



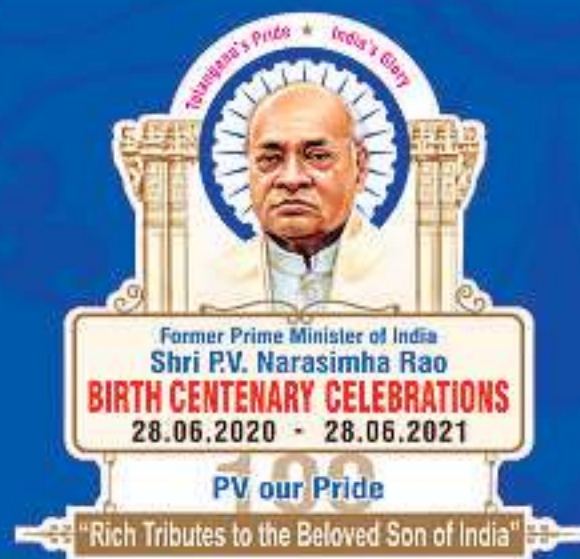
The lockdown to contain the coronavirus outbreak has disrupted supply chains. One crucial chain is delivery of information and insight — news and analysis that is fair and accurate and reliably reported from across a nation in quarantine.

A voice you can trust amid the clanging of alarm bells.

Vajiram & Ravi and *The Indian Express* are proud to deliver the electronic version of this morning's edition of *The Indian Express* to your Inbox. You may follow *The Indian Express's* news and analysis through the day on **indianexpress.com**



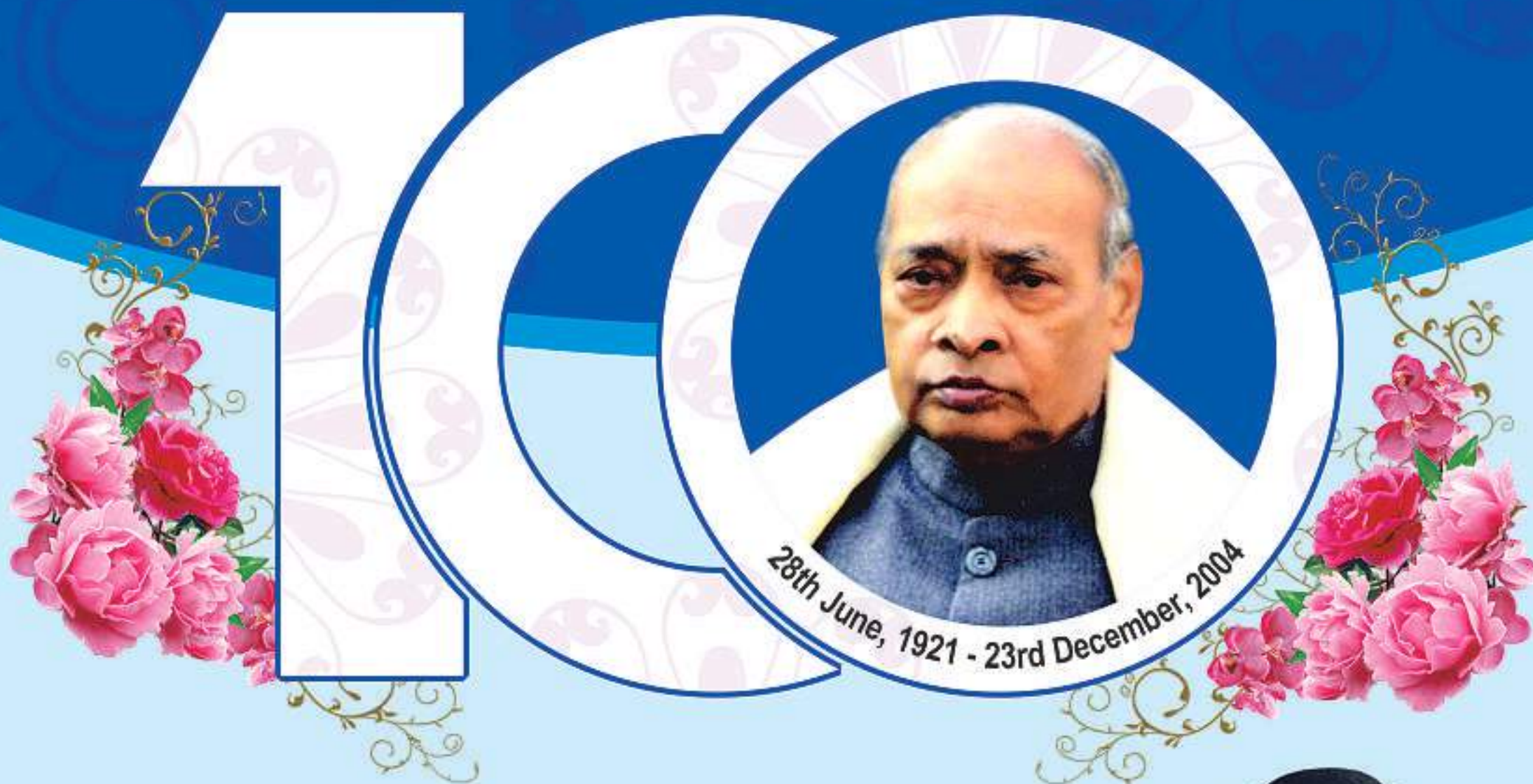
INDIAN
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Telangana's Son.. India's Pride

Birth Centenary Celebrations of Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao

Former Prime Minister of India



Under the leadership of Honourable Chief Minister

Shri K Chandrashekhar Rao

Telangana State Government Celebrates
the Birth Centenary Celebrations

28.6.2020 to 28.6.2021

Year long Programmes and activities acknowledging the contributions of

Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao



Shri K. Chandrashekhar Rao
Chief Minister of Telangana

Inaugural Programme

Date : 28-06-2020 (Sunday) Time : 10.30 am

Venue : P.V. Gnana Bhoomi, Necklace Road, Hyderabad.

Grand Tribute to India's Beloved Son

BRIDGE

Dealer South, NS vulnerable

NORTH

♠ K107

♥ A87

♦ J1064

♣ AJ8

SOUTH (you)

♠ A92

♥ K5

♦ AQ98

♣ Q1096

WEST

INT

Pass

3NT

Pass

Pass

SOUTH

Pass

West leads the H3. You win in hand with the king, and once again you have to deal with the two minor-suit kings before West gets his suit running. Which suit do you play first, and how?

The West Hand: S-54 H-10632 D-K3 C-7532

The East Hand: S-QJ863 H-Q104 D-7520-K4

Assuming West has chosen his longest suit, the lead could come from a four or five-card suit. If it is four, we can never lose more than two tricks in the suit together with the two minor-suit kings and the contract is in no danger. In this case, how we play to the hearts is irrelevant. We must therefore credit West with five hearts and now the defenders are threatening to take three heart tricks and the two minor-suit kings. We have four top tricks in the majors and at least three in each minor but both kings will have to be knocked out if we are to make nine tricks. The dangerous situation therefore arises when West has the DK and East the CK.

The order of losing tricks is now crucial. Firstly, let us consider the hearts. We obviously cannot win both the first and second rounds as that would leave East with another card, leaving communications between the defenders open. Thus winning the first round on the board (which would force us to win the second round in hand) is ruled out. We have a choice between refusing the first round or winning the first round in hand, intending to refuse the second.

Once we win a heart, we must consider which minor-suit finesse we should try first. The aim must be to lose a trick to East after he has run out of hearts, and to knock West's entry out early, i.e. before the hearts are established. Therefore diamonds must be played first. The question then arises as to how to get to dummy to take the finesse. We cannot use the CA as that would mean foregoing the club finesse. It is less obvious that it is also dangerous to cross to dummy with the SK. On taking his DK, West would realise that there is now no hope for the hearts, and he would turn to spades, setting up three tricks for his partner, who has the CK as entry.

Win the first or second round of hearts in hand and play the ace and another diamond, losing to West. He now clears the hearts. We win dummy's ace on the third round and cross to hand in diamonds to take the club finesse (starting with the queen, ten or nine to hold the lead), losing to the now safe hand, East. We are now assured of three tricks in each minor and two in each major to total ten tricks, against a heart and two minor-suit kings lost. You should also note that, if there is reason to believe that East has the long hearts (for example, if he had bid them) then the order must be reversed and clubs must be played first, we can now safely by the finesse.

Dealer South

NORTH

♠ A10982

♥ KQ3

♦

♣ J9763

SOUTH (YOU)

♠ KQ73

♥ A105

♦ 107543

♣

Miraculously, you and your partner arrive in 6S (your great bidding, of course) and the opening lead from silent opponents is the DK. Plan the play.

JUMBLED WORDS

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

An expert is someone who tells you _____ something. - Alec Issigonis (3,3,4,2)

KZAAO

IIOCDY

FUTON

IMSHWY

ANSWER: A jumbled word is someone who tells you something. - Alec Issigonis

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD

(A Government of India Undertaking)

Head Office, Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link Project, Satyam Complex, Marble Market, Greater Kailash, P.O. Sainik Colony, Jammu - 180011, Jammu & Kashmir, Tel : +91 - 191 - 2484778

Open e-TENDER

TENDER NOTICE No.: KR-PD-JK-STN-REASI-10-20 Dtd. 26.06.2020

Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. invites "Open e-Tender" in "Two Packet System" from experienced agencies for "Construction of Station Building, Posts & Barracks for RPF & GRP, FOB, Passenger Platform, Circulation Area, Approach Road & Other ancillary works at Reasi on Katra-Dharam Section of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link Project, Jammu & Kashmir."

Approx. Cost of the Work : Rs. 38.76 cr, **Earnest Money :** Rs. 20,87,800/-, **Completion Period of Contract :** 18 Months. **Submission of Tender :** 14.08.2020 up to 15.00 hrs. **Opening of Tender :** 14.08.2020 @ 15.30 hrs. **Cost of Tender Form :** Rs. 11,800/- (Rupees Eleven Thousand Eight Hundred Only) to be submitted through online payment modes available on IREPS portal only.

For further details and updates please visit <https://www.ireps.gov.in> Amendments/ Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted on the above website only.

OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) CONST. DIV. NO. II, JAMMU

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 31 of 2020-2021/Div-2 Dated 25-06-2020

Executive Engineer PW (R&B) Construction Division No. II, Jammu

Department Jammu on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory of J&K, invite tenders by e-tendering mode from approved and eligible registered Firm with J&K Union Territory Govt. upto 1800 Hrs on 01-07-2020 for the following work.

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (In lacs)	Cost of document (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time and date of opening of tender	Eligibility
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Soil Investigation Test for proposed New District Court Complex, Jammu.	13.38	600	26,760	02-07-2020 1400 hours	Firm registered with J&K Govt. having valid:- i) Registration ii) GST Number iii) Latest GST 3B iv) PAN

1/ Date of Publishing from 25-06-2020

2/ The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://ktenders.gov.in> from on 25-06-2020 to 01-07-2020 (1800 Hrs).

No. : 2304-18
Dated : 25-06-2020
DIP/1756-20

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD (R&B) Const. Div. No. II
Jammu

WESTERN RAILWAY-RAJKOT DIVISION

ENGINEERING WORKS

E -Tender Notice No. 06 of 2020-21 date 25.06.2020

(1) e-Tender No.	DRM-RJT-20-E-19
Name of Work	Rajkot Division - Supply of water for cooking and drinking purpose at Okhamadhi, Modpur, Khmabhallya, Bhatel and Bhopalka under the jurisdiction of Sr. Section Engineer (Works) Dwarka (for 24 months).
Approximate NIT Cost	₹ 39,36,759.46/-
EMD Cost	₹ 78,700/-
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	24/07/2020, 15:00 Hrs.
(2) e-Tender No.	DRM-RJT-20-E-20
Name of Work	Rajkot Division - Providing drains at Motikhavdi, Sikka, Hapa and Kanalus for yard drainage improvement (2500 RM).
Approximate NIT Cost	₹ 82,55,770.98/-
EMD Cost	₹ 1,65,100.00/-
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	24/07/2020, 15:00 Hrs.
(3) e-Tender No.	DRM-RJT-20-E-21
Name of Work	Rajkot Division - Extension of platform at Hapa and providing cover shed at Jamnagar.
Approximate NIT Cost	₹ 1,10,26,049.79/-
EMD Cost	₹ 2,05,100.00/-
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	24/07/2020, 15:00 Hrs.
(4) e-Tender No.	DRM-RJT-20-E-22
Name of Work	Rajkot - Operation and Maintenance of Sub Ordinate Rest House & TTE Room by outsourcing (for 24 Months).
Approximate NIT Cost	₹ 3,36,072.00/-
EMD Cost	₹ 6,700.00/-
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	24/07/2020, 15:00 Hrs.
Office Address:	Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), Western Railway, Kothi Compound, Rajkot, Gujarat-360001. Website: www.ireps.gov.in
Like us on:	Facebook.com/WesternRly follows us on: Twitter.com/WesternRly

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2275

QUICK CLUES ACROSS

8. Facile in speech (6)

9. Created, originated or wrote (8)

10. Renovated (8)

11. Let go (6)

12. Soft hat with band (6)

13. Culinary herb (8)

14. Only thing he is good in is bungling ? (7)

16. Idleness (7)

20. Attacked or assaulted (8)

23. Mark Twain's Tom ____ (6)

25. Trinidad and ____ (6)

26. Country in SE Europe (8)

27. Fancy that! (in a manner of speaking) 1 (4,4)

28. Becomes interested or aroused, in a way ? (4,2)

DOWN

1. Skin emollient (8)

2. Flowing with successive notes connected (6)

3. Obstruction (8)

4. Spar supporting sail (4-3)

5. Walks in a stiff pompous manner (6)

6. A genial manner- in France (8)

7. More enthusiastic or sharp (6)

15. Cobbler's nail (8)

17. Divulge (8)

18. Not genuine (8)

19. Eccentric person (7)

21. Inclined (6)

22. Inchworm (6)

24. Ghost (6)

CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS

8. Because buzzer is outside it's earlier (6)

9. Cleaner fuel, of a dark grey colour (8)

10. Conflict in which counter charges may be the deciding factor? (5-3)

11. Boy gives untruth about a direct debit (6)

12. Offlight hair and complexion when having a spell from broadcasting (3,3)

13. Running water provides him with employment (5-3)

14. Stories of members retaining ambition (7)

16. They secured superior items for ladies (3-4)

20. Standard feature of most city streets (8)

23. Nun's Aida part is left to the

imagination (6)

25. Start driving on a course (3,3)

26. Only odd socks of a pair (3,5)

27. Enduring advice on how to get old ? (4,4)

28. In a fair state - no disease, notice (3,3)

DOWN

1. Fruit flies nearly ruined weapon (3,5)

2. Opener skies pull before tea (6)

3. Old Wren design absorbed the West - the Western Hemisphere! (3,5)

4. They put up the points or put them down (7)

5. He studied drooling and ballet dancer lost one (6)

6. Sweet account I'd pursue no further (4,4)

7. Girl goes round northern docks (6)

15. Expel odd characters shown to be false (8)

16. Breathe in a swamp, left unattached (8)

18. Fix van that is hit with hammer (4-4)

19. Unusual to wander from the street (7)

Solutions to 2274

QUICK CLUES ACROSS:

8 Gamester, 9 Ennead, 10 Vegetative, 11 Inks, 12 Mitten, 14 Earnings, 15 Nitride, 17 Flutist, 20 Efficacy, 22 Nectar, 24 Nara, 25 Silverware, 27 Severn, 28 Fondness.

DOWN: 1 Samed, 2 Wren, 3 Attained, 4 Arives, 5 Meteor, 6 Antibiotic, 7 Packages, 13 Terminate, 16 Inflamed, 18 Lanterns, 19 Eyelift, 21 Assent, 23 At rest, 26 Wine.

CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS:

8 Desolate, 9 Waving, 10 Preferable, 11 Lark, 12 Dik-dik, 14 Salonika, 15 Heating, 17 Off-hand, 20 Nicholas, 22 Onsets, 24 Non-U, 25 Quid pro quo, 27 Mumbai, 28 Nominees.

DOWN: 1 Henry, 2 Soft, 3 Lark, 4 Sea-bass, 5 Awhheel, 6 Avalanches, 7 Unbroken, 13 Dutch bulbs, 16 Epilogue, 18 Foot pump, 19 Assigns, 21 Liquid, 23 Touted, 26 Oink.

SUDOKU 4152

Difficulty Level 5s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

3

6

4

7

8

6

3

9

3

2

4

1

4

3

5

8

1

8

7

6

7

9

8

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4152

Paschimanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd.,

Victoria Park, Meerut

TENDER DATE EXTENSION NOTICE

The Date of opening of tender specification No. P.VVNL-MT/COM/2019-20 for supply of 500 nos. 33 KV T.V.M. Cat-C Meter is hereby extended from 25.06.2020 to 14.07.2020. Time of opening tender and other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged.

For detailed information please log on www.pvvnll.org & E-Tendering website www.tenderup.nic.in till the date of submission of bids. Superintending Engineer (Commercial) "Help line Number for Information of Theft of Electricity: 1800-180-3002 (Meerut) & 9412207451" Remark www.tenderup.nic.in

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer (Commercial)
For Managing Director

यंत्रांक: 5168 दिनांक: 27.06.20

GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH,

WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER,

MAHANADI GODAWARI BASIN RAIPUR (C.G.)

e-Procurement Tender Notice

eProcurement Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

(2nd Call)

SYSTEM TENDER No.65342/NIT No.06/SAC/2020-21, Gariaband, Dated:23.06.2020

Online Tenders are invited for the following works up to 10.07.2020 at 17.30 Hour (IST):-

Name of Work:-CONSTRUCTION OF DIAPHRAGM WALL ON TELNADI IN VILLAGE SENMUDA OF DEOBHOG BLOCK IN GARIABAND DISTRICT.

Probable amount of Contract- Rs. 209.68 Lakhs

The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement Portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) from Date 30/06/2020, at 17.31 Hours. (IST) onwards.

Note:- All eligible/interested contractors/bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the Integrated e-procurement portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) and get approval on specific vendor class from PWD under Centralized Contractor/Supplier Registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Water Resources Division Gariaband
For, Chief Engineer Mahanadi Godawari Basin
Water Resources Department, Raipur (C.G.)

81884

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Procurement Tender Notice No.: 20/05

Date: 25.06.2020

E-Tender Notice

On behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Material Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj invites the E-procurement tenders:

Tender No. & Description	Qty.	EMD	Tender Opening date
Tender No. 19205684: Supply and installation of One Thermal Camera, with Client Software, 4Ch NVR, 2TB HDD, Cables, Connectors and other accessories for installation, (Make & Model of IDS South Korea DG-TH2011), HIK VISION, C&P, True view, Mantrix or other reputed make as per specification attached. With workstation of 32" Monitor make-IQ, Samsung, Sony or similar as per Specification attached. Note: Firm shall install the camera on stainless steel frame along with stainless steel passage for efficient monitoring of parent's temperature entering into premises.			

Note: 1. The complete information of above E-Procurement Tender are available on IREPS website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tender. For this purpose, Vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with class III digital signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into financial rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entry in any other form/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight away ignored and shall not be considered. 4. Documents being attached should be signed on their body. 5. Allocation for "Cost of Drawing" is 2-650 and for "Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)" is deposit Msc. stores-C0044517. The above tender notice has been uploaded on <http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in> in case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the IREPS website may be approached.

70820(8)
North central railways
CPRORC

CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION

1, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines, Prayagraj-211001

E-Tender Notice No. ELCORE-TSRC-Gr-203-203 E-TENDER NOTICE

Dated: 25.06.2020

On behalf of the President of India, Chief Electrical Engineer/PS, Central Organization Railway Electrification, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines Prayagraj-211001 invites following E- TENDER :-

Name of Work: Design, supply, erection, testing and commissioning of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system along with Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for a period of four years (excluding warranty period of three years) for 20KV Single phase 50Hz ac Traction Power Supply in Lingampet Jagtyal - Nazamabad section (Gr-203) & Parild Vajrathi - Vikarabad section (Gr-209) of Secunderabad Divisions of South Central Railway under Railway Electrification Project. Secunderabad as per RDSO Specification No.TI/SPC/RCO/SCADA/2130 (Rev-2) with A&S slip No.-1, 2 & 3 and latest amendments. RTUs for Gr-203&209 shall be designed to have the compatibility with adjacent section and shall be configured with the existing SCADA system at RCO/Secunderabad Division of SCR OR as advised by the purchaser.

Bidding Type Normal Tender	Bidding Type Normal Tender	Bidding System	Single Packet System
Tender Type	Open	Date Time of uploading Tender	25.06.2020 18:48
Tender Closing Date Time	24.07.2020 15:00	Pre-Bid Query Date Time	Not Applicable
Pre-Bid Required	No	Tendering Section	PSI
Advertised Value (₹)	47431058.44	Bidding Unit	
Bidding Style	Single Rate for Each Schedule Item	Validity of Offer (Days)	45
Earnest Money (₹)	387200.00	Period of Completion	3 Months
Tender Doc. Cost (₹)	10000.00	Contract Category	Expenditure
Contract Type	Works	Are Joint Venture (JV) firms allowed to bid	No
Bidding Start Date	15.07.2020	Expenditure Type	Capital (Works)
Ranking Order For Bids	Lowest to Highest		

Note: 1-The complete information of above E- Tender and Tender document are available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. 2-Only E-Bids shall be accepted against above Tender. The e-bids may be uploaded before 15.00hrs on tender closing date.

Chief Electrical Engineer/PS
Central Organization Railway Electrification,
Prayagraj
For & on behalf of President of India.

No.: PR.426/20
Satya Adv.

"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE" www.ireps.gov.in

Department of Vocational Education & Skill Development and Technical Education (UPVESD&TE)

Expression of Interest

Advt. No.: 367/16/3/2020 Date: 26.06.2020

1. The Department of Vocational Education & Skill Development and Technical Education (UPVESD&TE) invites expression of interest (EOI) for shortlisting of Private Sector Partners to operate newly constructed ITIs and Polytechnics in various districts of Uttar Pradesh through Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode.

2. Interested Applicants may download the complete EOI document from department's website <http://upted.gov.in>. The proposal as per prescribed formats provided in the EOI should be submitted electronically by sending an email to teupppp@gmail.com. The due date of submission of proposals is 15th July 2020 by 5:00 PM.

3. In order to interact with various prospective Applicants, consultation meetings are scheduled to be held as per below:

S.N	City	Date	Venue
1	Kanpur	8th July 2020 11.30 AM	Institute of Research Development & Training (IRDT) (Govt. Polytechnic Campus), Vikas Nagar, Kanpur Uttar Pradesh 208002
2	Lucknow	9th July 2020 11.30 AM	Directorate of Training & Employment, Guru Govind Singh Marg, Bans Mandi, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh 226001
3	Ghaziabad	13th July 2020 11.30 AM	Government Polytechnic Ghaziabad, Hapur Rd.Near Petrol Pump, E BlockRd, D-Block, Shastri Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh 201001

During these consultation meetings the details of PPP modalities (roles of various stakeholders, grouping of institutes, fee structure, operational feasibility, etc.) may be deliberated and subsequently RFP would be floated. All prospective bidders interested to attend the consultation meeting must pay online registration fees (please refer EOI document for details) and send an email to cwteppp@gmail.com before 6th July 2020.

4. The UPVESD&TE reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without incurring any obligation to inform the affected applicants of the grounds.

(Additional Chief Secretary)

For All Advertisement Booking

Call : 0120-6651214

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

There will be urgent domestic matters to tackle, so be sure to organise yourself carefully and see to it that friends and partners share responsibilities. Make sure that you don't miss out on social opportunities now that Venus, planet of love, is being so helpful.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

A wonderfully sociable atmosphere offers plenty of relaxation with pleasant partners, so set out to have fun. However, seeing as your current emotional cycles are sober, serious and intense, mature activities are bound to predominate. For example, you may attract people who are more experienced.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

This period should start on the right note although, you will have increasing difficulty in taking rational decisions. But, when all is said and done, there is nothing wrong with following your deeper beliefs, just for a change. Besides, sometimes you need to follow your intuitions.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

You have every reason to be well pleased with your progress over the past few months. Now, however, you are reaching a genuine turning-point under a striking astrogical alignment that last occurred ages ago. Make the most of it. And don't turn down an invitation now in the expectation that it will be renewed next month.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Friends and relations certainly have the right ideas. What is more important is that they have the force of personality to make sure that their proposals are put into effect and that your own desires may have to wait for a while. You may therefore have to grin and bear it, making a virtue out of necessity.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

It's a good time to pull strings, sound people out and try to get a word into an influential ear. What is really favouring you at the moment is Mars' impact on your house of romance and creativity. As Venus, lady of love, comes into the picture, and combines with other favourable planets, you may receive romantic opportunities.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Once personal affairs are dealt with you'll be giving thought to cash and career matters. Heed the comments put forward by friends and lovers as you'll get a fresh slant on things and you might even gain useful information. As you move into gear, your romantic prospects will pick up as well, which has to be a good thing.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

You often get the feeling that your life is subject to forces so great that they are beyond your control. However, the occupation of sensitive regions of your chart by Mars and Pluto, your two special ruling planets, means only one thing: the ball is now firmly in your court. Decide where you want to be in a month.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)

Take heart, for the financial situation can now only improve. When we look at the fact that Jupiter, your planetary ruler, is so helpful, the outcome of recent economic ups and downs will be a period of sustained prosperity. Younger people may come up with the best advice.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

The cosmos is treating you handsomely at the moment. The one mistake you mustn't make is to regard every difficulty as a sign that the planets have got it in for you. In fact, they are sending you lessons to learn and challenges to overcome, the net result of that is you will be far more skilled at handling personal relationships.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

You're in a brilliant mood. Mercury has been moving carefully, aligning with the part of your chart which governs your professional future. However, so much that you have wanted to say seems to have come out wrong, that people may misunderstand your true intentions.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

It now seems some time since there were any genuinely profound changes in your life. What this means is that you are still building on developments that took place over the last three years. If you wish, you may make a conscious effort to create the future you want, rather than waiting for the stars to push you.

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 21.07.2020 as below - Tender No. : E-91, Name of work with its Location : TRR(P) 11.90 Kms. from Km. 254.30 to 257.20, 258.20 to 262.20 & 265.00 to 270.00 in between Hisar-Bathinda stations of existing 52 Kg rails with 60 Kg New rails under ADEN/Sirsa. Approx. cost of work: Rs. 6092519.00, Earnest Money : Rs. 121900/-, Tender No. : E-92, Name of work with its Location : Ancillary works in connection deep screening by ballast cleaning machine 41.40 Kms from Km. 6.60 to 48.00 on Rohtak-Bhiwani section under ADEN/Bhiwani., Approx. cost of work: Rs. 41392054.93, Earnest Money : Rs. 357000/-, Tender No. : E-93, Name of work with its Location : Dismantling & repair to flooring, pipeline, etc. of 05 coach length of washing line at Lalgarh under ADEN/HQ/BKN., Approx. cost of work: Rs. 905577.88, Earnest Money : Rs. 18100/-, Note : Other term & condition will be shown on N.W.Rly. website www.ireps.gov.in 607-SP/20

Please join us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NWRailways) /NWRailways

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO. N-BSB0SnT-OT-I-2020

"Open Tenders" through Online (E-Tendering) are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom.) / Varanasi/North Eastern Railway for and behalf of the President of India for the following works:-

SI No.-1, Tender Notice No. and Description of Work: N-BSB0SnT-OT-I-2020: Name of Work: Indoor & outdoor work including additions and alterations in existing Route Relay Interlocking (Siemens) for provision of Tower wagon Shed, OHE Depot & Extension of Shunting neck at Manduadih (MUV) Stn. of BSB Division. Details: Approx. Value (Rs.): ₹ 16,02,454.56, Earnest Money (Rs.): ₹ 32,100/-, Cost of Tender Form (Rs.): ₹ 2,000/-, Completion Period: 90 Days, Tender Closing date & Time: 23-07-2020 up to 15:00 Hrs.

(1) Tender Online will be submitted up to 15:00 Hrs. on date 23-07-2020.

(2) For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of Indian Railways i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

Div. Rly. Manager (S&T)
Varanasi

About any passenger amenity complaint SMS on Mob. No.: 09794845955

Never travel on roof and foot boards.

New Delhi

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EXCLUSIVE

ANDHRA: EARTHMOVER USED TO TAKE BODY OF SUSPECTED PATIENT TO CREMATORIUM

The 70-year-old had died on Thursday night with symptoms of coronavirus.

VIDEO OF THE DAY

RAMPING UP
HEALTHCAREHow infrastructure saw
an increase during the
Covid-19 pandemic

LIFESTYLE

CHALLENGES FOR THE
DIFFERENTLY-ABLEDSocial distancing,
inaccessible mobile
apps pose challenges

EXPRESS AUDIO

Impact of Covid-19
on environmental
clearances

In the latest episode of The Sandip Roy Show, Kanchi Kohli (Centre for Policy Research) talks about how the pandemic has affected the decision making process in the Ministry of Environment

7 cops exonerated in
Hapur custodial deathAMIL BHATNAGAR
NOIDA, JUNE 27

SEVEN POLICEMEN in Uttar Pradesh have been exonerated in connection with an alleged custodial death in Hapur district last year, officers said on Saturday.

The family members of Pradeep Tomar had alleged in an FIR that DSP Santosh Mishra, Pilkhuwa Station House Officer (SHO) Yogesh Balian, Sub-Inspector Ajab Singh, and four unnamed policemen had tortured the 35-year-old to death on the intervening night of October 13 and 14.

While Mishra was declared innocent the next month, the district police absolved the other accused in a final report filed in March.

"The final report in the case was filed in March and was accepted by the court shortly before they were ordered to stop functioning (due to the pandemic and lockdown). The allegations were found to be baseless and there was no evidence linking the actions of policemen to the death... the minor son of the deceased, who was a witness, and family members, recorded their statements in front of the magistrate, stating that the policemen were not involved," said Hapur Superintendent of Police Sanjiv Suman.

Pradeep Tomar's family members told *The Sunday Express* that Tomar had left home in Pilkhuwa town on the evening of October

13, telling his wife Rajni that he was going to help his younger brother, whose motorcycle had a flat tyre. He took his 11-year-old son along with him.

He died a few hours later in police custody. According to officials, he was called to the station by policemen, and detained in connection with the murder of his sister-in-law. Tomar's son said his father was kicked, punched, hit with planks of wood, given electric shocks, and repeatedly pierced with a screwdriver by police personnel.

However, the police denied torturing Tomar, and claimed that his injuries were the result of a clash over an accident that occurred on the night he was called for questioning.

"A woman named Preeti was murdered in August, but she could not be identified then. Once identified, we found that her husband Digamber allegedly got her murdered with the help of a relative. Two people were hired for Rs 1.5 lakh, and Pradeep Tomar was allegedly supposed to pay them. He was married to Digamber's sister," then SP Yashveer Singh had told *The Sunday Express*.

The official said the 35-year-old was taken to a local hospital, and then to a medical facility in Meerut after he said that he was not feeling well. Following his death, three policemen were initially suspended, and DSP Santosh Mishra was transferred to another circle.

Locust attack: control
operations underway in
UP, Haryana, Rajasthan

New Delhi, Lucknow: As a locust swarm entered the outskirts of Delhi, the Union Agriculture Ministry on Saturday said more teams from Rajasthan have been deputed to help in the control operations being undertaken in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The control operations are underway in Rajasthan, Haryana and UP.

Meanwhile, locusts invaded several parts of Uttar Pradesh, including the home district of the UP Agriculture Minister Surya

Pratap Shahi, in the past 48 hours, officials said Saturday, adding they were taking steps to either chase the insects away or kill them.

The agriculture department said locust attacks were reported from Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Allahabad, Pratapgarh, Bhadohi, Azamgarh and Ambedkar Nagar on Friday. It said authorities of the neighbouring districts — Hamirpur, Banda, Fatehpur, Kaushambi, Mirzapur, Sultanpur, Mau and Ballia — have been asked to remain alert. **PTI**

FROM PAGE ONE

First signs of
trouble in
Pangong was
last Sept, days
after Ladakh
became UT

a brawl on the north bank on August 15, 2017 did the rounds. That scuffle, in which four Army and ITBP personnel were injured, had occurred while soldiers of both countries were locked in a tense 73-day standoff on the Doklam plateau at the India-Bhutan-China trijunction.

While both sides continued to object to patrolling and followed the banner drill — each side showing a banner for 10 minutes, asking the other side's patrol to return to its area — there was no physical clash, the official said.

Indian patrols were allowed to proceed on foot towards Finger 8, while the Chinese patrols would come in vehicles up to Finger 4. The patrols would often be intercepted short of their destination, but there was no attempt to completely block them.

The change in the Chinese approach, the official said, came on September 10 last year when PLA troops vehemently started blocking Indian patrols from proceeding towards Finger 8. This was barely a month after the Bill for abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and creation of Ladakh as a separate Union Territory was passed in Parliament on August 5.

Tensions were high and things went out of hand when two PLA companies came in eight heavy vehicles up to Finger 4 on the morning of September 11. Sharp words were exchanged, and a violent scuffle ensued, the official said, leaving 10 Army and ITBP personnel injured. The brawl extended to the waters of the lake, where three Army boats were damaged by Chinese soldiers. The Indian side also damaged two Chinese boats.

PLA soldiers also removed a semi-permanent structure of stones made by the Indian side, a kind of an observation post, at Finger 4. They then constructed a similar stone structure to the west of their base at Finger 8, the official said, and started blocking Indian patrols from proceeding towards their destination.

Indian troops began taking an alternate track to reach Finger 8 on foot, going behind the heights at Finger 4. This was strongly objected to by the Chinese and tensions mounted in the area, leading to the violent scuffle on the intervening night of May 5/6 this year which not only left many soldiers on both sides injured but also triggered the standoff.

In the past two months, there have been at least three clashes between Indian and Chinese soldiers in the Pangong Tso area. As seen in satellite images, the Chinese side has constructed pill-boxes, shelters, breast-walls and bunkers at Finger 4, both on the bank and the ridge, where they have deployed troops in large numbers.

The location of LAC in the Pangong Tso area has been a contentious issue between both countries, as evident from the number of Chinese transgressions recorded by the Indian side. There were 142 Chinese transgressions in 2019, up from 72 in 2018 and 112 in 2017.

2 more deaths in
Galwan: Soldiers
building a bridge
drown in river

team," said Khan's uncle, Budhdin Khan. "He was in a boat which overturned, and he died," he said. More's family said they were

also made necessary arrangements to reopen Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for Sikh pilgrims."

"To ensure adherence to the health guidelines, Pakistan has invited India to work out necessary SOPs for reopening of the Corridor," it said.

Sources in New Delhi said "cross-border travel has been temporarily suspended as part of measures to prevent and contain the spread of coronavirus. Further views would be taken in consultation with health authorities and other stakeholders

told that he dived into the river to rescue two other soldiers. While he managed to rescue them, More was seriously injured when he hit his head on a submerged rock. He is survived by his parents, wife and three children, including an infant.

His father, Vikram More, said he last spoke to him 10 days ago. "Sachin had told me that the situation in the Galwan Valley was serious. He assured me he was fine and said I shouldn't worry," he said.

Khan's mother, Nasima Bagum, said she last spoke to him two days back. "He said he would come home soon. He never gave details of the situation there... He said there may be a problem with phone connectivity, and I shouldn't worry if he didn't call. I have lost everything. He was our only support," she said.

Khan, who joined the Army in 2014, is survived by his mother and two siblings.

‘PTI’s coverage
not in national
interest’

Prasar Bharati is reviewing the need for continued relationship with PTI and a decision in this regard will be conveyed soon."

When contacted, PTI said: "We have received a letter from the Prasar Bharati this afternoon. We are examining it and will respond in due course with the facts."

This comes amid the ongoing border standoff between India and China which has claimed the lives of 20 Indian soldiers.

"It is also mentioned that the PTI had... been time and again alerted by the Public Broadcaster on editorial lapses resulting in dissemination of wrong news harming public interest," the letter added.

Prasar Bharati, which runs Doordarshan and All India Radio, is an autonomous institution owned by the Union Government. Since 2013, Prasar Bharati paid Rs 9.15 crore annually to PTI for its services. However, since 2017, the public broadcaster has been holding back about 25 per cent as it wants to renegotiate the costs.

China's ambassador to India Sun Weidong had published his version of the PTI interview on the website of China's embassy in India. This had just three questions and his answers.

In the interview, Sun blamed India for the LAC stand-off and, when asked about the resolution of the dispute, said that the "onus is not on China."

PTI, in a subsequent report from Beijing, said that it had questioned Sun on China's transgressions across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and its build-up but the envoy did not answer these.

Incidentally, the PTI interview marked the first instance that a Beijing official had gone on record

concerned."

"It is to be noted that Pakistan is trying to create a mirage of goodwill by proposing to resume the Kartarpur corridor on June 29, at a short notice of two days, while bilateral agreement provides for information to be shared by India with the Pakistan side at least seven days before the date of travel. This would need India to open up the registration process well in advance," sources said.

"Besides, Pakistan has not built the bridge on their side across the flood plains of Ravi

to admit that during the violence in Galwan Valley on June 15, there had been "casualties" on the Chinese side as well.

PTI, registered in 1947, began its operations in 1949. An estimated 99 media organisations own all 5,416 of its shares as of March 2019. The PTI board has 16 members, including four independent directors, and the board's chairpersonship is rotated every year. Punjab Kesari's CEO and editor-in-chief is the current chairman. It is the largest news agency in the country and earns through subscriptions from media groups.

HC rejected,
Delhi police
repeated

the faith of the people in the secular image (of) the country," He was denied bail.

The same day, bail applications of another accused Ashwani, in four cases registered in Karawal Nagar, were opposed on similar grounds. He got bail in all four cases.

JUNE 9: Bail applications from four riot-accused — Ashutosh (1 case, Khajuri Khas), Mitthan (1 case, Khajuri Khas), Surender (1 case, New Usmanpur) and Suaib (1 case, Bhajanpura) — were contested to avoid sending a "wrong message". Only Ashutosh got bail.

JUNE 4: Bail applications in two cases registered in Khajuri Khas against accused Asif were opposed on the ground that "granting of bail at this early stage may send adverse message (to) society and weaken the faith of the people (in) the country's secular image". The same argument was used against Taseem in one case in Bhajanpura. Bail was granted in all three cases.

JUNE 3: Bail applications from accused Deepak (2 cases, Welcome) and one from Raj Kamal (1 case, Welcome) were opposed so that no "wrong message" was sent. Bail was denied in all three cases.

MAY 22: The investigating officer (IO) opposed bail applications in three cases registered in New Usmanpur against accused Manish, submitting that "granting him bail at this stage would send a very adverse message (to) the society". Bail was granted in all three cases.

MAY 3: "Granting of bail may send wrong message to the society" was one of the six grounds on which the IO opposed accused Gulfisha's bail application in a case registered in Jaffrabad. Bail was denied.

The High Court order has been cited by defense counsel, too, to press for bail in the riot cases, but again with mixed results.

For example, reliance on the order brought relief for Ziauddin in a case registered in Dayalpur — bail was granted on June 19. But a similar reference on June 6 did not

river despite having committed to it in the bilateral agreement. With the advent of monsoon, it would need to be evaluated whether pilgrim movement is possible through the corridor in a safe and secure manner," sources said.

On June 23, India asked Pakistan to reduce the strength of its High Commission in New Delhi by half, and said it would do the same at its mission in Islamabad within a week.

This is a fallout of tensions between the two sides in the past few weeks over intimi-

get relief for Shadab Ahmed, who has been charged in Dayalpur in the murder of a police official. A district court ruled that the applicant was "not entitled for bail considering the overall impact of the incident on the society at large".

Mumbai reports
Kawasaki-like
symptoms
among young
Covid cases

fever and inflammation in blood vessels, and can sometimes cause permanent damage to coronary arteries.

Of Maharashtra's 14,474 under-20 Covid-19 cases, 5,103 are under 10 years, and 9,371 between the ages of 11 and 20.

The 14-year-old's father is a staffer at Kokilaben Hospital. Last week an ELISA test showed he had developed antibodies against Covid-19, indicating he had the virus and his body had fought it off. The 14-year-old was brought to hospital on Wednesday.

"These children can deteriorate fast. She came to us early so we were able to stabilise her for two days, but her condition deteriorated again," said Dr Tanu Singhal, a paediatric infectious diseases expert at the hospital, adding that the teenager had high white blood cell count (indicating an infection) and low blood pressure.

Dr Singhal added that while Kawasaki disease generally affects those aged less than five, children between 10-14 years with Covid were showing its symptoms. "It is not Kawasaki disease, but similar to it," Singhal underlined, with Kawasaki patients generally also exhibiting red tongue and eyes. "Children mostly develop the Kawasaki-like symptoms two-three weeks after a Covid-19 infection."

Dr Singhal said she had seen two similar cases in Mumbai, one at the SRCC Hospital and another at a private hospital in Jogeshwari. Both had inflammation, fever and rashes and both were negative for Covid-19. "It is possible they tested negative because their Covid viral load had reduced," she said.

CEO of Bai Jerbai Wadia Hospital Dr Minnie Bodhanwala also said that he had started recording cases of Covid-19 along with symptoms of Kawasaki. Dr Biswa R Panda, a paediatric cardiac surgeon at the hospital, said they had seen four cases of children showing symptoms similar to Kawasaki but testing Covid-19 negative. "It is possible they had developed antibodies by then. We are still in the initial stages and need more data to draw conclusions," Panda said.

Dr Mukesh Sharma, head of the paediatric department at KEM Hospital, said they had seen

symptoms of Kawasaki surface more than three weeks after Covid-19 infection. "Kawasaki disease is an immunological reaction to a virus. We cannot be sure if coronavirus is directly responsible for it. In children it is possible that the signs emerge as a response of the immunity system."

KEM Hospital is yet to note such cases, said Dean Dr Hemant Deshmukh.

Ten months ago, Pakistan had downgraded bilateral ties after India revoked the special status granted to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370.

Kejriwal admits
bed shortage led
to death spike,
thanks Centre for
'holding hand'

had helped Delhi deal with the crisis. "The first weapon was increasing the number of beds. Earlier, I used to get calls well into the night, people asking me to help arrange beds. I would try to help all night. We then ordered private hospitals to reserve beds and turned a few private and government hospitals into dedicated Covid facilities. Hotels were attached with hospitals. They were angry, they went to court, but we fought and won. Now, 3,500 beds are ready in hotels and the capacity of hospitals has been increased. The Radha Soami centre in Chattarpur has 10,000 beds and 2,000 have been made functional... There are around 13,500 hospital beds in Delhi now and close to 7,500 are available. But we will not sit idle. We will make more arrangements," Kejriwal said.

The second weapon, according to the CM, was testing and isolation. "Initially, some labs gave wrong results and we had to take action against them. In the first week of June, we were doing 5,000 tests. Now we are doing 20,000 daily... I thank the Centre for giving us antigen kits and holding our hand."

Distribution of pulse oxymeters to people in home isolation and sending oxygen concentrators to people if their oxygen saturation levels drop, Kejriwal said, was the third weapon, adding that soon all government hospital beds will have oxygen facilities.

Crediting plasma therapy and surveys and screening as the last two weapons, Kejriwal said that plasma therapy had been seen to work best in moderate patients, stopping them from sinking further. He said 20,000 people would be screened as part of the serological survey in the city starting Saturday. The data will give a better idea of the transmission across Delhi.

During the webcast, the CM said that initially, when not much was known about the virus and the city did not have many testing kits, close to 35,000 people returned to Delhi from various countries.

"People from all over the

world, especially from those countries where there was an outbreak, wanted to come back. The Centre took the right decision and brought them back and around 35,000 came to Delhi. They were screened for fever at the airport. Those who had fever were sent to hospital. The others were sent home. Some were also quarantined. When these people went back home, naturally, corona got transmitted to their contacts. In those days, there were no testing kits or testing labs available, testing was not done at the scale it is done today. Then, the lockdown was announced. People stayed indoors and the rate of transmission slowed. When the lockdown was eased, we expected a rise in cases but they rose beyond our expectations," he said.

He also said that the idea of another lockdown was discussed after the spike. "We had two options — to lock down once again or to fight corona. People said that the lockdown will have to be eased sooner or later, so we decided to fight."

First Covid,
now hunger,
Bhagalpur
migrants start
packing — again

said MNREGA work was on the rise, but didn't have the numbers. In front of him, four labourers were digging up dirt for the pond. They were MNREGA workers who had never left the village.

In Bhagalpur, the number of households that worked under MGNREGA declined to 40,118 in May this year in comparison to 43,431 during the same month last year. The number of person-days generated, too, came down to 7.55 lakh against last year's 9.16 lakh.

In the absence of work, conversation turns to the future. Anil Singh earned Rs 600 a day as a mason in Delhi. More than a month ago, he paid Rs 3,500 to be one of 70 people, squashed in the back of a truck for three nights and two days. He ate one packet of biscuits and six bananas over that time. But now? "Chori karenga (We will steal)," he says, half in jest, half in pain. Then, his eyes begin to well up. "They say soil is gold here. Is the soil more fertile in Punjab than here? There, they put up industries. Here, they put up nothing."

There is comfort in family, and the fields provide some food. Yet, the residents are buying fewer soap bars and lesser salt; fewer vegetables and no fruit; and, no shampoo. "There is also the weight of debt," says Diwakar Kumar who worked in Rajkot, and has taken a Rs 50,000 advance on his salary. Others have taken from Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000 from their employers.

For now, these are loans interest-free. "But if there is a medical problem, or something else, where will the money come from? The mahajans (money lenders) will give you money at an interest of five per cent per month. Nobody survives that," says a resident.

"We must go back to our jobs and earn," he says. Rakesh Ranjan Singh and Kailash Prasad will stay for a month, until paddy transplantation is over. Some others will hold out till "Chhat Puja", and perhaps the state elections. But Ranjit, 21, is clear: "I will leave soon." He worked in an advertising company in Ranchi, fixing billboards. "The company owes me Rs 15,000, and I am afraid I will lose that money," he says. He is afraid of Covid, too. And when he had set off for his village on a motorcycle, he was beaten by policemen, several times, he says. "All I want is to stay home and work here. But I can't. Every day, I tell myself, I will leave tomorrow."

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NORTH MCD MAYOR SAYS ISSUE RESOLVED NOW

As Hindu Rao turns Covid only, staff say unpaid for months

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

ON SATURDAY, as Hindu Rao Hospital was being converted into a Covid facility, medical staff and nurses staged a protest outside over alleged lack of infrastructure and delay in salaries. This was the second protest at the hospital, the biggest under the North MCD.

Dr Peeyush, an orthopaedic surgeon, said, "We have not received our salary for two months. The administration didn't provide us with proper accommodation and transport. I had to ask my relatives to help me with food and stay. There are no clean washrooms or donning rooms here. We wear PPE kits but don't have proper cooling systems. How can we work like this in this weather?" Nurses alleged that some of them were evicted from their rented accommodations by landlords, but the hospital administration did not help.

A nurse, who did not wish to



Lack of proper accommodation, transport and clean washrooms are among other issues alleged by the staff

be identified, said, "We are scared as the hospital doesn't have adequate infrastructure to deal with Covid patients. When I was evicted, I had to take help from doctors, who spoke to the landlord. The administration keeps saying our salaries will be credited in our account in a day or two. We are waiting. My parents have been very supportive and send me extra money every month."

Dr Abhimanyu Sardana, president of the Resident Doctors' Association, said doctors and MCD officials met on Saturday. "The protest was important as the hospital can't be converted into a Covid facility without fixing other matters. They are now installing new ACs and repairing some old ones. We have been told salaries will be paid to staffers soon. Two hotels have been booked for doctors and nurses will be accommodated at nearby Fab hotels," he

said. The Delhi government had ordered that the hospital be converted into a Covid facility on June 14. However, doctors said the process was delayed as there was "no segregation and facilities" inside the premises. On Saturday, after the protest, doctors admitted over four Covid patients at the hospital.

North MCD mayor Jai Prakash said, "We agree there were issues but this was because the Delhi government didn't support us. We couldn't get money from taxes, stamp duty and other work during the lockdown. We usually get over Rs 500 crore a month but now we only get Rs 200 crore. It was difficult to give salaries to doctors during this time. Now, we have generated enough money to help our healthcare workers. I will inspect the hospital to ensure all requirements are met," adding, "We took time to convert the hospital as many preparations had to be made. There was paperwork and the salary delay. We had to deal with all this on our own".

Amid lockdown, Delhiites complain of high power bills, BSES suggests self meter reading

ANANYA TIWARI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

WITH FIELD workers not going house to house to take meter readings during the lockdown, residents have been getting steep power bills — in some cases up to Rs 15,000 — for one month of usage. These bills, officials said, are being prepared without subsidies calculated into the total amount, leading to some confusion among customers.

The BSES, which runs two sub-discoms — the BYPL and the BRPL — has been issuing provisional electricity bills ever since the lockdown was imposed and the field workers of the company

were unable to go on-spot for meter readings. The discom has allowed customers to check the meters themselves, and apply for a revised bill as per protocol.

However, in many cases, bills have been inflated despite providing meter readings and residents are now having to approach discoms offices to rectify the errors.

Sushil Kothari (43), a salesperson living in Harsh Nagar, said he had been noting readings and sending it to the BSES. He said, "For May, I consumed 176 units, but I still got a provisional electricity bill of over Rs 2,000." Kothari lives with his family and has one air conditioner in his house. On June 26, he reached out to BSES

again and got the matter rectified. "I got it checked, and my bill came out to be zero," he said.

"For bills raised till June 30, 2020, consumers can get a rebate of up to Rs 220 in their electricity bills. All they have to do is pay their bills within 7 days of bill generation and do 'self meter reading' of their electricity usage. This will ensure that apart from getting the rebate, they can also get electricity bills based on actual meter reading and not provisional reading," BSES officials said.

The formula being used to set the amount billed in the provisional bills is set by the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC). "Such provisional bills will get regularised

in future when the actual meter reading for the provisional period is available," said BSES official.

As per the DERC order, due to the lack of regular staff to do meter readings, discoms were directed to issue provisional bills to customers. As per an information bulletin released by the BSES Delhi in May, the provisional bills are based on the corresponding power consumption of the same month last year. If this reading is unavailable, then the average consumption of preceding three billing cycles is used. The discom has also placed a moratorium on fixed charges till June 30. The accumulated charges will be spread over the next three billing cycles after June 30.

Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India

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ADVERTORIAL

Address your hair loss concerns at the earliest!



Dr. Gaurav Nakra, MD (Skin & V.D) Gold Medalist is founder and consultant Dermatologist at Centre for Skin, New Delhi. He has worked in both Government Institutions and state of art Aesthetic Centres to gain rich experience in the field of Clinical Dermatology as well as Aesthetic Dermatology.

He has completed his Fellowship in Laser Medicine under the guidance of Prof. Laubach in Toulouse, France. He is actively involved in conducting trainings in Lasers and Fillers for young Dermatologists & Post Graduate students in various forums and societies.

His fields of interests are Paediatric Dermatology, Drug Interactions in Dermatology and other Systematic Drugs, Scar management with Lasers, Periorbital Rejuvenation with Fillers and Dermal Hyperpigmentary Disorders.

He is most passionate about treating Hair Disorders. He has been actively involved in Anti Hair Loss Procedures like Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy since its introduction in India almost ten years back and has large number of extremely satisfied patients who were suffering from hair fall or baldness.

At what point should women and men start considering professional help for thinning & hairloss?

We must understand the difference between hair shedding/ hairfall and hair thinning. Excessive shedding or hairfall can be caused by a lot of external reversible factors like stress, nutritional insufficiency, sleep disturbance, hormonal fluctuations, post-injury or illness or seasonal shedding. It may improve in a couple of months by taking care of diet & regulating the sleep cycle. If this excessive hairfall persists beyond 3 months, we must see a dermatologist. On the other hand, hair thinning & increased visibility of scalp are always serious concerns as they are mostly irreversible without treatment and requires immediate dermatology consultation.

Who is a trichologist?

People are confused about whom to consult for hair loss. Actually a specialized dermatologist or skin specialist is the most appropriate person for treating disorders of hair & nails.

In a typical hairloss consultation, what does a dermatologist look for?

It's a comprehensive approach involving history, examination & certain tests if required. We first ask about the history of onset, family tendency, dietary pattern, medicinal history, previous treatment history, stress, sleep cycle etc. We examine the pattern of hairloss, quality & thickness of hair, presence of scalp infections/dandruff etc., Certain tests like trichoscopic examination, hair pull test etc. may be performed in the OPD. We may also ask for certain blood tests to rule out deficiencies or hormonal problems.

What are the few things you tell people who come to you?

The two most important things are patience and persistence. Any improvement in hairloss is apparent only after 3-4 months of regular treatment & to improve hair health. We have to take care of our routine & diet as well.

Is there anything women &

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Apart from taking a nutritious & balanced diet, improving their sleep cycle, regularly cleansing the scalp and cutting down on smoking and/or junk food, the best thing would be to consult a dermatologist as soon as possible. It is always easier to prevent hairloss than getting back lost hair.

men can start doing on their own as soon as they notice the first signs of hair loss?

Apart from taking a nutritious & balanced diet, improving their sleep cycle, regularly cleansing the scalp and cutting down on smoking and/or junk food, the best thing would be to consult a dermatologist as soon as possible. It is always easier to prevent hair loss than getting back lost hair.

Hairloss is a common problem with uncommon expensive solutions. Why is it so ?



Dr Gaurav Nakra M.D.

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In Jharkhand, social audit finds nearly half the people didn't get full lockdown ration

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, JUNE 27

■ FORTY-EIGHT per cent people did not receive full two months' ration, as promised by the Jharkhand government during the lockdown period
■ Out of 1,255 families inspected, which had pregnant/lactating women or children below five years of age eligible for Anganwadi support, only 1,086 families received the benefits; and among them more than a third – 34 per cent – did not receive nutritional support
■ Out of 1767 families eligible under Mid-May Meal scheme, around 20 per cent did not get the benefits.

These are some of the findings mentioned in a report prepared by Jharkhand's Social Audit Unit, under the Rural Development Department, created to "promote transparency and accountability in implementation of the programs".

The audit was conducted in 23 districts and 254 blocks of the state between April 27 and May 7, covering 4,428 families for three types of food safety schemes: Public Distribution System (PDS), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) or Anganwadi centre, and the Mid-Day Meal plan (MDM). The report was submitted to the respective departments on Thursday. The audit assumes signifi-

cance since this is the first such inspection done by the Social Audit Unit (SAU) on PDS --- FIRs have been initially registered against several PDS dealers after complaints of irregularities in grain distribution.

The report said that besides the Covid-19 pandemic, "hunger is a major community issue faced by migrant workers and other vulnerable communities". It reported that a "large population of Jharkhand is affected by poverty". SAU state coordinator Gurjeet Singh said, "Though a large number of eligible families are getting benefits of food security schemes, the small percentage not getting it might be most vulnerable."

The report said that "2062 beneficiaries that received two or more months' ration said that the quantity was given as per provisions, whereas 1898 people (48%) didn't receive quantity as per provision..." The SAU reported that 91.9 per cent households in Jamatra, 73.4 per cent in Palamau, and 65.2 per cent in Dumka "didn't receives right quantity quoted for two months or more".

Jharkhand had distributed double the specified ration in April – one month's was advance for May – and an Antodaya Aay Yojna cardholder was eligible for 70 kg rice. Under Priority Household Card, each person eligible for 5 kg grains was to get double the amount.

The audit found that among the eligible 1,255 families, which had pregnant/ nursing women or children under 5 years, 1,086 were registered and the remaining 139 families were left out.

"Out of 1086, only 717 families registered with Anganwadi received nutritional food, while 369 (34%) families did not receive nutritious food...(and) maximum families belonged to Ramgarh with 32.4%, 23.0% in Jamtara and 21.0% of Godda families didn't get nutritious food from Anganwadi centre," the report said.

Under the Mid-Day Meal scheme, the audit found 1,767 families eligible – families which had children attending government schools in class VIII or below --- and during lockdown they were provided with foodgrain at home. Out of this, 353 families – 20 per cent – did not receive any grain, the audit reported.

"We found that among 353 families, 27.3% families belonged to Godda and 14.9% belonged to Giridih that didn't receive foodgrains under MDM...Out of 1414 families, 853 families said that they received quantity based on Midday Meal plan, while 561 families said the quantity of grains received were not as per provisions," the report said.

It said that the districts of Koderma (34.2%), Gumla (29.8%) and Pakur (29.6%) had the "highest such share".

KERALA CHURCH EVENT

PM: Constitution guiding light, govt doesn't discriminate

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI,
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JUNE 27

URGING EVERYONE in the country to join ranks for the advancement of the nation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his government has been "driven by the desire to empower 132 crore Indians" and that the Constitution has been "its guiding light".

Addressing the 90th birthday celebrations of Rev Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan in Pathanamthitta of Kerala via video conference, the Prime Minister said that his government does not discriminate between faith, gender, caste, creed or language.

"Our government has always been guided by sensitivity and a long-term vision to make India a growth engine. We have taken decisions not from comfortable offices in Delhi but after feedback from the people on the ground," Modi said. The call for Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) will ensure economic strength and prosperity



Prime Minister Modi during the virtual address

for every Indian, he said.

Listing the welfare programmes initiated by his government, the Prime Minister said the Ayushman Bharat scheme is the "largest health-care scheme in the world" through which more than a crore people have got "quality treatment".

The Prime Minister said the recently-introduced Pradhan Mantri Matasya Sampada Yojana, with an investment of over Rs 20,000 crore, is going to transform the fisheries sector, increase export earnings and provide employment to over 55 lakh people.

"The Holy Bible talks extensively about togetherness. Now is the time to join ranks and work together for the advancement of our nation. Think of this, how can our action contribute to the development of the nation."

Pointing out that "the people-driven fight" against Covid has given good results so far for the country, Modi cautioned people to not let their guards down. He also lauded the Mar Thoma Church for its role in the freedom struggle and for its contribution in the health and education sectors. "We have to be even more careful now and wearing masks, social distancing, avoiding crowded places, remains more important now. Covid-19 is not only a physical sickness that is a threat to the lives of people but also takes our attention to unhealthy lifestyles. A global pandemic implies humanity as a whole needs healing."

The PM said historic reforms undertaken in the space sector will ensure greater use of space assets and activities. He said youngsters in Kerala and South India, who are taking a keen interest in science and technology, will gain from these reforms.

State Congress in pieces, says Gujarat BJP chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GANDHINAGAR, JUNE 27

WELCOMING FIVE former Congress MLAs, who quit the party before the recently concluded Rajya Sabha elections in Gujarat on June 19, into the saffron-fold on Saturday afternoon, president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Gujarat, Jitu Vaghani, said the Congress party which supported the "tukde-tukde gang" was itself breaking into pieces in the state.

He said that during his tenure, there had been four such defections from Congress to BJP, even as two of the five MLAs who joined fumbled in their speeches and mixed up BJP with Congress. Four of these MLAs had formerly been

with BJP, before they got elected on a Congress ticket.

In a formal event attended by senior office bearers at BJP headquarters in Kamlam of Gandhinagar, Vaghani welcomed former MLAs JV Kakadiya (Dhari) and Pradyumansinh Jadeja (Abdasa), both of whom had quit Congress after Rajya Sabha elections were announced in March. Along with the duo, three other MLAs Brijesh Merja (Morbi), Jitu Chaudhary (Kaprada) and Akshay Patel (Karjan) had quit Congress in the first week of June.

These five exits since March not only cost Congress a Rajya Sabha seat, but helped BJP – which did not have the required numbers of MLAs – to win a third seat in the polls.



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DRAW OF FLATS

General public is hereby informed that draw of flats under Haryana Affordable Housing Policy 2013 of **SignatureGlobal Prime, Sector - 63A, District Gurugram**, being developed by **M/s SignatureGlobal (India) Private Limited** shall be conduct on **04/07/2020 at 09:30 AM** onwards at **The Pilazio Hotel, Plot No. 292-296, Sector - 29, HUDA City Centre, Gurugram**.

With the help of live streaming/telecast of draw proceeding on youtube live, Due to ongoing situation of Covid-19 pandemic, restriction were imposed by Ministry of Home Affairs, over public gathering in order to prevent spreading of corona virus disease.

As per MH/A/ DTPC Haryana Guidelines draw shall be conduct with maximum strength of 50 persons including draw committee and staff at site, remaining applicant shall participate in draw online after login into below provided link on YouTube live.

YouTube Link - <https://www.youtube.com/user/SignatureGlobal>

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NGOs – The Face of Humanity

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Ensuring sustainable development in society

THE term NGO in India denotes wide spectrum of organisations which may be non-governmental, quasi or semi-governmental, voluntary or non-voluntary.

Non-Governmental organisations play vital role in mobilising public attention to societal problems and needs. They are the principal vehicle through which communities can give voice to their concerns. They act as a catalyst in improving government performance. They broaden government's accountability by ensuring that the government is responsive to citizens at large

and not to particularly sectarian interests. Enhancement in the efficiency of delivery of many services by continuously involving residents is another primary role that an NGO plays.

Since the advent of Covid-19 pandemic in India, the NGO community has been steadfast in its approach to mitigate the effects of the disease through many steps. The focal point in these distressed times has been to address immediate relief activities right from providing supplies to migrants and providing support to end ben-

eficiaries. In every possible way they are acting as the saviours- the face of humanity.

Rapid globalisation during the 20th century has given impetus to the rise of the importance of NGOs throughout the world. It has been observed worldwide that international treaties and are centered mainly on the interests of capitalist

enterprises. In an attempt to counterbalance this trend, NGOs have developed to emphasise humanitarian issues, developmental aid and sustainable development. The NGOs may work on any level, be it national, international or community level. NGOs have also been major players in promoting human-oriented development

strategies at their own level, without the help of government and have emerged as a major force in driving the growing movement of corporate social responsibility. They are a powerful force for promoting good, clean governance and uplifting the deprived. They provide social support that governments are unable or unwilling

to provide. These organisations offer alternative perspectives and present the capacity to conduct a meaningful dialogue with disadvantaged communities. They foster pluralism, diversity and freedom. NGOs promote the diverse culture, something with which India is recognised worldwide.



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NIVEDA FOUNDATION is an independent organization working towards betterment of our society. With absolutely no religious and political affiliation we continue to serve our people to ensure they live with respect and dignity. From women empowerment to children education, which is both the means and the end to a better life, we believe in upliftment of the weaker section of our society.

Initiatives and Projects

• **Non Formal Education** – Running 11 Non Formal Free Education Centres in the slums of Noida, Gr Noida, Kalsar-Gujarat & Phaltan (Maharashtra). Educating more than 650 students.

• **Women Empowerment & Skill Development**- Running 2 Skilling Centres in Noida for empowering women & girls of the community and supporting them in earning their livelihood.

• **Health Initiative**- Organising various health camps in different slum areas and providing vaccination to more than 7500+students along with health check-ups for more than 12500+families.

• **POSH** - Niveda Foundation is an empanelled institute under Ministry of Women and Child Development to take Trainings on Sexual Harassment at Workplace.

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not end at relief, hence, through the people who are strength of IGSSS, we ensure a sustainable revival of people's livelihood. Currently, along with the COVID-19 relief work, **we are also helping 1000+ families in South 24 Parganas in West Bengal affected by Cyclone Amphan.**

When **COVID-19** closed in India as a dark cloud, exposing people to multiple vulnerabilities, IGSSS with the support of volunteers, partners, community based groups have been supplying relief material, sanitation kits, spreading the importance of social distancing through posters and public announcements. IGSSS also arranged buses for migrant workers to travel back home.

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REACHED **842,031** **99** **21**
People Districts States



+2,80,000
Farmers

Helped farmers to increase farm production.



+56,991
Liters

Constructed water conservation structures.



+22,000
Families

Facilitated access of to safe drinking water.



+5,700
Families

Increased food and nutrition security.



+150
Schools & Anganwadi Centers

Renovated government schools and anganwadi centres.



+60,000
People

Provided relief to most affected people by disasters.



+48,000

Supported labourers, domestic workers, street vendors and homeless to access entitlements.

"I had nothing left to take care of my wife and two children during the lockdown. I lost my job in the laundry and exhausted my meagre savings. Living in a chawl, to follow physical distancing was impossible. I desperately wanted to go back to my native place", shared Devendra. Nine years back, Devendra migrated from Uttar Pradesh to Mumbai and was working in a Laundry, till the lockdown was imposed. Scores of migrant workers were desperately trying all possible means to reach their homes.

IGSSS' along with its partners arranged buses for people like Devendra to travel back safely to their hometowns.

8 GOVT & POLITICS

Pawar on Ladakh: Matter of national security, should not be politicised

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SATARA (MAHA), JUNE 27

AMID A war of words between the Congress and the BJP over the face-off with China, NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Saturday said that matters of national security should not be politicised and added that one cannot forget China had captured about 45,000 sq. kms of Indian land after the 1962 war.

Pawar's remarks came in response to a query about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's charge that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had surrendered Indian territory to the Chinese aggression.

Pawar also said the Galwan Valley incident in Ladakh cannot immediately be labelled as a failure of the Defence Minister, as Indian soldiers were alert during patrolling. Speaking to reporters here, the former Union minister said the episode is "sensitive".

It was China which played the provocateur in the Galwan Valley, he said.

Twenty Indian soldiers were killed in a violent clash with their Chinese counterpart in eastern Ladakh on the night of June 15. "What happened was they (the Chinese troops) tried to encroach on our road and were pushed physically. It was not somebody's failure. If somebody comes (within your territory)



Sharad Pawar

while you are patrolling, they may come at any time. We cannot immediately say it is the failure of the Defence Minister in Delhi," Pawar said. "Patrolling was on there. There was a scuffle, which means you were alert. Had you not been, you would not even have realised when they (Chinese) came and went. Hence, I don't think it is right to make such an allegation at this juncture," he added.

On the allegation raised by Gandhi, Pawar said one cannot forget that China captured around 45,000 sq km after the 1962 war. "That land is still with China. I don't know if they (China) have encroached on some area now again. But when I make an allegation, I should also see what had happened when I was there (in power). If such big land was encroached upon then, it cannot be ignored. It is a matter of national security and it should not be politicised is what I feel," he said.

At the same time, the NCP chief hit out at the Centre over the rising prices of fuel, saying he had never seen the rates going up daily.



Mediapersons outside Congress leader Ahmed Patel's residence in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

ED questions Patel in Sterling Biotech money laundering case

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) on Saturday questioned senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel in connection with an alleged money laundering case involving the Sterling Biotech group of Gujarat.

The ED had earlier summoned Patel (70) for questioning, but he cited the Covid-19 guidelines advising senior citizens to stay indoors.

Sources said an ED team reached Patel's residence at 11.40 am on Saturday, and questioned him until evening.

The Vadodara-based pharmaceutical firm is suspected to have defrauded banks of more than Rs 14,000 crore. Its promoters—Nitin Sandesara, Chetan Sandesara and Deepti Sandesara—are currently in Albania, where they have taken citizenship. The Indian authorities are trying to get them extradited.

After the questioning, which lasted eight-and-a-half hours, Patel told reporters, "Friends of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah came to my house. I replied to all questions that were asked. I feel sorry for these officials that they

are being used to divert attention—at a time when China has taken our land; instead of getting our land back, they are going after Opposition leaders."

According to sources, Patel was questioned about his links with the Sandesaras based on the statement of a witness, Sunil Yadav, an employee of the Sandesara Group.

Last year, ED had questioned Patel's son Faisal, and son-in-law Irfan Siddiqui. While Faisal was present at Patel's residence on Saturday, it was not clear whether he was also questioned.

In his statement to the ED, Yadav has said he bore the "expenses of Rs 10 lakh" for a party attended by Faisal, "arranged" entry at a night club for him, and delivered "Rs 5 lakh" to his driver in Khan Market, Delhi, on the instructions of Chetan Sandesara.

The ED probe is based on an FIR registered by CBI against Sterling Biotech Ltd in October 2017. The CBI had alleged that the group willfully defaulted on loans of over Rs 5,000 crore from a bank consortium led by Andhra Bank, and diverted the money for personal purposes of the promoters. Since then, the quantum of the scam has risen to Rs 14,000 crore.

"It is revealed during investigation that the loan funds were diverted for non-mandated purposes, layered and laundered through a web of multiple domestic as well as offshore entities. The main promoters have not only phoned off loan funds to finance their Nigerian oil business but also for their personal purposes," the ED said in a statement last year, when it attached foreign assets worth over Rs 10,000 crore belonging to the company.

According to ED, investigations have revealed that the group was engaged in round-tripping of Standby Letters of Credit (SBLCs) funds to the tune of Rs 4,500 crore by violating the RBI's conditions. "The said SBLCs were later devolved on the guarantor banks, causing wrongful loss to these public sector banks and to the public at large. Their strategy included incorporation of multiple shell companies, conducting circular transactions to artificially inflate turnover of flagship companies, claiming higher depreciations on non-existing machinery to avoid tax liabilities, and diverted the money for personal purposes of the promoters. Since then, the quantum of the scam has risen to Rs 14,000 crore.

"Rather than fighting the (coronavirus) pandemic and China, this government is more keen to fight the Opposition... We have nothing to hide, nor are we afraid to criticise and expose the government's failures and their past corruption."

Reacting to the developments, Congress leader Kapil Sibal said, "If you really wanted to investigate, why don't you investigate the names in Sahara diary, Birla diary... why doesn't CBI probe them? These are all motivated issues because they want to divert attention from the problem that the country is facing."

the web of multiple shell companies," the ED statement said.

In a statement later in the evening, Patel said, "If you were to do an analysis, you will see a clear pattern over the past many years. Every time there is Rajya Sabha, Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha election, or the government is facing a crisis, one or more investigative agencies become active on the instructions of one individual. Unfortunately, this time the Modi government's failure to manage a economic, health and national security crisis is so huge that none of the agencies can help spin the narrative."

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J&K admin gives domicile certificates to West Pakistani refugees, others

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, JUNE 27

THE JAMMU and Kashmir administration on Saturday issued domicile certificates to more than 50 West Pakistani refugees as well as members of the Balmiki and Gorkha communities who have long been living in the region but were not eligible for full citizenship rights under the erstwhile state's laws.

The certificates were distributed by Jammu Divisional Commissioner Sanjeev Verma at a special camp in Jammu. The beneficiaries hailed from different areas of Jammu district, including R S Pura, Bishnah, Bahu and Jammu South, an official statement here said.

The families of the refugees

BJP, Congress continue war of words on funds received by RGF

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

STEPPING UP its attack on the Congress, which has been hitting out at the government over the LAC standoff, the BJP on Saturday asked Congress president Sonia Gandhi not to hide behind "Corona or the situation in China" to avoid answering answers on funds received by Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF).

BJP president J P Nadda came out with more of "the deeds" of the Congress during the UPA regime, and said the party leadership had breached people's trust. He said: "I want to tell Soniji not to try to avoid the original questions because of Corona or the situation in China. The Army of India is able to protect the country and our borders and the country is safe under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi."

The Congress hit back, saying Nadda has lost his "political balance in his flailing attempts at distraction and diversion from the issues of national security and territorial integrity".

Addressing a press conference, Nadda alleged that former PM Manmohan Singh gave Rs 100 crore to RGF in the 1991 Union Budget and that RGF accounts were not allowed to go for CAG audit, nor is it under RTI. Posing 10 questions for Sonia, Nadda asked: "I want to know how such precious land on which Jawahar Bhawan is built was given to RGF on perpetual lease."

He alleged that NGOs and companies that have "deep commercial interests" had donated money and it is "a shame and sacrificing the national interests to accept money from foreign powers". Nadda said RGF "not only took the money and there were scams but also gave dodgy donations". He said Congress, which had targeted BJP over the issue of Mehul Choksi, should answer why Choksi took money from RGF.

He said RCEP was not in the interest of Indian farmers and



JP Nadda and Randeep Surjewala.

File

MSMEs, hence PM Narendra Modi did not join it, but the Congress government was keen to join it. "What was the need to be part of RCEP? How did India's trade deficit with China rise from \$1.1 billion to \$36.2 billion? Was this not quid pro quo?" he asked.

Reacting to the allegations, Congress communication department head Randeep Surjewala said the "wild and insidious hatred of the BJP vis-à-vis the Congress unfolds every day in an embarrassing and uglier fashion".

"No amount has been received as donation from Mehul Choksi personally as has been falsely alleged. Nor has any loan ever been given by RGF to him. The records of RGF reflect receipt of a modest donation of Rs 10 lakh from Navraj Estates Pvt. Ltd. (in the year 2013) of which Choksi was one of the Directors. The entire world knows the connection of Mehul Choksi to the Modi government and his consequent escape after duping banks of thousands of crores of public money," he said in a statement.

"Will BJP, like Rajiv Gandhi Foundation has done, ask Vivekananda Foundation and India Foundation to make public the list of its donors (including foreign individuals), companies, entities, organisations including those of Chinese origin, if any?" Surejwala asked. "Will the BJP declare the name of donors from whom it has received thousands of crores in donations through electoral bonds? Will the BJP disclose the source of funding, name of donors (including of Chinese origin) for 'Overseas Friends of BJP'?"

hailing from Bihar, became the first civil servant from outside Union Territory to get the status of domicile of Jammu and Kashmir.

As per the new rules, people residing in the Union Territory for 15 years, or those who have studied in it for seven years, or appeared in the Class 10 or 12 examination from an educational institution in the region, as well as their children, are eligible for domicile.

Also eligible are children of officials of the Central government, all India services, banks and PSUs, statutory bodies and Central universities, who have served in Jammu and Kashmir for 10 years.

Both the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party have reiterated their opposition to the new rules.

Yashwant to launch outfit to contest Bihar elections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA, JUNE 27

FORMER BJP leader Yashwant Sinha on Saturday announced his return to party politics by vowing to launch an outfit to contest the Bihar assembly polls, due later this year.

Sinha's announcement, made at a meeting of his outfit, Rashtra Manch, came as a surprise—he had taken *sanyas* (retirement) from party politics and said he would work towards "saving democracy" in the country. He had quit the BJP two years ago.

Sinha, who held the finance and external affairs portfolios in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government and has been severely critical of the Narendra Modi dispensation's policies and style of functioning, left the door open to poll tie-up with the Grand

Alliance in Bihar, which includes the RJD and the Congress.

"We will welcome everyone who comes and joins us," he said. "So far as (Bihar assembly) elections are concerned my party will contest it. It's not that I have any kind of reservations on contesting elections. We (the proposed alliance) will fight the polls with all our strength in order to create a better Bihar," Sinha said.

Quizzed about the parties interested in the proposed alliance by him, Sinha said it would be premature to divulge it but many leaders from Bihar were in touch with him over it.

About the name of his party, Sinha said he will announce it as soon as it is decided. The veteran political leader replied curtly when asked by reporters whether he himself would contest the assembly polls. "I will cross that bridge when I come to it."

Beijing will have to pay heavy price for aggressive military behaviour: experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

CHINA WILL have to pay a "heavy price" for decades for resorting to aggressive military behaviour towards India in eastern Ladakh as it will isolate the country globally, strategic affairs experts said on Saturday.

They said the economic cost of China's misadventure in the last couple of months in eastern Ladakh and South China will be "massive" as it has "exposed" Beijing's "real face" when the world is fighting the coronavirus pandemic. The experts also referred to China's tariff war with the US, growing bickering with Australia on trade-related issues and the fast-deteriorating situation in Hong Kong.

"China has made a huge mistake by resorting to aggressive military behaviour in eastern Ladakh. By triggering the standoff when the world is fighting the coronavirus pandemic, China has exposed itself globally," former Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Gurmit Singh said.

"The cost for China will be huge. It will be heavy. It will keep paying the cost for several decades for killing Indian soldiers in

Galwan valley on June 15. China has lost its goodwill in India and elsewhere," he added.

Referring to brutal attacks on Indian soldiers in the Galwan valley, he said the action has reinforced the view that China's People's Liberation Army is "just a political" force that does not conform to military standards.

Former Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Subrata Saha too said China is getting itself isolated by its unacceptable military aggression and the country will have to pay a heavy diplomatic and economic price for it. "China is isolating itself by its aggressive conduct both militarily and diplomatically. So there will be a price for it. It is putting itself into a corner," he said.

Lt Gen Saha said there will be a significant economic price that China will have to pay for its "misadventure".

The Indian and Chinese armies are locked in a bitter standoff in multiple locations in eastern Ladakh for the last six weeks, and the tension escalated manifold after 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a violent clash in Galwan valley on June 15. Following the clashes, the Army has sent thousands of additional troops to forward locations along the LAC.

As Nagaland Governor takes charge of law & order, those familiar with state say it was 'bound to happen'

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

WHILE NAGALAND Governor R N Ravi's letter to Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, in which he expressed his concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the state, has surprised many, officials familiar with the matters said it was "bound to happen, given developments in the state".

Ravi, in his June 16 letter, had given his detailed assessment of the law and order situation in the state to Rio's Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP)-led coalition government. The BJP is a key ally in the government.

Ravi's letter stated that he

would exercise his power as Governor, provided under Article 371 (A) of the Constitution, since the government has failed miserably in a sensitive border-state, sources said.

With the letter, the Governor has taken full charge of the important law and order decisions, including transfer and posting of officials.

According to an official, Governors had used powers under the Article until 2013, but when Ashwani Kumar took over (in March 2013), he did not interfere much into the administrative affairs.

"But Governor Ravi has been hands-on with the state's affairs," the official said.

Ravi has been the interlocu-



Governor R N Ravi and Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio.

File

tor for the Centre to finalise the Naga accord with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) to end the insurgency in the state.

Article 166 Clause 3 also gives powers to the Governor to allocate business of government among the ministers.



There have been serious concerns over law and order situation in the state for the Union government too, it is learnt. Officials pointed out that there have been a number of incidents of extortion by organised armed gangs—as mentioned by Ravi in his letter—in the last one year,

including one with a family close to a senior politician at the national level, who had to face the gangs while they were on visit to the state.

In his letter, Ravi wrote: "...I can no longer abstain from my Constitutional obligations for law and order in the state under Article 371 A (1) (b) of the Constitution of India. I hereby propose that hereafter important law and order decisions like transfer and posting of official entrusted with maintenance of law and order responsibilities of and above the district level will be after the approval of the Governor."

He also proposed periodical review of law and order situation in the state and issue required lawful directions, as well as re-

viewing of the Annual Performance Appraisal Reports of officers involved in the law and order process.

Clause 1b in Article 371(A), which deals with special powers given to Nagaland, provides immense powers to the Governor. It says: "The Governor of Nagaland shall have special responsibility with respect to law and order...for so long as in his opinion internal disturbances occurring in Naga Hills-Tuensang Area immediately before the formation of that State continue therein or in any part thereof..." In discharge of his functions, it states, "the Governor shall, after consulting the Council of Ministers, exercise his individual judgment as to the action to be taken".

ADVERTORIAL

Bringing Udupi eating to the Capital



FOUR decades ago Karnataka Food Centre set shop in Moti Bagh, near Sector-12, R.K. Puram a colony with residents who mostly were employed by the Government of India. Shekar Bangera, founder of Karnataka Food Centre wanted to introduce the uninitiated to the Udupi style idli, vada, dosa and its variant cuisine, including sambhar and combination of chutneys. For the scores of South Indians, the outlet was a go to place to experience the homely taste of the choice of food available.

Bangera's intention to provide simple to digest, healthy food that was easy on the pocket of people. The mild spice in the coastal Karnataka cuisine which is liberally laced with jaggery, gives a unique flavour, which is easy to go over all three meals in a day.

The centre is open for breakfast, lunch, evening snack and dinner. The vegetarian cuisine served is well sought after at all the times. Idli, vada, dosa, upma, variety of rice preparations including daily specials are the favourite of the patrons. The sizeable portions with a good dose of chutney and sambhar go well with the menu. It is a paradise for foodies across all age groups, which can be gauged by the crowds that throng to this centre and the waiting area which also frequently gets filled on occasions.



The dessert and beverage offerings are also in demand with filter coffee lovers getting their dose of authentic coffee at this place. Equally in demand is the kesari bhath which is a must have to conclude any meal. All these are available through the day, but the big draw is the lunch served here. The South Indian Thali is an experience one must try. Combination of rice, chapathi and poories makes

the meal not just elaborate but something to look forward to.

Further the mixed rice of the day is something that can be a meal of its own for ardent food lovers. The famous thing at Bisibela Bhaath, Lemon Rice, Puliogare (Tamarind Rice), Coconut rice, Tomato rice, etc are the day's special.

Evening snacks laced with pakora, dal vada and bonda can make you feel that

you are in Udupi. The evening dinner starts from 7PM with meals

For Bangera, the mission has always been to provide quality and hygienic food since inception. To achieve this objective, the cooks and staff is picked with care, with many of them working for several years at the outlet. Ability to manage the walk-ins as well as takeaway orders has over the years made this centre



work well for all types of customers. Bangera is a pleased man for his experiment has not just worked at this centre; it has also worked at its other outlet at ITO.

The Udupi Restaurant at ITO has for years served scores of journalists who work in the vicinity for long hours. This restaurant has a similar fare to offer from breakfast to dinner for even the medicos across the road from the

Maulana Azad Medical College and associated hospitals. With service, quality and a set menu, both the restaurants have managed to strike the balance between quality and pricing. At the same time, the south Indian fare served is unique and finds takers among a wide set of regular patrons and many others who travel from far and wide to experience the south Indian cuisine.

ADVERTORIAL

Quality made 'Ananda' a major dairy brand

With his entrepreneurship, Shri Radhe Shyam Dixit, who has transformed a small dairy into a national brand called 'Ananda', is keen on ensuring quality in products. As per him, Responsibility towards consumers is the sustainable spirit of Indian enterprises. He believes that domestic companies and their products have the potential to outrank the global competition. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call 'vocal for Local' 'is seen as a communication of energy through which Indian brands will dazzle the world.

Milk contains all the nutritional elements necessary for the body, which cannot be found in any other diet. Milk provides nourishment to all the tissues of the body and helps in keeping Vata, Pitta and Kapha balanced. It is one of the important foods that increase ojas. According to Ayurveda, ojus is produced in the body during digestion which strengthens the immune system by providing strength, but these benefits only come when milk and milk products meet all the standards of quality. Major dairy brands Ananda's milk products are in same line.

Range of Products: For Everyone

A long range of products are available under the Ananda brand. This strong product portfolio includes milk products as well as other food products. In general milk : full cream milk, Toned milk, double Toned milk, skimmed milk and kids milk which includes T20 Milk, T20 Gold Milk, Fit Milk, Supreme Milk, Ananda Halka-Phulka milk are favourites of consumers. Similarly, in milk-made beverages, Ananda has introduced flavoured milk, whey drink and buttermilk in the market. Other items include Ananda ghee,

butter, rabri, curd, lassi, panchamrit, kheer, dairy whitener, khoya, sweets, tea, cookies-rusks, chips, puffs, paneer, cheese snacks, milk shakes, oat milk, Nutri Bar, Gajak, sour cream, honey and honey drinks and baby food items are supplied in large parts of the country.

Focus on quality right from the beginning

In recent years the demand for this "complete diet" with all standards of quality has increased rapidly in the country. It was at this time when Radheshyam Dixit founded Gopaljee Dairy in 1989 to provide pure and fresh milk to the people. The aim was to provide international quality dairy products to the people - locally.



Ananda Dairy Chairman Radhe Shyam Dixit receiving the Best Dairy Brand Award at the India Dairy Awards 2020 ceremony on behalf of Agriculture Today Group.

Broad customer base

In the year 2012, its name was changed to Gopaljee Ananda. Today, more than 2 lakh farmers from 5,000 villages of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Delhi are progressing with Ananda. From them, the company procures 8 lakh liters of milk per day. Ananda has become



synonymous with trust among a wide customer base by establishing an extensive network of milk collection and product distribution and ensuring the quality of products.

Quality with clear and good intentions

Leadership, preparedness, foresight and strategy are required to go on a journey of success. These qualities lead any organization on the path of development and high quality operations. Ananda has ensured inclusion of these qualities at every stage of management. Radhe Shyam Dixit has always believed that if intentions are clear and good, here in this country, by using raw materials from local resources, world-class quality products can be created.

Commitment to quality is seen in 'Anand Karo!'

Ananda Dairy announced its first TV campaign in September 2017. The tagline of this brand campaign "Anand Karo!" disclosed the company's sentiment towards consumers. Expanding this, the company's chairman Radheshyam Dixit says that the way we conduct business in Ananda is a reflection of our principles. When you use Ananda products, be assured that you are getting the products available at the most reasonable price, which is with qualified service-level.

Respect for quality and reliability

At the India Dairy Awards 2020, Ananda was awarded the Best Dairy Brand Award. India's 70 **Most Trusted Power Brands** (2017) India's **Most Trusted Company Award** (2017).



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www.ananda.in

New Delhi

10 THE OUTBREAK

Low-cost steroid now part of govt's treatment protocol

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE CENTRE Saturday issued revised clinical management protocols for treatment of Covid-19 patients, including the low-cost anti-inflammatory drug Dexamethasone as an alternative to another steroid, Methylprednisolone, for moderate to severe cases.

The move by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare comes after Oxford researchers leading the RECOVERY clinical trials in the United Kingdom had announced that Dexamethasone reduced death by up to one-third in hospitalised Covid-19 patients who develop acute respiratory complications.

Both Dexamethasone and Methylprednisone are corticosteroids, which closely mimic cortisol, a hormone naturally produced in humans by adrenal glands. Dexamethasone is commonly used for treatment of rheumatological inflammatory conditions: inflammation of muscles, inflammation of blood vessels, chronic arthritis, and lupus.

Even before Oxford University had announced the results of the Dexamethasone

arm of the trial on June 16, India had already allowed the use of Methylprednisolone, as corticosteroid therapy in moderate and severe cases.

In the management of severe cases, the revised guidelines state: "For patients with progressive deterioration of oxygenation indicators, rapid worsening on imaging and excessive activation of the body's inflammatory response, glucocorticoids can be used for a short period of time (3 to 5 days)."

The guidelines add a note of caution: "A larger dose of glucocorticoid will delay the removal of coronavirus due to immunosuppressive effects."

In the Oxford Dexamethasone trial, 2,104 patients were administered the drug for 10 days, and the researchers said they saw fatalities fall by one-third in ventilated patients and by one-fifth in patients on oxygen.

"Based on these results, 1 (one) death would be prevented by treatment of around 8 ventilated patients, or around 25 patients requiring oxygen alone," the university said.

However, the study had found no evidence of benefit for patients who did not require oxygen. The trial did not study patients outside hospital settings either.



Dr Harsh Vardhan with other Union ministers at the meeting

8 states contributing 85.5 pc cases, 87 pc deaths, GoM told

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE HIGH-LEVEL Group of Ministers (GoM) on Saturday held its seventeenth meeting on the current status of Covid-19 cases in the country. It was highlighted that eight states — Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Telangana, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal — contribute 85.5 per cent of the active caseload and 87 per cent of the total deaths in India.

The meeting was chaired by Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan and included Union Foreign Minister Dr S Jaishankar, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Hardeep S Puri and Minister of State, Health and Family Welfare Ashwini Kumar Choubey. Members were briefed about recovery and mortality rates, doubling rate, ramped-up testing and strengthened healthcare infrastructure in various states.

The GoM was informed that the key focus areas are strict containment measures and surveillance; utilising full testing capacity; focus on monitoring of co-morbid and elderly population; predicting emerging

hotspots; leveraging digital tools such as Aarogya Setu; ensuring seamless patient admission processes; fatality mitigation by effective clinical management; focus on infrastructure preparedness (critical care beds, oxygen, ventilators and logistics).

"The GoM was also informed that, as on date, 15 central teams consisting of public health experts/epidemiologists/clinicians and a senior joint Secretary-level have been deployed to provide technical support to the states. Another central team is currently visiting Gujarat, Maharashtra and Telangana to strengthen ongoing efforts for management of Covid-19," the government said.

During the meeting, Dr Balram Bhargava, DG (ICMR), gave a detailed presentation on the testing strategy of ICMR. "He explained the serological survey as well as the increasing capacity for enhanced per day testing through various tests," the government said.

In a detailed presentation by K Shivaji, chairman of the Empowered Group-10, the GoM was briefed that the stipulated redressal time on Covid-19 public grievances was brought down from the usual 60 days for normal public grievances to three days to prioritise their quick disposal.

cases being reported.

Since June 1, there have been 2,183 cases and 84 deaths in Bengaluru, compared to 358 cases and 10 deaths from March 8 to May 31. As of Saturday, the city has 1,913 official active cases.

Sunday lockdown

The sharp spike in cases resulted in Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa calling an emergency meeting on Saturday evening in which a decision was taken to impose a complete lockdown in Bengaluru on Sundays from July 5, and to impose a curfew from 8 pm to 5 am. The deci-

Delay in testing surge, data 'managing' and high population led to Chennai, TN spike: experts

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JUNE 27

AS THE number of Covid-19 deaths in Tamil Nadu jumped from 160 on May 30 to 1,025 as on June 27, and the figure of confirmed cases from 21,184 on May 30 to 78,335, senior bureaucrats working on containing the pandemic and scientists and doctors monitoring the pattern of outbreak say the state did a few things wrong at a crucial stage, which led to the present crisis.

Many of these experts also said that the current situation is unlikely to overwhelm the state's health system in coming weeks if the ongoing efforts to contain the outbreak in Chennai — with an intense lockdown — succeed.

Chennai has 68 per cent of the state's total case load.

A senior bureaucrat monitoring the situation said the state would have been in a better position had it escalated testing in May, especially in Chennai. "For a combination of reasons — political, wrong calculations, and lack of coordination between the

Health Ministry and the Municipal Administration Ministry (which controls Chennai city corporation) — we delayed; waited until the second week of June to increase the testing rate," this officer said.

While 2,526 cases and 28 deaths as on May 1 went up to 13,191 cases and 87 deaths by May 30, daily testing saw only a minimal increase: from 9,615 samples tested each day on May 1 to 12,000 by month-end. It took another 10 days for the daily testing to touch to touch 17,000. There has since been a steady increase in testing — 33,000 samples, for instance, were tested on June 20.

When the state finally decided to increase testing, there was an expected increase in the number of cases as well, but the question was how did the death figure also rise: from 160 Covid deaths as on May 30, to 326 on June 10, and 704 on June 20.

Multiple sources in the Public Health Department said data was being "managed" — or fudged — since the beginning, as it was "a matter of pride for the political leadership". The reason



Chennai city corporation arranged auto-rickshaw services to take symptomatic people from crowded neighbourhoods to nearby medical camps and testing labs during the intense lockdown. Express

for the steady increase in death count after June 10 was due to a "reconciliation process," in which the state authorities started adding "missing deaths" to daily bulletins, a senior doctor

attached to the Health Department said.

This was following a controversy that nearly 200 deaths reported to Chennai corporation's health department were not re-

ported to the state Health Department since late April.

And, like in many other states, a complex bureaucratic system compounded matters.

According to a senior ICMR scientist who has seen the fight-back in Chennai, Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Delhi, there were two common challenges everywhere: "A huge population living in slums, and lack of administrative control of the state Health Departments on the city health department, which comes under these municipal corporations."

The civic body's health department is detached from state health system in all these cities, including Chennai, which played a big role in delaying the increased testing strategy in Chennai, the ICMR scientist said.

State Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan said the rise in deaths was proportionate to confirmed cases. "Every patient who comes to hospital is getting tested now; several deaths, including that of cancer patients and other critical illnesses, get added into the Covid count irrespective of complex medical rea-

sons. If you look at figures from April to May and June, you can see Covid cases have gone up and the increase in deaths were proportionate to cases. Compared to other cities with a huge population and cases, our death rate is still not alarming — at 1.2 now," he said.

Dr Prabhdeep Kaur, deputy director of ICMR-National Institute of Epidemiology, Chennai, said the biggest lesson here is the necessity for good public health systems in cities. "However, I believe Chennai should not face a situation where our health systems are getting overwhelmed by cases, like elsewhere," she said. "The ongoing strategy of aggressive testing in Chennai and other hotspots should be giving results in two weeks."

Dr Jayaprakash Muliyl, former principal of Christian Medical College, Vellore, said cities with large population and a high number of slums are bound to witness the outbreak. "The question is whether you are capable of handling cases with enough doctors and hospital beds and other health infrastructure," he said.



In home isolation

Shankersinh Vaghela tests positive

Ahmedabad: Former Gujarat Chief Minister Shankersinh Vaghela on Saturday tested positive for Covid-19 and is in home isolation, his IT and media in-charge Parthesh Patel said.

"He had fever for the last three days and so he got tested. His reports today came out positive and he has been isolated at his home in Gandhinagar," said Patel.

Vaghela (79) will seek medical advice on Sunday morning before deciding to shift to a hospital. "He has been visiting various hospitals and Covid care centres to meet patients for the last several days," Patel said.

Vaghela had recently quit the NCP and launched the 'Praja Shakti Morcho' to fight the BJP.

ENS



OPEN-AIR CLASS

With many students facing difficulties due to the lockdown and poor internet, Muneer Alam, a teacher, has started giving maths tuitions for Class 11 and Class 12 in an open ground in Eidgah area of Downtown Srinagar. Shuaib Masoodi

Rlys collects data on Shramik deaths, final toll may cross 100

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE NUMBER of migrants who have died taking Shramik Specials since May 1 is likely to cross the 100-mark, according to sources in states.

While the Railway Ministry is in the process of collecting the final data from all states as the latter had conducted the post-mortems, sources in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, which received the maximum number of these trains, indicated to The Indian Express that the figure is a little over 100 so far with many states yet to complete data collection.

Railways has officially said that it is still collecting the data and the exercise is not complete as states are yet to send the required data.

With the Monsoon Session of Parliament approaching, the process of the Centre getting the data from states might get expedited, sources in Delhi said, indicating that deaths on Railways premises would be counted. "Shramik Specials are still operational so the process is not complete yet," said a source.

An interim list had pegged the number of deaths at 80 a month ago — with a lot of data missing — and the Railway Ministry had tried to distance itself from the list containing data on deaths from May 9 to May 27.

Facing criticism on social media over the casualties, Railways had attributed many of the deaths to pre-existing health conditions.

"This is a state subject. States will share the information after they have completed the inves-

tigations... All the states have not shared the information yet," Railway Board Chairman V K Yadav said on Friday. Regarding compensation, Yadav pointed to procedures under the Railway Claims Tribunal on a "case-to-case" basis.

A former chairman of the Tribunal has told Railways that compensation can be given under the "eggshell theory" in law, based on which the RCT has awarded compensation in the past to the kin of a passenger who died on a train.

The list includes cases such as a body found in a toilet in an empty train, a four-year-old boy who died on a platform in Bihar, passengers "not feeling well" through the journey, and those with cancer, heart problem, paralysis, etc. A few deaths were also attributed to Covid-19.

Cases rise in Surat, 11 Army jawans test positive in Gujarat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, SURAT, JUNE 27

GUJARAT ON Saturday reported its highest single-day spike of 621 new Covid-19 cases, taking the overall count to 30,820. While Surat broke its daily record on Saturday, adding 174 fresh cases, Ahmedabad's daily count continued to drop as it reported 197 cases.

The majority of Surat's cases are from the diamond hub of Katargam, which accounts for more than 25 per cent of the city's total caseload.

Besides, 11 Army jawans, who had recently returned after leave, reported positive in the Bhuj cantonment of the border district of Kutch. It is the third major incident of defence personnel testing positive in the state.

Explaining the surge in cases in Surat, New Civil Hospital medical superintendent Dr Preeti Kapadiya said, "Cases are rising because of community transmission. It will continue for a few more days and for that 104 serv-

ices and Dhanvanti raths have been put into action."

Surat municipal commissioner BN Pani said, "We are carrying out meetings with the diamond industry to ensure that they follow the Covid-19 guidelines of social distancing, masks and sanitisers. They should also share correct information with the surveillance team. There are 1,600 small, medium and big diamond factories in Katargam area which are operational and we have set up teams who will visit the diamond factories to check if they are following rules."

Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) has shut down three large diamond units where multiple cases were reported, and micro contained several others, so far.

Surat Deputy Health Commissioner Dr Ashish Naik said, "We were expecting such a surge in the number of cases... Earlier we saw a rise in number of cases in the walled city area and Rander, but now the cases are reducing there. Now, Katargam and Limbayat zones are badly affected."

Covid testing capacity to be 20,000 by June-end: Punjab CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, JUNE 27

PUNJAB CHIEF Minister Amarinder Singh on Saturday said a decision on lockdown in the state will depend on the situation but he was prepared to take whatever steps needed to control the spread of Covid.

"It is in your hands," he told a Ludhiana resident during the #AskCaptain Facebook Live session after a question that Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu was indicating imposition of lockdown in the state.

Noting with concern that experts had projected Punjab's peak to be still some time away,



Lockdown decision to depend on situation: Amarinder Singh

Amarinder said the state could not afford to be lax in any way. On its part, the state government was increasing testing, he said, adding, in response to a question from a Hoshiarpur resident, that testing in Punjab would go up to 20,000 a day by the end of this month.

The Punjab CM agreed with the questioner that the lower testing in Punjab, as compared

to Delhi, had to be addressed, and said that four more testing labs had already been approved by his Cabinet, which will help scale up testing two-fold over the next few days.

With the coronavirus cases spreading across the country, the CM said the norm of wearing masks in public, besides other safety norms, had to be strictly adhered to. He appealed to the people of Punjab not to violate safety protocols.

"If we are able to control the pandemic then there would be no need for lockdown but if it goes out of control then we have no choice... I will not let my Punjabis and my children contract COVID," he said.

Closure of two key labs leads to backlog in test results in Karnataka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, JUNE 27

THE CLOSURE of two key government testing labs for Covid-19 in Bengaluru for a week, after personnel at both labs tested positive for the virus, has resulted in a considerable backlog of samples waiting to be tested in the last few days, even as case counts hit a new high in Karnataka on Saturday.

A record 918 Covid-19 cases were reported in Karnataka — now the highest in a single day — and Bengaluru alone saw 596

cases being reported.

Since June 1, there have been 2,183 cases and 84 deaths in Bengaluru, compared to 358 cases and 10 deaths from March 8 to May 31. As of Saturday, the city has 1,913 official active cases.

Sunday lockdown

The sharp spike in cases resulted in Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa calling an emergency meeting on Saturday evening in which a decision was taken to impose a complete lockdown in Bengaluru on Sundays from July 5, and to impose a curfew from 8 pm to 5 am. The deci-

sion was announced by state Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

It was also decided to have a centralised bed allocation system to speed up hospitalisation of Covid-19 patients. Yediyurappa told the officials to publish details of nodal officers working for Covid Management.

Crucially, the number of samples awaiting testing in Bengaluru hit 11,640 on Friday — a large backlog given that pendency rarely crossed the 4,000-mark when all labs were functional.

A laboratory at the Bangalore Medical College and Research



Police conduct a route march in Bengaluru. PTI

Institute, which is part of the ICMR's Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory network, and a laboratory at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences in Bengaluru together handled about 2,000 samples each day. They were shut for a week on Monday.

Despite the overall testing numbers being in the range 14,733 RT-PCR tests on Friday and 14,078 tests on Thursday, the number of samples pending rose sharply from 3,038 to 7,469 on Thursday and 11,640 on Friday, according to government data.

"Two major labs have been closed because their staff got infected. Around 2,000 to 2,500 samples used to be tested between BMCRI and Nimhans... From tomorrow, they should be back online for carrying out tests," said Dr C N Manjunath, the state nodal officer for testing.

The BMCRI, Nimhans and ICMR-NIV labs have handled the bulk of Covid-19 testing in Karnataka with each testing 1,000 samples each day — more at the peak of testing four weeks ago.

There are 76 labs in Karnataka, including 44 in the government sector and 32 in the

private sector.

The last time a large number of samples piled up in the state for Covid-19 was at end of May when the ICMR-NIV, BMCRI and Nimhans labs went offline to recalibrate machines.

A backlog of cases built up in districts bordering Maharashtra such as Kalaburagi, Vijayapura and Bidar as a large number of returnees from Maharashtra were tested.

Some of the north Karnataka districts also send samples to Bengaluru due to testing capacities being limited in some of the districts.

TRADER, SON ‘TORTURED’ IN POLICE CUSTODY

TN deaths: Family says magistrate saw the two from floor above, cleared remand

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JUNE 27

THE FAMILY members of the father and son who died of alleged torture in police custody, at Sathankulam near Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu, have accused the judicial magistrate of sending them in remand without due process.

Magistrate P Saravanan sent P Jeyaraj (62) and J Bennix (32) into police custody on July 20. Two days later, they were dead.

S Joseph, who is married to Jeyaraj's sister Jaya, says the two of them were present when Jeyaraj and Bennix were brought to the magistrate's court, func-

Thoothukudi SP Arun Balagopalan said the ongoing judicial probe will be looking into all aspects of the case

tioning out of his residence currently, around 11.45am. According to Joseph, they were visibly injured, with blood seeping through their clothes.

"The two were made to stand right at the entrance of the complex, near the gate, surrounded by seven-eight policemen. They were not taken inside. The magistrate appeared on the first floor,

waving his hand at the policemen. An officer with Jeyaraj and Bennix shouted out, 'Kovilpatti, remand'. And the magistrate cleared it."

The two were then taken to the Kovilpatti Sub-Jail.

Asked about the way the remand hearing was allegedly conducted, Thoothukudi SP Arun Balagopalan said the ongoing judicial probe will be looking into all aspects of the case.

Former Madras High Court judge K Chandru said if true, it was a clear case of judicial misconduct and violation of the Supreme Court guidelines on arrest. "It is the duty of a magistrate to examine the accused. He should have asked them why

they were injured and bleeding, if police had informed their relatives before the remand, and if they had a lawyer. These elementary constitutional rights should have been ensured by the magistrate," Chandru said.

The family members have also questioned the role of the government hospital where Jeyaraj and Bennix were taken for medical examination before being produced before the magistrate. "A doctor who came to examine them did not do so properly, with policemen surrounding the two at all times," said Joseph.

A senior government doctor in Chennai said the Sathankulam hospital doctor should have

done a full examination, checked for injuries or any health issues. "Only after an examination can a doctor decide if medical intervention is needed. A doctor can even admit the person concerned if required and a remand hearing can be held at the hospital," the doctor said, adding that the medical report has to be made available to the family.

Jeyaraj's relatives say they never got one.

A senior police officer, who is aware of the preliminary probe and did not want to be quoted, earlier told *The Indian Express* that Jeyaraj and Bennix were kept at the hospital for about three hours to stabilise them and to reduce the bleeding.

INFORMATION SOUGHT, SECRECY PROMISED

In a first, Chhattisgarh police make public list of most-wanted Maoists

GARGI VERMA
RAIPUR, JUNE 27

IN A first since Chhattisgarh was carved out as a separate state in 2000, the state police have released in public domain a poster with names and images of 34 senior "most wanted" Maoist leaders and cadres operating in the state, and announced rewards for information leading to their arrest.

The list includes two women.

While several such lists have been prepared by police in the past, this is the first time they have released the list along with pictures, and rewards for information on each one, in public domain.

The poster, with slightly blurry and mostly outdated images, carries all known aliases of 34 senior Maoist leaders and carries the message: "complete secrecy would be maintained for people coming forward with information."

The poster carries pictures of nine Maoists with a reward of Rs 1 crore each for information leading to their arrest, nine others with Rs 40 lakh each, and 17 operatives with reward of Rs 25 lakh each.

Among others, it lists senior CPI (Maoist) politburo members Nambwala Keshav Rao, alias Wasavraj, (64) and Mupalla Lakshman Rao, alias Ramanna or Gudsda Dada (72), along with People's Liberation Guerrilla Army's 'battalion' number one leader Hidma, alias Madvi Hidma.

According to Bastar I-G P Sundarraj, this is a broad list at the divisional level, and more such lists — at the levels of districts and police stations — will be made public soon.

"This is the list of most-wanted Maoists, with several incidents and crimes to their name," he said. "They have had



The poster has names, pictures of 34 senior Maoist leaders

a hand in more than 1,800 deaths in the state in the past two decades. We have made the list public so that people know how leaders from other states have only tried to benefit off the tribals, and not help them."

Sundarraj said, "If anyone has any information, they can pass it on to us; they will be rewarded, and we will maintain complete confidentiality."

The Maoists are learnt to have met between June 18 and 20 along the borders of Sukma and Bijapur, one of the security vacuums in the state where forces are trying to make inroads. "According to our information, the event was held as a commemorative meet to pay tributes to their leader Ramanna, who died in December 2019. Between 3,000 and 4,000 people attended it, including (Maoist) cadres and local villagers," a senior officer said. "As of now, they have not finalised the successor for Ramanna. For the

event and for other formal purposes, Sujatha, the seniormost rank-holder (among Maoists) in Chhattisgarh is handling the post."

Sujatha is one of the two women whose names are on the poster, with a reward of Rs 25 lakh for information leading to her arrest.

According to Sundarraj, while the main Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign (TCOC) period is almost over, security personnel will continue to carry on their exercises even during monsoon. In March this year, right before the lockdown was imposed, 17 security personnel were killed by Maoist operatives in an encounter in Sukma district.

Meanwhile, after remaining untouched until last month Left-Wing Extremism-hit districts in Bastar region have seen confirmed cases of coronavirus, with several infected CRPF personnel returning to camps. While district authorities

Assam: Two killed in floods, landslide warning in Guwahati

ABHISHEK SAHA
GUWAHATI, JUNE 27

FLOODS IN Assam killed two people on Saturday and inundated 21 districts, with large parts of the state experiencing heavy rains and thousands lodged in relief camps.

The Brahmaputra river and many of its tributaries were flowing above the danger mark at multiple points in the state—including its largest city, Guwahati.

The Assam State Disaster Management Authority said two were people killed in Goalpara district, taking the toll in this year's floods to 16. Over 4.6 lakh people in around 1,300 villages were "affected" in Assam on Saturday. Around 19,500 people were lodged in 98 relief camps.

On Saturday, landslides hit Guwahati city, its outcropping on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra, and Haflong district. The landslide in the city occurred at the Raj Bhawan, the official residence of the Governor of Assam. Officials said incessant



At Chanaka village in Morigaon on Saturday. PTI

rains had caused land to gradually slide at the posterior of the complex. A private clinic and hospital, adjacent to a wall of the Raj Bhawan, was asked to vacate its staff and patients immediately.

The Kamrup (Metro) district administration, under which Guwahati falls, has appealed to people residing in areas vulnerable to landslides to vacate their homes and shift to a safer location till the heavy monsoon

rains persist.

Biswajit Pegu, Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup (Metro), said: "Due to incessant rainfall for the last few days in Guwahati city, several incidents of landslide have occurred leading to loss of precious life and property. Moreover, there is every possibility of occurrence of more such landslide incidents in the coming days considering the incessant rainfall the district."

Assam gas leak and fire: Severe floods force OIL to pause blowout ops

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, JUNE 27

OIL INDIA Ltd (OIL) on Saturday temporarily called off its operations to contain the fire and blowout at the Baghjan 5 well in Upper Assam's Tinsukia district after the area was ravaged by days of heavy rain and floods. "Working condition at site has been considered unsafe for the day and all operations at site have been called off," stated a release from OIL.

The interruption in operations will prove to be a big challenge for the energy major, as it has struggled to plug the blowout, first reported exactly a month ago. The well subsequently caught fire on June 9, complicating matters further.

"One day loss is a huge problem for us because every day is accounted for," said OIL spokesperson Tridiv Hazarika, "The debris clearing around the well area—a crucial part of the plugging operations—was slated for today." The

authorities had estimated that the well would be capped by July 7. However, with weather reports indicating that rain will continue for the next few days, this is looking unlikely, said Hazarika.

The OIL release stated the Dangori river—from which it is pumping water—is overflowing.

"The Kill Pump area is completely flooded. OIL CMT Water Pump area is submerged with flood water" the release stated.

As a result, the main well operations had to be halted but operations at OIL workshops continued.

Currently, the three main routes to the well site are inaccessible. While the Doomdooma-Baghjan bridge collapsed on Thursday, the condition of the bridge near Daisajan Tea Estate on Tiphuk-Kordaiguri road is fast deteriorating. On Saturday, the district administration announced that the part of the third route via Plastic Park road has been closed for all vehicular traffic since it was inundated and under pressure.

2017 NAGOUR VIOLENCE

CBI files chargesheet against Cong MLA, Karni Sena leaders

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, JUNE 27

THE CBI has filed a chargesheet against 24 people, including leaders of various Rajput outfits and a Congress MLA from Rajasthan, in a case related to the 2017 violence and riots in Sanvrad in Rajasthan's Nagaur district, in the aftermath of the death of gangster Anandpal Singh in a police encounter.

In a statement released by CBI spokesperson RK Gaur on Saturday, the agency said it had filed the chargesheet in the Court of ACJM, CBI Cases, Jodhpur.

Singh was killed in a police encounter in June 2017. The violence in Sanvrad — Singh's hometown — had taken place during a massive meeting called by various Rajput outfits who had termed the encounter fake and demanded a CBI probe.

The accused include Lokender Singh Kalvi, the patron of the Shri Rajput Karni Sena, while Mahipal Singh Makrana is the outfit's president and Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi is the

president of the Shree Rashtriya Rajput Karni Sena — a rival faction. A P Singh is an advocate who has appeared as a counsel for the convicts of the 2012 Delhi gangrape case.

Among those named is Congress MLA Rajendra Singh Gudha — currently representing Udaipurwari constituency in Jhunjhunu. He had switched to Congress last year after winning the 2018 Assembly elections on a BSP ticket.

"CBI had registered the case (of the violence) on 05.01.2018 on a request from Rajasthan Government & subsequent notification issued by Govt. of India, and taken over the investigation of the FIR No. 115/2017, earlier registered at Police Station, Jaswantgarh, Nagaur (Rajasthan). It was alleged that after the encounter with police on 24.06.2017, Sh. Anand Pal Singh died & his body was not cremated and instead, a Shradhanjali Sabha was organised at Village Sanvrad, the native village of deceased, for pressurising the government to accept their demands," read the CBI statement.

GALWAN AND WHAT HAPPENS AFTER



with

Gautam Bambawale

Former Indian Ambassador to China (2017 to 2018)

The India-China border dispute is old, but for the first time in decades, lives have been lost in violent clashes. Why have the Chinese precipitated the situation on the LAC? Where is the current stand-off headed, and what diplomatic and military options does India have to respond?

To understand the big regional and global geopolitical picture within which this conflict is situated, join us for a conversation with Gautam Bambawale, among the best known diplomat-analysts of India's complex relationship with China.

Ambassador Bambawale will be in conversation with

Shubhajit Roy

Associate Editor and Diplomatic Correspondent
The Indian Express

29 JUNE 2020

07:00 PM

Join us on zoom

To register, SMS - IEEEXP <space> "IE" <space> "Your name and email ID" to 56161
Confirmation SMS will be your registration.

The Indian EXPRESS
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Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, hitherto known as Gulafsha Parveen D/o Sharif Alvi residing at, H.No. D-46, Gali No.-7, Old Mustafabad, Delhi-110094, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Payal.

0040540576-3

I, Swathi Malik, D/o Stander Singh Malik R/o Plot.No.-275, Vipin-Garden, Uttam-Nagar, New Delhi-110059, have changed my name to Swati Malik, Vide-affidavit no.-10AE927358 dated-27/06/2020 at Ghaziabad, (U.P.)

0040540576-9

I, Suresh Kumar S/o Sh.Deshraj, R/o House.No. 231, Gali.No.4, Ram Nagar, Krishna Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110051, inform that my actual and correct name is Suresh Kumar but Suresh Kumar Sikri mentioned in my documents. In future I will known as Suresh Kumar, S/o Sh.Deshraj, for all, future purposes.

0040540576-2

I, Sunita W/o Jaipal Singh Hooda R/o Pana Dudan, Village & Post Office Sanghi, Tehsil Rohtak, District Rohtak, Haryana -124303 have changed my name to Sunita Hooda.

0070707479-1

I, SONALI DEY W/O-NO-14654986P NK ARUP KUMAR DEY VILL- SINDRAPATH P.O-LEGO TEH- BISHNUPUR DIST-BANKURA WEST-BENGAL-722141 THAT IN MY HUSBAND'S SERVICE RECORD, MY DATE, OF-BIRTH HAS-BEEN WRONGLY MENTIONED AS, 04/08/1987, INSTEAD-21/10/1991.

0040540576-7

I, Raj Kumar S/o Sh.Deshraj R/o-C-5, Gali.No.5, New Krishna Nagar, Krishna Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110051, inform that my actual and correct name is Raj Kumar but Raj Kumar Sikri mentioned in my documents. In future I will known as Raj Kumar, S/o Sh.Deshraj, for all, future purposes.

0040540579-3

I, Putan Kumar S/o Ram Karan R/o-46 Kodara Bakhat-Kheda Bara Sagwar Babukhara Dixtanwala Unao UP-229509, changed my name to Gauri Shankar.

0040540576-6

I, ARUP KUMAR DEY S/O ANANDA MOHAN DEY ARMY-NO-14654986P NK ARUP KUMAR DEY 505-ARMY BASE WORKSHOP C/O-56, APO DELHI-CANTT, DELHI-110010, DECLARE THAT NAME, OF MY SON IN MY SERVICE RECORD IS, WRONGLY MENTIONED AS SURJOIT DEY INSTEAD OF SURAJIT DEY SO TRUE AND CORRECT NAME, OF MY SON IS, SURAJIT DEY AFFIDAVIT DATE-26/JUN-2020 BEFORE, MADAN LAL GUPTA DELHI.

0040540576-8

I, Vishnath Paul, S/O-Late Sri.Jogendra Nath Paul, R/O-B-121, 1st-Floor, Gagan Enclave, Amrit-Nagar, GT Road, Ghaziabad, UP-201001,, have changed my name to Vishwanath Paul, for all, purposes.

0040540579-9

I, Roshini U. D/o Vellu Udaya, R/o,F-1/176, J.J.Colony, Madangiri, New Delhi-110062, have changed my name to Roshini Udaya.

0040540576-1

I, Purushottam Singh R/o Vill-nagala Bari, Po-husainpur, Ps-pachokhara, teh-tundla, dis-firozabad UP 283203 have changed my minor son's name from Reyvan Yadav to Aayush Yadav for all purposes.

0040540358-1

I, Ashtami D/o Kishor Kumar R/o 30/4, Ground Floor, Ashok Nagar, Tilak Nagar, New Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Ashtami Shree.

0040540507-1

I, Pushpa W/O Dharmik Hirkane R/O S-126/35, Kanak Durga Colony, Sector-12, R.K.Puram, New Delhi-110022, Have Changed my Name to Pushpa Hirkane.

0040540579-1

I, Qayamuddin Qaman S/o Islamuddin R/o-2929, Gali-Kali-Masjid, Turkman-Gate, Sita Ram Bazar, Delhi-110006 changed my name to Qayamuddin for future.

0040540576-4

I, REVATHI NARI TYAGI W/O SHEKHAR TYAGI R/O, B-5, SECTOR-50, NOIDA U.P.-201301. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO REVATHI NAIIR FOR ALL PURPOSE.

0040540361-1

I, Rajender Oberoi S/O Krishan Lal R/O Flat.no.232, Vishal-Enclave Tagore-Garden Extension New Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Rajinder Pal.

0040540576-5

I, Ashish Chaudhary S/o Sh.Abbai Singh R/o-1351, Sector-10A, Gurugram, Haryana, have changed the name of my son Nimansh Gulia to Lakshya Chaudhary, for all purposes.

0040540576-2

LOST & FOUND

Original Sale Deed excuted by Smt. Mamta Kaushik, W/O-Shri Ajay Kaushik to Smt. Rani Khanna, W/O-Shri Ravi Mohan Khanna on 12/06/2001, in respect of property no.B-4/15, Third-Floor, Sector-15, Rohini, Delhi. An FIR in this effect has been lodged in Police station, Crime Branch, Delhi, LR no.187677/2020. Any person claiming any right interest having any objection or found in possession of original Sale Deed. May contact Smt.Aarti Dhingra, W/O-Shri Rohit Dhingra, Ph-9988656179.

0040540579-8

MATRIMONIAL



OTHERS

Looking for Bride for our son settled in Gulf, 41 yrs, Beng Brah, Univ. Professor 6'1". Bride within 36 yrs, 5'2"+, pref science educated, homely fm respectable family. Reply with details to: hello2bride@gmail.com

0050165792-1



CHRISTIAN

Fair beautiful Catholic girl 35/5'4" SAS Programmer MNC, Bangalore. Seeks well educated boy. # 06363669107

0050165799-1

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Sh. Surinder Kumar S/o Jagdish Parsad and Smt. Santosh W/O Surinder Kumar both R/o D-31C, Kiran Garden, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-69 have discovered & debarred their son Tarun Kumar & his wife Nishu from all their moveable & immovable properties due to their misbehaviour, quarrelsome nature & out of control towards my client and other family members and severed all their relations with them. My client shall not be responsible in future for any acts and deeds of them.

A. K. SHARMA (Advocate)
225, 2nd Floor, S.I.C. Licence Authority Building, District Centre, Jarak Puri, New Delhi-110058

PUBLIC NOTICE
My clientess Bhawna Suri W/o Sh. Mukul Suri and Mukul Suri S/o Sh. Virinder Kumar Suri, both R/o H.No.92, Bhera Enclave, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110087 have adopted the son of Ms Roopali D/o Sh. Sudesh Kumar Sethi, namely Master Keshav Sagar, R/o A-139, Flat No.-12A, Mohan Garden, Delhi-110059 on 25-06-2020. He will not have any right, title and interest in the moveable and immovable properties of Roopali & her in-laws.

ANNU ARORA (Advocate)
Ch. No. M-10, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

PUBLIC NOTICE
Information is given to the general public at large that my client Raj Singh s/o Piyra Singh wants to purchase the property: B171, New Delhi-69 have discovered & debarred their son Tarun Kumar & his wife Nishu from all their moveable & immovable properties due to their misbehaviour, quarrelsome nature & out of control towards my client and other family members and severed all their relations with them. My client shall not be responsible in future for any acts and deeds of them.

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A. K. SHARMA (Advocate)
225, 2nd Floor, S.I.C. Licence Authority Building, District Centre, Jarak Puri, New Delhi-110058

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Rajesh Bangsh Pandey S/o Late Udayraj Pandey R/o H.No. B-5, 697/2, Gali No. 2, Ganesh Nagar-II, Shakarpur, Delhi-92, has severed his relations and debarred his son Surya Kant Pandey from all his moveable-immovable properties due to his misbehavior and misconduct. My client and his family members shall not be responsible for his any act (s) / deed (s) / transaction(s).

Sd/-
(V.K. SINGH)
Advocate
Enrl. No. D-5390
CHAMBER No. D-823, 6th FLOOR, KARKARDOOMA COURTS, DELHI-32

Ammonia gas leak at Andhra factory, 1 dead

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, JUNE 27

AMAN died and at least two others were in critical condition after ammonia gas leaked at a factory in Nandyala town of Kurnool district in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday morning. The gas leak occurred at a building of SPY Agro Industries, owned by former MP S P Y Reddy. Welding work was being carried out on a gas pipeline in the factory when the leak occurred. The company's general manager, Srinivasulu Rao, died on the spot while four others fell ill. District Collector G Veerapandian said fire and emergency services personnel brought the situation under control.

"The gas leak has been contained, there is no danger nearby. Only a small amount of gas leaked and fire and emergency services contained the situation. After the LG Polymers incident, we had issued advisories to all factories in the district to check equipment and ensure that safety measures are in place before starting operations. Since June 19, repair and maintenance work was going on this factory and they noticed a weak welding joint... It was being tested today when it exploded due to a



At the site of the gas leak in Kurnool district. Express

pressure build-up. The general manager, who was not wearing any protective mask, died on the spot. The rest of the workers are out of danger," he said. Joint Chief Environmental Engineer of AP Pollution Control Board K Venkateshwara Rao said ammonia is used in the agro unit as a chilling agent. "Repairs were on since Friday and today morning the pipeline was being tested when it exploded, killing the manager on the spot and affecting four others. The ammonia leak is limited to inside the plant. During an inspection last week, we had identified some issues over the safety of the pipeline, following which the repairs were taken up," Rao said. Apart from the district collector, pollution control board officials also visited the site to take stock of the situation.

Paschimanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd.,
Victoria Park, Meerut
TENDER DATE EXTENSION NOTICE
The Date of opening of tender specification no. PVNVL-MT/COM/01/20-21 for supply of 1500 nos. 11 KV CTs (Different ratios) is hereby extended from 25.06.2020 to 14.07.2020. Time of opening tender and other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged.
For detailed information please log on www.pvnl.org & E-Tendering website www.etenderup.nic.in till the date of submission of bids. Superintending Engineer (Commercial) "Help Line Number for Information of Theft of Electricity: "1800-180-3002 (Meerut) & 9412207451"
Remark www.etenderup.nic.in
Sd/-
Superintending Engineer (Commercial)
For Managing Director
"SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION"
पत्रांक: 5169 दिनांक: 27.06.20

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRONICS
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
1st & Ground Floor, I.T. Bhawan, Mehli, Shimla-171013 H.P.
Tel. No. 0177- 2623513, 2623259,
FAX: 0177-2626320, Website: www.hpsecd.in
Emails: hpsecd@hpsecd.in gm@hpsecd.in
e-Tender No: F-905/HPSECDC/Tender/Smart School/2020 -969 Dated: 27/06/2020
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-Tender is invited for selection of implementation agency for implementation of Smart School Project in Govt. High School Krishnaganar, Shimla and virtual classrooms in identified schools of Himachal Pradesh. Detailed tender document containing technical specifications and terms & conditions is available on e-procurement portal <https://www.hpsecd.in> and <http://hptenders.gov.in>. Online pre-bid meeting will be held on 07-07-2020 (2:30 PM) and last date of e-bid submission is 30-07-2020 (2:30 PM).
Sd/-
MANAGING DIRECTOR
0175/HP

MADHYA PRADESH PUBLIC HEALTH
SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.
Tilhan Sangh Bhawan, 01, Arera Hills, Bhopal
URL: www.mpphscil.in Phone : 0755-2578915
Date : 27.06.2020
TENDER NOTICE
New Short Tender No. T-078/Empanelment of Service Provider for Outsourcing of COVID-19 Testing with same terms & Condition of cancelled Tender No. T-077 has been published. All prospective bidders are requested to participate in Tender No. T-078 instead of T-077. Prospective bidders are requested to visit www.mptenders.gov.in/www.mpphscil.in for further details.
M.P. Madhyam/97772/2020 CGM (TECHNICAL)

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR
Ganderbal (J&K) 191201, Website: www.cukashmir.ac.in
EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION
No.: 04 of 2020 (NT) Dated: 27-06-2020
Online Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for appointment to following temporary vacancies of non-teaching posts:
1) Internal Audit Officer (01-UR)
2) Deputy Registrar : (01-UR)
3) Lower Division Clerk : 06 (04-UR, 01-OB, 01-SC)
4) MTS/Peon/Office Attendant : 03(01-UR, 01-OB, 01-SC)
The Last date for submission of online Application forms is 13th July 2020 and the detailed notification along with the link is available on University website.
Dated 27.06.2020
GANDERBAL
Sd/-
I/c Registrar

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ROADS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (HPSRTP) REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST-CUM-REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL/ REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST PROPOSAL			
Name of Project: Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Project (HPSRTP)		Date: 26th June, 2020	
Loan No./Credit No. 9066-IN		The Chief Engineer-cum-Project Director, State Roads Project, HPRIDC Nirman Bhawan, Nigam Vihar Shimla-171002, Himachal Pradesh India invites the Request for Expression of Interest-cum-Request for Proposals/Request for Expression of Interest Proposal from national consultants for the consultancy services as detailed in the table below:	
Sr. No.	Description of the Consultancy Services	Date of availability of Detailed Request for Expression of Interest-cum-Request for Proposals/ Request for Expression of Interest Proposal Document on HPRIDC web site	Last date/Time for submission of Proposals
1.	Selection of Consultant (NGO) for support to implementation of Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) for Tranche-I Roads under HPSRTP (Approx. 90 km.)	June 27, 2020 (Request for Expression of Interest Proposal Document)	July 14, 2020
2.	Selection of Biodiversity/Wildlife Expert for World Bank Funded Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Program (HPSRTP)	June 27, 2020 (Request for Expression of Interest-cum-Request for Proposal Document)	July 25, 2020
Note: Any further addendum/Corrigendum to this Request for Expression of Interest-cum-Request for Proposals/Request for Expression of Interest Proposal Documents shall be available to all interested firms on official web site of HPRIDC under http://himachalservices.nic.in/hpridc/HPSRTP.html . link. Chief Engineer-cum-Project Director, State Roads Project, HPRIDC, Nirman Bhawan, Nigam Vihar, Facsimile: +91-177-2620663; Tel: +91-177-2627602, E-mail: pdsp-hp@nic.in			
0177/HP			

FIR AGAINST 5 OVER COVID 'MEDICINE' CLAIM

Ramdev, Patanjali MD booked for 'cheating'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, JUNE 27

AN FIR has been registered in Jaipur against yoga guru Ramdev, his aide and Patanjali Ayurved Ltd managing director Balkrishna and three others, accusing them of cheating and conspiring to sell fake medicines claiming to cure coronavirus following clinical trials on Covid-19 patients.

The others named in the FIR are Anurag Varshney, an employee of Patanjali, Balvir Singh Tomar and Anurag Singh Tomar, chairman and director, respectively, at the Jaipur-based National Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (NIMS). The FIR was registered at Jyoti Nagar police station in the city on the basis of a complaint by individuals, including a Jaipur-based advocate who questioned the clinical trials which reportedly took place on Covid-19 patients at NIMS. Jyoti Nagar SHO Sudhir Kumar Upadhyay said the FIR has invoked IPC section 420 (cheating) and Sections 4 and 7 of the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954. "We registered the FIR on Friday and are investigating the matter. No arrests have been

made till now," he said. Launching what he claimed was the first ayurvedic medicine to cure Covid-19 in Haridwar on June 23, Ramdev had claimed that 'Coronil tablet', 'Swasari Vati' and 'Anu Taila' had shown "100 per cent favourable results" during clinical trials on Covid-19 patients. The Union AYUSH Ministry subsequently sought details about the purported medicine and directed Patanjali and Ramdev to stop advertising such claims. The Rajasthan government had said that it had no knowledge about the clinical trials conducted at NIMS, and that no permission was sought for any such trial. The Chief Medical and Health Officer, Jaipur, has served a notice to NIMS over the issue, and state Health Minister Raghu Sharma has said that action will be taken if any attempt is made to sell the purported drug as a potential medicine for Covid-19 patients in Rajasthan. "The main accusation is cheating people under the garb of selling medicines of Covid-19. I will also approach the court, demanding a CBI inquiry into the matter. It is our demand that action be taken against the accused," advocate Balram Jakhar, one of the complainants in the case, said. Jakhar, who identified himself

as an independent advocate subscribing to the "ideology of the Congress party", cited previous cases registered against Balvir Tomar to demand a detailed investigation into the matter. Stating that FIRs had earlier been registered against Tomar him in different matters, and he was also in judicial custody, Jakhar said, "It should be investigated how Tomar, who runs a hospital not related to ayurved, launched this alleged Covid-19 medicine with Ramdev. We demand a detailed investigation into roles of every accused in the case," Jakhar said. Tomar's son Anurag, also named in the FIR registered on Friday, was arrested in 2017 in a case lodged by his father following a dispute. Calls and messages to Tomar for his response remained unanswered; Anurag Tomar declined to comment on the matter. In 2018, a woman employee had lodged an FIR at Amer police station against Tomar, accusing him of raping her. In 2016, Tomar was arrested by Jharkhand police based on a complaint of allegedly outraging the modesty of a woman. The FIR was filed by a former student of NIMS University, who accused Tomar of allegedly misbehaving with her in Ranchi in 2015.

VHP man in MP shot dead by rival group: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, JUNE 27

A 35-YEAR-OLD VHP leader was shot dead near Pipariya town in Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad district on Friday in what the police believe is a case of rivalry between two groups. Ravi Vishwakarma, a district gauraksha (cow protection) chief, was returning to Pipariya from Hoshangabad with two friends when his car was stopped by a group of men carrying iron rods, sticks and firearms. A video shot by a passerby showed the assailants damaging his car, firing at him, dragging him out of the car and beating him, even as they allowed the two other occupants in the car to escape. A case of murder has been registered against ten people on the basis of a complaint filed by the victim's brother. Hoshangabad SP Santosh Singh Gaur told *The Indian Express* a dozen cases, including murder and attempted murder, had been lodged against the victim. The assailants, too, had cases registered against them. Gaur said the killing was an outcome of battle for control in the Pipariya mandi where lakhs of tonnes of grains are traded every year. During auction and weighing, a small portion of grains is left on the floor and accumulates into a substantial quantity.

29 foreign militants in South Kashmir: J&K cops

ADIL AKHZER
SRINAGAR, JUNE 27

TWENTY-NINE foreign militants are active in the upper reaches of South Kashmir, which has seen major anti-militancy operations in the last few months, according to the police. Vijay Kumar, Kashmir Inspector-General of Police, said there are more militants in South Kashmir as compared to North

Kashmir. "They (foreign militants) are not in the hinterland, but there is a presence of (foreign militants) in the upper reaches of Kokernag, Tral and Khrew. In these areas (of South Kashmir) there is presence of FT (Foreign Terrorists). About 29 FTs are in South Kashmir. As soon they will come down, our sources will inform us and we will neutralise them by launching operations," Kumar told the media on Saturday on the sidelines of a wreath-laying ceremony for the

CRPF constable killed in a militant attack in South Kashmir's Bijbehara on Friday. Kumar said that South Kashmir is a "priority" even though the police are currently focussing on North Kashmir. "Number of militants is more in South Kashmir. We have started operations in North Kashmir. Recently two local LeT militants were killed in Sopore. They were locals, but they had carried a lot of incidents. We are

focusing on that (North), but there are militants in South Kashmir, and it is on priority," he said. "In May first week, there were huge losses on our side and a perception became that militants had an upper hand. In North Kashmir, the number of militants is still less. Whatever the less number is, we will neutralise them soon."

According to J&K Police records, 113 militants have been killed in this valley in the Valley.

NSUI office-bearer shot dead in MP, two arrested in Chandigarh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MANDLA (MP), JUNE 27

A 28-YEAR-OLD leader of the National Students' Union of India (NSUI), the Congress's student wing, was shot dead at Mandla in Madhya Pradesh, following which two men were arrested in neighbouring Chhattisgarh, officials said. The killing, a fallout of some past enmity, took place during the intervening night of Friday and Saturday, the Madhya Pradesh police said.

"Sonu Parochia, local office-bearer of NSUI, was returning home after celebrating the birthday of his uncle at a roadside eatery in a suburban area of Mandla," Additional Superintendent of Police Vikram Singh Kushwaha said. Accused Mayur Happy Yadav (30) fled from the spot after the crime, he said. "As per the preliminary information, Parochia's two-wheeler was hit by Yadav's car. Yadav allegedly opened fire on Parochia who died on the spot," Kushwaha said. NSUI's district president, Akhilesh Thakur, said that

Parochia was the general secretary of the Mandla district unit. He said that the accused hailed from Jabalpur and has been living in Mandla for the last five to six years. "We had complained to the police against him on several occasions," he said. Hours later, the Chhattisgarh police arrested Mayur Yadav and Piyush Maravi from Gudhiyari area of Raipur. "During the interrogation, the two confessed to their involvement in the killing. We have informed Mandla police about the arrest and their team has left for Raipur," the official said.

IT DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (ITDA)
Department of Information Technology
Government of Uttarakhand
IT Bhawan, Plot No. T-02, IT Park, Sahasrabudhara Road, Dehradun Email: itrida-uk@nic.in
UKSWAN FACILITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Tender Notice No. 04/ITDA-FPM/MS/MS/17/2020-PROJECT dated 08/06/2020
Please refer to the Tender Notice No. 04/ITDA-FPM/MS/MS/17/2020-PROJECT DATED 08.06.2020, in this regards the amendment is being made in Bid submission date and bid opening date as following:

S. No.	Critical Dates	Date Extended to Following Date
1	Last Date & Time for Submission of Bids electronically on https://www.ukswandevs.gov.in/	03 July 15:00 Hrs
2	Date & Time of Opening of Bids (Technical Bids)	03 July 16:00 Hrs

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. Director

कार्यालय आबकारी आयुक्त, मध्यप्रदेश, मोतीमहल, ग्वालियर (म.प्र.)
e-mail: ec.ecogwl@mp.gov.in - Ph. 0751-2452810
ग्वालियर, दिनांक 26.06.2020
विज्ञप्ति
सर्वसाधारण को जानकारी एवं आबकारी फुटकर ठेकेदारों की विशेष जानकारी के लिये राज्य शासन के निर्देशानुसार यह सूचना प्रकाशित की जाती है कि वर्ष 2020-21 की शेष अवधि के लिये प्रदेश के विभिन्न जिलों में संचालित मदिरा दुकानों के समूह / एकल समूहों के पुर्ननिष्पादन को कार्यवाही केवल ई-टेंडर के माध्यम से निर्धारित आरक्षित मूल्य पर संबंधित जिले के कलेक्टर की अध्यक्षता में गठित जिला समिति द्वारा मध्यप्रदेश राजपत्र (असाधारण) क्रमांक 77 दिनांक 25.02.2020 एवं क्रमांक 176 दिनांक 23.05.2020 में प्रकाशित शर्तों एवं निर्बन्धनों के अधीन दिनांक 28.06.2020 दिन रविवार से की जावेगी। वर्ष 2020-21 की शेष अवधि के लिये मदिरा दुकानों के समूहों / एकल समूहों का पुर्ननिष्पादन कार्यक्रम एवं विधियां निम्नानुसार रहेगी।

पुर्ननिष्पादन कार्यक्रम एवं विधियां	
1. ई-टेंडर हेतु ऑन-लाईन टेंडर प्रपत्र खानलोड एवं ई-टेंडर: ऑफर सर्वमिट करने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 28 जून, 2020 को प्रातः 10.00 बजे से 30 जून, 2020 अपराह्न 01.00 बजे तक
2. ई-टेंडर हेतु ऑन-लाईन टेंडर प्रपत्र खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 30 जून, 2020 अपराह्न 01.05 बजे से।
3. जिला समिति द्वारा ई-टेंडर के माध्यम से निराकरण किये जाने की तिथि एवं समय	ई-टेंडर प्रक्रिया पूर्ण होने पर।

वर्ष 2019-20 के वार्षिक मूल्य अथवा अब तक के चरणों में प्राप्त उच्चतम मूल्य (H1 प्राइस) इनमें से जो अधिक हो, को उसी समानुपातिक अवधि अनुसार कम किया जाकर आधार मूल्य बनाया जायेगा। वर्ष 2020-21 की शेष अवधि हेतु पुर्ननिष्पादन को प्रक्रिया उपरान्त सफल निविदादाता को मध्यप्रदेश राजपत्र (असाधारण) संशोधित दिनांक 23.05.2020 को काण्डिका 70 में उल्लेखित नवीन विकल्प चुनने की सुविधा युक्तियुक्त रूप से उपलब्ध रहेगी। दिनांक 26.06.2020 को निविदाओं में प्राप्त मात्र H-1 आफर को स्टैंड बाय/होल्ड पर रखते हुये मदिरा दुकानों के है समूह / एकल समूह के पुर्ननिष्पादन को कार्यवाही की जायेगी। आगामी चरण में पुर्ननिष्पादन हेतु निष्पादन से शेष समस्त जिलों के वर्ष 2020-21 में प्रचलित समूह/समूहों को वर्ष 2019-20 में प्रचलित रहे समूहों की भांति रखकर उनके वर्ष 2020-21 की शेष अवधि हेतु निष्पादन की कार्यवाही की जायेगी। इच्छुक व्यक्ति द्वारा मदिरा दुकानों का विवरण, संबंधित आदि की जानकारी, संबंधित जिला कार्यालय से कार्यालयीन समय में प्राप्त की जा सकती है।
Sd/-
आबकारी आयुक्त
मध्यप्रदेश
G-12296/2020

13 ECONOMY

TRANSACTION PEGS PHARMA BIZ AT ENTERPRISE VALUE OF \$2.77 BN

Carlyle Group to buy 20% stake in Piramal Pharma for about ₹3,700 cr

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 27

CARLYLE GROUP has agreed to acquire 20 per cent stake as fresh equity capital in Piramal Pharma Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Piramal Enterprises Ltd, at a cost of \$490 million (about Rs 3,700 crore).

The transaction values the pharma business at an enterprise value (EV) of \$2.77 billion, with an upside component of up to \$360 million depending on the company's FY21 performance. Based on the EV (excluding the upside component), exchange rate and pharma net debt as of March 2020, the estimated equity capital investment for Carlyle's 20 per cent stake in Piramal Pharma would amount to \$490 million.

CA Clover Intermediate II Investments, an affiliated entity of CAP V Mauritius Limited, an investment fund managed and

ONE OF THE LARGEST PE DEALS IN PHARMA SECTOR

■ CA Clover Intermediate II Investments, an affiliated entity of CAP V Mauritius Limited, an investment fund managed and advised by affiliated entities of the Carlyle Group Inc has made the purchase agreement
■ This transaction is one of the largest private equity deals in the Indian pharmaceutical sector, and

is expected to close in 2020, subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals
■ Last month, Carlyle announced its majority stake investment in SeQuent Scientific, the largest Indian pure-play animal healthcare company, which is expected to close in the third quarter of 2020

advised by affiliated entities of the Carlyle Group Inc has made the purchase agreement. Piramal Pharma will include Piramal Pharma Solutions, an end-to-end contract development and manufacturing (CDMO) business, Piramal Critical Care, a complex hospital generics business selling specialized products across over 100 countries, Consumer Products

Division, a consumer healthcare business selling over-the-counter products in India and PEL's investment in the joint venture with Allergan India, a leader in ophthalmology in the domestic market and Convergence Chemicals Pvt Ltd. This transaction is one of the largest private equity deals in the Indian pharmaceutical sector, and is expected to close in 2020,

subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals.

Ajay Piramal, chairman, Piramal Enterprises, said, "This infusion of funds will further strengthen our balance sheet and provide us with a war chest for the next phase of our strategy. We are pleased to have an investor of this caliber join the Piramal family and continue our stellar track record of partnerships."

Neeraj Bharadwaj, managing director, Carlyle Asia Partners advisory team, said: "Given global pharma industry trends, we see attractive opportunities for organic as well as inorganic growth in each of these businesses. We are excited to work with the company's experienced management team, and will leverage our global network, extensive knowledge of the healthcare sector, and operating experience to seek to expand its platform, develop

strategic opportunities and facilitate broader market access."

Following the sale of its domestic pharma business to Abbott in 2010 for \$3.8 billion, Piramal has demonstrated its ability to build a solid and resilient pharma business over the last 10 years. Leveraging its differentiated business model and strong quality track record, PEL's pharma revenue since the Abbott deal has grown 3.5 times at 15 per cent from Rs 1,537 crore in FY11 to Rs 5,419 crore in FY20.

Last month, Carlyle announced its majority stake investment in SeQuent Scientific, the largest Indian pure-play animal healthcare company, which is expected to close in the third quarter of 2020. Its other investments in the Indian healthcare sector include Medanta Medicity Hospital, a leading hospital in the National Capital Region, and Metropolis Healthcare, a chain of diagnostic centers and laboratories.

IDBI Bank to sell 27% in insurance JV, Belgian firm raises stake to 49%

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 27

IDBI BANK has decided to sell 27 per cent of its stake in IDBI Federal Life Insurance to Belgian insurance company Ageas Insurance and Federal Bank for Rs 595 crore. Ageas will acquire 23 per cent stake, while Federal Bank will buy 4 per cent.

Ageas Insurance will hold 49 per cent in the venture while Federal Bank will have 30 per cent stake, with IDBI Bank holding the remaining 21 per cent stake in the insurance firm, after the stake sale. IDBI Bank has 48 per cent stake in the insurer, while Federal Bank and Ageas Insurance have 26 per cent each. As LIC had acquired a 51 per cent stake in IDBI Bank, the stake sale of IDBI Bank's insurance venture was a regulatory requirement.

tional charge of the IT department.

In a complaint questioning the government's move, Arappor Iyakkam wrote to the Centre, "When the whole state is focused on fighting the pandemic, TANFINET has brought about big changes in the tender in the form of a Corrigendum, the major of which seems to be with the intention of restricting competition and to favour a few specific companies."

The Commerce and Industry Ministry's decision came following an online meeting on June 23, in which the allegations raised were heard in the presence of state government's experts and officers, including Verma.

Referring to the meeting, the Centre's order to scrap the tender said that "based upon comments and feedback received from stakeholders, it has been considered that the bidding conditions incorporated by TANFINET in the bidding documents are restrictive and discriminatory in nature."

Centre cancels ₹1,950-cr BharatNet project in TN

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JUNE 27

THE DEPARTMENT for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on Friday ordered the scrapping of a Rs 1,950 crore tender for the BharatNet project in Tamil Nadu stating the bidding conditions were "restrictive" and "discriminatory".

In a communication to state Chief Secretary K Shanmugam, the DPIIT asked for floating fresh tenders.

The communication stated that Tamil Nadu Fibernet Corporation Limited (TAFINET) should immediately scrap the Rs 1,950-crore BharatNet tender and should float fresh tenders with "non-restrictive" qualification criteria.

The tender got mired in controversy with allegations of corruption and charge raised by Chennai-based Arappor Iyakkam, that changes in the tender were

'FRESH TENDERS TO BE FLOATED'

■ Ordering to scrap the Rs 1,950-crore BharatNet project in Tamil Nadu, a communication from the DPIIT of the Union Commerce Ministry to state Chief Secretary K Shanmugam said fresh tenders should be floated, as bidding conditions were "restrictive" and "discriminatory."

made to favour a few companies.

The Union Commerce and Industry Ministry also sought an urgent report on action taken following its order to scrap the tender.

The BharatNet project aims to connect Indian villages with high speed broadband connections

through optical fibre. In Tamil Nadu, the plan was to connect all 12,524 gram panchayats.

The project had first generated controversy when an IAS officer, Santhosh Babu, who was in charge it, opted for voluntary retirement, reportedly after he was pressured to make changes in the tender after it was uploaded.

In January, Opposition leader MK Stalin had asked Shanmugam to ensure protection for "truthful" IAS officers, referring to Santhosh Babu's VRS request. "Was Babu, who was in-charge of the project (BharatNet), under pressure? Is the Information Technology minister behind this? The Chief Minister should reply," Stalin had said then.

"However, Babu's request was later withdrawn owing to pressure from his senior colleagues," a senior official, in the know of developments in the initial stage, said.

After Babu, Hans Raj Verma, a senior IAS officer, was given addi-

RBI extends higher overnight borrowing facility of banks to Sept

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 27

THE RESERVE Bank has decided to extend the enhanced borrowing facility provided to the banks to meet their liquidity shortages till September 30 in the wake of the continuing lockdown and downturn in the economy.

The RBI, as a temporary measure, had increased the borrowing limit of scheduled banks under the marginal standing facility (MSF) scheme from 2 per cent to 3 per cent of their Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL) — or deposits — from March 27, 2020.

This relaxation, which was granted till June 30, 2020, has now been extended till September 30.

COVID IMPACT

'Housing sales may plunge 81% in Apr-Jun'

Housing sales are estimated to decline by 81 per cent to 12,740 units during April-June period of this calendar year due to COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, property consultant Anarock said



Pune can witness a drop of 79 per cent to 2,160 units from 10,490 units

Hyderabad may see 85 per cent dip to 660 units from 4,430 units

Sales in Chennai are likely to fall by 84 per cent to 480 units from 2,990 units

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 25 to curb the spread of coronavirus disease, bringing the construction as well as sales activities to a grinding halt. Layoffs and payouts by various organisations would also mean that people will think twice before investing in buying a house.

AS MANY AS 68,600 units were sold during April-June 2019 across seven major cities - Delhi-NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Pune, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata

NEW LAUNCHES may plunge by 98 per cent to only 1,390 units as against nearly 69,000 units in the corresponding period of 2019

A MASSIVE drop in both new launches and housing sales were, of course, expected on the back of a complete lockdown for most of this quarter

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION has played a big role in housing sales of late, with many developers now strengthening their digital sales capabilities

HOUSING SALES are likely to fall by 83 per cent in Delhi-NCR to 2,100 units in April-June 2020 from 12,640 units during the corresponding period of the previous year

IN THE Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), sales may drop by 83 per cent

Source: Anarock/PTI

NEW TAX REGIME

CBDT allows individuals to claim exemption on tour, conveyance allowance

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE CENTRAL Board of Direct Taxes has allowed individuals who have opted for the new income tax regime to claim exemption on tour and conveyance allowance received from employers.

The income tax department has now amended income tax rules to prescribe certain exemptions to be availed by employees such as any allowance granted to meet the cost of travel on tour or on transfer, any allowance, whether, granted on tour or for the period of journey in connection with transfer, to meet the ordinary daily charges incurred by an em-

ployee on account of absence from his normal place of duty.

It also includes exemption for any allowance granted to meet the expenditure incurred on conveyance in performance of duties of an office or employment of profit, provided that free conveyance is not provided by the employer. Further, blind, deaf and mute or orthopedically handicapped employees can also claim ad-hoc exemption of transport allowance of Rs 3,200 per month while computing salaried income.

CBDT has, however, clarified while determining value of perquisites, no exemption shall be available in respect of free food and non-alcoholic beverages provided by employer via paid vouchers.

CRUDE WATCH

OIL SETTLES LOWER

New York: Oil settled lower as new coronavirus cases spiked in the US and China, and on growing concerns about rising US output while crude stockpiles sat at record highs. Brent crude futures settled down 3 cents at \$40.91 and WTI crude futures fell 23 cents to \$38.49. **REUTERS**

Not an easy task for banks ... but methods of lending and quality of lending has to improve: SBI chief

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, JUNE 27

EVEN AS public sector banks have taken the lead in sanctioning and disbursing loans under the government's collateral-free working capital finance scheme announced by the FM and SBI has already given loans worth Rs 19,000 crore to 4 lakh MSME's, Uday Kotak, CII president and MD & CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank, said that though private banks have been slow to start, they will catch up and over the next 3-4 weeks and they would have done a sizeable business under the government guarantee scheme for MSMEs.

Kotak said the eligibility conditions for the government's Rs 3 lakh crore MSME package should be relaxed in view of the revision in turnover limit for MSMEs from Rs 100 crore to Rs 250 crore.

Addressing the MSMEs from across the country over a webinar conducted by CII, Rajnish Kumar, chairman at SBI, and Uday Kotak acknowledged that while MSMEs are more vulnerable to stress in the external environment, they said that the financing to the segment needs to improve.

Kumar said that evolution of digital technology at banks will play a big role in easier lending to MSMEs as it is making it easier for banks to verify the credentials of

'More risk capital needs to be brought in as that would help them withstand the risk of shock of external environment and for that venture capital and angel investors are crucial'

UDAY KOTAK
CII PRESIDENT AND MD & CEO
OF KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK

MSMEs and is making the assessment easy."

"Use of tech in lending is enabling the banks to underwrite in a more scientific manner. Latest example is the guaranteed emergency credit line where Rs 3 lakh crore has been set aside and within month SBI has done 4 lakh loans worth Rs 19,000 crore," he said.

Kumar further said that SBI is shifting its focus from home loans to MSMEs in a big way and has asked 90 DGMs to focus on MSMEs. "Housing loan was safe, easy and that was the focus. I am shifting the focus... We are doing a lot of improvements around processes. It is not an easy task for banks and the hesitation comes from past experience but methods of lending and quality of lending has to improve. We are taking steps and hopeful that we will be able to support MSMEs," he added.

Emphasising that building

Irdai asks insurers to offer corona standard policy by July 10

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 27

INSURANCE REGULATORY and Development Authority of India (Irdai) on Saturday announced guidelines on COVID-19 standard benefit-based health policy and individual COVID-19 standard health policy. Guidelines were issued for Corona Rakshak policy, a standard benefit-based policy and Corona Kavach Policy, a standard health policy, which will be offered on indemnity basis and insurers have been asked to launch the product from July 10, 2020.

All life, general and health insurance companies have been encouraged to offer standard benefit-based policy, while every general and standalone health insurer shall offer standard health indemnity policy.

According to the guidelines by Irdai, minimum sum insured for Corona Kavach Policy will be Rs 50,000 and maximum sum insured would be Rs 5 lakh. However, for Corona Rakshak Policy, the minimum sum insured would be Rs 50,000 and maximum limit is set at Rs 2.5 lakh.

The premium under both the products shall be pan India basis and no geographic location or zone-based pricing will be allowed. Rashmi Nandargi, head, Retail Health Underwriting at Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, said these standard policies specific to COVID-19 were a welcome move considering the current situation where people are worried about the COVID-19 treatment costs.

"These policies will cater to people who currently don't have a

As per the guidelines by Irdai, minimum sum insured for Corona Kavach Policy will be ₹50,000 and maximum sum insured would be ₹5 lakh

holistic health insurance policy and are looking to cover themselves against COVID-19. The policy coverages, terms & conditions are standard across insurers; the USP would be wide network of hospitals for cashless facility. These Covid-19 specific policies will certainly be an attractive proposition for people to opt for health insurance, and later may encourage them to opt for a comprehensive health insurance cover," added Rashmi.

Corona Kavach policy will be an indemnity-based policy but optional cover shall be made available on benefit basis. The base cover will offer hospitalization expenses like room and boarding charges along with PPE kits, gloves, masks and such other similar expenses and even AYUSH treatment. While in Corona Rakshak policy, insurers shall pay lump-sum benefits equal to 100% of sum insured on positive diagnosis of COVID-19, requiring the hospitalisation for minimum continuous period of 72 hours. Under indemnity health insurance plans, insurers cover the cost of medical expenses during hospitalization, while in defined benefit plans a lump-sum is paid irrespective of the actual hospital expense. **FE**

new India in a new world would need MSMEs as an integral part, Kotak, stressed on the fact that MSMEs should look to raise risk capital and good corporate governance as that would enhance their ability to raise financing from banks.

"More risk capital needs to be brought in as that would help them withstand the risk of shock of external environment and for that venture capital and angel investors are crucial.... Besides principles of running a good business involved proper accounting, audits and ensuring that the money in business remains in business and doesn't go into real estate. Availability of risk capital and corporate governance is the bedrock for growth of MSMEs," said Kotak. He pointed that weak equity base of MSMEs make it difficult for bankers from time to time to support them.

Both the bankers hailed the government schemes to support MSMEs which they said were the backbone of the economy and said that the recent redefinition of micro, small and medium enterprises will enable them to grow and get larger. Kumar said that the schemes by the government are very timely and while they may not eliminate the pain of MSMEs, they would reduce the pain and help them come out of the current peculiar situation.

Govt to launch floating rate savings bond from July 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE GOVERNMENT has decided to launch Floating Rate Savings Bonds 2020 (Taxable) from July 1, giving an opportunity to invest in secured government instruments.

The new scheme has been brought in place of 7.75 per cent Savings (Taxable) Bonds, 2018, which was withdrawn from the close of banking business on May 28, 2020, the finance ministry said in a statement.

The interest on the seven-year bond will be paid semi-annually on January 1 and July 1 every year.

The interest on January 1, 2021 will be paid at 7.15 per cent.

The rate for next half-year will be reset every six months, the first reset being on January 1, 2021, the official release said.

There will be no option to pay interest on cumulative basis, it said, adding the bonds will be repaid on the expiry of seven years from the date of issue. However, the ministry added, premature redemption will be allowed for specified categories of senior citizens.

The interest on the Bonds will be taxable under the Income Tax Act, 1961 as amended from time to time and as applicable according to the relevant tax status of the Bonds holder, it added.

It will be issued at par at Rs 100 for a minimum amount of Rs 1,000 and in multiples thereof, the release said, adding there will be no maximum limit for investment.

Subscription to the bonds will be in the form of cash (up to Rs 20,000 only)/drafts/cheques or any electronic mode.

Deadline to submit bids for Air India extended again

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

THE CENTRE Saturday extended the deadline — for the third time — to submit bids for Air India till August 31. Prior to the change, the deadline for interested bidders to submit an expression of interest for the national airline's disinvestment process was June 30.

"The above changes are as per the requests received from the IBs (interested bidders) in view of the prevailing situation arising out of COVID-19," as per a notification by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management. In January, the Centre had put 100 per cent of its stake in Air India, including the airline's 100 per cent stake in Air India Express and 50 per cent stake in Air India-SATS Airport Services, on the block.

'Requested ComMin to allow export of PPE kits'

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

STATING THE importance of export orientation as well as import substitution, MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari Saturday said the country is producing large quantities of Personal Protective Equipment kits, adding he has requested the Commerce Ministry to allow their export.

"Over two months ago, India imported PPE kits from China through a special flight and now, the country is producing over 5 lakh PPE kits per day. I have requested the Commerce Ministry to allow export of PPE kits," Gadkari said while addressing a webinar organised by GAME task force on International MSME Day.

The government had on

The government had on January 31 banned exports of PPE kits and other medical coveralls including N-95 masks

January 31 banned exports of PPE kits and other medical coveralls including N-95 masks. Gadkari launched the report of the GAME National Task Force for MSMEs, entailing industry-wide recommendations to boost the units and entrepreneurial dynamism.

KP Krishnan, former secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said MSMEs need financial and regulatory support in the short term. He suggested NPA classification should be redone for the sector, so that the borrowers can get more time.

BRIEFLY

GSTR-1: Filing sales statement via SMS

New Delhi: GST taxpayers filing 'NIL' returns will be able to file final monthly/quarterly sales statement GSTR-1 through SMS from July 1st week. The CBIC said the move will improve ease of GST compliance for over 12 lakh registered taxpayers. **PTI**

Nalco net profit at ₹138 crore in FY20

New Delhi: National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco) has posted a net profit of Rs 138.23 crore for FY20, as per a release. **ENS**

14 SUNDAY STORY



Ladakh's long, hot summer

When India and China clashed in their worst stand-off in four decades, leaving 20 Indian soldiers dead, the ripples were felt in Ladakh. The tensions are set to further delay recovery in the UT that, instead of tourists, is seeing huge losses, a 20 times surge in Covid-19 numbers since May, and a strict lockdown. VARINDER BHATIA on the road from Leh to Pangong

TASHI WANGMO, 38, runs a stationery-cum-bookstore she took on rent two years ago, at a market complex near the Leh Deputy Commissioner's office. On Wednesday morning, she is busy negotiating the three-month lockdown rent with her landlord, Tsewang Norbu, as her daughter Yangchan, 10, attends online lessons on a phone. Schools shut, the Class 4 student has classes for two hours a day — noon and evening. But, the skies are rarely silent in Leh these days. And as the Indian Air Force's fighter jet sorties scream overhead, Wangmo quickly covers Yangchan's ears with headphones.

That also means Tashi, a single parent, can talk freely about the difficult times she is facing, with almost zero sales at her shop since the lockdown began in March end, a pending rent that amounts to Rs 54,000 per annum, school fees that needs to be paid, and the war clouds now hovering overhead.

It is 10 days since India and China clashed in Galwan Valley, with 20 Indian troops including a Commanding Officer killed in the worst face-off between the two countries in four decades. However, tensions have been brewing since May, particularly in Pangong Tso, around 200 km away. Its transition from a tourist hotspot a year ago to a hot zone, amidst the lingering shadow of coronavirus, is casting a pall on the rest of Ladakh.

Landlord Norbu says he understands Wangmo's problem, but adds they are also facing a crisis. "Shop owners like me have requested the administration to give us some relief too," he says. "The tension between India and China, and Covid, are two demons that have ruined our lives."

The clampdown

Ladakh, especially Leh, is under total lockdown, given both the situation at the border and the Covid-19 surge. Officials ward off queries, there are numerous check-posts across the UT's Capital, and anybody coming from outside, by road or air, must spend a minimum of seven days in quarantine — the wait can get prolonged due to the delays in getting test results.

An odd-even formula is in place to check the numbers of both private and commercial vehicles. While essential commodity shops are open through the week, Leh's traditional cloth market is allowed only Friday and Saturday.

In this stillness, the movement of troops, plus the IAF aircraft, is a constant presence. The 14 Corps of the Army's Ladakh Scouts and several units of the ITBP and Border Roads Organisation are based in Leh.

Since the first case was reported in March — a resident who had returned from Iran — the drumbeat of coronavirus too has been rising. On June 24, the tally stood at 242 in Leh — 87 of them cured. Kargil has nearly three times that number — 690 — with 187 cured.

With all cases asymptomatic or mild, and only one death across the UT, Chief Medical Officer, Leh, Motup Dorje, is confident of their readiness. "We are fully prepared, with enough



(Top) Sakti village in Leh, which is located on the highway to Pangong Tso. Beyond the village can be seen the Pangong area; (Above) school children in Leh climb up a hill nearby for Internet connectivity to attend online classes. Varinder Bhatia

EXPLAINED

The double whammy

THE BORDER with China is the hottest it has been in 4 decades. The coronavirus numbers have surged following a brief, comforting lull. And it's all coinciding to wash out a tourist season that Ladakh depends on for a living.

isolation and ICU beds." Community leaders are helping monitor patients in home isolation.

What Ladakh is struggling with is testing, with its sole lab, in Chuchot Yokma village, equipped to handle just 25-30 cases a day. After flights from outside resumed and cases surged, the authorities started flying samples down to Delhi and Chandigarh. While officially the waiting time for results is 48-72 hours, it usually takes several days.

The checkpoints across the two national highways — from Srinagar and Manali — to control movement from outside are slowing supplies. The trucks from outside stop here, and goods are transferred to local vehicles, following sanitisation.

Phuntsog Wangyal, the president of the Leh Merchant Association, says, "Scarcity of essential commodities is a major issue... The entire ration for the city comes from outside. By the time they reach, the goods are far costlier."

Ghulam Mustafa, a leading Leh hotelier, adds, "Transporters are not willing to bring in supplies because they fear getting stuck on the way due to both the Army movement and the curbs. Entire stocks can get ruined." The Ladakh Transport Cooperative Society based in Leh has a network of around 1,200 trucks. Many have been requisitioned by the Army for transporting rations, ammunition and troops to forward areas. The society's secretary, Nawang, says they are grateful for the business.

The economy

April to September is peak tourist season for Leh — this year, it threatens to be a total washout. Compared to the 1.33 lakh tourists it got in 2019 till June (over 2.79 lakh the entire season), Leh has got barely 6,050 so far. Its over 400 guesthouses and hotels are shut. With 70% of Ladakh's economy dependent on tourism, hoteliers put the expected loss at over Rs 600 crore. The border tensions mean there won't be any early respite.

Tsetan Angchuk, the president of the Leh

Travel Association, says they expect little business for another 12-18 months. "Tourism is the only full-fledged industry here... Leh has 4,000 taxis and 300 tourist buses. All are jobless."

Angchuk adds that the government's laws for the sensitive region have always been a drag on Ladakh's tourism. "When Ladakh was opened for tourists, they were allowed to explore very limited places. In the 1990s, restricted areas like Nubra valley, Pangong Tso were opened. Now, Inner Line Permit is needed to visit these places and the Chinese and Taiwanese require another permit, from the Ministry of Home Affairs in New Delhi. Nearly 15% of the tourists here are from China and Taiwan, Buddhists coming to visit monasteries."

According to Angchuk, encouraging tourism in border areas near the LAC would also fortify India's claims regarding these when it comes to China. "Take the nomadic tribes. While we have imposed so many restrictions on them, not allowing them to go to their pasture lands, the Chinese have been encouraging them to spread out."

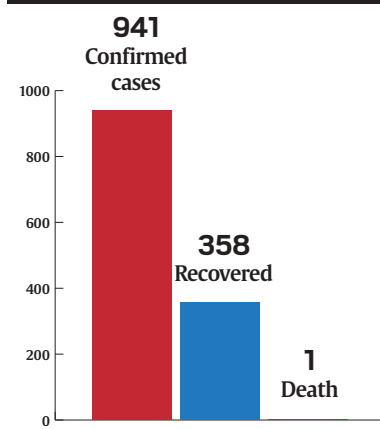
Stanzin Chospel, the president of a taxi union, says, "During the five-month tourist season, a taxi driver earns Rs 3-3.5 lakh, which supports him the entire year. During normal conditions, the Army also hires a large number of taxis. But these days, we are sitting idle."

The Covid blow came even as the industry was still working out the glitches since January and Kashmir was split into two Union Territories — of J&K and Ladakh. Tashi Gyaltsen Khachhu, Chairman of the Ladakh Chamber of Industry, points out the absence of a procurement policy. "When we were a part of J&K, the J&K Small Scale Industrial Development Corporation promoted the local MSME sector. We had requested the Union government and Ladakh Lt Governor RK Mathur that till the time there was a similar body for Ladakh, have a tendering process for projects above Rs 1 lakh, and restrict the same to only those units registered with respective districts in the UT."

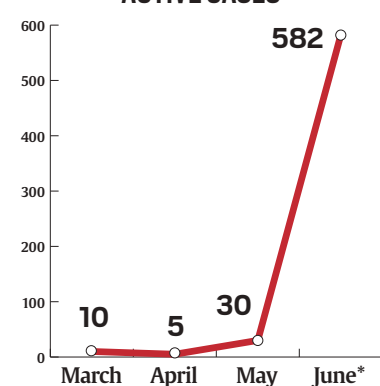
Among the businesses hit due to the border tension is the much-coveted Pashmina wool, worth Rs 13-14 crore annually. The sheep from which the wool is acquired are found in regions near the LAC. Pashmina traders claim most of the livestock grazing pastures are now out of bounds.

Sonam Tsering, a former councillor from Chushul and one of the leading Pashmina traders of Leh, says around 1,200-1,300 families in the city are in the business. "There are

COVID IN LADAKH



ACTIVE CASES



*till June 25

■ 10 patients in hospitals in Leh, 38 in Kargil; none on ventilator; 1 death so far

■ Ladakh has 42 ICU beds, 21 ventilators

about 2.5-3 lakh Pashmina goats in the Nyoma and Durbuk sub-divisions. Most of the traditional pastures are along the Indus River in the area of the LAC and used to be shared by Tibetans and the nomads. While our Army has imposed restrictions, China has been sending Tibetan nomads to these pastures. First they push them to the forward areas, then they put up mobile towers, shopping complexes there, and stake claim to the land. On our side are a few dilapidated *kuchcha* houses. So the few people living there are also migrating."

While the border tension is set to further hit business, Tsering says even previous payments are pending. "In March-April, we receive payments for Pashmina sold during the winter. Due to Covid-19, our clients who process the raw wool said they were not able to sell their goods either, and hence could not pay us."

Schools

Tsewang Norbu and his friends Jigmet Dolkar and Jigmet Dolma, all students of Class 10, climb up a 30-feet hilltop on the outskirts of Leh every day with a laptop. That's the only place in the area where they get proper Internet connectivity, for sessions with their class teacher.

Leh has 358 government and 46 private schools, with 7,782 enrolled in the former and 15,840 in latter. Punchok Paldan, the head of the National Informatics Centre in Leh, admits the Internet is a major issue, now emerging as a major problem with schools shut.

Chetan Dorje, District Education and Planning Officer, Leh, says, "To ensure students don't miss out, we have deputed teachers who liaison with sarpanchs in villages to provide homework and lessons. Teachers also share lessons on WhatsApp."

The administration is also reaching out through radio and television. Since April 11, the Leh Education Department has been broadcasting lessons to students of Classes 10 and 12 on the radio. "Theory subjects like English, Social Studies, Urdu, Bodhi language and Science are taught on a station from 11 to 12 noon daily. For subjects like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, which involve equations, diagrams etc, we have been using a Door-darshan channel since May 19," Dorje says.

However, the tension along the LAC means officials fear disruption in reaching out to students in the forward areas. "Areas like Changthang, Zaskar, Nyoma, Nubra and various zones have 40-45 villages. We send teachers there once a month, to share lessons, even stationery items," says Dorje.

Noney P Wangchuk, the owner of Ladakh Public School in Leh, says many of their 1,200-odd students have returned home to far-flung areas after the lockdown. As many families share one phone or device between themselves, Wangchuk says, "We give lessons till late in the night. Teachers teach even till 2-3 am."

The road to Pangong

National Highway 3, connecting Leh to Pangong, runs along the Indus River, with the Stok and Matho glaciers on one side and hills on the other. But the picturesque villages, a mix of Tibetan, Muslim and Christian families, hide an underlying anxiety these days — about Covid as much as China.

The Shey village, the ancient seat of Ladakhi kings, is located down this road, as well as the historic Thiksey monastery and a residence of the Dalai Lama.

Resembling Lhasa's Potala palace, Thiksey monastery is a 12-storey structure housing Buddhist art. In 1970, a Maitreya temple came up on the premises to commemorate the visit of the 14th Dalai Lama. Usually, at this time, the place is thronging with tourists. Now, everything is shut.

An Army checkpoint marks Karu, where NH-3 splits into two — one road going up towards Sakti village and further to Pangong Tso, and the other towards Manali.

Sakti, a village of 3,600 people, lies at an altitude of approximately 11,800 feet. Its greenery, with fields of potatoes, tomatoes and peas (the region's summer staple), is a rare sight for Ladakh.

Sitting at a roadside *dhaba* near the entrance to the village, Chamba Gelek, a 60-year-old farmer, says they have been hit hard by coronavirus. "We do not have any case, but due to the numbers in Leh, no tourists are coming towards Pangong."

Stanzin Tashi, 36, the owner of the *dhaba*, says, "If the tensions increase in Pangong Tso, our livelihood will be ruined. I will be left with no money to feed my family." Gelek remarks that for months now, their effort had been to ensure no outsiders entered the village, to prevent coronavirus. "Villagers even told their relatives and friends not to come." Now, there is almost no break in the continuous stream of Army vehicles going past. "For hours, we don't see any private car."

The road to Pangong Tso, about 104 km away, stretches next to him — empty for miles, but for the Army trucks and troops.

In the dark, says Kargil, as tests delayed, China looms

ANKITA DWIVEDI JOHRI

ON MAY 23, says the 28-year-old, he boarded a Shramik train from Mumbai, along with 135 residents of Ladakh's Kargil district, to return home. "About 30 of us arrived on May 26. We were put in institutional quarantine, with our samples collected for Covid-19 testing on June 1."

Refusing to reveal his identity, he adds that for the next two weeks, none of them heard anything on their test results. "On June 12, all 30 of us gathered outside the quarantine centre and protested," he recalls.

Finally, on June 14, his results came positive for Covid-19. "I had already spent 14 days in quarantine. So I had to undergo re-sampling on June 16," he says. That result too was positive, and now he is waiting for results of the third test, done on June 24.

Having declared itself Covid-free on May 15, Kargil is seeing a surge in cases this month. Of Ladakh's nearly 1,000 cases, 70% are in Kargil.

Says Feroz Ahmed Khan, Chief Executive Councillor of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Kargil, "Those who returned mixed freely with residents since their results were not out..."

Kargil has no testing lab, with the nearest 200 km away, in Chuchot Yokma in Leh district. "Earlier, we were sending most of our samples to the NCDC in Delhi. In June, the test results started getting delayed. Recently, we have begun sending samples to Chandigarh. We hope this will reduce delays," says Dr Abdul Jalil, in-charge of the only dedicated Covid-19 hospital in Kargil, with 100 beds. As of June 24, 63 beds were occupied.

Khan says apart from the hospital, they have 10 ICU beds, Covid Care Centres in all 12 blocks, isolation beds, quarantine centres, and beds in hotels — about 1,000 in all.

Among those waiting for their result is a 25-year-old research scholar at Delhi University who returned to Kargil on May 14 and remains in home quarantine since. He is waiting for results of a second sample. "The lab has been conducting 80-90 tests daily as per press release of the administration. Of these, at least till June 17, not more than 10 tests were from Kargil," he says.

Khan says they are trying to see to it that more samples from Kargil are tested at the Leh lab.

Kargil Deputy Commissioner Baseer Ul Haq Choudhary did not respond to calls and messages.

Kargil residents are now on edge over the border tension with China. Social activist Sajjad Hussain says the mixed messages from the government aren't helping, despite the site of the June 15-16 night clash being 400 km away. "Since the Kargil war, there has been no ceasefire violation from Pakistan's side here. Now people fear there might be shelling. The administration should reach out to stakeholders like village heads to soothe the nerves."

Across
THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM

Website: pchidambaram.in
Twitter @Pchidambaram_IN

Almost alone, the MoF predicts a V-shaped recovery. Down 5 per cent in 2020-21 and up 5 per cent in 2021-22 may appear to be a recovery, but it is not. Only when total output (GDP) exceeds the total output of 2019-20 will that be considered a recovery, and that may not happen until 2022-23. If the MoF is so sanguine, why does it not predict positive GDP growth in 2020-21? The MoF dare not!

SOME HAVE perfect vision. Some are better, they are seers, they can see things that ordinary mortals cannot. Some are even better, they are sages, they can foretell the future that is beyond the grasp of average people.

Let me report what I see around me and you can compare it with what you see around you. In a big city like Chennai, everything is open, then everything is suddenly closed. It is a bewildering swing between Lockdown and Unlockdown and Lockdown, no one knows what will be open or closed, or when. The rich and the upper middle class stay home, falling back upon their wealth or savings, and praying that the nightmare will go away by... nobody knows when. The lower middle class play hide and seek with their workplaces, venture out only if absolutely necessary, and return quickly to their homes. The prevailing emotion is **fear**.

It is the poor, especially the shopkeeper, the self-employed auto or taxi driver, and the tradesman like carpenter, plumber or electrician, who perforce must try their luck, go out in search of work, and return home with earnings that are less than 50 per cent of usual earnings. The prevailing emotion is **frustration**.

The very poor are devastated. They had migrated for work, they have migrated back to their villages, and the only two things that sustain them are the ration under the National Food Security Scheme (many state governments have

made it free) and MGNREGA work, both initiatives of the UPA government. Many, however, are still dependent upon the charity of NGOs. The prevailing emotions are **disgust** with the governments and **resignation** to fate.

In small towns everything is open — the bazaar, the shops, the service providers.

Except in the bazaar for vegetables, fruit, meat and fish, there are few customers for footwear, clothing, barber's services, etc.

AGRICULTURE
SHINES...

Rural India is completely open. Very few wear masks. There has been a bountiful harvest, the Rabi crop has been procured, the sowing season has started, and there are happy faces. People are buying essential items and staples, but not beyond that. Packaged food items and diet and nutrition supplements are popular. The rich farmers are buying tractors and agricultural equipment. Sale of two-wheelers and small cars (not other cars) has picked up smartly. The pent-up demand for commercial vehicles has spurred CV sales, but the relentless increase in petrol and diesel prices is a dampener.

Supply chains are being restored, though there are some bottlenecks like GST.

Agriculture will do well in 2020-21. Doing well means, at best 4 per cent

growth. That will contribute 0.60 per cent to overall GDP growth.

... BUT GLOOM
ELSEWHERE

Everything else is surrounded by gloom and uncertainty. MSMEs feel they have been abandoned by the government. The Finance Minister promised Rs 3 lakh crore to 45 lakh MSMEs (out of 10 crore MSMEs) as a *credit guarantee*. Assuming an NPA level of 10 per cent, that works out to Rs 30 lakh crore of lending. Only Rs 70,000 crore have been sanctioned so far and only Rs 35,000 crore have been disbursed. Thousands of MSMEs have closed down and lakhs of jobs have been lost — maybe forever.

Travel, tourism, airlines, bus transport, hospitality, hotel industry, consumer durables, construction, exports, etc. are languishing. Many of them will suffer huge losses running into crores of rupees and some will file for bankruptcy. Millions of direct and indirect jobs will perish with the failed businesses. Many companies have announced debt reduction and sharp cuts in capital expenditure.

Demand is still abysmally low, hitting the Manufacturing and Services sectors very hard. People are hoarding cash. Year-on-year, currency in circulation has risen 14 per cent. The reasons are two: one, fear of Covid infection and the cost of hospitalisation. The other is the looming threat of China. Both Covid fear and China threat will drag India into a reces-

sion in 2020-21, the first in 42 years. It could be up to -5 per cent. A recession will mean more unemployment (except rural, mostly manual, work) and falling incomes/wages. Per capita income is expected to fall by 10-12 per cent. The people at the margins of the poverty line (just above the bottom 30 per cent) will be pushed into poverty.

STILL CONTRACTING

The Ministry of Finance sees green shoots in wheat procurement (382 LMT), kharif sowing (13.13 million ha), fertiliser sales and foreign exchange reserves (USD 507 billion). The rest are data about *lower contraction* in Manufacturing and Services, though it has conceded that y-o-y growth is negative. Y-o-Y, Manufacturing has contracted by 27.4 per cent and Services by 5.4 per cent, consumption of electricity by 12.5 per cent, consumption of petroleum products by 23.2 per cent and consumption of coal by 4 per cent. Railway freight traffic is lower than last year. Different sectors of the economy have reported huge job losses.

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Fifth
COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

Twitter @tavleen_singh



Chinese
checkers

THE CONGRESS Party's former president should have been more cautious before he made his 'Sunder Modi' tweet. It did not take the Prime Minister long to hit back hard. Last week his government revealed that the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation accepted largesse from China in 2005 after which Sonia Gandhi's government started showing unusual camaraderie with our old enemy. Concessions were made in matters of trade that benefited China more than India and the Gandhi family appeared to develop a close relationship with the Chinese Communist Party.

The disclosure that the Dynasty's personal foundation received \$300,000 from the Chinese government in 2005 is truly damning. But, personally, I was not surprised. This is because when Sonia Gandhi was India's unofficial prime minister and Rahul her designated heir, I noticed that they took a keen interest in closing down major projects that would have benefited India enormously but that China clearly did not like. One example will suffice.

If Vedanta had not been stopped from refining bauxite in the Niyamgiri Hills, because of the personal intervention of Rahul Gandhi, Odisha may today have been the world's centre for aluminium production. Anil Agarwal, who invested more than Rs 11,000 crore in the Lanjigarh refinery, has said more than once that the international price of aluminium would have come down by half if the refinery had been allowed to mine bauxite in the surrounding hills. And, Jayanthi Natarajan has publicly admitted that she was ordered to close this project, and other major projects, by Sonia Gandhi.

China knows that India will only match its might if it succeeds in building an economy as powerful. In the decade before Sonia became India's de facto leader, we were beginning to get there. The Indian economy was booming. This is because Atal Bihari Vajpayee continued the process initiated by PV Narasimha Rao to dismantle the awful licence raj. So, our private sector companies began to compete with the best. It was around 2006, as I remember, that the dead hand of the government reappeared and manifested itself through the Ministry of Environment. People like me supported Modi in the hope that he would unshackle the economy and bring back real growth. Sadly, he has turned out to be a socialist and a central planner and the economy was already in serious trouble before the Chinese virus hit.

It is my considered opinion that a powerful economy is our greatest weapon against both our main enemies. China is ruled by a totalitarian dictator who knows this well. So he got the Dynasty to submit and then lulled Modi into a false sense of security by agreeing to all those picturesque but futile summits. At that first one, even as he shared a Gujarati swing with Modi, Chinese troops entered Ladakh for what then seemed like a picnic. They now come with much more ugly intentions. It is unfortunate that our response has so far been surprise and not strategy.

Where are the men who are in charge of national security? Where is the National Security Advisor? He has not been seen since he trotted off to the Tablighi Jamaat's headquarters in Delhi in the early days of the pandemic. That should have been the job of the city's police chief. What is happening now is his. Where is the general who became our first Chief of Defence Staff? He has not been seen in a very long while. In this time of open hostilities with China it should be his job to brief the country on what is happening. It should be the job of the NSA. Instead, all we have seen are BJP spokesmen whose job it is not to speak for the Government of India.

At the best of times these spokesmen are bad and they have been atrocious since the crisis began in Ladakh. They have behaved like childish, belligerent schoolboys. Whenever they have been cornered in some primetime debate they have resorted tediously to either invoking Jawaharlal Nehru's China war or to accusing those asking questions of treason. This is a time of national crisis, they shriek, how dare you ask questions that could hurt the morale of 'our bravehearts'.

Actually, it is because not enough questions have been asked about national security that not enough has been done to strengthen India's defences. We did not ask enough questions after 26/11 so our cities remain as vulnerable to another jihadi attack as Mumbai was in 2008. We did not ask enough questions after the attack on a CRPF convoy in Pulwama so we do not know how the suicide bomber acquired RDX. He could not have been acting alone but we do not know the names of those who helped him. If it was Pakistan behind that attack then we should at least know if it was the work of the State or freelance jihadists.

In the Kashmir Valley we have asked so few questions since the abrogation of Article 370 that we now hear of jihadi attacks every other day. Were we not told that one of the reasons for Kashmir to come under direct rule from Delhi was to stop jihadi groups from continuing their horrible violence? If we cannot control attacks within our borders, what chance is there for us to be able to control attacks on our borders? Things have gone very wrong with national security for a very long while.

Floyd's last breath
has an echo here

Dalitality

SURAJ YENGDE

Twitter @Surajyengde



THE COLD-blooded murder of African-American George Floyd on May 25 has sparked a revolution in the United States. Floyd was kneed by a white police official in Minneapolis while his colleague, of Asian origin, stood as abettor. This brutality was recorded on mobile phone cameras by onlookers who protested but to no avail. The video galvanised global communities to demand justice for George Floyd and call for an end to America's mistreatment of its black and brown citizens by the cruel world of white supremacy and racial capitalism.

The US has reverberated with cries of abolition of racialised policing and there have been calls for defunding the police. Unjust incarceration of black and brown people and a capitalism that preys on the poor and vulnerable of all shades is a template of the American Dream. Malcolm X saw this as an American nightmare for African-Americans.

Big US corporations, global financial industries and liberal educational institutions immediately lent their support to the Black Lives Matter movement. Some courageous ones acknowledged their culpability, with a resolve to correct their past mistakes. In the entertainment industry, white celebrities co-created a video clip accepting their complicity: assuming, overlooking, shutting down or not saying anything on racial bias when it was required.

Back in India, Dalit rights activists Ravi Keerthi (50), Mayuri Keerthi (49) and Bhimrao Kanshiram Keerthi (12) took out a public protest in Nagpur against anti-black racism in America. They pointed to similarities of caste and race discrimination. They chanted "I can't breathe", adding to the echoes of Floyd's final words.

I was busy fielding TV and other media interviews. Everyone, it seemed, was interested in understanding my perspective on the racial question in America. No one, it seemed, was interested to look at obvious parallels. I had to force this analogy into the discussions. One panelist in a TV debate said it was a US-centred conversation and, hence, bringing up caste issues of India would be a diversion.

As usual, Indian celebrities were apathetic.

While some woke ones did lend their support, no one seemed interested in acknowledging the oppression of Dalits who have to live through hell under similar and sometimes far brutal circumstances in India. From Sambhal to Moradabad to Pune to Nagpur, be it over practice of religious rituals or a property dispute, couples in love or crimes of hate, there are several examples of Dalits brutalised and killed by upper-caste perpetrators.

This tragedy also underlines the role of police brutality against Dalits, Adivasis and Muslims in India. In many cases, the murder of a Dalit is passed off as "another Dalit murder". The SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act is rarely invoked and police crudely discourage any reference to caste atrocities.

Many times, an FIR is not filed. If filed, investigation and due process are delayed. Perhaps, that explains how a Thevar man found guilty in Tamil Nadu of ordering the vicious murder recorded on a CCTV camera of his son-in-law Shankar, a Dalit, was set free by the Madras High Court.

Police, in general, is an anti-Dalit, Adivasi and Muslim institution. Their lack of empathy for victims of these groups indirectly make them co-convicts. This has to do with the way police are trained and taught to respond to cases involving Dalits, Adivasis or Muslims.

Many times, the character of a criminal is assumed. S/he must have a certain name, dress a certain way, worship a particular religion. There are also communalised, casteist elements in the forces that are often not discussed. There is little debate on these aspects of the law enforcement machinery.

Looking at the damning Dalit murders and the cold response from the court and police system, there is need for a renewed society-led response to these atrocities on Dalits. Need for a moral force that is dedicated to fighting the injustice meted out to the poor, vulnerable, weak Dalits. In the face of lawlessness and the lack of State and police interest in curbing atrocities, there has to be a Constitutionally devoted, socially conscious force that keeps violence in check.

Sometimes, it is the moral force that draws attention to it. This moral force helped India win its independence from British brutality. As the world debates Floyd and systemic prejudice and oppression, the power and the need for such a moral force couldn't be more relevant today.

Suraj Yengde, author of Caste Matters, curates the fortnightly 'Dalitality' column

She
SAID

LIUCHUENCHEN

liu.chen@indianexpress.com



I WAS grabbing my mask to rush to the nearby grocery store when the cellphone rang. It was my mother. I thought she would be (once again) fussing over my 'outing' amid the pandemic but she spoke in an extremely serious tone: "I hope you know what is happening between India and China. Always keep your face covered. Stay safe and do not respond to any trouble maker out there."

While the words of caution aren't anything new, the fears and anxiety of a possible backlash ratchet up whenever there is a fresh confrontation along the border. The undercurrent of tension bounces back, perhaps each time with a greater force, leaving me wondering if the average man on the street would understand that I am an Indian Chinese and should not be blamed for anything that happens with the neighbouring country.

It was during the initial days of the coronavirus pandemic, when I had gone to a familiar store for some purchases. Little did I expect that one of the staff members, wearing a mask, would appear in front of me, pass some unpleasant remark and walk away. It didn't turn out to be a pretty sight after I confronted him in front of other customers and the owner, who forced him to apologise. Even though I wasn't at fault, it didn't make me want to return to the same store again.

But it took only a couple of weeks for me to rethink the entire situation as news of the latest border face-off between the two nations poured in.

Would someone catch me again if I went out or will it prove to be worse this time? I am not a "spy". I have no connection with the Chinese government, so why should I suffer?

Most think that I am going overboard with the word "spy" but that's how I was portrayed the last time I tweeted something in favour of Indian Chinese. I was cornered for being a "Chinese agent" with a few people tagging the National Investigation Agency. I remember I couldn't sleep that night.

The current spiralling tension makes me wonder what it will take to make others understand the need for cordial exchanges and support rather than hostility with their very own people. An Indian Chinese friend recently asked me if the

Can you see me as I
am, an Indian Chinese?



Indians of Chinese origin protesting against China's incursions in Ladakh in Kolkata's China Town area on June 20. Partha Paul

various Chinese associations should put out a message of harmony.

What I find unusual is how we are most of the time treated with respect but it is only during a conflict that we are looked upon with suspicion. It doesn't appear difficult for anyone to turn their backs on us just because we look similar to those from the enemy nation.

Such situations often call for measures to heal the festering distrust between people. At the same time, they also leave you wondering if you should

succumb to ridiculous ideas such as #boycottchinese goods and give up Chinese food, only for the sake of peace and to ensure that your life is not hampered.

It might sound slightly crazy but at one point, I was suggested by a close one that I wear more of ethnic clothes and wear a

bindi to "prove" my nationality.

Am I not just one of the 1.35 billion Indians out there? Why are people demanding that minorities change their own culture to be regarded as a citizen of the very country they were born in?

I might be of Chinese origin but I have no knowledge of Mandarin. Rather, I am well-versed in Hindi and Bengali.

Recently, a friend left me annoyed when she said, "Don't mind me saying this but China...". I don't understand why others need to worry about how I feel about a remark against the neighbouring country.

The scars of the 1962 war will always haunt my community. Fearful of drawing attention, we have always remained quiet about the injustice meted out to us back then. Picking on us will only worsen our suffering.

Liu Chuen Chen is a Senior Sub-Editor with IE Online

National Editor Shalini Langer curates the fortnightly 'She Said' column

Out of
MY MIND

MEGHNAD DESAI



SUDDENLY, WITHOUT any planning or co-ordination, across the globe countries are deciding that they want to 'normalise' lives. Infections may still be found and deaths inevitably and sadly occur. But the time has come to get back to work, end lockdowns and social distancing. Covid is no longer the unknown fear of the Armageddon. We know its size and its effects. It is domesticated in our minds.

People have died of a previously unknown infection and died in large numbers. At the outset, after a delay of a month

Why it's time for post-Covid world

or two (blame the Chinese or WHO), everyone was bewildered, unprepared and mystified. Scientists were caught without total command over the nature of the disease, its spread, its impact. It was global and so frightening that, like in the Old Testament, people began to think they will never survive this curse or, if they did, the world they will go back to will be totally different. Many people thought that this was a chance of a lifetime to reorder the world as greener, safer, more equal, more just.

As that fear or expectation is gone, We yearn for the Old Normal. In the UK, the arrival of a lovely hot summer, one hundred days of lockdown later, has un-

leashed all the old pleasures people used to enjoy. They do not care if the closeness may lead to a second coming of the infection. Been there, done that.

Behavioural scientists are really no better than economists, whatever they think. But they did warn back in February that if you impose lockdown for too long, people will begin to flake off and become impatient for the old routines. Scientists, the hard type, were undecided among themselves but kept on urging caution, as they are still doing. They know they don't know.

Ultimately when the choice came between the infection and the economy, as time passed, the costs of the shutdown be-

came unbearable for the people. The poor were hit the worst but businesses were also hit. Rich or poor, a 50% cut in income hurts. Governments around the world began to underplay the novelty of the pandemic. Yes there were deaths but people died anyway in winter in the Northern Hemisphere. They were just dying of a new disease. But most of these were the elderly or the unhealthy (people with underlying conditions). So the cost of the lives lost was argued down.

The higher per capita deaths have been in Europe. Even though the US records the highest number, given its size its numbers are fewer than the UK, Spain, France and

Belgium put together. Even a death score of 700 per million is less than one-tenth of 1 per cent. Of course politicians add that every life is precious, but those who have longer to live are even more precious than those above 65/70. In any case even globally the number of deaths is below half a million. The Spanish flu was much worse.

Covid has become familiar. A vaccine is far away, but we want Covid routinised in our lives. It has exposed appalling weaknesses in our societies but soon other problems will take priority. In every country, the hospital facilities proved inadequate. The poor of all ages and races suffered. They will stay that way... Relax.

16 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



PAKISTAN

Pak anti-graft body files new case against Nawaz Sharif

Lahore: Pakistan's anti-graft body has filed a fresh corruption case against deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif and three others for their alleged involvement in the illegal allotment of land in Punjab province about 34 years ago. An arrest warrant has been issued against the 70-year-old embattled three-time premier who is in London for treatment. Several corruption cases have been filed by the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan against Sharif since his ouster from the office by the Supreme Court in July 2017 in the Panama Papers case. Sharif was disqualified as prime minister in 2017 by the Supreme Court in the Panama Papers case.

BANGLADESH

4 Rohingya men killed in gunfight with police

Dhaka: Four suspected members of a Rohingya group allegedly involved in kidnapping for ransom were killed in a gunfight with Bangladeshi police near the sprawling refugee camps where refugees from Myanmar live, officials said. The gunfight took place Friday when a team of security officials was searching for the gang leader in a forest near the Rohingya camps at Cox's Bazar, said police Inspector Pradeep Kumar Das. Another inspector said the suspects opened fire at police, sparking the gunfight that led to their deaths.

HONG KONG

No permission for march to mark handover

Hong Kong: The Hong Kong police department on Saturday denied permission for an annual march in the former British colony on July 1 to mark the anniversary of the city's 1997 return to China, the organiser and the police said in separate statements. In a notice to the organiser, Civil Human Rights Front, police cited the city's current rules limiting gatherings to no more than 50 people due to the pandemic, saying public demonstrations are not exempted. The notice also cited violent incidents that took place after rallies organised by the group over the past 12 months.

BLOC TO ALLOW TRAVELLERS FROM SOME COUNTRIES

EU holds off reopening decision, Americans set to be excluded

PHILIP BLENKINSOP
BRUSSELS, JUNE 27

EUROPEAN UNION countries failed to settle on a final "safe list" of countries whose residents could travel to the bloc from July, with the United States, Brazil and Russia set to be excluded.

Ambassadors from the 27 EU members convened from Friday afternoon to establish criteria for granting quarantine-free access from next Wednesday.

A redrawn text of 10-20 countries was put to them, but many said they needed to consult first with their governments, diplomats said. The list did not include the United States, Brazil or Russia, one diplomat said. The countries are expected to give informal replies by Saturday evening.

The European Commission had advised that the bloc first lift internal border controls and then gradually open up to outsiders. However, the first step has not gone according to plan.

Greece is mandating Covid-19 tests for arrivals from a range of EU countries, including France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain, with self-isolation until results are known.

The Czech Republic has said it will not allow in tourists from Portugal, Sweden and part of Poland.

There is broad agreement that the bloc should only open up to those with a similar or better epidemiological situation, but there are questions about how to assess a country's handling of the epidemic and the reliability of data. **REUTERS**

Irish Parliament picks Micheál Martin as new Prime Minister

PADRAIC HALPIN
DUBLIN, JUNE 27

IRELAND'S PARLIAMENT picked veteran opposition leader Micheál Martin as Prime Minister on Saturday to head the first ever coalition uniting the two parties that have battled each other for power since a civil war nearly a century ago.

He pledged to rescue Ireland from the "the fastest-moving recession ever to hit", brought on by the coronavirus crisis.

Martin's Fianna Fail party was forced to join forces with its foes Fine Gael, after an election surge for leftist Irish nationalists Sinn Féin left neither of the traditional centrist parties with enough support to govern on its own. They are joined in coalition by the Greens.

Under a novel agreement, Martin is expected to step aside half way through the five-year term to allow Fine Gael's leader, outgoing PM Leo Varadkar, to return to the post.

"There is no question what our most urgent work is. There is no community, no part of our country which has escaped untouched" by coronavirus, Martin told a special sitting of MPs, held in Dublin's large Convention Centre as the Houses of Parliament are too small for social distancing. **REUTERS**



Lines of cars wait at a coronavirus testing site in Miami Gardens, Florida, on Friday. Florida banned alcohol consumption at its bars Friday as its daily confirmed coronavirus cases neared 9,000, a new record that is almost double the previous mark set just two days ago. **AP**

Despite early warnings, nations missed silent spreaders of Covid

MATT APUZZO, SELAM GEBREKIDAN & DAVID D KIRKPATRICK
MUNICH, JUNE 27

DR CAMILLA Rothe was about to leave for dinner when the government laboratory called with the surprising test result. Positive. It was Jan 27. She had just discovered Germany's first case of the new coronavirus.

But the diagnosis made no sense. Her patient, a businessman from a nearby auto parts company, could have been infected by only one person: a colleague visiting from China. And

that colleague should not have been contagious.

The visitor had seemed perfectly healthy during her stay in Germany. She told colleagues that she had started feeling ill after the flight back to China. Days later, she tested positive for the coronavirus.

Scientists at the time believed that only people with symptoms could spread the coronavirus. They assumed it acted like its genetic cousin, SARS.

But if the experts were wrong, if the virus could spread from seemingly healthy carriers or people who had not yet developed symptoms, the ramifications were potentially catastrophic. Public-

awareness campaigns, airport screening and stay-home-if-you're sick policies might not stop it. More aggressive measures might be required — ordering healthy people to wear masks, or restricting international travel.

Rothe and her colleagues were among the first to warn the world. But even as evidence accumulated, global health officials expressed confidence that symptomless spreading was not important, delaying strict measures.

It is impossible to calculate the human toll of that delay, but models suggest that earlier, aggressive action might have saved tens of thousands of lives. **NYT**

FB set to label rule-breaking posts, even Trump's, following boycott

BARBARA ORTUTAY
OAKLAND, JUNE 27

FACEBOOK SAID Friday that it will flag all "newsworthy" posts from politicians that break its rules, including those from US President Donald Trump.

Facebook's stock has dropped more than 8%, erasing roughly \$50 billion from its market valuation, after the European company behind brands such as Ben & Jerry's and Dove announced it would boycott Facebook ads through the end of the year over the amount of hate speech and divisive rhetoric on its platform. Later in the day, Coca-Cola also



Facebook stock fell 8% as big firms announced boycott

announced it joined the boycott for at least 30 days.

CEO Mark Zuckerberg had previously refused to take action against Trump posts suggesting that mail-in ballots will lead to voter fraud, saying that people deserved to hear unfiltered statements from political lead-



Washington has made a deal with the Taliban that allows the US to gradually pull its troops out of Afghanistan. **NYT**

Russia's GRU under spotlight again

US INTELLIGENCE officials told the *New York Times* that the alleged roping in of Afghan militants to kill coalition troops was the work of a Russian military intelligence unit known as GRU. This is the same unit that the UK government blamed for the poisoning of Sergei Skripal, a former Russian double agent living in England. According to Western intelligence offi-

EXPLAINED cials, GRU's missions usually involve the destabilisation of Western countries through various means. According to NYT, the unit was behind an attempted coup in Montenegro and the poisoning of an arms manufacturer in Bulgaria in recent years. It is also believed to be behind Russian attempts to intervene in the 2016 US elections.

NATO troops would be a significant and provocative escalation of what American and Afghan officials have said is Russian support for the Taliban, and it would be the first time the Russian spy unit was known to have orchestrated attacks on Western troops.

Any involvement with the Taliban that resulted in the deaths of American troops would also be a huge escalation of Russia's so-called hybrid war against the United States, a strategy of destab-

ilising adversaries through a combination of such tactics as cyberattacks, the spread of fake news and covert and deniable military operations.

The Kremlin said it had not been made aware of the accusations.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Taliban, denied that the insurgents have "any such relations with any intelligence agency" and called the report an attempt to defame them. **NYT**

Trump grateful for US-Indians' support, says White House

Washington: US President Donald Trump is "incredibly grateful" for the "widespread support" he has received from the people of India and Indian-Americans, the White House has said in response to a survey suggesting that over 50 per cent of the community members in some key American states are switching over to him in the presidential election in November.

White House Deputy Press Secretary Sarah Matthews made the comments while responding to a question on recent survey results that Indian-Americans, who traditionally vote for the Democrats, are switching towards Trump in the Nov 3 election. **PTI**

'I Love NY' logo designer Milton Glaser dies at 91

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK, JUNE 27

MILTON GLASER, a graphic designer who changed the vocabulary of American visual culture in the 1960s and '70s with his brightly coloured, extroverted posters, magazines, book covers and record sleeves, notably his 1967 poster of Bob Dylan with psychedelic hair and his "I (HEART) NY" logo, died Friday, his 91st birthday, in Manhattan.



Glaser got the National Medal of Arts in 2009. **AP**

His wife, Shirley Glaser, said the cause was a stroke.

Glaser brought wit, whimsy, narrative and skilled drawing to commercial art at a time when advertising was dominated by the severe strictures of modernism on one hand and the cozy realism of magazines like *The Saturday Evening Post* on the other.

At Push Pin Studios, which he and former classmates formed in 1954, he opened up design to myriad influences and styles that began to grab the attention of magazines and advertising agencies, largely through the studio's influ-

ential promotional publication, the *Push Pin Almanack* (later renamed *Push Pin Monthly Graphic*).

"I (HEART) NY," his logo for a 1977 campaign to promote tourism in New York, garnered global attention. Sketched on the back of an envelope during a taxi ride, it was printed in black letters, with a cherry-red heart standing in for the word "love". Almost immediately, the logo became an instantly recognised symbol of New York City, as recognisable as the Empire State Building. **NYT**

BASELESS CLAIM THAT DEMOCRATIC ELITES RUN A CHILD TRAFFICKING RING FROM A PIZZERIA WAS VIRAL ONLINE AHEAD OF 2016 POLLS

PizzaGate conspiracy theory thrives in TikTok era, now featuring Bieber

CECILIA KANG & SHEERA FRENKEL
WASHINGTON, JUNE 27

FOUR MINUTES into a video that was posted on Instagram last month, Justin Bieber leaned into the camera and adjusted the front of his black knit beanie. For some of his 130 million followers, it was a signal.

In the video, someone had posted a comment asking Bieber to touch his hat if he had been a victim of a child-trafficking ring known as PizzaGate. Thousands of comments were flooding in, and there was no evidence that

Bieber had seen that message. But the pop star's innocuous gesture set off a flurry of online activity, which highlighted the resurgence of one of social media's early conspiracy theories.

Viewers quickly uploaded hundreds of videos online analysing Bieber's action. The videos were translated into Spanish, Portuguese and other languages, amassing millions of views. Fans then left thousands of comments on Bieber's social media posts asking him if he was safe. Within days, searches for "Justin and PizzaGate" soared on Google, and the hashtag #savebieber started trending.

Four years ago, ahead of the 2016 US presidential election, the baseless notion that Hillary Clinton and Democratic elites were running a child sex-trafficking ring out of a Washington pizzeria spread across the internet, illustrating how a crackpot idea with no truth to it could blossom on social media — and how dangerous it could be. In December 2016, a vigilante gunman showed up at the restaurant with an assault rifle and opened fire into a closet.

In the years afterward, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube managed to largely suppress PizzaGate. But now, just months before the next presidential elec-



Hateful comments have surged on the social media pages of Comet Ping Pong, a pizza parlor in Washington that is at the center of the debunked PizzaGate conspiracy theory. **NYT**

tion, the conspiracy theory is making a comeback on these platforms — and on new ones such as TikTok — underlining the limits of their efforts to stamp out dangerous speech online and how little has changed despite rising public frustration.

This time, PizzaGate is being fuelled by a younger generation that is active on TikTok, which was in its infancy four years ago, as well as on other social media platforms. The conspiracy group QAnon is also promoting PizzaGate in private Facebook groups and creating easy-to-share memes on it.

Driven by these new elements, the theory has morphed.

PizzaGate no longer focuses on Clinton and has taken on less of a political bent. Its new targets and victims are a broader assortment of powerful businesspeople, politicians and celebrities, including Bieber, Bill Gates, Ellen DeGeneres, Oprah Winfrey and Chrissy Teigen, who are lumped together as part of the global elite. For groups like QAnon, PizzaGate has become a convenient way to foment discontent.

The theory has also gone global. While it previously found traction mainly in the United States, videos and posts about it have racked up millions of views in Italy, Brazil and Turkey.

"PizzaGate never went away because it encompasses very potent forces," including children's safety and the power of elites, said Alice Marwick, a disinformation expert at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "But now there is so much scaffolding from people who have researched it, it wasn't hard for others to pick up from there."

PizzaGate is reaching a level that nearly exceeds its 2016 fever pitch. TikTok posts with the #PizzaGate hashtag have been viewed more than 82 million times in recent months. Google searches for PizzaGate have skyrocketed. **NYT**



ARTS etc

Under the Red Moon

Anvita Dutt on *Bulbbul*, her directorial debut feature film set in 19th century Bengal, and the importance of the female gaze



INTERVIEW

'Start NREGA for the arts'

TM Krishna on how artistes are being pushed into poverty

eye

Adoor's World

The mother who finds a way into his films. The meditation that leads to his cinema. Conversations with Adoor Gopalakrishnan as he steps into his 80th year

Ashutosh Bhardwaj

THAT WAS our fourth consecutive evening together. We were at my cottage, on the second drink. In the last four days, I had driven him around the hills, we had been to a brewery at the Mall and trekked up to Chadwick Falls in the jungle. Realising that the word "sir" now sounds dry and distant, I asked: "What do you call a venerable old man in Malayalam?"

"Sir."
"I mean, what do people call you back home in Kerala?"
"Adoor Saar."

■ ■ ■

The novel and the cinema are often autobiographies in disguise; they can be more intimate and revealing than diaries or memoirs. During long afternoons and evenings in Shimla last summer with Adoor Gopalakrishnan, who steps into his 80th year this July, I found myself searching for the person behind *Elippathayam* (1982) and *Mathilukal* (1990). Critics now hail vulnerable male characters in recent Malayalam films like *Kumbalangi Nights* (2019); few recall that Adoor has been portraying such fragile men for five decades. Men who don't impose themselves on women, are always unsure and anxious of their choices and not ashamed of admitting their vulnerabilities.

Perhaps, the last poet in a major Hindi film was in *Kabhi Kabhie* (1976), a hesitant man who writes poems for his beloved but doesn't lay any claim on her and quietly watches her go away. Contrast the increasingly toxic arrogance of the leading men of Hindi cinema in the recent decades with Adoor's protagonist-writers in *Mathilukal* or the autobiographical *Kathapurushan* (1995) — a movie he shot in the house he was born in. If it reflects the cultural difference between the Hindi heartland and Kerala, it's also the statement of an artiste whose life was shaped by two remarkable women, his mother Mouttathu Gouri Kunjamma and wife Sunanda.

He was the sixth of seven children. Gouri Kunjamma brought him up after his parents separated in his childhood. As a child, Adoor was very possessive of his mother, a generous and compassionate woman, who came from a family that patronised the arts. She played the violin, her brothers had studied painting and sculpture under Raja Ravi Varma's son Rama Varma. She constituted young Adoor's world. "Our family was a traditional, feudal kind. But my mother was very kind and considerate towards the people who worked for us. All my basic lessons in human relations were imbibed from her," he said. Gouri Kunjamma died in 1962, the year he joined the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune.

Her life and demeanour had ensured that he could never "imagine a woman being ill-treated" and would "always oppose it". "I am very sensitive about any indecency, atrocities on women," he said. Even when his films depict any cruelty on women, like in *Vidheyan* (1993), the predatory male gaze is completely absent, as violence never turns voyeuristic.

The parents of *Kathapurushan*'s protagonist, too, separate after his birth and his mother brings him up. I wondered whether Adoor created a motherly figure in several films, like Rajamma in *Elippathayam*, in order to trace and retrieve his mother in his art. "It happens naturally. I don't do it deliberately," he said.

■ ■ ■

Sunanda was the other influence. She died of cancer in September 2015, creating an aching absence in his life. "She was my memory, my closest friend in whom I could confide anything," he told me one evening.

"Soulmates?"
"Yes, we were soulmates. There's no way to fill up the gap. It's a permanent absence now. We lived together for 43 years. I never imagined that I would be alone in my old age. During the day, I am busy with many things. I feel very lonely when I retire for the day and go to bed. Those few minutes before I sleep, I think about her. I have her in my dreams."
"Even now?"
"Yes. I wake up from my dream and she's not there. It's a terrible feeling."

It was an arranged marriage. His family

went to see the girl. "It was love after marriage."

"She was a very strong woman. She had great interest in cinema, was very active behind the scenes and had a major role in his movie-making. She would always push a contrary point of view and prompt him to listen to her," Aswathi Dorje, Adoor's daughter, now a senior IPS officer in Maharashtra, recalled.

■ ■ ■

Like many great filmmakers, his first love was theatre. Though he watched a lot of cinema in childhood because his uncle Mouttathu Gopalan Unnithan owned a few cinema halls, he always found cinema "distant" and "not related to our lives".

He wrote and acted in plays, made some mark as a theatreperson during his student days, obtained a degree from

Gandhigram Rural Institute, Tamil Nadu, before he suddenly decided to join FTIL, which had just come into existence. He spent his first year at the institute reading only about theatre. Soon, Ritwik Ghatak joined as the vice-principal of the institute and Satish Bahadur as professor of the film appreciation department. The two giants invigorated the campus and the young theatre artiste was drawn to 35 mm.

He graduated in 1965, but it took nearly a decade for his first full-length feature film, *Swayamvaram* (1972). In these five decades,



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

he has made 12 feature films, besides several documentaries on Kerala's classical arts and theatre. The two are not mere distinct genres, but different ways of looking at reality. One primarily reflects a creator, the other an observer, a documenter, and, yet, they form a cohesive, creative oeuvre.

Theatre also seeps into his cinema. In a play, the viewer forms a direct bond with actors on the stage, whereas in cinema, the camera intervenes. The chemistry between moving actors and the static stage creates tension in a play, whereas in cinema the tension comes from the camera's movements.

Adoor uses his camera in a way that his frames often come to resemble a stage.

His films were made over several years, as he took to the sets only after deep introspection. He chose to work on original ideas; when he adapted literary texts, he did so "with freedom". "The original inspiration may come from the story, but that is a point from where I take off," he says.

Adoor chooses his actors, hands them the script he has meticulously written and they are required to follow him strictly — no improvisations at all. He completely pervades his cinema. "I am present in all my films, in one form or the other. Sometimes as a detestable character, sometimes as a character whom you love," he says. An artiste for whom filmmaking is an act of absolute concentration. "Even when you are not making a film, you are into *dhyaanam*. It's like hatching

eggs," he says.

Adoor has made several films in co-productions with countries like Japan and France but none of his producers ever interfered with his work. K Ravindranathan Nair, who produced several of his movies, never visited the sets. "I have never compromised with anything. I always did what I felt proud about," he says, adding that "the best of cinema makes you a better person. This cinema is always about humanity. But not many filmmakers make such films. Many filmmakers make a hundred times more money than I do. But I am happy and contented with a decent subsistence," he says.

When I asked him about any movie that made him feel that he should have made it, he replied: "It works both ways. There are many movies that I admire, I watch some of the bad ones, too, once in a while by mistake and tell myself — I should not make a film like this. I carry a creator, an audience and a critic within me." Once, he headed the jury of the national film awards. The Union minister for Information and Broadcasting called him, requesting him to favour a certain movie. The request was promptly denied.

■ ■ ■

We discussed cinema, politics, even the famous 1905 trial of Kuriyedath Thathiri, a woman from the Namboodiri Brahmin community, who was pilloried for her sexual life. He allowed me to take photographs, record videos and conversations — as if the filmmaker now wanted to be filmed.

He recalled his childhood memories of baby elephants, their joy when someone splashed water on them. He admired Nehru and shared his vision. "We have been very lucky to have someone like Jawaharlal Nehru — a dreamer, a poet, a visionary and a statesman." The conversation also turned to Arundhati Roy's famous novel, perhaps the most known work of fiction on Kerala in several decades. I find *The God of Small Things* (1997) deeply problematic, as it chooses a Dalit's body as an instrument of revenge for an upper-caste Christian woman, and completely denies him any voice. The "novel's politics is bunkum," Adoor says, pointing out it has not been received well in Malayalam.

He wistfully remembered his old friends Satyajit Ray and UR Ananthamurthy, Ashis Nandy and Ashok Vajpeyi. He was sad that while many mediocre writers have received the Nobel, it continues to elude Milan Kundera. We both agreed that Elias Canetti's *Auto-da-Fe* (1935) is a great novel. Its protagonist believes that books have a greater value than human life. "He was not born into the world for love. He had not married for love. He had wanted to safeguard the future of his books, and she had seemed a suitable person for this purpose." The self-destructive passion, witnessed in many creative artistes through the ages, eventually consumes him.

■ ■ ■

Adoor is among the few Indian filmmakers with a vision for the form, whose method and frames have contributed to the art. Ray captured Bengal's archetypal village, Adoor is perhaps even more firmly rooted in Kerala. The villages and towns of his cinema that portray the decay of a feudal life and the emergence of new communities make him arguably the most authentic chronicler of Kerala post-Independence. Both Ray and Adoor have a universal vision, but they are essentially the narrators of the backyards and basements of their provinces.

I recalled that Abbas Kiarostami, another giant whose art lies in unveiling an Iran we never knew, floundered in *Certified Copy* (2010) when he shifted his locale from Iran to Europe. Adoor agreed: "It was a poor copy of *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961)."

But for every rooted artiste, there are also many in perpetual exile, shifting geographies and assimilating various cultures. And even the seemingly rooted ones carry collective memories that transcend their immediate lives.

In *Anantaram* (1987), a teacher asks his students to name the first published work in Malayalam. The child replies: "The Essence of the Holy Bible."

He asks again: "Where was it printed?" The child again replies: "Italy, written and published by Father Clement."

That's Adoor and his Kerala.

Ashutosh Bhardwaj is a journalist and the author of *The Death Script*

EYE SPY
EVERY FORTNIGHT, WE PICK, YOU WATCH

All That You Need Sometimes

Eliza Hittman uses an unwanted teen pregnancy to tell the story of being female in a man’s world



ALONE, TOGETHER

A still from the film

Shubhra Gupta

HAVING A problem that you have to deal with all by yourself can be hard. If you have someone with you, it can get better, but it still remains your problem.

Eliza Hittman’s *Never Rarely Sometimes Always* (on several streaming platforms) uses an unwanted teenage pregnancy to tell a bigger story. Of being female, in a man’s world. Of having to struggle to be heard. You see 17-year-old Autumn hit herself on her belly, repeatedly. Of course, that doesn’t help. What she needs is an abortion, which she cannot get where she lives, in a small town in Pennsylvania.

Autumn’s journey, on the bus to New York, accompanied by her cousin Skylar, isn’t only about escaping to a place where she can get help. It’s also about escaping to a place where she couldn’t ask for help: clearly, she hasn’t been able to turn to anyone at home, where lives a menacing stepfather. We are never told why, but we do see the depths of her loneliness.

There’s nothing expository in Hittman’s treatment of a subject which can so easily turn either manipulative or maudlin, or both. Autumn speaks very little. Her face is her canvas and we see a multitude in her eyes: being hurt, helpless and frustrated. The bond between the two girls is strong and withstands bursts of temper and name-calling: it is also the bulwark between them and the sole significant male in the movie, a young man their age who extends support, which is, yes, transactional.

First-timer Sidney Flanigan is so believable as Autumn, that you never stop feeling protective of her, even when she is having a meltdown and lashing out at her only real friend, the cousin. Talia Ryder as Skylar, and Théodore Pellerin as Jasper are equally real: the two girls mill around the Manhattan Port Authority Bus Terminal, wheeling a strolley between them, getting a measure of the boy, as they wait through the night for Autumn’s appointment at the facility.

The most devastating part of the film is also the quietest. An empathetic, experienced staffer taking Autumn’s details, which includes her sexual history, requests that she answer with just the one word, choosing between “never rarely sometimes always”. A pause after one telling question is revelatory: Autumn has been the victim of abuse. Is it from her partner’s? Or, someone in the family?

We don’t know. All we know is that the pain is for real. Just like Cristian Mungiu’s 2007 Cannes-winner *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*, in which a college friend helps another get an abortion (illegal in Romania in the 1980s, when the movie is set), which this film will remind you of, there is no time for sentimentality. Only time to get this done, here and now.

I saw this sombre yet bracing film at the International Film Festival of Berlin in mid-February earlier this year, where it won a jury award, and every once in a while Autumn’s face flashes in front of me: will she get past this? I cross my fingers.



PHOTOS: NETFLIX INDIA

Under the Red Moon

Lyricist and screenwriter Anvita Dutt on her directorial debut, *Bulbbul*, set in 19th-century Bengal, her love for fantasy and the importance of the female gaze

Alaka Sahani

MERE PAIR thode ulte hain (I’ve inverted feet),” says Anvita Dutt, the writer-director of the film *Bulbbul*, that released on Netflix on June 24. Dutt’s allusion to the popular belief that *chudails* (witches) can be identified by their inverted feet is an explanation for her compulsive urge to give every story she writes a dark twist. “All the stories that I write, barring the commissioned ones, inadvertently introduce some supernatural or fantasy elements,” says Dutt, whose directorial debut is a dark fable set in 19th-century Bengal.

Bulbbul critiques the horrors of patriarchy that exist beneath a veneer of aristocracy. Bulbbul, a child bride, is married off to an older landlord. When the story takes a 20-year leap to the year 1901, Bulbbul is calling the shots in a gorgeous *haveli*. Casting a shadow over this charming world is a series of killings attributed to a *chudail*. Satya Thakur, Bulbbul’s brother-in-law and childhood playmate, doggedly investigates these deaths.

Dutt, 47, wrote *Bulbbul* nearly a decade ago, in between her commissioned film assignments. The moment she finished writing it, Dutt experienced a certain amount of “possessive love and greed” for it. She decided not to pitch it to any director. Instead, she wanted to direct the movie herself. “Strangely, on the first day of the shoot, I almost heard an audible snap of a jigsaw piece falling into place. I felt as if I had come home. Now, I would pick direction over other things even though I will always say that I am a writer first,” says Dutt, an advertising professional who made a career switch 13 years ago to write lyrics and screenplays in Hindi films. After starting her film career as the dialogue and lyrics writer of *Neal ‘n’ Nikki* (2005), she worked on many movies such as *Heyy Babyy* (2007), *Bachna Ae Haseeno* (2008), *Patiala House* (2011), *Student of the Year* (2012) and *Queen* (2014).



Dutt says that she decided on a period drama because she is drawn to the neoclassical period of Bengal. The writer-director selected Bawali Rajbari, about two hours from Kolkata, out of the many beautiful mansions she visited during the recce because it appealed to her as a “beautiful prison”. “What I really liked about this house was that it is like

a box with high walls. The only exit from that house is a small door,” says Dutt, who has also worked on *Phillauri* (2017) and *Pari* (2018).

Rabindranath Tagore, too, influenced the period setting of the film. “Tagore’s woman characters are written so sensitively — somewhere, that too inspired me to tell the story in a period when his stories were set,” says Dutt, who has named one of the key characters Binodini (Paoli Dam) after a Tagore character in the novel *Chokher Bali* (1903). *Bulbbul* has pronounced shades of *Nastanirh* (Tagore’s 1901 novella on which filmmaker Satyajit Ray’s 1964 film *Charulata* is based), especially the way it looks at the relationship that Bulbbul shares with Satya and their joint literary pursuit. Tripti Dimri and Avinash Tiwary — the lead actors of *Laila Majnu* (2018), who essay the characters of the adult Bulbbul and Satya respectively — share a beautiful chemistry.

The film’s action frequently moves to a misty forest where men, under the red moonlight, are on a witch-hunt. Yet, Dutt refrains from calling *Bulbbul* “a horror movie”. “It’s more of a fairy tale. It has a lot of mood and intrigue,” she says. Having read fantasies and science fiction since childhood, that mode of story-telling has always had a peculiar appeal for her. “On my bookshelf, you will find books by Neil Gaiman, Terry Pratchett and Ursula Le Guin. The first book that I ever read when I was five was a Russian fairy tale. They were not the sanitised fairy tales that children read today. They were dark. I remember reading about Baba Yaga, the Russian *chudail*. There was beauty, emotion and spookiness in it,” recalls Dutt, whose childhood was spent in cantonments of Assam, Chennai, Jodhpur and Haryana, thanks to her father’s job in the Indian Air Force.

Bulbbul is a chilling reflection of patriarchal society in the way that Jordan Peele’s *Get Out* (2017) is about racial alienation. Making a statement was not on Dutt’s agenda when she started writing. “When you sit down to write, the first thing that comes to your mind is the story. You are spinning a yarn and saying, ‘Once upon a time...’. You just want to pull in the audience. But the things that affect you — it could be misogyny or the fact that women take so much time to come into their own because of the way they are brought up — might reflect in the story,” says the writer, who has

“Once upon a time”, “aparajita” and “*katha kavita*” tattooed on her arms, along with a symbol of “*devi*” (goddess).

In an ideal world, Dutt says, people would stop calling her a ‘female’ director. ‘The term female is attached because there are so few of them,’ she says. While “female gaze” is essential to storytelling, the onus is not on women alone, she says. “There are men who have told sensitive stories and have the female gaze. Tagore was one of them. If

you hear the lyrics of Gulzar *saab*, they are so delicate. Bimal Roy’s movies had outstanding female characters.”

With five feature film scripts and three web-series outlines in her bank, she has no plans of slowing down as a director. “Fortunately, Clean Slate Filmz (formed by actor Anushka Sharma and her brother Karnesh Ssharma) is interested in making all of them. All I can share with you is that they are stories of interesting girls and they all have an element of the supernatural,” says Dutt. To her surprise, Indian filmmakers haven’t explored dark and supernatural tales much even though the subcontinent has a rich reservoir of them. “That’s fine, though. I’m going to tell these stories,” she says, with a smile.

In an ideal world, Dutt says, people would stop calling her a ‘female’ director. ‘The term female is attached because there are so few of them,’ she says

Whose Line is it Anyway?

The theme of border seams two Indian film projects that are part of ‘Goes to Cannes’ at the prestigious festival

Tanushree Ghosh

THE BENGALI landscape is resplendent in the trailer of Prasun Chatterjee’s debut feature *Dostojee* (Two Friends) — vast, rainwashed paddy fields stretch along the river Padma and the glint in the eyes of the two young protagonists take viewers back to another village boy, Apu, from Satyajit Ray’s *Pather Panchali* (1955).

The location is the remote, no-man’s-land near Domkal (in Murshidabad) — the last subdivision on the Indian side. The Padma river separates it from Bangladesh’s Rajshahi. The backdrop is an early-’90s Bengal, shaken by the communal violence that followed the Babri Masjid demolition and the ’92 Bombay blasts, but *Dostojee* speaks of the friendship between two boys from different faiths, living in a border village. “I wanted to show anger and love through the eyes of children,” says Chatterjee, 34.

For over two years, he stayed with and trained 150 local residents as his cast and crew. One afternoon, when he was packing to return to Kolkata, an angry nine-year-old came banging on his door. The boy, Arif Sheikh, whose friend Asik Sheikh was cast as one of

the leads, said, “*Ekhane cinema'r jonno baccha leya hoye? Boite lyen amake, Deber moto koyee debo* (Are children being cast in films? Take me, I’ll act like the Bengali hero Deb).” Chatterjee, bowled over by his confidence, cast Arif as the other lead.

Chatterjee, who traces his roots to Bangladesh, has always been interested in the lives of border dwellers. “Your work should make the provincial man win at the end, or, even if he dies, show that there is a flicker of hope for their lot,” says the filmmaker, who takes inspiration by Ritwik Ghatak’s ideology and Ray’s craft.

From paper to screen, the crowdfunded film charted a seven-year journey since 2013. Co-producers Prosenjit Ranjan Nath and Soumya Mukhopadhyay came on board in 2017, and Taiwan’s Ivy Yu-Hua Shen after NFDC Film Bazaar selected *Dostojee* in November in its Recommends section. NFDC sent it, among five films, to ‘Goes to Cannes’: 20 work-in-progress (WIP) films from across the world, whose pitches were made to global buyers and distributors at the online Marché du Film segment of Cannes Film Festival from June 22-26. There, Asia’s leading film project market Hong Kong-Asia Film Financing



THE GREAT DIVIDE

(Clockwise from left) Chatterjee; a still from his film *Dostojee*; Mahajan; a still from his documentary, *The Borderlands*



Forum (HAF) picked up *Dostojee* (feature) and two documentaries, including Samarth Mahajan’s *The Borderlands* — the only three from South Asia — among its 22 shortlisted projects for its WIP programme in August. HAF presented *The Borderlands* at Marché du Film.

The sense of invisibility runs deep in villages and towns along the borders. Mahajan, 29, recounts how, when in 2015 his town Dinanagar, 10 miles from the India-Pakistan border in Punjab, faced a terrorist attack, his mother sounded excited over the phone — Dinanagar had made national news. “The stories that we hear about border areas create a specific image of army men and terrorists but no common people. I have lived through experiences which don’t fit these perceptions,” says the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, graduate, who gave up his cushy FMCG job to make documentaries.

After moving to Mumbai in 2015, he met his IIT-K batchmate Ashay Gangwar and began collaborating. Gangwar was the cinematographer for Mahajan’s first documentary, *Kazwa* — *A Million Lanterns* (2016), his company Camera and Shorts produced *The Unreserved* (2017), which won the National Award for ‘Best On Location Sound Recordist’. He is also one of the co-producers of the crowdfunded *Borderlands*.

For his latest, Mahajan took a four-part journey to different borders: Pakistan, Bangladesh, China-Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan. He learnt that borders have their own ecosystems. What happens when a tiger from Arunachal Pradesh’s Dibang Valley wildlife sanctuary crosses over into China? Or, how do people on either side of a border interact with each other? His film explores these questions. “There are two Indias. One is upper-class privileged and the other we have stopped engaging with. At this point, we need to hear stories of people from the grassroots,” he says.

‘There are cases of artistes committing suicide due to a lack of income’

Carnatic musician and author TM Krishna on why only a programme similar to the NREGA can help artistes tide over the pandemic

Amrith Lal

THE PANDEMIC struck just ahead of the festival season in March. How has this impacted the artiste community?

The image that the word *artiste* elicits, especially in the minds of the privileged sections of society, is that of individuals from the middle class or the rich. Artistes and artisans from marginalised sections are clubbed together as the ‘poor’ and rarely is respect or dignity given to them. Their workmanship and artistic talents are part of the ‘ethnic’ make of our country and only useful for us to brandish our so-called diversity. This mindset makes us blind to the fact that most art and artistes live on the margins of society. Their economic status is not very different from agriculture labourers or daily-wage earners. It is in this context that we need to understand the present situation. The months of March, April and May, especially in south India, provide most performing artistes the bulk of their earnings for the year. The pandemic and the resultant lockdown wiped this out entirely. While migrant workers were stuck in their place of work, performing artistes were stuck at their homes unable to move from village to village or town to town to perform. Most art is specific to geographies, cultures and is very local in performance. When that is shut, the entire ecosystem collapses. In this world, the physical cannot be replaced by the digital.

The future also looks grim because even in the unlocking process, allowing the assembly of people will probably be the last thing the government does. In such a situation, with no system for them to fall back on, artistes may become full-time daily-wage workers. The irony is that we will, at that point of time, lament about the loss of art. There are already cases of artistes committing suicide due to a lack of income.

Social media has provided a platform for live performances, but the absence of a stage and an audience could impact performers badly, right?

Social media as a performance platform is only applicable to art forms that occupy the upper echelons of social hierarchy or are mass in appeal. Most performing-art forms do not fall into this bracket. People may argue that the mobile phone penetration in India is so large that this must be a viable option. But the truth is that though some artistes practising marginalised arts are attempting to find a way into this space, these art forms still remain within the ‘physical’ domain as far as audience experience is concerned.

The other and more complex question is about viability. If we were to observe the social media performances by Hindustani, Carnatic or Bollywood musicians, everyone is very happy to consume all this for free. The question is, will they pay? Now, even if they do, it would be only for the ‘big names’. If this is the situation even within art forms with social leverage, one can only imagine what would be the condition of artistes and art



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

Social media as a performance platform is only applicable to art forms that occupy the upper echelons of social hierarchy or are mass in appeal. Most performing arts don’t fall into this bracket

forms that continue to remain beyond this digital imagination.

What suggestions do you have for temples, sabhas and other public spaces on hosting performances, even on a limited scale in the coming days?

If the government, at some point, allows the gathering of people with restrictions or

limits in numbers, it is essential that all organisations, local temples and public social spaces find a way to bring back performances. This is important not just in terms of providing livelihood, but on the larger question of the need for art. Art should never be considered an ‘add-on’. Art gives society access to imagining, hope and questioning through the emotional experience it induces. Without art,

society collapses, empathy, even reason, dies.

You have been involved in efforts to help artistes, especially the not-so-well-known ones. Can you speak about it?

Our effort to support artistes, especially those who are marginalised, began in late March. I sang an online concert and raised the seed fund for this project. Five of us from Sumanasa Foundation began making calls to artistes in rural Tamil Nadu, impresarios, NGOs and other organisations to find out how we could support them. We began with Tamil Nadu, but over the last few months worked in 17 states across India. We have been sharing with artistes on an average Rs 3,500 via bank transfers. This is a small sum, but we do hope it helps them at least cover food expenses for a month. As of May 22, we have transferred Rs 51,11,900 to 1,545 artiste families. In order to address the anomaly of the digital space, we also conducted an online festival of art forms that usually remain beyond the digital economy. We made sure that people had to contribute to the fund in order to watch the festival. This is a baby step in getting individuals to pay for all art.

You have flagged the need to have state-funded institutional mechanisms to address the plight of the community — on the lines of an employment guarantee scheme for artistes. Can you elaborate on that?

As individuals or collectives, there is only so much we can do and we are merely touching the surface. If the situation for artistes is to change, the state has to recognise this need and fill this gap. Until now, the state has done hardly anything for marginalised artistes and the schemes that they may point to are badly executed. We need a NREGA-type legislated programme for artistes and artisans. There has to be a yearly guarantee of work and income for artistes/artisans living below the poverty line. This would mean that at the district level the government must provide performance, teaching, lecture-demonstration opportunities for artistes at schools, colleges, public spaces etc. The government could also purchase the works of local artisans and provide special access to markets, both locally and beyond the region. All these will help rejuvenate the art forms within their communities and bestow respect on the artistes. We have had some preliminary conversations with friends in the art and social sector to begin work on a proposal using NREGA as a base model.

How has the pandemic impacted you as an artiste, teacher, writer, thinker?

It has not been that easy to work on things unrelated to the present crisis. I am uncomfortable with the online medium, yet have managed to take a few online classes for my students. Learning and writing has revolved around issues emanating from the pandemic, but over the past week I have been reading, thinking and making notes for my next book on the symbols of India.

The Lucknow Connection

Farrukh Jaffer, 88, who plays the feisty Fatto Bi in Shoojit Sircar’s *Gulabo Sitabo*, on her love for the camera

Suanshu Khurana

“*AUR BATAO bitiya.*” From her daughter’s living room in Lucknow, Farrukh Jaffer begins a Skype conversation with typical Awadhi courtesy. The 88-year-old actor is as spunky as the character she plays in Shoojit Sircar’s *Gulabo Sitabo* — Fatima Begum, the owner of Fatima Mahal, a crumbling haveli in Lucknow where Sarkar’s film plays out. It was a performance that held its own in a formidable ensemble cast. “I love being in front of the camera. I am glad that people have enjoyed my performance,” says Jaffer.

Despite the appreciation, she has one grouse. She was expecting her co-actor Amitabh Bachchan to be more forthcoming and chatty. “I remember him as the romantic hero from *Silsila* (1981) and *Kabhi Kabhie* (1976). I thought, on the sets, we’d talk about our lives, our families. But he’d come, do his scene and go away. There was no conversation. I wish there was,” she says.

Farrukh Jaffer isn’t a name that might ring a bell in Indian mainstream cinema. She has worked in less than 20 projects, most of them over the past 20 years. Her last few films include *Photograph* (2019), *Secret Superstar* (2017) and Ashutosh Gowariker’s *Swades* (2004), among others. One of her most mem-

orable roles was as the grouchy Amma in Anusha Rizvi’s *Peepli Live* (2010). “I am given my lines but I also enjoy improvising. *Peepli Live* had the scope so I went ahead and added a few things,” says Jaffer.

Born in 1933 in Jaunpur in a *zamindar* family, Jaffer moved to Lucknow at the age of 16, after her marriage to journalist and freedom fighter Syed Muhammad Jaffer. Her husband encouraged her to study and participate in theatre and films. “I recall him being perpetually amused by her restlessness,” says daughter Mehru Jaffer, a journalist and author. She graduated from Lucknow University and was spending her days as a homemaker when she landed a job at All India Radio, Lucknow, by accident. “I had accompanied a friend who wanted to audition for the announcer’s job. When I was there, I was fascinated by the recording equipment

and the idea of everyone being able to hear my voice in their homes. I asked the producer if I could audition, too. They agreed,” says Jaffer. She got the job. Her friend didn’t. This also made her one of the first female voices at All India Radio, Lucknow. She quit in 1966 to help her widowed mother take care of their agricultural lands in Jaunpur.

After a few months, her husband moved to Delhi as a correspondent for *The Washington Post* and *Chicago Times* and she joined AIR’s



OLD IS GOLD

(Clockwise from above) Farrukh Jaffer in stills from *Gulabo Sitabo*; *Peepli Live*; a young Jaffer playing dress-up at home



Urdu service. She also attended a few acting workshops held by Ebrahim Alkazi. But her heart was not in Delhi. So she quit her job and returned home. Lucknow may have changed over the years but it is here that she feels most at home. So, when another Lucknow girl, Juhi Chaturvedi, mentioned that the shoot for *Gulabo Sitabo* will be in Lucknow, she was excited. Her first film project was Muzaffar Ali’s *Umrao Jaan* (1981) in which Jaffer played Rekha’s mother. That, too, was shot in Lucknow. She landed the role at a get-together where Ali was also present. “*Humara ek mulazim tha*, Purdil. (We had an employee, Purdil). I was imitating and improvising on the

way he spoke,” says Jaffer. Ali was looking on from the balcony and told her that he was making a film and would like to cast her in it. “I came from a conservative family. I told him, acting *wagerah humare yahan nahi hota*. But he persisted. He asked so nicely, I agreed,” says Jaffer, who met Rekha many years later at a private party in Mumbai. “*Wo boli, ye meri ma hain* (She said that she’s my mother). I was touched,” says Jaffer.

Her next film *Swades* came 23 years later, followed by *Peepli Live*, *Chakravayuh* (2012), *Sultan* (2016) and *Tanu Weds Manu* (2011). She also played the lead in Narayan Chauhan’s *Ammam ki Boli* (2019), the story of a family and their second-hand scooter. “I never thought I’ll make a career as an actor. It is not about fame or money. *Humko camera se bohot mohabbat hai*,” she says.

Her upcoming projects include *Mehrunisa*, a film shot in Lucknow by Austria-based director Sandeep Kumar, that has Jaffer in the lead role. There are also three short films awaiting release, apart from Baba Azmi’s *Raks*. She was to shoot Kundan Nandy’s next film but that is on hold due to COVID-19.

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND



Ranjit Lal

Ranjit Lal is an author, environmentalist and bird watcher

The Call of the Tide

Why, even after 40 years as a landlubber, I still miss the sea

I’VE LIVED like a landlocked landlubber in Delhi for over 40 years now – and still, especially at this time of the year – I sorely miss the sea. My childhood and adolescence were spent in coastal metros – Madras and Bombay (as they were then known), where, without even realising it, you kind of imbibed the sea. If your mind got overcrowded or you ever felt claustrophobic, you could always wander down to the beach or the sea’s edge and feel your mind open up as wide as the horizon in front of you. It gave you a sense of freedom that no other landscape could provide – the mountains have you gasping in awe, forests make you tense and twitchy with excitement and arid plains desiccate you. Perhaps, its only true rival would be the vast rolling desert, provided you had enough drinking water and didn’t die of heatstroke.

But to fill yourself with sheer exultation, there was nothing to compare with the beach on a monsoon day. Not only you, it affected our Boxer, too. Well before we reached the beach for the weekend, she would be a quivering mass of excitement in the car, happily treading on your toes and drooling copiously into your lap. Out on the beach, she would freak out – flying so fast her feet barely touched the ground. Gentle to a fault, in sheer, unbridled joy, she once chased a *rheriwalla* onto his *rheri*, where he stood among his clinking multi-coloured soft-drink bottles, yelling for help. Back home after a lunatic weekend, she would spend the next two days sleeping it off on the sofa, her paws twitching as she chased crabs in her dreams. (They always befuddled her.)

As for you, you could walk for miles on the varnished sands at low tide, wading through shallow tide pools, keeping away from the purple bottle-cap-like stains the stranded Portuguese men-o-war left on the beach, but eyes skinned for a gleaming cownie or stranded starfish. It was astonishing to think that some of the most beautiful shells provided homes to some of the most venomous sea creatures in the world – step on them and you would never forget the experience, unless it killed you. There’d be tiny fish and shrimps twisting this way and that, crabs which would scuttle sideways. The wind



RANJIT LAL

THE WIND BENEATH ITS WINGS

A white-bellied sea eagle

would buffet you in the back like a friend meeting you after ages and silver bullets of rain would make you head for cover.

When it calmed down, you could make your way gingerly over the rocks – serrated and scalpel-sharp – which could viciously lacerate you the moment you touched them unthinkingly. Sometimes, you would hear a clattering amongst the rocks – giant green crabs making their way around ponderously. If you were exceptionally daring (or silly), you could settle on a rock right near the edge to brood but it would be wise to keep an eye on the great bruised purple front of the next battalion of clouds advancing across the horizon. Ignore it at your peril. Suddenly, you’d be sent staggering back by an explosion of shrapnel, as a giant wave barreling in like an express train, and rearing up like a wall of glass would commit harakiri on the rocks just ahead of you, all thunder and boom. Time to retreat, on the double.

Certainly, the ocean and the beach cast a strange magnetic pull on you. Back home in Bombay after a surgery that kept me away for three months, the first place I wanted to go to was the beach. Every time I visit Goa and take my first draw of the briny, fishy air, it’s like a homecoming (even though I’ve never lived there).

On calm sunny days (in summer), you could sit at the tideline and watch the wavelets wash up to you, all lacy, as a cool breeze fans your face. Suddenly, you are aware of a deep truism: the briny sea air does make you hungry very quickly. And there is always a bounty from the sea – baskets heaped with fresh prawns conjured up into delicious curries for lunch (washed down with beer, naturally, and followed by a nap). Of course, you weren’t the only one thinking of lunch! Perched high up at the top of a casuarina tree, a majestic white-bellied sea eagle contemplated her realm and kept an eye out for her lunch. Beach-brown sandpipers scuttled back and forth, deftly picking up their fare while trying not to get their feet wet! Stock-still amid the rocks, patient as the best fisherman, an Indian reef heron, in smart ashy grey waited in ambush.

Especially today, in these corona-riddled times, the beach seems like an ideal place to escape to. Perhaps, the wind would whisk any signs of the virus to kingdom come and enable you to shout with exultation. But be respectful. Regardless of who you are – billionaire or beggar, crook or saint, prime minister or pretender – a single wave can send you and your dignity tumbling head over heels in a welter of froth and mirth.



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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 reasons to rejoice in the past.

PULELA GOPICHAND tells **SHIVANI NAIK** how his 2001 All England triumph brought badminton into limelight after two decades.

Wrestlers open the lock in Tokyo

While WWE's only concern seems to be the bottomline, Japanese promotions take a holistic view to deal with the coronavirus pandemic

GAURAV BHATT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

IN JAPAN, the Covid-19 outbreak left in its wake a crushed Olympic dream. Now professional wrestling is helping unlock the country, one suplex at a time.

While it tried, and failed, to avoid the Tokyo Games postponement to next year, the Japan government seems to have successfully flattened the curve, with daily cases below a hundred since May 15.

The nationwide state of emergency was lifted on May 25, and last Monday, New Japan Pro-Wrestling (NJPW) — the largest promotion in Japan — held its first show since the lockdown, becoming the first sport to restart in the country.

Pro-wrestling's return, facilitated by working closely with the sports and health ministries, also highlights cultural differences between Japan and America.

While promotions worldwide continued to run shows through the pandemic — most notably WWE which held its annual WrestleMania event over two nights behind closed doors in April — NJPW and most other Japanese promotions effectively shut shop late February.

"The responsibility we hold as an industry leader in Japan and worldwide weighs heavily on our shoulders; ultimately this was the only sensible decision we could have taken as a responsible corporate citizen," NJPW president Harold Meij tells *The Indian Express*. "A business must be viewed as a long-term entity, and I believe our decision to side with caution over profit will in the long term be seen to have been the right one."

It certainly wasn't an easy one. On track for a record profit this year, NJPW had to cancel 56 events which left a huge dent in the revenue. The company executives, however, took pay cuts ranging from 15 to 95 per cent to shield the workforce.

Conversely, WWE, which also had a profitable quarter, released close to 30 workers-

including wrestlers, producers, referees, and writers - in April; two days after being allowed to run shows as an "essential business" in Florida. On April 15, while WWE was busy announcing the layoffs, representatives of seven different companies in Japan met government officials to discuss the way forward and request testing kits and compensation for lost pay.

"Not being able to wrestle does make a lot of us concerned for our livelihoods, but in the world of sports, be that baseball, football, or sumo, I feel that professional wrestling should be the anchor," Hiroshi Tanahashi, NJPW's biggest star for over two decades, told the government officials. "I think it should be acceptable for professional wrestling to be the last sport to return to full activity."

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Before returning to action, the company drew up safety protocols based on a set of guidelines devised by the Japan Sports Association, and with the help of the Japan Safety Agency.

Wrestlers undergo temperature tests twice daily and keep a log of who they have been in contact with. Locker rooms are zoned and have staggered entry, conversations are limited and buffet-style catering has been done away with; containers of food and beverages have individual names on them. The ring and ringside area are disinfected between matches.

Plans are already in place for the return of socially-distanced fans. NJPW will hold shows at Osaka-Jo Hall on July 11-12, with only one-third of the 16,000-seater venue filled. In addition to the basic measures of masks and temperature tests, fans must also not touch the wrestlers, submit address and contact details, and not cheer!

WWE, meanwhile, has been allowing family and friends of performers to be in attendance at the Performance Center venue in Orlando, Florida, but with no disclosed detailed safety protocols. And on Thursday, when reports emerged of multiple employ-



NJPW legend Hiroshi Tanahashi (kneeling) spoke with the government officials on behalf of Japanese pro-wrestlers. *NJPW*

ees testing positive, the company simply issued a statement: "WWE will continue COVID-19 testing of its talent, production crew and employees in advance of TV productions for the foreseeable future."

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

While Vince McMahon, WWE chairman and CEO, was named as an industry leader tasked with helping restart the US economy by President and WWE Hall-of-Famer Donald Trump, it is his counterparts in Japan who are putting in the work.

"In our corporate logo are the words 'King of Sports'," says Meij about pro wrestling's importance as a Japanese sport. "It is being seen this way that we led an initiative by vis-

iting elected officials to push for government support in creating clear policies, sustainable programmes, guidelines, and testing support for our and other sports in Japan."

Hase, the government official who presided over the April meeting with wrestling promoters, represented Japan at the 1984 Olympics and went on to become a pro-wrestling great with NJPW and AJPW (All Japan Pro-Wrestling). He also served as the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology under current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and worked closely with the Japanese Olympic committee in 2016.

"The perception and acceptance of pro wrestling in Japan is a little bit different," says

Fumi Saito, wrestling historian and sociology professor. "It is still 'sports entertainment'. Some people just watch it and believe everything. Some people like it because it's entertainment. Most people understand wrestling for what it is. The things they are doing in the ring is incredible... But basic questions like 'is it real or is it fake?' Listen, do you like it? Does it matter?"

Wrestling match results are carried alongside baseball scores in newspapers, and there are dedicated national magazines and awards. But it was the American soldiers circa 1950 who brought pro wrestling to Japan after the Second World War. A North Korea-born Sumo wrestler Rikidozan took it up, and his rise, coinciding with Panasonic's first black-and-white TVs made him a working-class phenomenon.

Pro wrestling became ' puroresu '. Rikidozan, in turn, inspired Antonio Inoki — a wrestling legend who fought Muhammad Ali in 1976, was elected to the parliament's upper house in 1989, and went to Iraq during the Gulf War and successfully negotiated the release of Japanese hostages with Saddam Hussein.

"They were sports heroes who became politicians, movie stars," says Saito, before adding: "In India too, you had a similar story in Dara Singh. A professional wrestler who became a big-time film star."

COMFORTABLE WITH MASKS

During the pandemic, masks have deepened a political divide in America.

The Orlando International Airport, where 260 employees tested positive last Tuesday, only necessitated masks a day later. The airport is frequented by employees of WWE, where the makeshift crowd of developmental wrestlers, family and friends during shows continues to appear maskless.

Amid reports that masks, much like any mention of coronavirus, is not allowed in the company, Renee Young, a WWE announcer who tested positive on Thursday, tweeted: "Wear your masks and wash your hands"

Battle of 64 squares spills onto 280 characters

Carlsen vs Giri: Virtual war of words or friendly banter?

Anish Giri holds a finger to his lips, in a video clipping, as if to silence all his doubters - and in particular, his vanquished opponent Magnus Carlsen. He was playing a game of online chess, from the sanctity of his home, as one of the contestants in the Magnus Carlsen Invitational held in April. The Dutchman (25) who is currently ranked 10th in the world, then gets up from his chair, walks to the edge of the camera's view, turns back at the screen and then hops with his arms raised. He stops, turns to leave, again faces the screen and repeats his celebration. This was how he reacted to beating Carlsen at the Norwegian's own event. Though beating a player as talented as the world no. 1 is always worth a celebration, in Giri's case, there has been a degree of animosity between the two in the past - something that has been highlighted in their exchanges on social media. The most recent one took place on Saturday. Gone are the days when the feistiest of chess rivalries between great contemporaries - Bobby Fisher and Boris Spassky, Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov, Kasparov and Vladimir Kramnik - went beyond the chess board. Nowadays, the younger generation, as demonstrated by Grandmasters Carlsen and Giri, all animosity or banter can be put forth in 280 characters.



Screen grab of Anish Giri immediately after he beat Magnus Carlsen at the Magnus Carlsen Invitational event in April.

The latest exchange

Giri has a rather infamous reputation of playing for draws, especially against the top players. The duo is currently competing at the Chessable Masters Tournament, an online event. On Friday, Giri drew against world no. 6 Grandmaster Alexander Grischuk of Russia, a game Carlsen felt the Dutchman should have won.

So the Norwegian tweeted: **"My boy @anishgiri snatching a draw from the jaws of victory."**

On Saturday, Giri shared a screenshot of a message he received regarding a 'billing problem' when he tried to renew his subscription for an online chess application developed by Carlsen.

He tweeted along with the picture: **"In light of the recent hateful tweets from @MagnusCarlsen and his employees, we at Anish Giri Inc. have (apparently) taken a decision to hereby pause sponsoring his endeavors. #StudyChess"**

To this, the reigning world champion replied: **"The real story here is that you figured that tactics are not necessary to make solid draws. Recommended for people who play to win though!"**

How it all started

Ahead of the 2018 Candidates event, former world champion Kramnik employed Giri as a second - this after Giri had beaten the veteran Russian months earlier at the Tata Steel Masters. Upon learning that Giri was helping Kramnik, Carlsen took to Twitter to make a point.

"So supposedly @anishgiri will be seconding Kramnik during the candidates. Before Tata (an unbeaten +7 with just a few draws for Vlad) this would have been a clear-cut case of 'if you can't beat em, join em' Now it's rather 'if you can't draw em, join em.'"

The tweet alluded to Giri's notoriety of sniffing for a draw in most matches.

Giri then replied with: **"I guess this deep joke only makes sense in Norwegian! Or maybe I am just too tired from all the work on the openings."**

And the banter went on, as the 29-year-old Carlsen challenged Giri to win a tournament 'for the first time in (his) life' and the younger played replying with his joy that Carlsen was 'taking (him) seriously and that is flattering!' On Saturday, the rivalry continued.

SHAHID JUDGE

Six Pak players get negative result in 2nd test

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JUNE 27

SIX OF THE 10 Pakistan players who had tested positive for Covid-19 last week have returned negative results following a second round of tests. However, they will not be on the flight to Manchester on Sunday as the Pakistan Cricket Board, which conducted these tests, wants them to undergo a third one. If the third round of tests also returns negative, they will be able to travel to England. Mohammad Hafeez, Wahab Riaz, Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan and Shadab Khan are the players who tested negative in the second round of tests conducted by PCB.

As per the PCB testing programme, players who have tested positive have to show two negative tests before entering England in adherence to the UK government regulations.

The Board confirmed that 20 players and 11 support staff will leave for England on Sunday to play three Tests and as many T20 Internationals.

Hafeez and Riaz underwent tests at a lab, which the PCB does not use, and though the results returned negative it has not been taken into consideration, chief executive Wasim Khan said.

"I am aware Mohammad Hafeez and Wahab Riaz took personal tests outside of our process prior to the second PCB testing. While their results came up negative, as per the PCB testing programme, they are deemed to have one negative test following a positive test. "Therefore, once they are retested and receive a second negative result under the PCB testing programme, they will be available to join the squad in England," Khan said.

Out of 10 players and one support staff who had initially tested positive, Haider Ali, Harris Rauf, Kashif Bhatti, Imran Khan and masseur Malang Ali tested positive again. They have been advised to observe "strict quarantine".

The PCB originally had picked a 29-member playing squad for England.

Following the positive results, it included fast bowler Musa Khan and Pakistan U-19 captain and wicketkeeper Rohail Nazir in the first batch of travellers. After reaching England, the squad will undergo ECB testing at Worcestershire followed by a 14-day isolation period, during which they can train.

The first Test is scheduled for July 30 at Lord's. **First batch of players leaving for England:** Azhar Ali (captain), Babar Azam (vice-captain), Abid Ali, Asad Shafiq, Faheem Ashraf, Fawad Alam, Iftikhar Ahmad, Imad Wasim, Imam-ul-Haq, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Abbas, Musa Khan, Naseem Shah, Rohail Nazir, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shan Masood, Sohail Khan, Usman Shinwari, and Yasir Shah.

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