shall be accepted only.
 - Corrigendum, if any will be published on e-procurement web side only.

Sd/-
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CD/V
DIP/SHABDARTH/0042/20-21



Govt. of Bihar
South Bihar Power Distribution Co. Ltd, Patna Bihar
 Registered Office: Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna-21
 A Govt. of Bihar undertaking
 CIN No. U40109BR20125G0018890
 (Department of Stores & Purchase)
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
 (Through e-procurement mode only - www.eproc.bihar.gov.in)
NIT No. 27/PR/SBPDC/2020

South Bihar Power Distribution Co. Ltd. (SBPDCL), a Government of Bihar Undertaking, invites online tender for procurement of 33 KV Outdoor VCB along with CRP, CT & PT for SBPDCL & NBPDCL in Two-tier (Techno-Commercial & Price) online bid from eligible and experienced Original Manufacturer as detailed below:-

Sl. No	Name of material	Quantity, in Sets	Cost of tender Documents (in Rs)	Estimated Cost(Rs)	Earnest Money (EMD) (in Rs.)
1	33 KV Outdoor VCB along with CRP, CT & PT	296 (SBPDCL:96, NBPDCL:200)	20,000.00	18,44,08,000.00	28,44,080.00

The Time line for the above tender is as follows:

Last Date of Online Sale of Bid Document/request of Bid/Bid Documents:	16.06.2020, up to 18.00 Hrs
Last Date of Online Submission of bid along with Tender Cost & processing fees:	17.06.2020, up to 18:00 Hrs
Last Date of submission of EMD and hard copy of receipt of BSEDCL processing fee & tender cost	18.06.2020, up to 15:00Hrs
Date of opening of Techno-Commercial bid(Part-I)	18.06.2020 after 17:00 Hrs.
Date of Pre Bid Meeting:	08.06.2020, at 11:00 Hrs, Venue: SBPDCL, Vidyut Bhawan, Patna

BSEDCL(BELTRON) Processing fee & tender cost are mandatory to be paid through online mode i.e. Internet Payment gateway (credit / debit card), net banking, NEFT/RTGS. Bids along with necessary online payments must be submitted through e-payment portal www.eproc.bihar.gov.in before the date and time specified in the NIT. EMD is mandatory to be paid through Demand Draft/Bank Guarantee in favour of "Sr. Manager(F&A), SBPDCL" and payable at Patna. EMD and hard copy of receipt of BSEDCL processing fee & tender cost must be submitted to Electrical Superintending Engineer (Purchase), SBPDCL within specified time failing which bid of the firm shall be summarily rejected. The department does not take any responsibility for the delay / Non submission of Tender / Non Reconciliation of online Payment caused due to Non- availability of Internet Connection, Network Traffic/ Holidays or any other reason. **Date of opening of price part: To be notified after Technical Bid Evaluation at www.eproc.bihar.gov.in**

e-tendering introduced in BSPHCL for tenders above Rs. 25 lacs.

For registration login to www.eproc.bihar.gov.in and e-Procurement Help Desk First Floor, M/22, Bank Of India Building, Road No-25, Sri Krishna Nagar, Patna-800001 at 0612-2523006, Mobile :+91-7542028164

While participating in e-tendering process, the contractor shall have to get them registered to get user ID, Passwords and digital signature. This will enable them to access the Website: www.eproc.bihar.gov.in onlyFor complaints regarding corruption Vigilance Help Line No.-9431821485, 0612-2504969.

Consumer can deposit electricity bills via Sahaz Vasudha Centre or <http://bills.sbpdc.in>

“ विवादों के निष्पादन के लिए लोक अदालत का काम उठावें ”
 “परस्पर सहमति से न्यायिक निर्णय प्राप्त करें”
 “समय एवं खर्च की बचत करें।”

Note:- Subsequent information / notification / corrigendum will be available only on website of EPROC and/or SBPDCL i.e. www.eproc.bihar.gov.in and/or www.sbpdc.in For further details please visit website www.prdibihar.gov.in

Electrical Superintending Engineer (Purchase)
PR. No. 001331 (Ni.Ni) 2020-21

नोबल कोरोना के संघर्ष में विरलतु जानकारों एवं सहयोग हेतु	Toll Free No. 104	पर संचालित कर सकते हैं।
खाद्य सामग्री-संबंधी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।		
श्रमिकों के सदस्यों एवं सहकार हेतु सश्रम संसाधन विभाग का	Toll Free No. 18003456138	



The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking
 (Of The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation)

TENDER NOTICE
e-tenders are invited for the supply of following items.
 (1) 44795, (2) 45998, (3) 67472, (4) 67566, (5) 67704, (6) 67789.
 Note:
 For more details, log on to website <https://mahatenders.gov.in>.
PRO/AAM(M)/10/2020. GENERAL MANAGER



EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
OPEN TENDER NOTICE No. C/13/ATM/ Tender/SEE-2019 Date: 19.05.2020
 The Sr. DCM/SEE for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open Tender for the following work. The last date of dropping of tender is 19.06.2020 upto 16:00 hrs. All information and tender documents related to tender is available on Website- www.ecr.indianrailways.gov.in
Sl.No. 1, Name of Work with item no.: Open tender for provision of ATMs at various stations, Railway Colony/Campus of Sonpur Division for five(05) years.
Approx. Cost (In Rs.): Nil, Earnest Money (In Rs.): Nil, Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.): (Non Refundable): 1000.00
 The above tender notice is available on website: www.ecr.indianrailways.gov.in
RIGHT OF RAILWAY TO DEAL WITH TENDER: Railway administration reserves the right to postpone/modify or to cancel the above tender without assigning any reasons.
Divisional Railway Manager/General, Sonpur PR/0180/SEE/Com/I/20-21/32



Purvanchal Vidyut Vitaran Nigam Limited Vidyut Nagar, P.O.- DLW Varanasi-221004 E- Tender Notice
E- tenders are invited for the following materials. The tenderer will be accepted up to at 15.00 hrs. Please visit website www.etender.up.nic.in for details /download and for any other corrections/ amendments/ modifications/ extensions till the date of submission of bids. Sl. No. 1 Tender Specification No. EAV-06/2020-21 Name of Material 11 KV XLPE Al. Cable (3x185 sq.mm.) Qty. 100 Km. Earnest Money (Rs.) 10,30,000.00 Tender Fee (Rs.) 10,000.00+ GST @ 18% Last date & Time for online submission of tender document 23.06.2020 15.00 Hrs. Sl. No. 2 Tender Specification No. EAV-07/2020-21 Name of Material 33 KV XLPE Al. Cable (3x300 sq.mm.) Qty. 75 Km. Earnest Money (Rs.) 15,35,000.00 Tender Fee (Rs.) 10,000.00+ GST @ 18% Last date & Time for online submission of tender document 23.06.2020 15.00 Hrs. Date & Time for online opening of tender part-I 24.06.2020 15.00 Hrs. Sl. No. 2 Tender Specification No. EAV-07/2020-21 Name of Material 33 KV XLPE Al. Cable (3x300 sq.mm.) Qty. 75 Km. Earnest Money (Rs.) 15,35,000.00 Tender Fee (Rs.) 10,000.00+ GST @ 18% Last date & Time for online submission of tender document 23.06.2020 15.00 Hrs. Date & Time for online opening of tender part-I 24.06.2020 15.00 Hrs. Sd/- SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM-I) "Save Electricity in the interest of Nation" प्रारंभ:1302/पू.वि.नि.लि.(वा.)/सा.प्र.-I/अअ-I/विज्ञापन दिनांक: 21.05.2020

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM
THE INDIAN EXPRESS, FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2020



NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER
Open Tender Notice No. Sr.DEE-TRD-BSB-2020-21-T01 Dated: 15.05.2020
 Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, North Eastern Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf of President of India, invites sealed "OPEN" E-tender for the following work. Sl. No. - (I) Name of Work : Periodic Overhauling (POH) of Overdue Automatic Tension Devices (ATDs) in CHPG-CPR Section of N.F. Railway Varanasi Division through out sourcing for a period of one year. **Tender reference no. Sr.DEE-TRD-BSB-2020-21-T01 Approx. Cost (In Rs.) : 945450/- Earnest Money (In Rs.) : 189000/- Cost of tender documents (In Rs.): 2000/- E-Tender closing date and Time : 09.06.2020 up to 15.00 Hrs. Completion period : 12 Months** **E-Tender Online will be submitted up to 15.00 Hrs. on date 09-06-2020** **For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of Indian railway i.e. www.ireps.gov.in**
 Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, CPRO/EL-10 N. E. Railway, Varanasi
 About any passenger amenity complaint SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955
"Never travel on roof and foot boards"



ANDHRA PRADESH TECHNOLOGY SERVICES LTD
 Tender-Request for proposal for Selection of Consultant for setting up PMU for Providing Strategy and Implementation Support for Gram Secretariats / Ward Secretariats Department, Govt. A.P.
Time schedule of various tender related events :
 RFP Ref. No. ITCS1-24028/1/2020-FMS-APTS
 Bid calling date 22-05-2020
 Pre-Bid Conference 01-06-2020, Andhra Pradesh Technology Services Ltd., 3rd Floor, R&B Building, M.G Road, Opp. Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium, Vijayawada - 520 010, A.P. India
 Bid available from 22-05-2020 at 6.00 PM
 Bid Document Fee Rs. 5,000/-
 APTS Contact Officer Mr. M. Sobhan Babu, PSA, Mobile: 9963029407
 Department Contact Officer Sni. G. Ranga Charyulu, Mobile: 7901675628
 For the detailed tender notice, please visit our website www.tender.approvement.gov.in and www.apts.gov.in
Sd/- Managing Director, A.P. Technology Services Ltd.



NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
 Divl. Rly. Manager, N.W.Rly. Bikaner for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tender for the following works up to 15.00 hours on 12.06.2020 as below:- **Tender No. :- E-48, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.1(A)- Zonal works for Service Building at Bikaner under ADEN/HQ/NWR/BKN. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 15999991.96, Earnest money : Rs. 230000/-; Tender No. :- E-49, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No 1(B)- Zonal works for Staff quarters & Bungalows at Bikaner under ADEN/HQ/NWR/BKN. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 15999990.55, Earnest money : Rs. 80000/-; Tender No. :- E-51, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No 2A - Zonal works for work shop & general store at Laghar under ADEN/HQ/NWR/BKN. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 6999996.26, Earnest money : Rs. 140000/-; Tender No. :- E-52, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.2B - Zonal works for Service Building at Laghar under ADEN/HQ/NWR/BKN. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 9999998.55, Earnest money : Rs. 200000/-; Tender No. E-53, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.3 - Zonal works for staff quarters & Bungalows at Laghar under ADEN/HQ/NWR/BKN. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs 13999998.19, Earnest money : Rs. 220000/-; Tender No. :- E-54, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.4 A(I) - Zonal works for Service Building over ADEN/Line/Bikaner Sub Division under ADEN/Line, N.W.Rly., Bikaner for NPS(ex.) - NTZ(ex.) section. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 7999998.88, Earnest money : Rs. 160000/-; Tender No. :- E-55, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.4 A(II) - Zonal works for Service Building over ADEN/Line/Bikaner Sub Division under ADEN/Line, N.W.Rly., Bikaner for LGH(ex.) - PLC(ex.) section. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs.11999999.11, Earnest money : 210000/-; Tender No. :- E-56, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.4 B(I) - Zonal works for Staff quarters over ADEN/Line/Bikaner Sub Division under ADEN/Line, N.W.Rly., Bikaner for NPS(ex.) - NTZ(ex.) section. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 8999999.10, Earnest money : Rs. 180000/-; Tender No. :- E-57, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.4 B(II) - Zonal works for Staff quarters over ADEN/Line/Bikaner Sub Division under ADEN/Line, N.W.Rly., Bikaner for LGH(ex.) - PLC(ex.) section. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 9999998.36, Earnest money : Rs. 200000/-; Tender No. :- E-58, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.5 (A) - Zonal works for Service Building over ADEN/Suratgarh Sub Division under ADEN/NWR/Suratgarh. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 10999998.28, Earnest money : Rs. 205000/-; Tender No. :- E-59, Name of Work with its Location :** ZONE No.5(B)- Zonal works for Staff Qtrs. over ADEN/Suratgarh Sub Division under ADEN/Suratgarh. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 12999999.34, Earnest money : Rs. 215000/-; Tender No. :- E-60, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.6(A) - Zonal works for Service Building over HHM- 1 sub-division under ADEN/NWR/HHM. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 13999970.70, Earnest money : Rs. 220000/-; Tender No. :- E-61, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.6 (B) - Zonal works for Staff Qtrs. over Hanumangarh-1 Sub Division under ADEN/N.W.Rly., Hanumangarh. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 16999960.96, Earnest money : Rs. 235000/-; Tender No. :- E-62, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No 7 (A) - Zonal works for service building over HHM-II sub-division under ADEN/II/NWR/HHM. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 11999955.32, Earnest money : Rs. 210000/-; Tender No. :- E-63, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.7 (B) - Zonal works for staff quarters over HHM II Sub Division under ADEN/II/NWR/Hanumangarh. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 16999991.89, Earnest money : Rs. 235000/-; Tender No. :- E-64, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.8(A) - Zonal works for Service Building over Sirsa sub-division under ADEN/NWR/Sirsa. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 9999986.00, Earnest money : Rs. 200000/-; Tender No. :- E-65, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.8(B) - Zonal works for Staff Qtrs. over Sirsa sub-division under ADEN/NWR/Sirsa. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 15999992.74, Earnest money : 230000/-; Tender No. :- E-66, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.9(A) - Zonal works for Service Building over Bhivani sub-division under ADEN/NWR/Bhivani. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 9999991.00, Earnest money : Rs. 200000/-; Tender No. :- E-67, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.9(B) - Zonal works for Staff Qtrs. over Bhivani sub-division under ADEN/NWR/Bhivani. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 17999991.93, Earnest money : 240000/-; Tender No. :- E-68, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.10(A) - Zonal works for Service building over Sadulpur Sub Division under ADEN/NWR/Sadulpur. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 17999975.80, Earnest money : Rs. 240000/-; Tender No. :- E-69, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.10(B) - Zonal works for staff quarters over Sadulpur Sub Division under ADEN/NWR/Sadulpur. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 17999923.41, Earnest money : Rs. 240000/-; Tender No. :- E-70, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.11(A) - Zonal works for Service building over Ratan garh Sub Division under ADEN/ NWR/Ratangarh. **Approx. Cost of Work: Rs. 11999936.00, Earnest money : Rs. 210000/-; Tender No. :- E-71, Name of Work with its Location :** Zone No.11(B) - Zonal works for Staff Quarters over Ratan garh Sub Division under ADEN/NWR/Ratangarh. **Approx. Cost of Work : Rs. 14999902.00, Earnest money : Rs. 225000/- Note- Other term & condition will be shown on N.W.Rly. website www.ireps.gov.in.**
503-AJ20 Please join us on   /NWRRailways



DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH) II
JAL SADAN : LAJPAT NAGAR : NEW DELHI
NIT No. 1/S-I/2020-21
Press Tender

S. No.	Name of work	Reserve price	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date and time for download & RTGS through e-procurement solution
1.	Trapping of sewage from JJ Cluster of Anna Nagar and Sanjay Amar Colony in the existing sewer line at ITO under EE(S) II (AC-41 Jangpura)	3464244/-	2020_DJB_190668_1 13.5.2020	2.6.2020 upto 2:00 PM
2.	Trapping of sewerage from JJ Cluster of Adwasi Camp and Pratap Camp, Nehru Nagar into existing sewer line under EE(S) II (AC-41 Jangpura)	4206262/-	2020_DJB_190668_2 13.5.2020	2.6.2020 upto 2:00 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in.
 ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
 Advt. No. J.S.V. 41/2020-21
 Sd/-
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH) II



NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)
Prayagraj Nagar Nigam (PNN)
1, Sarojini Naidu Marg, Prayagraj- 211001 Uttar Pradesh

NIT No: 2020-21/dated

1.	Name of the work	"Design, Supply, Construction, Installation & Commissioning of wet processing Recycling Facility plant for Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste including Collection & Transportation with Operation & Maintenance of Five (05) years period in Prayagraj City (u.p.) on EPC Contract mode
2.	Mode of Bid Submission	e-tendering https://etender.up.nic.in
3.	Type of Tender	National Competitive Bidding (NCB) system
4.	Type of Contract	Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) Contract
5.	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Rs.587.19 Lacs excluding GST amount.
6.	Period of Completion	09 Months from the date of Award of Contract Work (including Monsoon period).
7.	Tender Document Fee	Rs. 11200/- (inclusive of GST @ 12%) (non-refundable)
8.	EMD/Bid Security	(Rs.11,74,000.0 (Rs Eleven Lacs Seventy Four Thousand only) Refundable)
9.	Account details for EMD/Bid Security & tender fee	Account name- E-tender security money, Bank-Uco Bank Branch- Nagar Mahapalika prayagraj, Account no.06940110006498, IFSC code- UCBA0000694
10.	Date Time of Publication of Tender document on e-Procurement portal	27.05.2020 @ 5.00 P.M onwards
10.	Date of Pre-bid meeting & Venue	08-06.2020 at 3.00 P.M at PNN Office,1, Sarojini Naidu Marg, Prayagraj (U.P) or Through Electronic Meeting app as per prevailing conditions
11.	Last Date & Time of for On-line Bid Submission	29.06.2020 at 2.30 P.M
12.	Last Date & Time for Submission of Tender Fee & EMD etc., (in Hard copy)	29.06.2020 at 3.00 P.M
13.	Date & Time of Bid Opening (Technical Bid)	29.06.2020 at 3.30 PM
14.	Bid Submission Address	Prayagraj Nagar Nigam Office 1, Sarojini Naidu Marg, Prayagraj (U.P) - 211001
15.	Contact Details for the queries (if any)	Envoinment Engineer, Prayagraj Nagar Nigam (PNN) email ID: pwcaldnn@gmail.com, Mobile No. 8303701016

Note: Only e-Tenders shall be accepted. Further details are available on U.P Government e-Procurement website and select Prayagraj Nagar Nigam and can be seen on the website <https://etender.up.nic.in>

Sd/-
(Ravi Ranjan)
MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER
Prayagraj Nagar Nigam



Classifieds
 by eMails

PERSONAL
I,SAROJ YADAV,W/o Sh.Sandeep Kumar R/o V-Village-Seka, Post-Mandhana, Tehsil-Narnaul, Distt.Mohinragarh,Haryana-123001, have changed my name, from SAROJ YADAV to SAROJ,for all,future purposes.
 0040537936-5



Ashok kumar sharma,S/O Lt.Shri mohanjali sharma, resident of.H.no.1/4880, street. no.9, balbir-nagar-extension shahdara, delhi-110032, have change my name, from Ashok kumar sharma to Ashok Sharma, for all future purpose. My all-documents name is Ashok Sharma.
 0040537936-6



I.Urmila Kumari Wife of Inderjeet Mother of minor son Chitraksh,R/o-19-Pocket-K Sarita-Vihar, New-Delhi-110076, have changed my minor son name, from Chitraksh to Ashish Kumar for,all purposes.
 0040537936-7



I.Neena Devi Yadav D/o Mahander Singh Yadav W/o Birender Singh Yadav, R/O-B-1311,Palam-Vihar, Gurugram (Haryana)-122017, have changed my name to Neena Yadav.
 0040537936-2



I.Binay Alias Binay Kumar Alias Binay Kumar Sharma S/o Ram Bahadur Sharma R/O RZ1-15, Tamil Enclave, Vijay Enclave, Delhi-110045, have changed my name to Binay Kumar Sharma
 0070705301-1



I.Charanjit Chhabba W/o Late Sh. Jasjit Singh Chhabba R/o Village Katpura Chhabba Farm, Post Karnapur, Pilibhit, Pooranpur, UP-26

14 THE OUTBREAK THE WORLD

PANDEMIC WATCH



In Peshawar. Reuters

PAKISTAN

Highest no. of tests as cases cross 48,000

Islamabad: Pakistan conducted the highest number of tests per day during the last 24 hours as the coronavirus cases crossed 48,000-mark on Thursday, the health ministry said. Pakistan recorded 2,193 new cases, taking the total number of infections to 48,091. The death toll stands at 1,017 with 32 new fatalities. As many as 15,346 coronavirus tests, the highest in a single day, were conducted in the last 24 hours, health officials said. The authorities have conducted 429,600 tests so far. Sindh reported the maximum number of 18,964 cases.

NEPAL

Third death reported, cases top 450

Kathmandu: A 41-year-old Nepalese man died on Thursday, becoming the third person to succumb to the coronavirus in the country on a day when 26 new COVID-19 cases were reported, the health ministry said. The surge in the coronavirus cases along with the new death has prompted the Nepal government to seal the Kathmandu Valley, imposing complete restriction on people entering the capital city. The new death was reported from Rupandehi district and the patient had tested positive for coronavirus a few days back, a senior health authority from the ministry said.

RUSSIA

US to fly in aid, including 50 ventilators

Moscow: A US military transport aircraft was expected to deliver a first batch of medical aid to Russia on Thursday, including 50 ventilators, to help Moscow cope with a rising number of novel coronavirus cases and deaths. Russia's case tally, the world's second highest, rose to 317,554 on Thursday after 8,849 new infections were reported, while the toll climbed past the 3,000 mark. Russia cites a huge testing programme, which it says has seen over 7.8 million people tested, as the reason for the case count.

JAPAN

Tokyo curbs may be lifted soon

Tokyo: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday said it was possible to end the emergency in Tokyo and surrounding regions could end as early as next week if the number of infections continues to decrease. "The state of emergency will continue in Tokyo, Hokkaido and other regions. We will meet with experts (on Monday) to update the situation on infections," Abe told reporters after ending the state of emergency in Osaka, Kyoto and Hyogo prefectures. "If the current situation continues, it is possible that the state of emergency could be lifted in those areas."

OUTBREAK LIKELY HIT ITALY
weeks before first cases were spotted

AVERAGE OF 91,000 CASES
daily across the globe: Estimate

CHINA KICKS OFF KEY EVENT
even as new outbreaks were reported

5 million Covid cases and counting

Daily new cases higher than ever, death rate down; South America overtakes Europe, US this week

AGENCIES

NEW YORK, LONDON, MAY 21

GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS cases surpassed 5 million on Wednesday, with Latin America overtaking the United States and Europe in the past week to report the largest portion of new daily cases globally.

The average number of daily new cases worldwide over the past week — more than 91,000 — is higher than it has ever been, according to data compiled by *The New York Times*. But even as the global figure grows higher, the average weekly number of fatalities has been decreasing.

And as the fallout from the pandemic deepens — with millions of new jobless claims expected to be announced in the US on Thursday and country after country announcing recessions — new studies are revealing how little the world understood the pandemic when it first began.

In Italy, new research shows that the outbreak there probably took hold weeks before the first confirmed cases, meaning that by the time the country imposed a nationwide lockdown in March, the virus might have already been widespread.

As hindsight offers a clearer picture of the start of the out-

EXPLAINED

Concern over Brazil trajectory

BRAZIL COULD soon have the second-most recorded cases globally, as per reports. This has led to many experts blaming its leader Jair Bolsonaro, who has eschewed social distancing measures. He also advocated the use of chloroquine, with his government recently issuing guidelines to use it widely. Many have also criticised Bolsonaro for prioritising the reopening of the economy from an early stage.

break, nations are taking steps to loosen restrictions and reinvestigate their economies.

It represents a new phase in the virus' spread, which initially peaked in China in February, before large-scale outbreaks followed in Europe and the US.

Latin America accounted for around a third of the 91,000 cases reported earlier this week. Europe and the United States each accounted for just over 20%.



A large number of cases in South America are from Brazil. AP

China: Wuhan-style curbs after new outbreaks



Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in Beijing on Thursday. Reuters

Beijing moves to impose new national security law on Hong Kong

JAMES POMFRET & YEW LUN TIAN

HONG KONG, BEIJING, MAY 21

CHINA IS set to impose new national security legislation on Hong Kong after last year's often violent pro-democracy unrest that plunged the city into its deepest turmoil since it returned to Beijing rule in 1997, a Chinese official said on Thursday.

The statement confirmed what three people with direct knowledge of the matter told *Reuters*, potentially sparking fresh anti-China protests in the free-wheeling former British colony, which enjoys many freedoms not allowed on the mainland.

Pro-democracy demonstrators have for years strongly opposed the idea of national security laws, arguing they could erode the city's high degree of autonomy, guaranteed under the "one country, two systems" formula put in place when it returned to Chinese rule.

"In light of the new circumstances and need, the National People's Congress (NPC) is exercising its constitutional power" to establish a new legal framework and enforcement mechanism to safeguard national security in Hong Kong, Zhang Yesui, the spokesman for the legislature, said.

Hong Kong media outlets reported that the legislation would ban secession, foreign interference, terrorism and all seditious activities aimed at toppling the central government and any external interference in the financial hub. **REUTERS**

JAVIER C HERNÁNDEZ

MAY 21

IN SHULAN, a city in China's northeast, the streets are eerily quiet, devoid of taxis and buses. Apartment complexes have been sealed off, confining residents inside. Teams of government workers go door to door rounding up sick people as part of what they call a "wartime" campaign.

As the Chinese authorities confront scattered outbreaks of the coronavirus in the country's northeast, they are turning to many of the same strict lockdown measures that were a hallmark of the effort four months ago to stamp out the epidemic in the central city of Wuhan.

Residents described the atmosphere as tense. Li Ping, who works at a real estate company in Shulan, population 600,000, stocked up on meat, eggs and

WUHAN: 5-YR WILDLIFE CONSUMPTION BAN

TOTAL STOPPAGE

Wuhan has issued a total ban on hunting, breeding and human consumption of wild animals after research showed the virus most likely originated among bats and was transmitted via intermediary wild species sold at a food market

MANY EXCEPTIONS

The regulation contains numerous exceptions,

including for animals used for traditional Chinese medicine, as long as they are not consumed as food for humans

CLARITY NEEDED

It is unclear if the ban would cover pangolins, small mammals whose scales are used for traditional medicine but which are thought to have been the intermediary carrier of the virus

noodles as she prepared for the lockdown. "The government's controls now are very strict," she said. "As long as we obey and not go out, it will be all right."

The forceful response reflects fears among China's leaders about

the potential for a fresh wave of infections as factories, schools and restaurants reopen across much of the country. It also offers a preview of what governments around the world will likely face in coming months as they work to

restart their economies.

The latest outbreak is concentrated in Jilin, a province of 27 million people that sits near China's borders with Russia and North Korea. Officials have already mobilised police and Communist Party groups to make sure residents comply with the lockdown. Tens of thousands of people are being tested and thousands rounded up into hospitals for quarantine. The central government has signaled its displeasure about the outbreak.

The authorities have also imposed a lockdown on parts of Jilin City, a manufacturing base, bringing factories to a standstill and quieting streets. In some areas, residents are allowed to leave their homes only once every two days, for a maximum of two hours, to shop for groceries. The strictest measures are probably affecting more than 200,000 people in the city. **NYT**

Delay in imposing restrictions led to 'at least 36,000 more deaths' in US

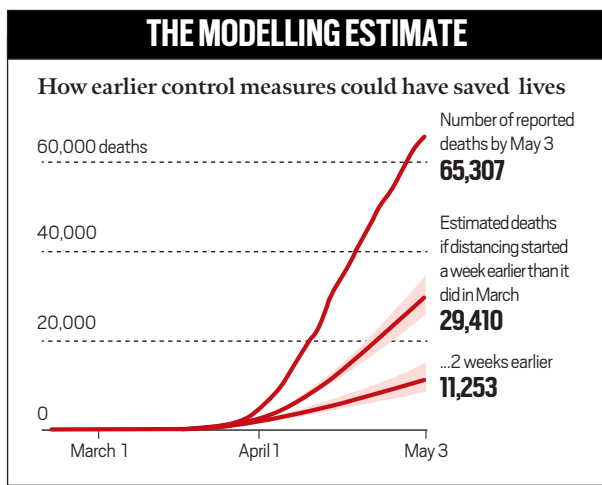
THE NEW YORK TIMES

NEW YORK, MAY 21

IF THE United States had begun imposing social-distancing measures one week earlier in March, about 36,000 fewer people would have died in the pandemic, according to new estimates from Columbia University disease modelers.

And if the US had begun locking down cities and limiting social contact on March 1, two weeks earlier than when most people started staying home, a majority of deaths — about 83 percent — would have been avoided, the researchers estimated.

The enormous cost of waiting to take action reflects the unforgiving dynamics of the outbreak that swept through American cities in early March. Even small differences in timing would have prevented the worst



exponential growth, which by April had subsumed New York City, New Orleans and other major cities, the researchers found.

"It's a big, big difference," said Jeffrey Shaman, an epidemiologist at Columbia and the leader of the

research team. "That small moment in time, catching it in that growth phase, is incredibly critical in reducing the number of deaths."

On March 16, President Trump urged Americans to limit travel, avoid groups and stay home from

school. Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City closed schools on March 15, and Governor Andrew Cuomo issued a stay-at-home order that took effect on March 22.

But in cities like New York, where the virus arrived early and spread quickly, those actions were too late to avoid a calamity. Dr Shaman's team modelled what would have happened if those same changes had taken place one or two weeks earlier and estimated the spread of infections and deaths until May 3. The results show that as states reopen — all 50 states had eased restrictions somewhat as of Wednesday — outbreaks can easily get out of control unless officials closely monitor infections and immediately clamp down on new flare-ups.

And they show that each day that officials waited to impose restrictions in early March came at a great cost.

New York: New cases drop to pre-crisis levels

New York: Daily new hospitalisations across New York for the coronavirus are below rates seen prior to its March lockdown, further evidence the state hit hardest by the pandemic has turned the corner, New York Governor Andrew said on Thursday.

Cuomo said the three-day rolling average for new coronavirus hospitalisations was at 246 on Wednesday, below 295 a day earlier and roughly half the level reported on March 20.

"It is actually lower than we were when this first started," Cuomo said. "We got through it. We got over the mountain."

Even so, Cuomo said he would not accelerate the reopening of New York, which has so far allowed seven of 10 regions to begin relaxing restrictions. New York City, where more than 20,000 people have died from COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus, remains under lockdown. **REUTERS**

'Ten times more testing needed' in African countries

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNESBURG, MAY 21

THE AFRICAN continent needs to test about 10 times the number of people it has already tested for the coronavirus. That's according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Director John Nkengasong says Africa should strive to test at least 1% of the population of 1.3 billion people, or 13 million people, but so far 1.3 million to 1.4 million tests have been conducted.

Africa's number of virus cases is above 95,000 and could surpass 100,000 by the weekend. The continent has seen roughly the same number of new cases in the past week as the week before, and Nkengasong says that "we hope that trend continues."

While early lockdowns de-

2-DAY-OLD BABY DIES

■ South Africa recorded its first neonatal Covid death. The baby was born prematurely and had lung difficulties which required ventilation support, a health ministry statement said. "The mother had tested positive for Covid-19 and the child subsequently tested positive as well," it stated

layed the pandemic, he says "that doesn't mean Africa has been spared."

Countries with fragile health systems and a recent history of conflict like Somalia and South Sudan, however, remain "very concerning" as cases rise quickly.

WHEN RAMZAN STARTED, PASTRY MAKERS WERE EXEMPTED FROM A STRICT CURFEW

In locked-down Istanbul, *baklava* makers are essential workers

CARLOTTA GALL

ISTANBUL, MAY 21

EVERY WEEKEND, for over a month now, Istanbul has been under a strict curfew because of the coronavirus. No one is allowed out, not for exercise or groceries, and the police impose fines. Sometimes, like last weekend and next, the street-emptying lockdown stretches for four days to take in public holidays.

That has dampened one of the great joys of living in Istanbul: watching the perpetual commotion of this water-bound city.

From many vantage points,

you can see the tiny fishing boats bobbing and glinting, the passenger ferries crisscrossing incessantly, and the giant container ships and long oil tankers that glide right through everything.

But the curfew has also offered new moments of breathtaking beauty.

A reverent hush falls over the city. The timeless skyline of mosques and minarets seems to grow in stature in the silence. The sapphire waters are as still as a pond.

Nature lovers have been thrilled. Dolphins have ventured closer, even dipping and diving by the Galata bridge that crosses the Golden Horn. Migratory birds



Bakers rolling out phyllo dough for baklava. NYT

are bolder, storks have returned to an old haunt, and the pollution has lifted, giving the city its first

glimpse in 20 years of the snow-covered mass of Mount Uludag, 100 miles to the south.

The clanging of the construction sites and the thick hubbub of traffic has eased. The only movement is of the sea gulls wheeling over the rooftops. I can even hear a cock crowing in someone's garden.

Of course, Istanbul's curfew could never be a total shutdown. Its residents have lived through multiple military coups, sieges, earthquakes, pestilence and other calamities, and know well that life must go on.

So bakers are exempt from the curfew because fresh bread is so important for the Turkish table. They shout their wares on the empty street and sell bread from the back of their vans.

When Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting, began last month, pastry shops also got an exemption. Turks it seems cannot do without their *baklava*, that heavenly, multilayered, flaky pastry, bound up with nuts and syrup, that is the nation's favorite sweet.

Murat Gullu, the general manager, whose great-grandfather founded the company in the 19th century, said he asked the government to allow *baklava* makers to stay open. His master pastry chefs are working throughout the lockdown, hand-rolling sheets of pastry until, as tradition demands, each one is so fine you can read the newspaper through it.

Ramadan drummers are also allowed out during curfew and prowl the streets at night, banging a warning to people to get up and eat before the dawn call to prayer begins the day's fast.





With some pleasure and pride, Turks are rediscovering their old traditions — like the one where a householder will lower a basket from a window and shout to a shopkeeper to place an order in the basket to save the trek down flights of stairs.

Betül Ozkan in Fatih, one of the oldest neighborhoods, posted a photo of her family's basket, with a line from the poet Rumi: "There is much hope after despair and many suns after darkness." **NYT**



New Delhi



GOLD	RUPEE	OIL	SILVER
 ₹41,705	 ₹75.61	 \$26.15	 ₹38,100

Note: Spot gold markets are shut due to lockdown in major states; gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Indian basket as on March 19, 2020

International market data till 1900 IST

SHARE OF PSBs IN TOTAL CREDIT FALLS FROM 70% TO UNDER 65%: RBI REPORT

Private banks overtake PSBs in number of borrowers, raise share in loan outstanding

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, MAY 21

AGGRESSIVE PRIVATE banks have overtaken public sector banks (PSBs) in the country in terms of number of borrowers and expanded their share in loan outstandings in calendar year 2019.

An RBI report states that private sector banks led the credit expansion with their share in the total credit successively expanding to 35.7 per cent in December 2019, from 32.2 per cent a year ago and 30.0 per cent two years ago. State-owned banks' share has fallen from 70 per cent to less than 65 per cent now.

According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), total credit outstanding of private banks was at Rs 35,34,855 crore as of December 2019, as against Rs 29,67,516 crore in December 2018 — a rise of 19.11 per cent. PSBs reported credit outstanding of Rs 58,49,986 crore, a

EXPLAINED

Spreading of loan defaults remains a major concern

THE POSSIBILITY of loan defaults spilling over from the corporate sector to the retail segment, a key growth area for lenders in recent years, has been flagged as a growing concern by bankers. This comes on top of the expected rise in defaults by corporates as well as MSMEs, which are directly impacted by the lockdown.

marginal rise of just 1 per cent when compared to Rs 57,91,822 crore a year ago.

Private lenders reported a big expansion of their borrower base to 12.60 crore in December 2019 from 8.68 crore borrowers a year ago. PSBs just managed to increase their number of borrowers from 9.17 crore to 9.32 crore during the year, according to the RBI

report 'Quarterly BSR-1: Outstanding Credit of Scheduled Commercial Banks for December 2019'.

Private banks also managed to increase their retail borrower base significantly last year. "Private banks have been focusing on the wholesale and retail customers — especially in the personal loan segment which includes auto and home loans. PSU banks started

looking at the retail segment only recently. The year 2019 was tough for the banking sector in the wake of the woes in the financial sector and sluggish credit growth," said a banking source.

The RBI report said bank credit growth on a year-on-year basis (y-o-y) decelerated for the fourth successive quarter in December 2019, as industrial credit growth (-0.8 per cent) moved to negative terrain for the first time after September 2017.

However, personal loans segment continued to grow at robust pace (17.1 per cent). The total bank credit of all scheduled commercial banks was at Rs 102,52,405 crore as of April 8, 2020 as against Rs 96,24,756 crore a year ago.

Meanwhile, credit growth (y-o-y) by metropolitan branches decelerated to 5.2 per cent in December 2019 from 14.7 per cent a year ago, whereas bank branches in rural, semi-urban and urban areas maintained double-

digit credit growth.

The central bank said the share of private non-financial companies in total credit declined to 25.8 per cent (28.4 per cent a year ago), whereas for individual borrowers, it increased to 40.3 per cent (37.3 per cent a year ago).

"The share of female borrowers in total loans also increased marginally," the Reserve Bank report said.

As branches in northern, western and southern states account for nearly 84 per cent of the total credit, bulk of the deposits were also from these regions.

According to the report, weighted average lending rate (WALR) for outstanding credit declined by 15 basis points (bps) during the quarter ended December 2019. "The decline was significant for industry (28 bps) and trade (29 bps) sectors," it said.

However, deposit rates also declined as part of asset-liability adjustment of banks.

FIRST MEETING OF FINANCE COMMISSION'S FISCAL CONSOLIDATION PANEL

'Have to make substantive expenditures to tackle pandemic'

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

CENTRAL AND state governments will have to make substantial expenditure to tackle the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will have an impact on their debt levels, the Committee of the 15th Finance Commission formed to Review the Fiscal Consolidation Roadmap of the General Government noted in its first meeting held Thursday.

By hiking the fiscal deficit limits for states, the Centre has enabled them to support their expenditure, even as linking of additional borrowing with reforms will help in medium-term debt management, the Commission's Chairman N K Singh said. Stating that additional 2 per cent borrowing by states is a "symmetric" treatment of the Centre and states, he said the move augurs

"The increase in debt will ratchet up state borrowing. Some reforms are necessary as this will help them in debt management in the medium term"

NK SINGH
CHAIRMAN,
15TH FINANCE COMMISSION

well for strengthening fiscal architecture. The Finance Commission has been mandated to work out the fiscal consolidation roadmap for the general government for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26.

As part of the economic package, the Centre on May 17 raised the borrowing limit of states from 3 per cent of gross state domestic product to 5 per cent in FY21, which will make available an additional Rs 4.28 lakh crore. However, part of the increased borrowing

limit would be linked to specific reforms: universalisation of One Nation One Ration Card, ease of doing business, power distribution and urban local body revenues.

"The increase in debt will ratchet up state borrowing. Some reforms are necessary as this will help them in debt management in the medium term. It is in the interest of states... following a path of higher growth trajectory would be necessary," Singh told reporters after the meeting of the fiscal consolidation committee.

As per the increased borrowing plan, a 0.5 per cent rise in borrowing by states, from 3 per cent to 3.5, would be unconditional. The next 1 per cent, i.e. up to 4.5 per cent, will be released in four tranches of 0.25 per cent and each of the tranches will be linked to a measurable and feasible reform. The last 0.5 per cent will be given once the milestones are achieved in at least three of the four reform

conditions.

"The Committee noted that both Union and State Governments will have to make substantive expenditures to tackle the unprecedented situation caused by the pandemic. This, coupled with the downward pressure on economic activity caused by the pandemic, will impact the debt to GDP ratio of the General Government. Considering the uncertainty about emerging outlook, the magnitude of such impact is too early to be assessed now..." as per a statement issued by the Commission after the meeting.

The online meeting was attended by Singh, Ajay Jha and Anoop Singh, members of the Commission; Soma Roy Burman, Controller General of Accounts; S Krishnan, Additional Chief Secretary of Tamil Nadu; Anirudh Tiwari, Principal Secretary of Punjab; and analysts Sajjid Z Chinoy and Prachi Mishra, among others.

ONGC, NTPC ink MoU for JV in renewable energy biz

New Delhi: Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with power generation utility NTPC Ltd to form a joint venture (JV) in the renewable energy business. The two PSUs will, through the JV, set up renewable power assets including offshore wind assets in India and overseas, read a press release by ONGC.

ONGC currently has a renewable energy portfolio with a power capacity of 176 MW, while NTPC has 920 MW of installed renewable power capacity. **ENS**

'Stimulus does not address concerns of healthcare system'

The stimulus package by the Centre does not address immediate concerns of the healthcare system which is reeling under the pressure of COVID-19, said Fitch Solutions

<10%: Percentage of COVID-19 patients being handled by private hospitals

-66%: Share of hospital beds in India accounted for by private hospitals

0.008% of GDP: Increased allocation to health services division, announced by the Finance Ministry on March 11, to support an expansion of healthcare spending

Factors responsible for closure of private hospitals:

■ Rapidly declining revenues

■ Sharply eroding profits

Factors that may worsen the spread of coronavirus in the country:

■ Continued lack of medical funding

■ Poor healthcare infrastructure



Not new allocation: This is not a new budgetary allocation, but only a rerouting of existing expenditure

***80%:** Percentage of available ventilators in the country accounted for by private hospitals

Source: Fitch Solutions/PTI

Package has good points, but needs to do more: Rajan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

CALLING INDIA'S Rs 20.9 lakh crore stimulus inadequate in providing for recovery of an economy pummelled by COVID-19, former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan has said the package gives free foodgrains but migrant workers, rendered jobless by lockdown, need money to buy milk, vegetables and cooking oil and pay rent.

The world is facing the greatest economic emergency and almost any resource is inadequate,

he said. "I think it is particularly so in the case of India because we have years of economic drift in which our growth had slowed, our fiscal deficit has gone up. There is a lot more we need to do to put economy back on track. We have to pull all the stops," he said in an interview to Karan Thapar for news portal *The Wire*.

"The package has some good points but it probably needs to do more," Rajan said.

The former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund said ways have to be found to give relief to people and companies af-



The former RBI Governor said ways have to be found to give relief to people affected by COVID. *File*

ected by COVID and the ensuing nationwide lockdown.

"We got to repair places in the economy that need repair. This includes some of the big firms, this includes banks, and of course this includes MSME. We need to provide for recovery that means some kind of stimulus so as to get the recovery going. And we need reforms," he said.

Giving foodgrains to unemployed migrant workers, the poor and vulnerable was not enough, he said. They also need vegetables and cooking oil and, most importantly, money and shelter.

Sebi revises post-default curing period for CRAs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

MARKETS REGULATOR Sebi on Thursday said that credit rating agencies can deviate from the 90-day period required to upgrade the rating of an entity from default to non-investment grade.

The credit rating agencies (CRAs) can take the decision on case-to-case basis, the Securities

and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

The capital markets watchdog has noted in a few recent cases of defaults that even though the rated entity was able to correct the default within a relatively shorter span of time, the rating could not be upgraded and continued to be under sub-investment grade due to the extant provisions on post-default curing period.

Nearly 2,000 employees asked to resign from Indiabulls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, MAY 21

DIVERSIFIED FINANCIAL services group Indiabulls Group has asked nearly 2,000 employees to resign from the company. The group, however, said this was part of the annual attrition cycle and claimed these were not lay-offs.

"The company typically sees an attrition of 10-15 per cent of its workforce every year during April-May in the normal course of business. This year we waited till we got clarity from the Supreme Court and MHA. There are no lay-offs other than in the normal course of business due to attrition and as per the performance trend of the entire year and not just a couple of months," Indiabulls Group said in a statement.

The group did not disclose any specific numbers.

The group employs more than 26,000 people and in financial year 2019-20 itself, it added more than 7,000 new members, the statement said.

INTERVIEW: HARDEEP SINGH PURI, UNION CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

'We intend a phased escalation ... Indian aviation will come out stronger from this crisis'

Civil Aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri at a press conference in New Delhi, Thursday. *Anil Sharma*

uation, address the issue of international travel.

What problems did the fact that metros like Delhi and Mumbai were red zones and that they have the highest traffic pose in the phased reopening process?

The metros like Delhi and Mumbai are the worst hit due to the pandemic. These are also our major economic centres. They account for highest traffic movement and have been developed as hub for their operations by various airlines. The airlines will have to follow full protocols and operate as per SOPs.

Are the airlines fully on board with the operating protocols?

We have been regularly speaking to the airlines and all other stakeholders. Their views have been sought and considered while formulating the SOPs and protocols.

Who will bear the burden, for example, of leaving vacant seats given that the airlines are already facing huge financial losses?

We have taken a holistic view of the situation. Experts are of the opinion that even if the middle seat is left vacant, then also social distancing norms may not be followed. Airlines the world over have not gone for this option. They are already facing huge losses. Commercial viability of operators has also been considered. The economics of ticket pricing, in case of a vacant middle seat, would take air travel beyond the reach of general public.

However, we have gone for additional safety protocols based on our experience of Mission Vande Bharat. Aviation experts have also opined that the air conditioning system in an aircraft is so designed that the direction of air flow is from ceiling to the floor which minimises risks.

What stimulus can the airlines expect from the government?

The government is having discussions with airlines on a regular basis. We already took some steps to mitigate the long pending demands of the airlines and Aviation Sector. In January 2020, fuel throughput charges were rationalised. Central excise duty on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) was reduced to 11 per cent in October 2018. GST rate on MRO has been reduced from 18 per cent to 5 per

cent with full input tax credit from 1 April 2020. The proposal to bring ATF under the ambit of GST is before the GST Council, which has representation from the states as well. Further measures will certainly be considered.

Till now, only 60 per cent of the airspace was available for civilian aircraft movement. Now, these restrictions are being eased out so that civilian flight operations become more efficient. We are also moving forward on second round of public private partnership on six additional airports. It is expected that additional investment of around Rs 13,000 crore will be made by private players in the 12 airports in the first and second round.

What do you feel is the fate of the aviation industry globally in the COVID and post-COVID scenario?

Aviation is a highly capital intensive business and it has been one of the worst hit globally during the COVID pandemic. Internationally, many Airlines like Virgin Australia, Air Mauritius, to name just a few, have gone into liquidation. We are the third largest domestic aviation market and were in the middle of a massive expansion. We were scheduled to be overall third largest market (pre-COVID) in the World. As Hon'ble PM has rightly pointed out, we have to view this crisis as an opportunity. I am of the firm view that the Indian aviation sector will come out stronger in this crisis. In addition to Air India, private players have been participating in Lifeline Udan. Flying dedicated cargo planes has been a new experience for many of them.

What is the new normal for the civil aviation industry in India?

Indian civil Aviation market is very dynamic. As Hon'ble PM has rightly pointed out, now we have to move further towards self-reliance. We have already taken some steps so that the maintenance repair work is done within the country. As already pointed out, India is one of the biggest civil aviation markets in the world and was going for a massive expansion with one of the biggest order books for acquiring new planes. We still have only 8 per cent penetration and this is a huge opportunity for the manufacturing and the service industry. We are very confident that Indian aviation will come out stronger from this crisis.

'Domestic telcos to see only 15% growth in FY21'

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

THE GROWTH of Indian telecom companies in financial year 2020-21 will be hit due to the coronavirus-induced slowdown and a lower than expected rise in data usage, Fitch Ratings said Thursday.

The overall earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) of domestic telcos is likely to see a growth of only 15 per cent on year growth in FY21, as compared to the 20 per cent on year growth seen during the last fiscal ended March 2020, the rating agency said in a note.

"The EBITDA growth of telcos seen in the January-March quarter during the last fiscal was driven by hike in pan-industry tariff hike and a growth in 4G data usage. The same would, however, slow down going ahead, as the country went into a nationwide lockdown from March 24," Fitch said.

In October last, after the Supreme Court's first judgment on the adjusted gross revenue (AGR) matter, both Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea — who were hit the hardest by the order — had

The pandemic-led slowdown will mostly affect lower-revenue users, those who spend ₹50-100 a month, which could prevent further improvements in monthly ARPU, Fitch Ratings said

sought to hike tariffs without interference from the government.

The following month, the two telcos, as well as the latest entrant Reliance Jio Infocomm, hiked prices by as much as 30 per cent, with further indications that the time for lower price end users was limited. The three telcos had moved to set a minimum monthly recharge for prepaid users in an effort to shore up revenues.

"The pandemic-led economic slowdown will mostly affect lower-revenue users, those who spend Rs 50-100 a month, which could prevent further improvements in monthly average revenue per user (ARPU)," Fitch said.

No more fresh subscriptions in two debt funds of Aditya Birla Sun Life MF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

ADITYA BIRLA Sun Life Mutual Fund has decided to temporarily suspend acceptance of fresh subscriptions in two of its debt schemes with effect from Friday.

The two schemes are — Aditya Birla Sun Life Medium Term Plan, which invests in instruments with a duration of 3-4 years; and Aditya Birla Sun Life Credit Risk Fund that predominantly invests in AA and below rated corporate bonds, the fund house said Thursday.

This comes after Franklin Templeton MF last month closed six of its debt funds, citing redemption pressures and lack of liquidity in the bond markets. In order to protect the interest of investors, Aditya Birla Sun Life MF said it has decided to temporarily suspend the acceptance of fresh subscriptions or switch in applications in two schemes with effect from May 22, till further notice.



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THOSE MONTHS, THOSE MINUTES

Forced into an unprecedented lockdown, sport is staring at an unfathomable despair. Indian athletes, though, have given the country

VIJAY KUMAR tells **Shahid Judge** how he won the silver at London Games
[READ THE STORY ON indianexpress.com](#)

2021 'last option' for Tokyo Games, says Olympics chief

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
TOKYO, MAY 21

OLYMPICS CHIEF Thomas Bach said 2021 was the "last option" for holding the delayed Tokyo Games on Thursday, stressing that postponement cannot go on forever. Bach told the BBC that he agreed with Japan's stance that the Games will have to be cancelled if the coronavirus pandemic isn't under control by next year.

In March, the Tokyo 2020 Olympics were postponed to July 23, 2021 as the coronavirus spread across the globe, killing hundreds of thousands of people and making international sport impossible. "Quite frankly, I have some understanding for (Japan's position) because you cannot forever employ 3,000, or 5,000, people in an organising committee," the International Olympic Committee president said. "You cannot every year change the entire sports schedule worldwide for all the major federations. You cannot have the athletes being in uncertainty, you cannot have so much overlapping with a future Olympic Games."

Sans fans?

The Olympic organizing committee CEO Toshiro Muto spoke about the need to take "countermeasures" to combat the coronavirus. But what measures, exactly?

Muto acknowledged there is talk about holding next year's Tokyo Olympics without fans, but he did not indicate this was going to happen. The Tokyo official was responding to a BBC interview in which Bach said an Olympics without fans "is not what we want."

But Bach did not rule it out and said any such decision would take more time. "Regarding president Bach's remarks," said Muto, speaking through an interpreter in an on-line news conference, "there are other people in Japan as well that (believe the Olympics) need to take place behind closed doors. However, our point of view is that we have more than one year until the games take place. And we think it's too early at this point in time to have that discussion."

With play suspended world over, a tiny corner of the Caribbean starts its own league, with all health protocols

SANDIP G
NEW DELHI, MAY 21

FOR THE best part of the last three days at the nets, former West Indies quick Nixon McLean has been trying to kick an old habit: rubbing the cricket ball with saliva. "You've done this all your life, each time you have the ball in your hand. It's a habit. So the hand goes automatically towards the tongue when you get the ball in your hand," he admits.

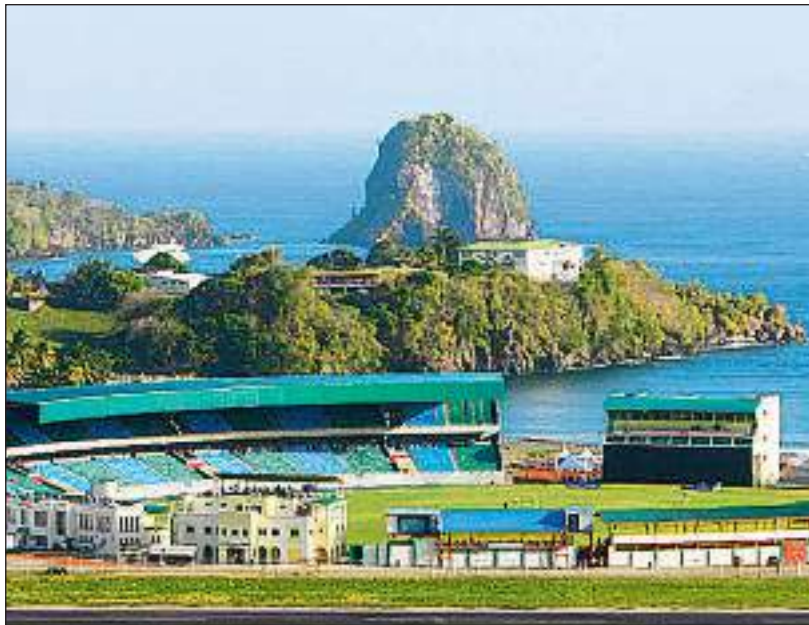
It's a habit most cricketers — the bowlers and ball-shining designates especially — have to ditch after the ICC prohibited the application of saliva to maintain the ball in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Not just this practice, McLean and Co have been unlearning a slew of other old habits and etiquettes too, like handshakes, hugs and high-fives, and internalising new ones like maintaining social distance when celebrating, washing hands with sanitisers ever so often and not borrowing team-mates' bats or gloves.

"It's kind of strange, you get a wicket and run immediately to your teammates. It's instinct. But all that is not possible. But at least cricket is back," says McLean, coach of Botanic Gardens Rangers, one of the six franchises in the Vinncy Premier League, a T10 tournament that would roll on for 10 days from Friday in the tiny and picturesque East Caribbean island of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The league, if one discounts the Vanuatu Premier League, is the only instance of competitive cricket since the pandemic outbreak that suspended most sporting activities in the world. Understandably, McLean is excited: "The cricket world will be tuning into us. So, we are naturally excited. The little island will be in the limelight for once."

SVG, or the "small island" as they call it in the Caribbean, is a necklace of 32 islands, of which only nine are inhabited with four of the nine being private resorts, having a total area of 369 square kilometre and population of 110,000. Like most East Caribbean islands, the COVID-19 devastat-



The Arnos Vale Sporting Complex, which hugs the Caribbean Sea, has not hosted any international fixture since a Test against Bangladesh in 2014.

The league, if one discounts the Vanuatu Premier League, is the only instance of competitive cricket since the pandemic outbreak that suspended most sporting activities in the world.

tion has been nominal here. Till date, only 18 persons have been infected, of which 14 have recovered.

It has been a cricketing outlier too — primarily a limited-overs haunt — with the Arnos Vale Sporting Complex not hosting any international fixture since a Test against Bangladesh in 2014. International cricketers too have sprung sparsely — only nine from the island have played Test cricket for the West Indies. They don't have a team in the Caribbean

Premier League either.

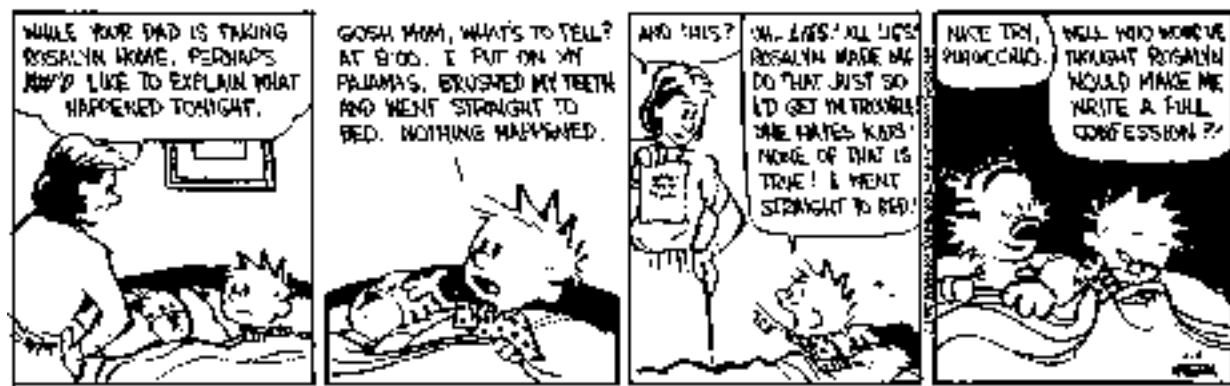
"But the stadium is one of the most beautiful in the world. It's so close to the Caribbean Sea and I remember people seeing (Brian) Lara hitting a few into the sea. The atmosphere is usually great, a lot of music and drums in the stands," McLean says.

Whether the stands will sway to soca and reggae is unsure as the timing of the VPL is odd — the matches (30 in 10 days) begin at 8.30 in the morning, catering to Asian viewers more than the locals. Besides, the crowd is regulated too. "We could not obviously deny crowd from entering the stadium as there is no lockdown or other prohibitions in our country. So, we kind of reduced the number of tickets and instructed strict social-distancing practices while watching the game. Every spectator will be screened and their temperature measured. Also, because the matches are in the morning, we don't expect too much

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



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