

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC: WHO,**  
health ministry says India count 60

**CENTRE TELLS STATES**  
to invoke Epidemic Diseases Act

**14-DAY QUARANTINE FOR**  
travellers from seven countries

# India quarantines itself

All visas — except diplomatic, official, UN — suspended till April 15, entry barred for OCI card-holders too

**ABANTIKA GHOSH**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

ON A day that the World Health Organisation (WHO) said the novel coronavirus (COVID 2019) outbreak could now be "characterised as a pandemic", India on Wednesday took the unprecedented decision to suspend all visas, barring select categories, till April 15, effectively closing its borders for a month.

The Centre also advised all states and Union territories to invoke provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, which will enable them to enforce advisories as and when needed.

"All existing visas, except diplomatic, official, UN/international organisations, employment, project visas, stand suspended till 15th April 2020. This will come into effect from 1200 GMT on 13th March 2020 at the port of departure. Visa free travel facility granted to OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) card holders is kept in abeyance till April 15th, 2020. This will come into effect from 1200 GMT on 13th March 2020 at the port of departure. Any foreign national who intends to travel to India for compelling reason may contact the nearest Indian Mission," the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said in a statement.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Group of Ministers (GOM) constituted to

**WORLD**



**MERKEL SAYS VIRUS LIKELY TO INFECT 70% OF GERMANS**  
PAGE 17

**EXPLAINED**

**SIMPLY PUT**  
**THE HUNT FOR TREATMENT**  
PAGE 16

review, monitor and evaluate the preparedness and measures taken to fight the COVID outbreak. It means that no foreign tourists can enter India for over a month now, affecting an already stressed economy. Several sporting events, including the IPL and the India Open badminton tournament were also scheduled to start this month.

The GoM meeting, chaired by **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**MORE REPORTS**  
PAGE 9



Foreign tourists being scanned at Junagarh fort in Bikaner on Wednesday. PTI

## Collateral: Almost 1 mn tourists a month; aviation, hotel slowdown

1.74 mn in March, April '19 — 15% of annual tourist arrivals

**PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE CENTRE'S move to virtually lock its borders down for a month by suspending all existing visas, barring certain categories, sent officials of domestic and international airlines with operations in India to rush into meetings late Thursday in an attempt

to understand the impact of this decision on the aviation sector — foremost in the line of fire.

However, in addition to airlines, a cascading impact is expected to be seen on allied sectors such as airports and hospitality.

"We will study passenger loads for the next few days and will decide — on the basis of that — whether or not to cancel

flights to foreign destinations," a senior executive at a domestic airline said. Indian airlines handle nearly one-third of India's international air traffic every year while foreign airlines carry the rest. According to the official, a chunk of foreign nationals who arrive into India are flown in by overseas carriers.

The move is also expected to **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**Foreign players, stadium crowd: Question mark over Badminton Open and IPL**

**MIHIR VASAVDA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to suspend "all existing visas" until April 15 in the wake of coronavirus outbreak has put a big question mark on the Indian Premier League scheduled to begin on March 29. India's one-day international matches against South Africa, with the opening game to be played in Dharamshala on Thursday, are likely to be played behind closed doors after the sports ministry issued directives to state administrations late Wednesday night to "adhere to the advisory issued by the health ministry in letter and spirit."

Sports Secretary Radhey Shyam Julaniya said he spoke with Chief Secretaries of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and asked them to ensure that mass gatherings are avoided at the matches. The ODI series between India and South Africa begins in Dharamshala Thursday, followed by a match in Lucknow on March 15.

"So the sporting event may go on but public gathering has to be avoided," Julaniya told *The Indian Express*.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Jyotiraditya Scindia at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday. Tashi Tobgyal

## Day after, Scindia joins BJP and gets a Rajya Sabha ticket

BJP moves Madhya Pradesh MLAs to Manesar, Cong takes its flock to Jaipur

**LIZ MATHEW**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE DAY after resigning from the Congress, former Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia joined the BJP Wednesday in the presence of party president J P Nadda. Hours later, Scindia, who had served the Congress for 18 years, was rewarded — the BJP named him for a Rajya Sabha seat from Madhya Pradesh.

Scindia's official joining comes in the backdrop of an intensifying political crisis in Madhya Pradesh where the Kamal Nath-led Congress government is on the brink with both sides scrambling to send their legislators to safer places to protect them from walking over — or being lured — to the

**BUSINESS AS USUAL**



By UNNY

other side. Along with Scindia, 22 MLAs from Madhya Pradesh Assembly, where Nath enjoys a slender majority, resigned and reduced the **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**SRIRAM'S IAS**  
**IAS**  
Prelim-cum-Main June 2020  
Prelim Test Series (FREE)  
For Details  
www.sriramsias.com  
011-42437002, 09811489560

**THE EDITORIAL PAGE**  
**BEYOND SCINDIA, THE LARGER MESSAGE**  
BY SUHAS PALSHIKAR  
PAGE 14

**CITY**



**ED BOOKS TAHIR HUSSAIN, PFI ON CHARGES OF MONEY LAUNDERING**

**THREE MONTHS AFTER POLICE ACTION, JAMIA LIBRARY OPENS**  
PAGES 3, 6

**HOME MINISTER DEFENDS DELHI POLICE IN PARLIAMENT DEBATE**

## 300 from UP... riots a plot, no one to be spared: Shah in LS

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah Wednesday called the Delhi riots a conspiracy that had been hatched well in advance and assured Parliament that the rioters, irrespective of which side they belong to, will not be spared.

"How these riots spread so fast is a good question... we have registered a case of conspiracy in the matter. I am of the firm belief that it can spread so fast only after advance planning," Shah said during his reply to a debate on the Delhi riots in the Lok Sabha. Beginning his speech with



Shah at Parliament House Wednesday. Prem Nath Pandey

expressing grief over the deaths in the riots, he reiterated multiple times that strict action would

be taken against anyone behind the violence. "The Narendra Modi government will not spare anyone from any side... A scientific investigation is being conducted. No innocent will face any trouble. They may be called for questioning, but no one will be arrested without evidence," Shah said.

He also defended the Delhi Police which has faced severe criticism for alleged dereliction of duty. "People asked what the Delhi Police was doing. Police should be praised, in fact. About 1.7 crore people live in Delhi. Where the riots happened, 20 lakh people live. It is the most **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**In riots debate, BJP MPs take a swipe at judges too**

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

ON A day that several members from the Opposition raised the issue of what they called the "sudden" transfer of former Delhi High Court judge Justice S Muralidhar during a debate on the Delhi riots in the Lok Sabha, some key members from the Treasury chose to corner the judiciary over violence in the capital.

Delhi MP Meenakshi Lekhi questioned the wisdom of allowing non-violent protests. "Some judges, I will not take their names, think police shouldn't act until protests turn violent... Under the circumstances, it is difficult to gauge when a peaceful protest will turn violent. Who will decide when will a dharna turn violent?" Lekhi said while participating in the debate.

Lekhi blamed the riots on anti-CAA protests that had been going on in Delhi since December and also alleged that the majority had suffered at the hands of the minority during the riots.

BJP MP from Bettiah and president of BJP's Bihar unit Sanjay Jaiswal, too, held courts **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**EXPLAINED**



**HOW SAUDI-RUSSIA TUSSELED OIL PRICES**

**35 YRS AFTER DELHI BLASTS, HOW PROSECUTION'S CASE FELL**  
PAGE 16

## Will prove majority, had talked about BJP plot with Scindia, says Kamal Nath

**RITUSARIN**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE BELEAGUERED Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, who has been meeting a stream of visitors at his residence ever since the dramatic exit of Jyotiraditya Scindia Tuesday, appears to be sanguine about averting the fall of his 15-month-old Government.

"I am confident that the Congress will win the floor test



'Everyone talking to everyone'

in the Assembly after it convenes as scheduled on March 15. You will see that we will be able to prove our majority in the Assembly," he told *The Indian Express* on Wednesday morning **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Where were you when Delhi burning... This will be your legacy: Oppn to Shah

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE OPPOSITION Wednesday held the government squarely responsible for the Delhi riots, with the Congress and other parties seeking the resignation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

"When Rome was burning, Nero was playing fiddle or flute

on Palatine Hill and waiting to see the burning of the city in order to build one golden palace, Domus Aurea. It appears Nero has now arrived in India. When Delhi was burning, Nero was in Ahmedabad playing flute with President Donald Trump," Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said.

The Trinamool Congress's Saugata Roy demanded a judicial

inquiry into the riots, telling Shah, "Please acknowledge responsibility. In the name of god, go and do not stay in the Home Minister's position... Otherwise, you will live the rest of your life with the stamp on your forehead that he is the man who could not prevent the riots in Delhi, at a place which is 10 km from the headquarters of the Home Ministry." **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**PAGE 1 ANCHOR**

## Behind killer cough syrup: Glaring gaps in regulation and its manufacture

**PRABHA RAGHAVAN & ARUN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, JAMMU, MARCH 11

EARLIER THIS year, around 17 children from Ramnagar in Jammu and Kashmir were hospitalised. More than half of them died of kidney failure. The cause: A batch of "Coldbest" cough syrup containing a chemical that should never have been there in the first place — diethylene glycol (DEG). Over a month of investigations, first by a team of doctors from PGIMER- Chandigarh and later by drug control regulators, revealed on March 2 that the

syrup was, in fact, the culprit. The September batch of Coldbest, manufactured by Himachal Pradesh-based Digital Vision Pharma and sold in several states, contained 34.97 per cent of the poisonous chemical, according to Chandigarh's Regional Drugs Testing Laboratory.

Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana authorities have since filed FIRs, setting in motion further investigations into alleged offences by the company. Last week Himachal Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said that the government was seeking "stringent action" — imprisonment of 10 years to life

against the company's executives. Glaring gaps in the regulatory process together with several failures in the manufacturing chain in the company itself could be behind the toxic batch entering the market.

Experts see two possible explanations for why a batch of Coldbest with DEG — reportedly a common impurity in the solvent of such syrups — was in the market. Either it was counterfeit, or Digital Vision, despite reportedly claiming to follow good manufacturing practices, failed to test the quality of its batches.. They suspect the latter. The company had "poorly"



17 children from Ramnagar in J&K were hospitalised, over half died. One of the grieving families. Express file

**EXPLAINED**  
**Red flags were ignored**

THIS IS India's 4th mass glycol poisoning and yet safeguards are lacking. High levels of toxin point to the failure of internal controls within the company. Regulators had raised red flags regarding the firm but yet these gaps went undetected. The role of the pharmacist is limited if the product itself is suspect.

followed manufacturing processes, Drug Controller General of India VG Somani told *The Indian Express* at the Indian Pharma 2020 conference in Ahmedabad.

"There is no doubt about it. (The syrup) was impure. The person who made it was contravening the provisions of law," said Somani, who heads CDSCO, India's top regulator responsible for ensuring safe and effective medicines.

"He has done everything (tests), but poorly done... Validation, calibration — these things are extremely necessary and it has to be done

properly. If it is not... it can lead to fatal results sometimes."

Digital Vision could have detected DEG in "various" stages of Coldbest's production, starting with the raw material used, said Murali Neelakantan, former global general counsel of Cipla and Glenmark Pharmaceuticals. Depending on its operating procedure, it would "normally" have had to check for "known issues" like impurities and contaminants.

"If you want to, and people do their jobs, you can catch it at any stage. Here, several opportunities to catch the problem have been missed," he said. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**





- VISUAL STORIES
- DAILY BRIEFING
- PODCASTS
- CUSTOMIZABLE NEWS EXPERIENCE

Indian Express 4.6



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO DOWNLOAD THE APP



FIRST OF MANY: MANOJ BAJPAYEE REVISITS BANDIT QUEEN

If cattle rode scooters to facilitate the fodder scam in Bihar, claims that two-wheelers and an oil tanker were used to transport tonnes of apples from Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh's orchards could give a fresh twist to the alleged bribery scandal surrounding his tenure as a Union minister.

VIDEO OF THE DAY



THE CHILDREN AT DELHI RIOT SHELTERS

The dreams and ambitions of riot-hit children in Delhi

FULL COVERAGE



JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA JOINS BJP

Scindia to be a BJP RS nominee from Madhya Pradesh

EXPRESS AUDIO

How the Madhya Pradesh political crisis can play out

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

What Jyotiraditya Scindia stands to gain from joining the BJP, what comes next and where his move leaves the Congress.

FROM PAGE ONE

IPL

If implemented by states, this will be the first time in the country that an international match will be held behind closed doors. The India Open badminton championship, too, is likely to be hit following the government's revised advisory, which may also put some of the country's top players who are competing abroad into a 14-day quarantine.

As many as 63 foreign players from countries like Australia, England, New Zealand, South Africa and the Caribbean are drafted to compete in the IPL. There are as many international shuttlers - from nations with high number of cases like China, Japan, South Korea and Spain, among others - who were to take part in the India Open, scheduled to begin in New Delhi March 24.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has, so far, maintained that it will conduct the IPL as scheduled. Last week, amid concerns over mass gatherings, it sought advice from the Sports Ministry which referred it to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The Karnataka government, too, had sought advice from the Health Ministry on whether IPL matches should go ahead as planned while Maharashtra was considering a ban on ticket sales. On Wednesday, a cricket board official said: "We will speak to the government and arrive at a decision in two to three days." Another official added: "We will present our case and request the government to grant an exemption to the foreign players taking part in the IPL."

A Badminton Association of India (BAI) official said they, too, will approach the Centre. "Almost all the players were granted visas. We have not received the latest communication but if that's the case (visas getting suspended), then we will ask the government to make an exception," a BAI official said.

Earlier in the day, the Badminton World Federation (BWF) and BAI had said the tournament will "go ahead as planned" and were exploring the possibility of conducting it without spectators. Even if the tournament goes ahead, the bigger concern for BAI, which is headed by BJP's Himanta Biswa Sarma, would be the availability of all the shuttlers.

More than half of the players will have to go into a minimum 14-day quarantine upon their arrival in Delhi, including top Indian stars like Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth as per the advisory issued today. Indian shuttlers had taken part in the Barcelona Open, which was held from February 18-23, and are currently in Birmingham, competing in the All England Championships.

Scindia

Congress government to a minority.

The BJP Tuesday night shifted its MLAs to Manesar near Gurugram in Haryana, while Congress shifted its flock to Jaipur Wednesday morning.

Scindia, flanked by Nadda, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and a host of other lead-

ers including Syed Zafar Islam who apparently had a key role in getting the Scindia scion into the BJP camp, said: "I always believed that our aim should be Jan seva and politics should be a medium for that. But I can say that the aim of Jan Seva cannot be accomplished by being in the other party (Congress). The Congress is not what it used to be... So I took this decision to be part of country's progress," Scindia said.

"Pained" and "distressed" for not able to serve the people in his previous organisation, he said the Congress is living in denial and is not the party it used to be.

Slamming the Congress, Scindia said the Congress had failed the mandate it had been given by the people of Madhya Pradesh. He said the Congress government has not fulfilled any of the promises it had given to the people in the state. "Transfer industry is flourishing in Madhya Pradesh... Dream lies shattered, whether it was about waiving farmers' loans or compensating farmers for the crop damaged due to natural reasons," Scindia said.

Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Nadda, Scindia said they have given him the platform to serve the people.

Welcoming him into the BJP, Nadda recalled the party's founder and Jyotiraditya's grandmother Vijaya Raje Scindia and said, "He is joining his family and we welcome him."

The BJP also cleared Harsh Chauhan of the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram as the second nominee for the Rajya Sabha election, sources said. Elections to the upper house will be held on March 26 for three Rajya Sabha seats falling vacant in Madhya Pradesh.

Riots a plot: Shah

densely populated part of the country, with a mixed population. To not let these riots spread across Delhi was a big responsibility. Police not only managed to limit the riots to 12 police stations with 4% area of Delhi and 13% of its population, but also controlled the riots within 36 hours," Shah said.

Elaborating on what he called the "conspiracy" behind the riots, Shah said 300 people had entered from Uttar Pradesh, and referred to speeches made by the AIMIM's Waris Pathan and former JNU student Umar Khalid. He also obliquely accused the Congress, in particular Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, of inciting violence. He said police were using face recognition software and had identified more than a thousand people through it.

Notably, on February 25, the Press Information Bureau in a release had quoted Shah as calling the Delhi riots "spontaneous".

"On December 14, a political party held a rally at Ramliha Maidan. Its leader gave a speech where she made a call for 'Aar paar ki ladaai (fight to finish)'. On December 16, Shaheen Bagh started. Another senior leader of the party said if you don't get out of your homes now you would be called a coward. Were these not hate speeches?" Shah said, adding that 76% of all riot deaths in the country since Independence had happened in Congress regimes.

He added that on February 17

India quarantines itself

Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan, also decided that "all incoming travellers, including Indian nationals, arriving from or having visited China, Italy, Iran, Republic of Korea, France, Spain and Germany after 15th February, 2020, shall be quarantined for a minimum period of 14 days. This will come into effect from 1200 GMT on 13th March 2020 at the port of departure." The health ministry has said employers should facilitate work-from-home for such employees during this period.

Advising Indian nationals to avoid non-essential travel, the ministry said "international traffic through land borders will be restricted to designated check posts with robust screening facilities".

At another meeting chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, attended by secretaries of departments concerned, it was "decided that all states/UTs should be advised by MoHFW to invoke provisions of Section 2 of the

Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 so that all advisories being issued from time to time by the Ministry of Health Welfare/State/UTs are enforceable".

Section 2 of the Act states: "When at any time the (state government) is satisfied that (the state) or any part thereof is visited by, or threatened with, an outbreak of any dangerous epidemic disease, the (state government), if (it) thinks that the ordinary provisions of the law for the time being in force are insufficient for the purpose, may take, or require or empower any person to take, such measures and, by public notice, prescribe such temporary regulations to be observed by, the public or by any person or class of persons as (it) shall deem necessary to prevent the outbreak of such disease or the spread thereof, and may determine in what manner and by whom any expenses incurred (including compensation if any) shall be defrayed."

In a separate order invoking

the National Disaster Management Act, 2005, the Ministry of Home Affairs designated Secretary (Health) Preeti Sudan as the nodal authority for coordination, monitoring, preparation and implementation of a national disaster management plan.

Meanwhile, confirming the eight new coronavirus cases reported in Kerala and two fresh positive cases - one each in Rajasthan and Delhi - the Health Ministry said the total number of cases detected across the country has risen to 60. This includes the three who were discharged in Kerala last month.

Amid concern over the Centre's circular barring the return of Indians from COVID-hit countries unless they produce a certificate that proves they have tested negative, the government is preparing to send a medical team to Italy to test Indians stranded there ahead of their evacuation.

Speaking in Rajya Sabha,

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said: "...as the coronavirus is so strong in Italy, we wanted people boarding a flight to have a COVID-free certificate. Now, it has been difficult for people to get that in the Italian system, because the Italian system is busy treating patients in Italy. So, we are hoping, by tomorrow, to fly in a medical team to Italy, just as we have flown into Iran. We will do the testing of those people and try and put them on early flights thereafter".

The first batch of 58 Indians - 25 men, 31 women and 2 children - were evacuated from Iran on Tuesday. So far, the government has evacuated 948 passengers from COVID-affected countries.

Meanwhile, 83 people who arrived in Delhi from Italy on Wednesday have been quarantined at the Indian Army facility in Manesar. Of these 74 are Indian nationals, six are Italians and three are US nationals.

Aviation, hospitality to be hit hard

add to the woes of India's tourism sector, which last year witnessed the slowest growth in foreign tourist arrivals in a decade.

In 2019, about 10.89 million tourists visited India, a growth of 3.1% from the year before. Of these, 1.74 million visited in March and April alone, with the two months representing more than 15% of the annual foreign tourist arrivals. That's why the visa freeze until April 15 is expected to hit hard.

According to official information, in the month of January this year there were 1.12 million foreign tourist arrivals, of whom 795,863 were from Asia and Europe - the regions worst affected by COVID-19.

Another official at a domestic full-service airline told The

Indian Express that carriers were yet to decide whether they will offer full-refunds to the impacted foreign passengers or simply offer a free change in their itineraries. "This will be decided once there is a level of certainty as to how long will the suspension of visas extend," the official said on condition of anonymity.

Sector analysts expect national carrier Air India to be the worst-affected among Indian airlines because of the visa suspension. According to latest available data, Air India carried 1.80 million international passengers to and from India during April-June 2019.

The period between mid-March to mid-April, because of exam season, is generally deemed to be the leanest dur-

ing a year for domestic airlines and the added impact of the COVID-19 outbreak has carriers bracing for impact from plummeting demand, mounting flight cancellations and a consequential grounding of a part of their fleets.

Experts have also pointed out that usually by this time of the year, people begin booking for summer holidays but that is yet to be seen, something that could potentially impact future loads.

While foreign airlines, too, are yet to take a call on whether their flights will be cancelled or not, it is noteworthy that flight movements of international carriers account for a substantial amount of revenues for airport operators in terms of landing charges, parking fees and

other ancillary revenues.

During 2019, of a total 9.15 million flight movements at Indian airports, 1.58 million were international flight movements. Notably, some foreign airlines including British Airways recently enhanced their capacity allocated to India, after it was freed up due to mass flight cancellations in China.

"This is a bold but a necessary move to prevent a mass pandemic in India. This will have a major impact beyond just aviation and the hospitality sector... Focusing on the positives, there are still no restrictions/advisories issued on the domestic travel front so, hopefully, this segment will not be impacted as much," said Aloke Bajpai, CEO and co-founder of online travel portal ixigo.

Umar Khalid had called upon people to hit the streets during US President Donald Trump's visit to India, as well as referred to Pathan's speech where he said 15 crore would prove stronger than 100 crore. "But these will not be called hate speeches because they address a particular vote bank," Shah said, adding that because of these speeches, tension began building on February 23. (After an FIR was registered against him, Pathan had withdrawn his comments, seen as referring to 15 crore Muslims and 100 crore Hindus.)

Over the Opposition criticism's of alleged hate speeches made by BJP leaders in the run-up to the Delhi polls and riots, Shah said speeches made by Kapil Mishra were being examined by police, but appeared to defend Union minister Anurag Thakur and others. "Now speeches made 30 days before the riots are being called hate speech but those made two-three days before the riots are not hate speeches," Shah said.

More than 700 FIRs had been registered, with 2,647 arrests, CCTV footage was being analysed on 25 computers and videos being sought from public, Shah said. "Thousands of videos have come. (IB officer) Ankit Sharma's murder will also be unravelled through this."

He added that a face identification software, which had been fed with data of voter IDs and driving licences, was being used to identify rioters. He said 1,100 people had been identified thus and 40 Delhi Police teams were tracing them.

"Money has been pumped in. A financial probe is on. It is too premature to divulge the details... Those who received the money

have been identified. Three people have been arrested. People belonging to the Islamic State have been arrested. Social media has been used to stoke hatred. As many as 60 social media accounts that started on February 22 and shut down on February 26 are under probe. As many as 25 cases have been registered under the Information Technology Act," the Home Minister said.

Replying to AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi's charge in his speech that Muslims were being targeted during the probe, Shah said, "Owaisi sahab, it's a software. It does not see religion. It can't identify people by their clothes. It only identifies faces."

On the damage to property during the riots, Shah indicated recovery would be made from people identified via video evidence, saying the government had sent a letter to the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court to set up a Claims Commission.

Responding to Owaisi on the mosques that had been burnt, Shah said 52 "Bharatiya (Indians)" had died in the riots while 526 "Bharatiya" were injured and 371 shops and 142 houses damaged or burnt. "I don't see Hindu and Muslim in this. I express regret for both the damaged mosque and temple. We will not spare the killers of Zubair. But sensitivity should also be expressed for Ankit Sharma whose body had 400 stab wounds."

Shah said it was he who had requested NSA Doval to "go and boost the morale of the Delhi Police". "Had I gone in his place, police would have got busy with me. I also appointed a Special CP (Law and Order)".

The minister said he was on

top of the matter throughout. "At 2 pm on February 24, first information (about the riots) was received. At 11 pm on February 25 the last information was received. The riots happened for only 36 hours. I was in Gujarat for the Trump visit. I came back by 6 pm and held a series of meetings. I didn't go to Taj Mahal. I didn't even go for the Rashtrapati Bhawan lunch and dinner. All the time I was with the Delhi Police to see that the riots were brought under control."

Judges

responsible for sustaining tensions that led to Delhi riots.

After blaming Opposition parties and certain elements among the minority community for Delhi riots, Jaiswal said, "There is one more culprit of the Delhi riots. I want to put the country's judicial system in the dock today. We are all public representatives. When we agitate on the road or block a rail line or a road, we face prosecution by the courts."

Citing several cases from 1955 to 2011, Jaiswal said that the apex court had held that freedom of expression did not mean that people could obstruct rail and roads. He said the apex court had even held that case related to those who block rail and roads should be heard in fast-track courts.

"Then what is the reason that when 10 lakh people are facing difficulties daily in Delhi, the court is sending mediators to talk to protestors? Among the mediators is the person who is alleged to have offered various delicacies to terrorists who had captured Hazratbal Dargah (in Kashmir), he goes to Shaheen Bagh and says that people are not blocking the road but police is," Jaiswal said.

He demanded action against those blocking the road in Shaheen Bagh. "Or else the Supreme Court must say that it is not a crime to block a road, a rail line or even shut down the Supreme Court and that people can protest peacefully," Jaiswal said.

Several other members from the Treasury defended the government's action on transfer of Justice Muralidhar saying his transfer had been recommended by the Supreme Court and the government merely followed the recommendations.

The Opposition had tried to corner the government over Justice Muralidhar's transfer saying he was transferred because he ordered registration of FIRs against hate speeches made by BJP leaders Kapil Mishra, Pravesh Verma and Anurag Thakur. When an Opposition MP shouted Justice Muralidhar's name, Lekhi said: "They are taking some names. They know very well how appointments are made... transfers cannot happen without recommendations... I would say that IB reports about judges should be made public. Then we will know why the transfer was done."

Kamal Nath

on telephone from Bhopal.

Asked what was his confidence based on and whether he was in touch with some of the 22 MLAs who had submitted their resignations on Holi, he replied: "Yes, we are in touch with them. Everyone is talking to everyone is all I can say at this stage. The point that the media is missing is that if the Congress MLAs had given their resignations of their own free will,

why are they not in Bhopal? Why have they not been allowed to come to Bhopal and submit their resignations in person? They should be here if they have not been held captive."

He added: "I had met Jyotiraditya in Delhi about 10 days ago and we also talked about the constant attempts of the ruling party to topple the Government in Bhopal. I had been briefing him about this. Until this Saturday (March 7) I was speaking to him on telephone and then I learnt that he had high fever and he simply went off line."

AAP NPR

NRC and Citizenship (Amendment) Act, citing the economic downturn, while also terming amendments in the citizenship law as "divisive". The AAP had also voted against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in both Houses of Parliament. However, Kejriwal had dismissed the need to pass any resolution, saying it would achieve little.

The AAP suprema has also stayed away from the anti-CAA/NRC/NPR protests in the Capital, including at Shaheen Bagh.

Sources said the Delhi government is likely to table the NPR move in the form of a government resolution, which ideally should be sent to the Assembly Secretary at least seven days in advance. However, under Rule 90, the Speaker can allow shorter notice periods.

According to Rule 92 of the Delhi Assembly, a resolution may be in the form of a declaration or in the form of recording "either approval or disapproval by the House of an act or policy of Government or convey a message or command, urge or request an action, or call attention to a matter or situation for consideration by Government or in such form as the Speaker may consider appropriate".

The NPR, data for which was first collected in 2010 and updated in 2015, is a list of "usual residents of the country". According to the Home Ministry, a "usual resident of the country" is one who has been residing in a local area for at least last six months or intends to stay in a particular location for the next six months.

In the 2018-19 Annual Report of the Home Ministry, the NPR was described as the first step towards implementation of the controversial NRC. Union Minister of State (Home) Kiren Rijju had also made a similar assertion in the Rajya Sabha in 2014, while Union Home Minister Amit Shah had indicated the same in Parliament.

A Delhi government official said the updation exercise is set to begin on April 1 in NDMC areas and subsequently, during the school summer holidays, the rest of the city will be covered. Authorities had followed the same procedure during the last Census drive, two officials said.

Oppn asks Shah

AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi called the Delhi riots a pogrom, adding, "I would like to say that honourable Prime Minister Modi has this great distinction of presiding over two pogroms and this is the second one and he has deliberately failed in discharging his constitutional duty of saving life, limb and property of every Indian, especially Indian Muslims... Many inquiry commissions have said very clearly that if a communal carnage continues for more than 24 hours, it is a pre-planned pogrom wherein the State not only abets the mobs but it is police who plays a major role in the destruction and carnage. To call it a communal riot is a joke."

Chowdhury asked how riots could rage for three days in Delhi, the seat of political power in the country, when it had an elite force like the Delhi Police, with access to all kinds of weapons and technology, the Army, paramilitary forces and all important agencies.

"Who will answer for it? The government will have to answer. The Home Minister will have to answer... Where were you for three days?" Chowdhury asked.

"What was your and your junior ministers' responsibility during the Delhi riots?" he added. "Where were your strong Delhi MPs and MLAs? Was he singing Bhojpuri songs (Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari is a Bhojpuri star)? When elections come, you go door-to-door begging for votes. But when Delhi faces a crisis, you have no time to meet people. In the areas where riots happened, you did not get much votes. Is that why you did not feel the need to focus on them?" Chowdhury said.

"Ajit Doval showed how riots are controlled," he added. "Why did the NSA have to come in? The NSA reports directly to the PMO. It means the PMO does not trust the HMO (Home Minister's Office)."

Saying Muslim dignity had been trampled upon during the riots, Owaisi told the government to fulfill its constitutional duties. "Do you have any humanity left in you? For God's sake, show your humanity! This is not a question of Hindu or Muslim."

Cough syrup

Some say Digital Vision, with its history of making standard drugs, should have been on the radar of regulators much earlier. In 2015, Kamataka's drug regulator even attempted to prosecute it over substandard medicines.

"State drug regulators and CDSCO need to conduct a root-cause analysis of why this happened," said public health activist Dinesh Thakur, questioning why Digital Vision never figured in CDSCO's risk-based inspections.

"The fact that this high a percentage of DEG made it to the final product points to the failure of internal controls within the company. If CDSCO and state drug regulators have conducted prior inspections of this manufacturing unit, did they not find their internal control procedures lacking?" he said. "What does it say about the efficacy of CDSCO inspections? Who at State drug regulatory authorities and CDSCO is accountable for the death of these 12 children now?"

This is India's fourth mass glycol poisoning, yet safeguard have not been enforced, feel experts.

To avoid future mishaps, it has been made "mandatory" to test excipients for medicines before using them, said Haryana Drug Controller NK Ahuja. "Every manufacturer or importer of propylene glycol (Goldbest's excipient) has to test it for presence of toxic impurities like diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol," he said.

"For this product, there is no gap in law. The company had a manufacturing approval. The approval requires you to perform all these quality checks," said Neelakantan. "It's a known impurity. Let's be clear about that."

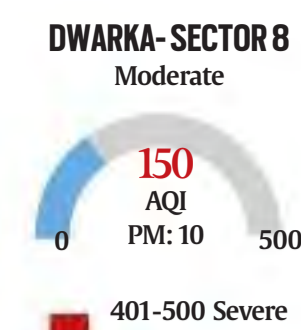
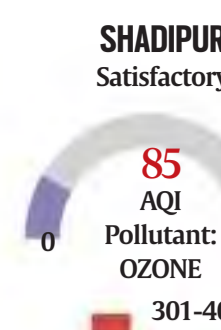
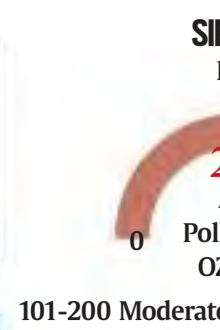
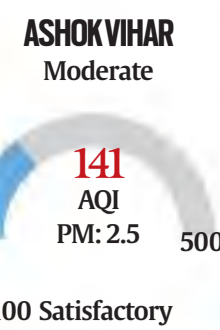
Around 95 percent of Jammu and Kashmir's 13,000 drug retailers and 4,000 wholesalers do not have "any diploma or degree in pharmacy," said its Drug Controller, Lotika Khajuria.

On March 2, The Indian Express sent an email to Digital Vision and Vellinton Healthcare, in which Digital Vision's executives are directors, seeking responses to nine queries, including whether the firm had tested the raw materials used to make the syrup, whether it performed quality assurance tests on samples from the batch before releasing it into the market and whether these records had been submitted to drug regulators.

The company is yet to respond to these queries. Despite repeated attempts, managing directors Konic Goyal and Parshottam Goyal were unavailable for comment.

FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com





**NORTHEAST DELHI VIOLENCE**

## ED books Tahir & PFI, links 'laundering of money' to riot funding

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate has booked suspended Aam Aadmi Party councillor Tahir Hussain, Islamist group Popular Front of India (PFI) and some others on charges of money laundering and alleged funding of the recent communal riots in Northeast Delhi.

A criminal case has been filed against Hussain, who is facing charges of killing an Intelligence Bureau officer during the riots, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

This will be the second PMLA case against the PFI, after the first one for allegedly fuelling protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) in various parts of the country. There was no immediate comment from the PFI.

Hussain is currently in Delhi Police's custody, and the ED is expected to seek his custody to question him in the case.

A councillor from Ward No. 59 under the Mustafabad Assembly seat, he was suspended by the AAP after he was named in connection with IB officer Ankit Sharma's murder. His brother and associates were subsequently arrested in the case. Hussain has said he had been falsely implicated.

Officials said a clutch of FIRs had been filed by Delhi Police's Crime Branch to probe the alleged money laundering and routing of illegal funds by



Hussain was arrested for his alleged role in the murder of IB officer Ankit Sharma. ANI

Hussain, the PFI and others to "sponsor" the communal riots, which claimed 53 lives and injured over 200, and they had taken cognisance of the same.

On Monday, a 32-year-old PFI member, Mohd Danish, was arrested by the Special Cell and was produced before a Delhi court which sent him to four-days' police custody.

The FIR was registered under sections of rioting and criminal conspiracy. A resident of East Delhi's Trilokpuri, Danish is pursuing law from a Ghaziabad university and runs a mobile repair shop with his brother.

His family claimed that he was picked up on fabricated charges and that he was home in Trilokpuri when violence broke out in Northeast Delhi.

Earlier, the ED had begun a probe against the PFI for allegedly routing about Rs 120

crore to fuel anti-CAA riots in the country.

About half-a-dozen of its office-bearers have been questioned. The PFI has denied the allegations, saying its financial transactions were transparent.

Hussain was arrested last week and three FIRs, including one of murder, was registered against him last week.

Hussain had told *The Indian Express* that on February 24, his house was surrounded by a mob and that some men forcibly climbed to his terrace. "I called police and they got me out of there. There was police presence outside our house till 4 pm on February 25 but then it was removed... I don't know why," he had said. Police denied rescuing Hussain. After he was arrested, a Delhi court sent Hussain to seven-days' police custody.

## Unlocking of school in riot-hit NE Delhi area sparks protests

SOURAV ROY BARMAN  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE UNLOCKING of a school Wednesday in Northeast Delhi's Shiv Vihar Tiraha, which witnessed communal violence last month, sparked protests in the area. The protests were led by Hari Singh Solanki, father of Rahul Solanki (26) who succumbed to bullet injuries during the riots on February 24. Many locals joined his sit-in, which continued into the evening.

Dayalpur SHO Tarkeshwar Singh said he unlocked the gates of Rajdhani School in the morning as police and forensic teams had already collected evidence from its premises over the last few days. This move irked locals, who alleged the school was used as a "base" to carry out acts of arson during the riots. "My son was killed at the end of the lane which borders the school. On what basis did police and the Delhi government unseal it? Large amounts of arms and ammunition were kept inside. I will give up my life, but won't allow this school to reopen," said Solanki.

A Delhi Minorities Commission report states that two schools in the area, Rajdhani and DRP Convent, were used as



At the school, Wednesday. Express

bases by around 2,000 masked persons to carry out attacks. The school's owner, Faisal Farooq, was arrested earlier.

As protesters refused to budge, top police officers of the district, including Additional DCP Sukant Ballabh and ACP Subodh Kumar, rushed to the spot. Kumar told Solanki and the locals to raise their grievance with Education Minister Manish Sisodia. Ballabh told them that police is not authorised to take a call on keeping a school sealed. "We sealed the school for investigations," he said. Ballabh also told them police will write to the education department to cancel the school's licence from the next session.

Later, to pacify the protesters, another lock was put on the school's front door. However, the locals stayed put, holding portraits of Rahul Solanki. Around 8.15 pm, the protesters dispersed.

## Temple body seeks release of man who 'kept vigil', was arrested by police

SUKRITA BARUAH  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

A TEMPLE association in Northeast Delhi's Mustafabad, which was recently hit by riots, wrote to court officials Wednesday, appealing for the release of a man who was allegedly arrested from outside the temple Sunday. Relatives and eyewitnesses said Usman Saifi (45), a welder and resident of

Mustafabad's Nehru Vihar, was picked up by police outside a Ram temple in the locality after Sunday midnight while carrying out a vigil with two other men.

The area is a Muslim majority one, with around 10 Hindu households. As part of their nightly vigil, residents there were keeping guard outside the Ram temple. On Wednesday, the Shri Ram Dharmik Samiti wrote to "Magistrate sir, Karkardooma Court" appealing

for Usman's release. "In our area, both Hindus and Muslims have maintained unity," said the letter, adding that Usman had taken responsibility of looking after the temple. "Kindly release this person on bail. *Aapki ati kripa hogi*," it read.

DCP (Northeast) Ved Prakash Surya said, "A case of rioting has been registered against the men at Dayalpur police station, and they have been arrested after verifying facts."

**VIT Vellore Institute of Technology**  
(Deemed to be University under section 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

**QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS by subject**  
VIT is ranked within the top 450 Universities in the World and No. 1 Private Institution in India in Engineering and Technology as per QS subject ranking, 2020.

VIT Chancellor receiving Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements Award from President of India - 2019

VIT received the Most Innovative Private Institution award (ARIIA award 2019) from Govt. of India

Govt. of India has recognised VIT as an Institution of Eminence (IoE)

In 2005, VIT was the first University in India to undergo the IET, UK accreditation

In 2010, VIT was the first University in India to undergo the ABET, USA accreditation

VIT - The 18<sup>th</sup> Ranked Engineering Institution of India (NIRF Ranking 2019, MHRD, Govt. of India)

**VITEEE - 2020**  
Last Date to Apply for B.Tech. admission: 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2020  
Apply now at [www.vit.ac.in/viteee](http://www.vit.ac.in/viteee)

Vellore | Chennai | AP | Bhopal VIT - A place to learn; A chance to grow

## Exempt injured student from exams: DCPCR

ENS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE DELHI Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) has requested a government school in Northeast Delhi to exempt a Class IX student— who suffered a bullet injury in her hand during riots in the region — from writing her examinations till her wound has healed.

The directions were given in a notice issued by DCPCR member Anurag Kundu on Monday.

The notice also sought an action taken report in the matter.

The commission has asked that the girl be allowed to write her paper during the compartment examinations, which are held around a month after the regular exams.

"Our city has faced a great plight and our children have gone through trauma that no child should (face). In light of this, the Commission asks you to ensure that she may be allowed to give her exams when she is healed and her year does not go in vain," the notice said.

The girl is a resident of Hassanpur.

The girl's mother said, "She was standing on the terrace of our house on February 25 when she was shot in the hand. The rioters were firing in the air and one of the bullets hit her. She was taken to St. Stephen's Hospital, where she was operated upon. She is still recovering and has severe pain in her right hand."

The girl's mother said the exams began on Wednesday and it seems unlikely that her daughter will be able to appear for them.

"We have to go for a check-up on Thursday. Her hand is hurting and she won't be able to write. We are in talks with the school authorities," she added.

Sources said the school has unofficially accepted the request.

**APPEAL!**

DELHI POLICE SHANTI SEWA NYAYA

HELP US SERVE YOU BETTER

**DELHI POLICE CONTROL ROOM**

Delhi Police request the cooperation of Residents of Delhi including Media Persons to send Video Footages/Pictures or any information that will help in the investigation of the incidents of Rioting in North East Delhi

These may be sent on:

WhatsApp No. **8750871243**

Email : **crimebranch1sit@gmail.com**

Telephone: **8750871221, 8750871227, 22829334, 22829335**

Identity of the person will be kept secret

E-mail to CP, Delhi at : [cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in](mailto:cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.gov.in)  
Write to CP, Delhi at PO Box No. 171 GPO, New Delhi

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL : 112 TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL 1090

DP19233/2020

**बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda**

**PAY YOUR TAX IN ADVANCE!**

PAY ADVANCE TAX ONLINE THROUGH OUR NET BANKING OR VISIT OUR NEAREST BRANCH.

\* From 01.04.2008, e-payment of Direct Taxes is mandatory for all Corporates and all assesseees (other than the company) to whom provisions of Section 44AB of Income Tax Act, 1961 are applicable.

LAST DATE 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

Call Toll Free No.: 1800 258 44 25 (24x7) | 1800 102 44 55

Bank of Baroda eVijaya 1800 425 5885 | 1800 425 9992

eDena 1800 233 4427 | 022-4224 2424

www.bankofbaroda.in

Follow us on: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn

T&C Apply



Property row escalates, man shot dead on Holi Dec 16 rape convict alleges assault, seeks FIR against 2 cops

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NOIDA, MARCH 11

A 45-YEAR-OLD man was shot dead and his brother was injured after an argument over a land dispute escalated during Holi in Greater Noida's Surajpur village. The victim, Anil, was celebrating Holi at home when his father, Satyapal, entered into an argument with the accused, Pawan Jindal, a local property dealer...



At Surajpur village where the incident took place

"The argument escalated and though Jindal left, he returned after a while and fired at the family," said police. A case under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code has been filed against Pawan Jindal and five others named accused.

"We received information Tuesday afternoon that a fight had broken out between two groups of people in a Surajpur village. On reaching the spot, we found that one group had fired at the other over previous enmity. One person was rushed to the hospital, where he died during treatment, while his brother is currently in hospital," said Harish Chander, DCP Central Noida.

returned and opened fire at Satyapal's family. The eldest son, Anil, sustained a bullet injury and died allegedly due to excessive bleeding. His brother, Sunil, is admitted in Kailash Hospital and is recovering, police officers said. The two families in the colony have a longstanding land dispute over the passage of a road in the locality. According to police, a case over the issue is currently in the Supreme Court. There were instances of arguments, clashes between two sides in the past as well, but no fatalities occurred, an officer said.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

PAWAN KUMAR Gupta, one of the four death row convicts in the December 2012 gangrape and murder case, moved a Delhi court Wednesday seeking registration of an FIR against two police constables for allegedly physically assaulting him when he was lodged at Mandoli Central Jail in East Delhi last year.

The court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Karkardooma, has fixed Pawan's complaint for hearing on Thursday at 2 pm, said A P Singh, the convict's lawyer.

In his application, Pawan prayed that the Station House Officer of Harsh Vihar Police Station be directed to register the FIR against constable Anil Kumar and another unidentified police constable. The complaint said that since Pawan is to be handed

soon, it is necessary to allow him to appear as a witness in the case to identify both the policemen.

The criminal complaint alleged Pawan was beaten on his head and body by a constable and an unidentified officer with a "danda" on July 26 last year.

On July 28, the same police officers allegedly assaulted Pawan again with "lathi, danda, and fist-blows on his whole body".

It further said he was treated at Guru Teg Bahadur government hospital in Shahdara for his alleged head injury.

On March 5, a Delhi court presided over by Additional Sessions Judge Dharmendra Rana had issued fresh black warrants for the execution of the four death row convicts — Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Kumar Gupta (25), Vinay Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar Singh (31) — on March 20 at 5.30 am.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT "E-Procurement Notice" Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Table with columns: Sr. No., Name of work, Estimated Cost Rs., Starting date of downloading, Earnest Money, Deadline for submission of bid, Time Limit, Eligible Class. Item 1: Construction of Office Building of Tissa Division at Bhanjraur (SH: Building Portion including WS & SI and rain water harvesting tank and septic tank).

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR

GIST OF e-NIT No: MHCHD/IS/2019-20/159/e-tendering Dated: 07.03.2020 For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K State e-Tenders are invited from Registered/ Reputed/ experienced firms with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work:-

Table with columns: Name of Work, Est. cost (Rs. In Lacs), Cost of T/Doc. (in rupees), Earnest Money (in Rs.), Time of Completion (in days), Position of Funds. Item 1: Providing and laying of Aluminium Conductor for 320 Kva DG set along with allied works at Govt. PD Hospital, Srinagar.

- 1. The Tender Document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of Quantities (B.O.Q.), Set of terms and conditions of Contract and other details can be Seen/Downloaded from the Govt. website: www.jktenders.gov.in from 07.03.2020 (18.00 hrs).

No: MHCHD/IS/6599-6604 Date: 07.03.2020 DIPK-NB: 2179/19 Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar

CHIEF ENGINEER (KANGRA ZONE) HPPWD DHARAMSHALA H.P., 176215 UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice

The Chief Engineer (Kangra Zone) HPPWD Dharamshala-176215 on behalf of Governor Himachal Pradesh invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-II (Batch-I) of 2019-20 in the District of Chamba as detailed in the Table below from the eligible contractors registered with HPPWD/CPWD/P&T, Railways/other state govts/Central Govt agencies.

Table with columns: Division, Package No., Name of the Work, Estimated Cost (Rs.Lacs), Total Cost (Rs. Lacs), Period of Completion (Months), Security (Lacs). Items include road works in Nurpur, Dehra, and Dehra.

Last Date/ Time and place for receipt of bids through e-procurement:- Bids can be submitted online from Date 12 Month 03 Year 2020 to Date 31 Month 03 Year 2020 upto 1700 Hours and will be opened on Date 01 Month 04 Year 2020 at 1130 Hours in the office of Superintending Engineer, 9th Circle, HPPWD, Nurpur

The Government has enhanced the tendering limit of Class-B Constructors from Rs. 2.00 Crore (Two Crore) to Rs. 5.00 Crore (Five Crore) only for PMGSY works.. For further details please log on to https://pmgsytendershp.gov.in

The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons there-of. Chief Engineer, Kangra Zone, H.P.P.W.D, Dharamshala-176215. Fax: 011892-223100. Tel: 011892-224948.

OFFICE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR ASSAM STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION PALTANBAZAR, GUWAHATI-781008

Ref no: ASTC/H.O/STY/20-21/6980 Date: 7/3/2020

Sealed tender are invited from interested reputed authorised firm for printing and supply of the following group of items, which will be received by the undersigned up to 1 pm on the last date shown against each group of items given below and will be open on the same day at 3 pm.

Table with columns: Sl no., Name of the items, Date of Tender form issue, Last date of receipt. Items include ASTC Wayside Ticket Book, P.O.B Wayside Ticket Book, ASTC City Bus Ticket, SFT Ticket and A/C Airport Ticket, General Stationery Items, Computer Stationery Items, Money Receipt, Time Sheet (General and JnNURM), Cash Book, D/Oil Cash Memo, Summary Sheet, Numerical Ledger Sheet, Bin card, Long Sheet, etc.

The bidder must submit their bid documents in prescribed forms and details which may be collected from the Stationery Section, ASTC.H.O. Paltanbazar, Guwahati-08 on payment of Rs 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred Only) in Cash as tender fee (non Refundable) for each group of items or else the tender document can be downloaded from the website of ASTC, "www.astc.assam.gov.in" and the tender fee of Rs. 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred Only) can be submitted in the form of demand draft in favour of "Managing Director, Assam State Transport Corporation", which must be submitted along with the bid documents.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (A&T) ASTC, Paltanbazar, Guwahati-08

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL E-mail: mechanicalskims@gmail.com

SHORT TERM INVITING NOTICE E-TENDERS Gist of e-NIT No. 53 of 2019-20 Dated 09.03.2020

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar invites e-tenders from Registered/reputed/experienced Firms having expertise as detailed in the tender document for the following works:-

Table with columns: Sr. No., Name of the Work, Estimated Cost (In Rs.). Item 1: Maintenance Contract for Central Air Conditioning System at SKIMS, Soura for the Summer Season of 2020.

The complete tender document is available at website: http://jktenders.gov.in. Interested Bidders/Tenderers may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarifications and submit their Bids online upto the date and time mentioned in the table below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Specifications, Bills of Quantities & Terms and Conditions of the contract and other relevant details.

Table with columns: i) Date and Time of downloading/ Sale of Tender documents (Starting Date), ii) Date & Time of Bidding Queries/ clarification/ Pre-Bid meet, iii) Last Date & Time of Bid uploading, iv) Date of Submission of hard copies (Original EMD/FDR & DD only), v) Date & Time of Commercial/ Technical Bid (Cover-I) opening, vi) Date & Time of Financial Bid (Cover-II) opening, vii) Cost of e-Bid Document, viii) Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (CDR/FDR), ix) Completion Time, x) Budget Head.

No. SIMS 139 EX. 48420-3173-82 Date: 09.03.2020 Sd/- Executive Engineer Mechanical, SKIMS.

CONCOR Container Corporation of India Ltd. NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER CONCOR invites E-tender in Single Packet system of tendering for the following work: Construction of Earth Work, PSC bridge, truck work and other allied works at Yamana Railway Station, near Vasodara (Gugareti).

CHENNAI METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD NOTICE INVITING TENDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING Sealed bids are invited from the eligible bidders for the following work as per the procedure of CMWSSB under two cover system conforming to the Tamil Nadu Transparency in Tenders Act, 1998 and Rules, 2000.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT PRE QUALIFICATION & PRICE TENDER (TWO COVER SYSTEM) SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE No.31/ 2019-20/ BCM/ MW/ TR/1 Dated: 10.03.2020 FORM OF CONTRACT: LUMP SUM / ITEM WISE RATE TENDER For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, sealed Tenders are invited from the PWD Registered contractors in the field, for the following work and the same will be received up to 3:00 PM on the respective date mentioned (column ii) and will be opened on the same day at 3:30 PM in the presence of those tenderers or their representatives who choose to be present.

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD CHENNAI CIRCLE-III Tender Notice No. SGB / TIR / HD / SE (CC-II) / 2019 NOTICE INVITING RE-TENDER Date: 10.03.2020 For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, one sealed tender consisting of two separate sealed covers one for Pre-qualification and other one for Price Bid with name of work duly substantiated in both covers are invited from eligible Contractors who are in the field of Construction industry and are registered contractors of TNSCB under Classed and above of Government Departments (Government, undertakings, Government / Semi Government Bodies / Quasi Government / Public Sector undertakings, Housing Boards / Corporation Undertakings, CPWD and registered at a local entity in India, by the Superintending Engineer, Chennai Circle III, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No. 5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai: 600 005 upto 3.00 PM on 27.03.2020 and the same will be opened at 3.30 PM on the same day in the presence of the Tender Security Committee and bidders / their authorized agents.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PMGSY (JKRRDA) JAMMU. NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS e-NIT No:-CEJ/PMGSY/591 of 2019-20 Dated: 06/03/2020 Chief Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Jammu on behalf of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, invites e-tenders on 'page Above/ Below' (i) Basis (i.e. on Percentage-Rate Basis) from Approved and Eligible Contractors Registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways or equivalent and other State Govts up to 05.00 PM, on 24.03.2020 for each of the following works including Defect Liability & Maintenance Period of Three Years for Stage-I and Five Years for Stage-II and Bridge after construction.

Any registered contractor with State PWD/CPWD/Railways or equivalent qualifying eligibility criteria as provided in the Standard Bidding Documents can tender for the works

26.03.2020 10.00 A.M.



# NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) GENERAL ADVISORY FOR PUBLIC



The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a contagious virus that causes respiratory infection, can transfer from human to human.

## SYMPTOMS

- FEVER
- DIFFICULTY IN BREATHING
- COUGHING
- TIGHTNESS OF CHEST
- RUNNING NOSE
- HEAD ACHE
- FEELING OF BEING UNWELL
- PNEUMONIA
- KIDNEY FAILURE

## MODE OF TRANSMISSION

Human Coronavirus (COVID-19) most commonly spread from an infected person to other through:

- Coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hand
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

## HOW TO REDUCE RISK OF CORONAVIRUS INFECTION (COVID-19)

- Clean hand with soap and water or alcohol based hand rub
- Cover nose and mouth when coughing & sneezing with tissue or flexed elbow
- Avoid close contact & maintain 1 meter distance with anyone
- Isolation of persons travelling from affected countries for atleast 14 days.

### DO's

- Cover your nose and mouth with disposable tissue or handkerchief while coughing or sneezing
- Throw used tissues into closed bins immediately after use
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water
- Avoid crowded places/big gatherings
- Person suffering from Influenza like illness must be confined to home
- Stay more than one meter distance from persons sick with flu
- Take adequate sleep and rest
- Drink plenty of water/liquids and eat nutritious food
- See a doctor if feel unwell (fever, difficulty breathing & cough). While visiting doctor, wear a mask/cloth to cover your mouth and nose.

### DON'Ts

- Touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Hugging, kissing and shaking hands while greeting
- Spitting in public places
- Taking medicines without consulting doctor
- Disposal of used napkin or tissue paper in open areas
- Touching surfaces usually used by public (Railing, door gates, etc)

## Control Room Numbers at State and District level

State DGHS (HQ) 011-22307145, 22300012, 22300036  
 North 011-27708768  
 South 011-29531277  
 East 011-22050908, 22051234  
 West 011-25195529  
 North-West 011-25951182

South-West 011-25066674  
 South-East 011-26476410  
 North-East 011-22115289  
 New Delhi 011-23385743  
 Central 011-23270151  
 Shahdara 011-22111077

24\*7 Control Room has been established at DGHS (HQ), may be contacted for any query related to COVID-19 Ph: 011-22307145, 22300012, 22300036





**BRIEFLY**

**Man falls to death from Noida flat**

**Noida:** A 42-year-old chartered accountant died after allegedly falling from the balcony of his 18th floor apartment in Noida's Sector 45 Wednesday. "We received information from the security guard of the residential society that a man had fallen from one of the flats. The victim, Ritesh Chauhan, lived with his parents and wife. The family told us it was an accident. We are exploring all angles," said Sankalp Sharma, DCP Noida Zone 1. Police said Ritesh's family came to know of his death when the security guard rang their phone. According to the family, police said, the victim did not mention any dispute or conflict to them. Ritesh worked as a chartered accountant in a firm in Saket. **ENS**

**3 dead in road accidents on Holi**

**New Delhi:** Three people were killed in as many road accidents in the national capital on the day the country celebrated Holi, police said on Wednesday.

**2 held with Rs 1 cr foreign currency at IGI Airport**

**New Delhi:** An Indian and an Afghan national were apprehended by CISF personnel at the IGI Airport for allegedly carrying about Rs 1.3 crore worth of foreign currency in an illegal manner, officials said on Wednesday.

**Robber attacks ASI who caught him, arrested**

**New Delhi:** A 28-year-old man was arrested for allegedly attacking a police officer who had caught him in a robbery case in Govindpuri, police said Wednesday. The accused, Deepak, along with three others, had allegedly robbed a shopkeeper of Rs 1 lakh in Govindpuri on September 13 last year, police said. On Saturday, ASI Faiyaz Ahmad of Govindpuri police station was attacked with a dagger on his head, arms and legs. Police later arrested Deepak from Holi Chowk in Navjeevan Camp.

**3 arrested for robbing scrap dealer**

**New Delhi:** Three persons were arrested for allegedly robbing a scrap dealer in Dilshad Garden when he was returning on a motorcycle after collecting cash from a client, police said on Wednesday. **PTI**



Renovation work continues as the reading hall in the New Library at Jamia Millia Islamia was opened Wednesday. The Old Library, which suffered the maximum damage, is yet to reopen. *Praveen Khanna*

**SOME STUDENTS APPREHENSIVE OF RETURNING**

**3 months after police action, library at Jamia is open again**

**ARANYASHANKAR**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

**MOHAMMAD RAFI** remembers the evening of December 15 in vivid detail. A diploma student of civil engineering at Jamia Millia Islamia, he recalls the police entering the reading hall of the New Library in the evening and attacking students and property, even as he managed to escape from the back door.

On Wednesday, as the reading hall of the New Library, also known as Zakir Hussain Library, opened after almost three months, Rafi stepped back into the hall, which smelled of fresh paint, with some trepidation.

Police have so far maintained that they had entered the university campus in "hot pursuit" of miscreants from outside the institute, who had allegedly indulged in stone-pelting and arson during an anti-CAA protest during the day. As reported by *The Indian Express*, the university suffered property damages worth Rs 2.66 crore in police ac-



CCTV grab of personnel in riot gear smashing a camera

tion. More than 125 students had complained of injuries, some serious in nature. The Old Library, which suffered the maximum damage, is yet to reopen. "I remember that visual — of police entering from the front door and us running out of the hall. We went and hid upstairs, and thankfully it was dark so the police didn't come up. It will always stay with me; nothing like this has ever happened. It has also been an academic loss, because we haven't been in the frame of mind to study. The library has opened just a few days before exams are to begin," he said.

Scores of students came rushing to the library Wednesday as word spread that it had been opened, but many said it would take time before the hall reaches full capacity as several students were still a little hesitant to return. As students sat with their books and laptops trying to concentrate, some renovation work was still going on.

Said Ahmad Siddiqui, an MA student of Public Administration, who was studying at the hall, said, "That day there were students who thought they would be safe in the library, and they suffered because of it. I thought it was better to run out so I was spared. Regardless, the last three months have been difficult. We have been studying in the civil engineering department library but faced problems because we are not from the department," he said.

Even students who weren't in the library that day say it will take time to come back to normalcy. "In my class of 75 students, only 12-13 have been attending classes. Our parents are worried and keep calling us

home. It's becoming difficult to assuage their fears. I have come to the library today because exams are approaching and I wasn't being able to study properly in my room," said Mobassir Hasan, a BTech student.

Shadab Anjum, a BSc student of Maths, said, "It is still unbelievable that all this happened inside a university library. There is a fear that if we are not safe in a library, where are we safe?"

The New Library has a seating capacity of 800 and consists of "a reading hall, research floor, reference and periodical section and a well-equipped digital resource centre, comprising of 150 computers".

"Effort has been made to provide better facilities to students by installing LED lights and providing new and comfortable chairs. It is a matter of great satisfaction that despite the heavy odds, the library has been able to utilise its budgetary allocation completely and renew its subscription to electronic databases," Jamia PRO Ahmed Azeem said in a statement Wednesday.

**DTC conductor held for arson outside mosque also behind attack last year**

**SAKSHI DAYAL**  
GURGAON, MARCH 11

**ALMOST** A year after a 25-year-old man in Gurgaon alleged he was beaten up by an unknown person, who also threw his skull cap to the ground, police unexpectedly arrested the accused in the incident Wednesday for another crime — setting two stalls selling religious items on fire outside Gurgaon's Jama Masjid. Police said the accused, Vikas (40), hails from Delhi's Majra Dabas village and lives in Gurgaon's Ram Nagar area. He was identified through footage from a CCTV camera outside the mosque, showing him burning the stalls on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday.

"The accused works as a conductor with the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and lives in Gurgaon as his wife, a nurse,



CCTV grab purportedly shows Vikas, who set fire to two stalls. He allegedly beat up a man and threw his skull cap to the ground last year

works in the city. Our investigation revealed he is a defaulter with the DTC as well and has a poor attendance record," said Gurgaon Police PRO Subhash Boken.

"The accused was intoxicated at the time of the incident

Monday night. After his arrest, he confessed he was also involved in an incident last year, wherein he targeted a person from a minority community," he said.

Mohammad Barkat Aalam had alleged that on May 25, 2019 around 10.15 pm, as he was walking in his rented accommodation in Jacobpura, two men confronted him and beat him up, telling him "you cannot wear a cap in this area". Aalam alleged they then asked him to remove his skull cap, and when he hesitated, one of them threw it to the ground.

Although police had registered an FIR in the matter, no arrest had been made, with officials stating CCTV footage was unclear and "faded".

"Vikas emerged as the main accused in last year's case, and has so far claimed the other person involved was a bystander and not someone he was acquainted with," said Boken.

The spot where last year's incident took place is barely 100 metres from the place where the stalls were burnt.

In his complaint to police, 48-year-old Hafiz Harun stated he was sleeping in his room when he heard a commotion outside around 2.15 am Tuesday. He stepped out to find police personnel trying to extinguish fire at the stalls run by him and another person. "When we and the police personnel checked the CCTV footage, we saw a man wearing a blue shirt, black coat and white shoes," said Harun.

The footage shows him walking up to the stalls and trying to set them on fire with a lighter. Unsuccessful, he leaves and returns later to try again. Harun said he did not know the accused.

"The accused was produced in court Wednesday and remanded in judicial custody. He has been sent to Bhondsi Jail," said Boken.

**Delhi Cong gets new chief, Maken says 'accept blindly'**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

A DAY after the Congress suffered a jolt with senior leader Jyotiraditya Scindia leaving the party, which raised questions on the central leadership's ability to take timely decisions and keep its flock together, the party Wednesday moved fast to set its house in order in Delhi.

The party selected AICC secretary Anil Chaudhary to lead its Delhi unit and appointed five vice-presidents — Abhishek Dutt, Jaikishan, Mudit Agarwal, Ali Hassan and Shivani Chopra. While Mudit is the son of former Delhi Congress chief JP Agarwal, Chopra is the daughter of former DPCC president Subhash Chopra. Hoping for a complete revamp, the party this time has given a chance to young leaders.

Chaudhary, a former MLA from Patparganj in 2008-2013, was chief of the Youth Congress and NSUI in Delhi.

In Delhi, the Congress had re-



Anil Chaudhary at the AICC office, Wednesday. *Anil Sharma*

ceived 9.65% of the votes in 2015, which went up to 22.43% in the Lok Sabha elections in 2019; it had come second in five of the seven Lok Sabha seats. However, its vote-share plummeted to 4.26% in the recent Delhi polls. As many as 63 of its 66 candidates lost their deposits (each got less than a sixth of the votes polled), and Delhi Congress chief Subhash Chopra submitted his resignation to the leadership on February 11.

While the changes have left some unhappy in the Delhi Congress, former DPCC presi-

dent Ajay Maken issued a statement asking all leaders to accept whatever decisions the high command has taken.

"The Congress is passing through very difficult times... those who love the Congress's ideology... it is their duty to strengthen the party at such a juncture... whatever decision the high command takes... we should accept it blindly... We may have some wishes and aspirations regarding posts but this is not the time to demand but to make sacrifices for the party," he said.

Sources said Chaudhary was denied a ticket from Patparganj in the Assembly elections. "There are several senior leaders who could have been asked to take charge. The party is once again divided after this decision. This is a crucial time for the party, and what we all needed was a leader who would have taken us all together. The MCD polls are just two years away, and all leaders are sceptical on whether the party will be able to make gains in time," said a senior leader.



Workers sanitise a DTC bus at the Rajghat Depot. *Tashi Tobgyal*

**Covid-19 scare thins out hotel bookings, business takes hit**

**ANANYA TIWARI & SRISHTI JHA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

**HOTELS, INNS** and guesthouses across the capital are seeing a downturn in business as incoming foreign guests are either cancelling or not confirming bookings against the backdrop of coronavirus cases in the city.

Based largely in areas such as Paharganj, Karol Bagh, Rajouri Garden and South Delhi, the capital's international tourism hotel business is set to suffer losses over the next few weeks.

On Friday, the number of confirmed cases worldwide surpassed 1,00,000. It is mandatory for hotels to maintain reports of guests coming in from affected countries daily, and accommodate guests only when they present a medical clearance certificate from the airports.

Bookings from affected countries such as China, Iran and Italy have been cancelled, with guests from China not arriving in Delhi since the outbreak in late January.

At Kuldeep Friends House in Paharganj, a majority of the foreign guests have cancelled their bookings. The manager, Piyush Kumar Singh, said, "We mostly get guests from the US, Russia, Israel, Portugal, Spain and Germany. Since last week, around 75% of the bookings were cancelled. New bookings made this week are also getting cancelled."

Hotel Aura in Paharganj, which gets many Iranian guests,

also reported that bookings from the country are getting cancelled as the guests are not getting visas. At Jyoti Mahal, the manager said, "We had a group coming in from Italy, but they cancelled as they did not get visas."

Guests from other countries have also reduced across the city. The manager of Hotel Godwin Deluxe at Paharganj said, "People are just not coming and no bookings are happening."

At Hotel Heritage, the manager said, "We used to get 10-12 bookings daily from foreign tourists. Now it has reduced to around four-five." Hotel Guruvas Inn said it has had no new bookings over the past few days.

With three cases being reported in Delhi over the past week, even the number of domestic guests coming to the capital is declining. An official from Hotel Clark International at Karol Bagh said, "About 60% of the bookings have been cancelled so far. Many of these were domestic tourists."

At Madpackers Hostel in Rajouri Garden and Jyoti Mahal, no guests from China, Italy, South Korea, Iran, Singapore, Nepal, Malaysia and Indonesia are being allowed.

Precautionary measures such as distributing hand sanitisers and masks aren't being carried out evenly at all hotels. An official at Hotel Le Cadre said, "We aren't taking any precautionary measures in particular." The manager of Hotel Heritage Home at Paharganj said they were not taking any specific precautions either.

**Coronavirus: Plea seeks review of Centre, state facilities**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

**THE DELHI** High Court Wednesday sought to know the stands of the Centre and the Delhi government on a PIL seeking review of all medical facilities and infrastructure available to deal with a coronavirus outbreak.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice C Hari Shankar issued notice to the Union Ministry of Health and the Delhi government seeking their replies by March 30.

The plea filed by advocate Triveni Potekar sought direction to authorities to set up a monitoring committee under the supervision of experts in the field. It also sought directions for making available important and relevant information, including guidance on easy access to medical facilities to treat and test coronavirus.

The central government's standing counsel Anil Soni, appearing for the ministry, submitted that "state-of-the-art" medical facilities have been put to use to check whether people coming here were infected as "prevention is better than cure".

The PIL said India is under grave potential risk of mass infection due to lack of sufficient screening, testing, isolation facilities and trained health workers. It claimed that steps being taken by the Centre were not sufficient to handle a mass outbreak.

The petition also stated that the public at large is gripped with fear and uncertainty due to misinformation about the virus.

Stating that it is the right of the public to know the preparedness of the Centre and the Delhi government, the advocate sought judicial review of the preparation and steps taken by both governments on a scientific basis, and not an ad-hoc basis.

The petition further claimed that the Centre "has not provided any preventive mechanism other than screening at 21 airports and ports, and has established only 15 testing centres and 50,000 personal protection equipment, and the same seems grossly inadequate".

**Dilip Pandey new AAP chief whip in Delhi Assembly**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

MLA **DILIP** Kumar Pandey was appointed Aam Aadmi Party's chief whip in the Delhi Assembly on Wednesday.

The assembly secretariat on Wednesday issued a notification, stating that Speaker Ram Niwas Goel recognised the Timarpur AAP MLA as the chief whip of the party with immediate effect.

Earlier this month, the Arvind Kejriwal government appointed first-time MLA Raghav Chadha as vice-chairman of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

**TAMIL NADU HOUSING BOARD**  
Special Project Circle - II  
TENDER NOTICE NO : SPC-II 13 /2019-2020 Dated : 11.03.2020  
Sealed competitive tenders with pre-qualification system duly superscribed on the covers with name of work, reference No, due date and name of tenderer are invited for the following works so as to reach the office of the Superintending Engineer, Special Project Circle-II, Tamil Nadu Housing Board, 2nd Avenue, C-48 Anna Nagar, Chennai-600 040, upto 3.00 P.M. (as per office clock) on the due dates mentioned below. The tenders will be opened by the undersigned at his office at 3.30 P.M. on the same day in the presence of the tenderer or their agent who choose to be present.

Sl. No.	Description of work	Approximate value of the proposed Project	EMD in Rupees	Cost of Tender Schedule in Rs. (Non-refundable)	Period during which the tender schedule available for sale	Last date of receipt and opening of tender
1)	Comprehensive Project Management Consultancy for the proposed Construction of Multifloried Office cum Commercial Complex with development works & Allied works (3 Basement + GF + 17 Floors) at PETERS ROAD Colony in Mylapore, @ S.No 343/2, Mylapore Village & Taluk, Chennai.	Rs. 223.64 Crores	1,18,000/-	15,750/- (Including Taxes)	From 20.03.2020 to 26.03.2020	27.03.2020

Detailed tender notice can be had from the above said office and from the website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)  
Tender Condition: The amount should be Quoted only on percentage basis, based on the Project cost mentioned in column No.3.  
Special Project Circle - II, Tamil Nadu Housing Board, C-48 2nd Avenue, Anna Nagar, Chennai-40. Ph.No.044-26280020. DIPRI/1380/TENDER/2020  
Superintending Engineer (i/c) Special Project Circle-II

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU**  
**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
Buildings (C&M) Circle, Tirunelveli- 627 002.  
TYPE OF CONTRACT: LUMPSUM (Pre Qualification (Two Cover System) & Rate Tender System)  
Tender Notice No : 15/ 2019-2020, Dated:11.03.2020  
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu sealed Tenders are invited from the contractors registered in Public Works Department in the appropriate class to the office of Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (C&M) circle, Tirunelveli upto 3.00 P.M. on 16.04.2020. Received tender will be opened at 3.30 PM on the same day in the reference to the contractors of their authorized representative who chose to be present at time. The tender schedule can also available in office at 12.03.2020 to 15.04.2020 upto 5.45 P.M.  
Package No: 1 Kanniyakumari District  
Slice No.1 : Construction of New Regional Transport Office Building and Driving Test Range for Nagercoil at Ramapuram  
Slice No.2 : Conservation, Renovation and Restoration of Heritage Building (Old District Court) at Nagercoil.  
Package No. 1: Total Value of Slice Rs.589.00 Lakhs  
Package No: 2 Thoothukudi District  
Slice No.1 : Construction of Family Cottage, Hotel Dormitory, Dormitory Building and Driver Dormitory in Yathikar Nivas at Tiruchendhur  
Slice No.2 : Construction of Sub Registrar office Building at Nazareth.  
Package No.2 : Total value of Slices Rs.2546.00 Lakhs  
Package No: 3 - Thoothukudi District  
Construction of New Hostel for 100 Students in Government, ITI Buildings at Various Places  
Slice No.1 : Thoothukudi, Slice No. 2: Nagalapuram  
Package No.3 : Total value of Slices Rs.500.00 Lakhs  
For further details and tender documents visit the website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) and [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in)  
SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PWD., BUILDINGS(C&M)CIRCLE, TIRUNELVELI  
DIPRI/1362/TENDER/2020

**CONTAINER CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD.**  
(A Govt. of India Undertaking, Ministry of Railways) Regional Office  
Chief General Manager (CGM) North Central Region(NCR)  
6th Floor, IWAJ Building, A-13, Sector-1, Noida-201301 (U.P.)  
Ph No - 0120 - 4052941, Fax - 0120 - 4052988  
E-Tender Notice  
Reference: OPEN E- TENDER NO: CON/NCR/TCPC/DG Set 500 KVA /2020 Dated 12/03/2020. In Single bid system is invited, for Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of one no. of 500 KVA silent DG-set with AMF panel & accessories AT ICD/KANPUR, UTTAR PRADESH, at Container Corporation of India Ltd, North Central Regional office,6th Floor, IWAJ Building, A-13, Sector-1, Noida-201301 (U.P.) Last date of submission of tender is up to 17:00 hrs, on 26/03/2020 on the website [www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL](http://www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL). For detailed information and any corrigendum please log on to [www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL](http://www.tenderwizard.com/CCIL)  
Chief General Manager/NCR

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH**  
Information & Public Relations Department  
Request for Proposal for Engaging Multimedia Electronic Creative Producing Agency for Government of Andhra Pradesh  
This department invites Request for proposals from Multimedia Electronic Creative Production Agencies to provide services to Government of Andhra Pradesh. Cost of Tender Schedule (RFP) Rs.10,000/- (Non-refundable) and EMD Rs.5,00,000/-. The Cost of Tender Schedule and EMD should be in the shape of DD from Nationalized Bank in favour of "Accounts Officer, I&PR Department, Vijayawada". Interested bidders can obtain tender schedule (RFP) on written requisition from the O/o. Commissioner, Information and Public Relations Dept., 2nd Floor, Dr. NTR Administrative Block, Pandit Nehru Bus Station, Vijayawada from 11-03-2020 to 26-03-2020 upto 1 PM. Sealed tenders should reach this office on or before 5.00 PM on 26-03-2020 For further details can be viewed in the website [www.aperecruitment.gov.in](http://www.aperecruitment.gov.in) or contact Sri P. Kiran Kumar, Joint Director (Advertisements) 9121215223.  
Sd/- T. Vijay Kumar Reddy, I.I.S., Commissioner  
DIPR No.2136/CL/ADVT/1/1/2019-20, Dt.10/03/2020



# 7 IN PARLIAMENT BUDGET SESSION

FROM THE GALLERY

FROM THE CHAIR

**RAJYA SABHA**  
"How long will this continue? I am unable to understand..."

**M VENKAIAH NAIDU**,  
Chairman, when Congress MPs jeered at MoS Anurag Thakur

**LOK SABHA**  
"You raise issues about violation of rules so many times. But do you follow the rules yourselves?"

**OM BIRLA**, Speaker, to Opposition MPs during ruckus

5 QUESTIONS



**CPM MP K K RAGESH**  
SPEAKS TO MANOJ CG ON THE LEFT RAISING THE BAN ON TWO TV CHANNELS IN RS

**You and other Left MPs tried to raise an issue in Rajya Sabha, but the House was adjourned. What was the issue?**  
Two news channels of Kerala were banned for 48 hours last week...Right to freedom of speech and expression is a fundamental right and freedom of press is also part of that.

**But the government revoked the ban and the I&B Ministry suggested officials could have erred in drafting the notice**  
How can it be possible? Immediately after the ban was imposed, we saw resistance by people from all walks of life...they were compelled to withdraw their decision. But it is a sign. They are indirectly threatening the media...

**Do you think they were testing the waters?**  
Absolutely. It is very clear... This government has no respect for the democratic ethos of our country...

**Rajya Sabha is slated to discuss Delhi riots. You could've raised the issue then and not disrupted the House today**  
It is an urgent issue...It is an issue of national importance.

**What will be your demand in tomorrow's discussion? Congress has demanded the Home Minister's resignation**  
The Home Minister must resign and there should be an independent probe. Delhi Police was made inactive for around 48 hours. Why? Because the government wanted the riots to happen...to divide people on communal lines.

## Hard faultlines in House over Delhi riots

### BJP MPs say Oppn used lies to spread hate, majority was target

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

MEMBERS FROM the treasury benches on Wednesday blamed the Opposition and radicalisation in the minority community for the violence in Delhi.

Several members even defended statements made by BJP leader Kapil Mishra.

Among the speakers from the ruling BJP were New Delhi MP Meenakshi Lekhi, Bangalore South MP Tejasvi Surya and Paschim Champaran MP Sanjay Jaiswal, among others.

Participating in the debate, Lekhi claimed that police could not act against BJP leaders for their speeches, as then they would have to act against "provocative statements" by Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and Aam Aadmi Party leader Amanatullah Khan as well and invite charges of curtailing freedom of expression.

Contrary to what the Opposition claimed, Lekhi said, the situation had been brought under control within 36 hours because of intervention of the Home Ministry.

Accusing the Opposition of using "lies as a weapon" and "spreading hate", Lekhi referred to alleged seizures of stones and petrol bombs from an AAP councillor's residence.

"The way an (IB) officer was killed, only a fundamentalist could do that. Who have been support-



BJP's Meenakshi Lekhi speaks in Lok Sabha. PTI

ing these fundamentalists? ...women from the minority community indulged in acid attack. ... A majority community school was burnt down but the minority community school was left alone. ...properties of minorities have been left alone but those of the majority have been destroyed," she said, amid protests by the Opposition.

After the BSP's Danish Ali objected to her remarks, Speaker Om Birla warned her not to refer to any particular community or caste in the debate.

Responding to Lekhi's speech, in which she largely blamed the minority community for the riots, TMC's Sougata Ray said he had never heard a more "biased and communal" speech in his life.

Lekhi also cited figures on communal violence during Congress regimes, saying 243 such incidents occurred under Jawaharlal Nehru's premiership, 337 under Indira Gandhi and 291

under Rajiv Gandhi.

Surya, while defending the government, accused the Congress of engaging in "a module of riot-engineering". "Congress chief Sonia Gandhi called for 'aar-paar ki ladaai', and asked people to come out on the streets when she held a dharna at the Ramliya Maidan. The very next day, innocent Muslim women gathered at Shaheen Bagh and began protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act," he said, adding, "There is nothing anti-Muslim about the CAA, but everything anti-Hindu about the anti-CAA protests."

Defending Mishra, he said, "Too much has been spoken repeatedly both inside and outside of this House about an alleged hate speech. What did he say? He gave an ultimatum to the police authorities that if you do not clear it in three days, things will not be under control. Is this a hate speech? I will tell you with all confidence. No jurisdiction and no jurisprudence in any part of the world will consider this hate speech."

Jaiswal said, "A particular community's leaders instigate the riots and when their own house starts burning, they begin to play the victim card. They say remove the police for 15 minutes and we will show you our place. They say 15 crore will turn out to be stronger than 10 crore...These are the statements that have instigated the riots."

QUOTE UNQUOTE



"Congress chief Sonia Gandhi called for 'aar-paar ki ladaai', and asked people to come out on the streets... The very next day, innocent Muslim women gathered at Shaheen Bagh and began protesting..."

**TEJASVI SURYA**  
BJP MP, BANGALORE SOUTH



"Do you want the Muslims to be radicalised? You have radicalised your Hindu community, please do not radicalise us. We do not want to join the ISIS. We are fighting them."

**ASADUDDIN OWAIISI**  
AIMIM MP, HYDERABAD

### Police complicit...hate speech fanned flames, Oppn slams govt

**DEEPTIMAN TIWARY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

IN HIS speech in the Lok Sabha Wednesday during the debate on the Delhi riots, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury pointed out that there were hate speeches leading up to the violence, regretting that such remarks had become the norm.

"Who has been making hate speeches? You have had to hear from the high court on this. And when it asked you to file FIRs, you transferred the judge who criticised the government... The Supreme Court has said that if police acted on hate speeches, lives could have been saved," Chowdhury said. He sought FIRs against BJP leaders Anurag Thakur, Parvesh Verma and Kapil Mishra for their alleged hate speeches, and also asked for a judicial inquiry to identify officers guilty of negligence.

On the BJP's constant invocation of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, Chowdhury said former PM Manmohan Singh had publicly apologised for them, and the same was an act of courage.

AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi asked why the Centre had not acted with required alacrity to quell the riots. "The LG has enough powers to even call in the Army."

He accused police of colluding with the rioters and said they were now randomly picking up Muslims and releasing them after taking bribes. "Do you want the



Congress's Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in Lok Sabha. PTI

Muslims to be radicalised? You have radicalised your Hindu community, please do not radicalise us. We do not want to join the ISIS. We are fighting them. We will die saving this Constitution," Owaisi said.

At least two Union ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad and Kishan Reddy registered their protest to Owaisi's remarks, and Speaker Om Birla expunged some of them. Reacting to a speech made by BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi during the debate, Roy said, "I have seldom heard such a biased communal speech ever."

After the BSP's Danish Ali too objected to her remarks, the Speaker warned her not to refer to any particular community or caste in the debate.

The BSP equated the Delhi riots with a "genocide", with MP Ritesh Pandey saying, "If the Delhi Police is under the control of the Central government, then this a genocide."

The CPI's K Subbarayan alleged

that hate speeches were a reason for the riots and that the Central government was complicit. CPM member A M Ariff accused the government of "killing the country's secular nature" and sought Shah's resignation. He also referred to the banning of two Malayalam television channels over their coverage of Delhi riots and the transfer of Delhi High Court judge S Muralidhar after passing an interim order over hate speeches by BJP leaders. The point was also raised by the RSP's N K Premchandran.

Condemning the violence, NCP member Amol Ramsing Kolhe wondered why hate speeches could not be controlled, and flagged concerns about "religious nationalism". Taking potshots at the government brass, he wondered "if there is a heart in the 56-inch chest".

IUML leader P K Kunhalikutty said "a majority of the minority community" are scared due to plans for the National Population Register and a National Register of Citizens. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act was the first law passed discriminating on religious grounds, he added, warning that India was becoming a theological state. AAP member Bhagwan Mann charged that people had been brought from outside to incite the "sponsored" riots.

National Conference member Hasnain Masoodi said the government was promoting a culture of impunity.

## In LS, Shah says rioters identified using facial scan

**KARISHMA MEHROTRA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

AT A time when the Personal Data Protection Bill is being examined by a Joint Parliamentary Committee, Union Home Minister Amit Shah told Lok Sabha on Wednesday that the authorities used facial recognition from Voter ID cards, driver licences, and other databases to identify that 300 people involved in the Delhi riots came from Uttar Pradesh.

Facial data is categorised as "sensitive personal data" under the current draft of the Personal Data Protection Bill. Significant changes to state powers were made by IT Ministry from a previous draft by Justice BN Srikrishna committee. The current draft states that the Centre can allow any agency to process personal data as long as it is "satisfied that it is necessary or expedient" for purposes such as "preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence".

Addressing Lok Sabha, Shah said, "CCTV and video footage have been analysed in detail by 25 computers... through facial recognition software, we began to identify... This software doesn't see religion, this software doesn't see clothes. This software only sees faces." The Home Minister said the software identified 1,100 people in all as having taken part in the violence.

He also said 60 social media



Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Lok Sabha Wednesday. PTI

accounts opened on February 22 and closed on February 26, after the riots ended. "Will they be able to escape just because they have closed their account? Wherever they are, we will find them..." Shah also said that the people have sent Delhi Police "thousands of videos" of the riots.

The Indian Express reported in December that Delhi Police had acquired Automated Facial Recognition Software from Innenu Lab in March 2018 to identify missing children, but was now using the technology to identify protesters.

Sources said Delhi Police has so far created a photo dataset of over 1.5 lakh "history-sheeters" for routine crime investigation. Another dataset meant for monitoring sensitive public events has over 2,000 images of terror sus-

pects and "rabble-rousers and miscreants", said the sources.

Experts told *The Indian Express* that there are two types of facial recognition softwares — one called "one-to-one" and matches single face image to another image. The other type of software, "one-to-many", involves finding a facial match from images of crowds and has a lower accuracy rate.

An earlier draft Bill prepared by the Justice BN Srikrishna committee had provided exemptions to the government for collecting such data for security, criminal investigations and crime prevention. It had, however, stipulated that these exceptions be authorised by a separate law and data collected only if it was "necessary for, and proportionate to" the government's interests.

## Suspension of seven Cong MPs revoked

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

LOK SABHA Wednesday passed a motion to revoke suspension of seven Congress MPs. Congress MPs Gaurav Gogoi, TN Prathapan, Dean Kuriakose, R Unnithan, Manickam Tagore, Benny Behanan and Gurjeet Singh Auja were suspended on March 5 for the remaining period of Budget session on grounds of gross misconduct.

Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ran Meghwal moved the motion to revoke the suspension and it was a passed by a voice vote.

Speaker Om Birla then announced that the suspension stands revoked with immediate effect.

On Wednesday, Speaker Birla came to the House for the first time since the ruckus on March 2, when ruling and opposition MPs got into a scuffle. In his absence, the proceedings were presided over by members from the panel of chairpersons. After a meeting with leaders of all parties on Wednesday, Birla came to the House at 1.30 pm.

He said he was pained over the recent happenings in the House and actions of some members who tore papers in the Well,

snatched papers from marshals and displayed placards. "In this House, we can agree, disagree on issues, or use sarcasm, but decorum should be maintained," Birla said, assuring the Opposition that he would allow time for discussion on issues demanded by members. "It is necessary to keep the dignity of the Chair intact to retain the faith of people in India's democracy," he added.

Maintaining that his party never wanted to dishonour the Chair, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury sought revocation of suspension of the seven members. Pointing out that it is

the responsibility of both the Opposition and the treasury benches to maintain the dignity of the House, Chowdhury said, "You don't give life sentence to someone for just killing a pigeon."

DMK's T R Baalu and TMC's Sougata Ray said the House should function in harmony and said members will refrain from any action which impinges on the dignity of the House.

## GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI

### TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT,

5/9, UNDER HILL ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110054,

## NOVEL CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

### Advisory for Owners / Operators of Public Transport Vehicles

As one of the preventive steps against the spread of Novel Corona Virus (COVID-19), all the Owners and Operators of Public Passenger / Goods Transport vehicles i.e., Buses including mini buses and metro feeder buses (Stage Carriage and Contract Carriage), Auto Rickshaw, Taxies, Gramin Sewa, Phat-Phat Sewa, Maxi Cab, Eco Friendly Sewa, School Vans, E-Rickshaw and Goods Carriers etc., are hereby advised to wash and disinfect their vehicles on a daily basis. Such cleaning and disinfection would help in addressing public health concerns and is in the interest of the owners / drivers and commuters.

**Secretary (State Transport Authority)**  
DIP/Shabdarth/1447/19-20

**TAMIL NADU ARASU CABLE TV CORPORATION LIMITED (TACTV)**  
(A Government of Tamil Nadu Undertaking)  
Registered Office: Dugar Towers, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, 34(123), Marshalls Road, Egmore, Chennai – 600 008. Phone No: 044-28432911, Fax: 044-28432913, E-Mail: tactv@tactv.in CIN: U64204TN2007SGC064958

**GLOBAL TENDER NOTICE**  
No: 002/TACTV/Set Top Box/2019

Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Ltd. (TACTV) invites sealed tenders in "Two cover system" from single applicant/consortium for supply of Set Top Boxes. The details of the tender are given hereunder:

1	Tender Inviting Authority	Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Ltd., 34/123, Marshalls Road, Dugar Towers, 6 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Egmore, Chennai 600 008. Ph: 044-28432911, Fax: 044-28432913. E-mail: tactv@tactv.in. CIN: U64204TN2007SGC064958
2	Name of the Work	Supply of Standard Definition (SD) and High Definition (HD) Set Top Boxes on Rate Contract basis.
3	Tender documents available place, cost and due date for obtaining tender	Tender documents can be purchased on all working days from 12.3.2020 to 13.4.2020 between 11.00 AM and 3.00 PM from the address mentioned in Sl.No.(1) above on payment of Rs.1000/- by way of Demand Draft drawn on any Indian Nationalised/Scheduled Commercial Bank in favour of "Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Ltd." payable at Chennai. Alternatively, the Tender documents can be downloaded at free of cost from 12.3.2020 from the websites www.tactv.in and www.tenders.tn.gov.in.
4	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs.25,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five lakhs only) in the form of a Irrevocable Bank Guarantee in favour of "Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Ltd" with a validity period of 12 months.
5	Date, Time and place of Pre-Bid meeting	23.3.2020 at 3.30 P.M. at the address mentioned in Sl.No.(1) above.
6	Due Date, Time and place of submission of the above Tender	13.4.2020 upto 3.00 P.M. at the address mentioned in Sl.No.(1) above.
7	Date, time and place of Tender opening	13.4.2020 at 3.30 P.M. at the address mentioned in Sl.No.(1) above.

DIPR/1337/Tender/2020 Managing Director

## 451 under detention in J&K, minister tells RS

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

A TOTAL of 451 people are under detention in Jammu and Kashmir, including 396 slapped with the Public Safety Act, Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said Jammu and Kashmir authorities had taken 7357 people into preventive custody since August 2019 when the special status of the erstwhile state was abrogated and it was divided into two Union Territories. Stone pelters, miscreants, overground workers of terrorist outfits and separatists are among those detained, he said.

"Out of these, 451 such people are presently under preventive detention, which includes 396 persons under Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA)," Reddy said.

The minister said the detentions have been made under Section 107 of the CrPC and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978.

In reply to another question, Reddy said no case had been registered against any person under sedition law for using social media platforms in the Union Territory.



# 8 GOVT & POLITICS



## HOLDING FORT

AMIT SHAH may be calling the shots in major organisational decisions in the party, but when it comes to protocols, the BJP leadership seems to be going by the book. While new party president J P Nadda has replaced Shah on party's posters and hearings, on Tuesday when the leaders were seated for the central election committee meeting, Nadda and Prime Minister Narendra Modi took seats at the head of the table — Shah was seated after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to Modi's left. When the Prime Minister arrived at the party office, it was only Nadda and BJP general secretary (organisation) B L Santosh received him at the entrance.

## COMMON PAST

THE BJP on Wednesday announced names of two former Congressmen as party candidates for the Rajya Sabha elections. Besides being former Congressmen, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Bhubaneswar have another common factor: both have been chief whips in Parliament — Kalita in Rajya Sabha and Scindia in Lok Sabha. As whips, ironically, their jobs were to keep the party flock together to battle the BJP in Parliament.

## NAMASTE WORLD

AS THE novel coronavirus spreads, French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday adopted namaste to greet the Spanish royal couple at the Elysee Palace in Paris. The UK's Prince Charles had earlier adopted the namaste. Indian diplomats have been greeting foreign diplomats with the hands-off greeting in recent days.

## WORKPLACE WONDER

AFTER OPENING a swanky gym, NITI Aayog on Wednesday opened a crèche for children of its employees. It has designated playing and learning activity area for the kids. The crèche, to be run by Central Postal Ladies Organisation, was inaugurated by NITI V-C Rajiv Kumar and CEO Amitabh Kant. A tweet from the Aayog's official handle said, "...NITI Aayog understands that career & motherhood are equally important and one must complement the other."

## HARYANA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

### Sushma's daughter among 90 new law officers named

Chandigarh: The Haryana government Wednesday issued orders for appointment of 90 law officers in the office of its Advocate General in Chandigarh and Delhi. The prominent names include late BJP leader Sushma Swaraj's daughter, Bansuri Swaraj, Chandigarh BJP chief Arun Sood's wife, Ambika Sood, and JJP MLA Ram Kumar Gautam's son, Rajat Gautam. They have been engaged as Additional Advocate Generals, Deputy Advocate Generals and Assistant Advocate Generals for the High Court as well as Supreme Court. **ENS**

## JD(U) picks RS deputy chairman, former CM's son

**SANTOSH SINGH**  
PATNA, MARCH 11

THE JANATA Dal (United) on Wednesday announced that it would re-nominate Rajya Sabha deputy chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh and Ramnath Thakur — the son of former Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur — to the Upper House.

Of the five Rajya Sabha vacancies from the state, JD(U) and RJD are eligible for two each, and BJP one.

Those completing their term from the state are JD(U) leaders Singh, Thakur and Kehkasha Parveen, and BJP's C P Thakur and R K Sinha.

JD(U) state chief Bashistha Narayan Singh said: "Our party has decided to send Harivansh and Ramnath Thakur to the Rajya Sabha".

Party sources said Thakur was renominated as he was the son of socialist stalwart Karpoori Thakur, besides being an EBC (extremely backward caste) face; Singh was renominated because of his performance as deputy chairperson of Upper House.

The RJD has not announced its candidates yet. Former MP Premchand Gupta and Faisal Ali, who had contested Lok Sabha polls unsuccessfully from Sheohar, are said to be the front-runners. Ali also edits an Urdu newspaper.

## Athawale, Kalita among 11 BJP names

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE BJP on Wednesday released its first list of 11 candidates for the Rajya Sabha elections on March 26, offering two seats to NDA allies. While Union minister and RPI chief Ramdas Athawale is set to get renominated from Maharashtra, Biswajit Daimary of Bodoland People's Front will contest from Assam.

Other candidates named are Bhubaneswar Kalita from Assam, Vivek Thakur from Bihar, Udayanraje Bhosale from Maharashtra, Rajendra Gehlot from Rajasthan, Abhay Bhargadwaj and Ramilaben Bara from Gujarat, Deepak Prakash from Jharkhand, and Leishemba Sanajaoba from Manipur.

## Manipur BJP candidate has early links with RSS

**ESHA ROY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE TITULAR King of Manipur — the last of a 2,000-year-old dynasty — Ningthou Leishemba Sanajaoba, who is the BJP's Rajya Sabha nomination from the state, has links with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) since childhood.

"I used to study in Bal Vidya Mandir which was indirectly run by the RSS. At the time, RSS eld-

# State leaders slam Scindia, Cong takes on 'poacher' BJP

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, BHOPAL, MARCH 11

AS JYOTIRADITYA Scindia joined the BJP on Wednesday, the Congress's central leadership hit out at the ruling party and accused it of fine-tuning the "business of poaching MLAs and stealing governments", while the party's state leaders launched a no-holds-barred attack on the former Lok Sabha MP.

Addressing the media in Delhi, senior leader Anand Sharma said: "The BJP is a ruling party. It is expected to follow certain norms and democratic principles but it is now seriously in the business of poaching MLAs and stealing governments. A few months back, the same modus operandi was there in Karnataka. Earlier, they stole governments in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Goa... Why is the BJP intolerant towards non-BJP governments in major states which have come into office with popular mandate?"

Asked about Scindia's reported grievance that he had not given him an audience, Rahul Gandhi told reporters in Parliament that Scindia was perhaps the only Congress leader who could walk into his residence



Congress's Madhya Pradesh MLAs arrive at Jaipur airport on Wednesday. Rohit Jain Paras

any time. He also said they had gone to school together. Calling Scindia's remarks "sad and unfortunate", Sharma said, "This party nurtured him, gave him the profile and projection, respect and position."

In Madhya Pradesh, Congress leaders tried to put senior BJP leaders Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Prabhat Jha in an embarrassing spot by circulating on social media their old videos and statements slamming Scindia.

Before 2018 Assembly polls, the BJP had launched a campaign titled "Maaf karo Maharaj, hamara neta Shivraj (pardon us Maharaj, our leader is Shivraj)" to contrast the then Guna MP's fam-

ily's royal past with the humble image of Chouhan.

On Wednesday, Kamal Nath's media coordinator Narendra Saluja invoked that slogan and tweeted, "Sharm karo Maharaj, ab apke neta hue Shivraj (shame, Maharaj, now your leader is Shivraj)." He asked how BJP leaders such as Jha, Jaibhan Singh Pawaiya and Kailash Vijayvargiya would reconcile with Scindia's entry into the saffron party.

Pawaiya, a former national chief of Bajrang Dal, has been a vocal critic of Scindia and had, in the past, unsuccessfully contested a Lok Sabha election against him. Vijayvargiya had lost to Scindia in the MP Cricket

## Will go by rule book: MP Speaker

**MILIND GHATWAI**  
BHOPAL, MARCH 11



Narmada Prasad Prajapati

WITH THE Kamal Nath government headed for a floor test that will determine its fate, the spotlight is on Madhya Pradesh Assembly Speaker Narmada Prasad Prajapati.

The 61-year-old Congress legislator from Goteagaon, a reserved constituency in Narsinghpur district, Prajapati was first elected to the Assembly in 1985 and was elected thrice after that.

Son of a contractor, Prajapati played as goalkeeper in the hockey teams of his college and university. He captained the Indore University hockey team for a year. And while the Assembly has not seen many sessions since he was elected Speaker in January 2019, Prajapati has shown tough tackling skills in conducting the business of the House.

The first session of Assembly after the Congress came to power was marred by the acrimony between the treasury benches and the Opposition,

with former chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accusing the Speaker of "behaving like a don".

"You are not behaving like a Speaker. You are behaving like a don. You are threatening us. We won't tolerate it. Your threats won't work," Chouhan had said after the Speaker did not allow legislators, including former Speaker Sitasaran Sharma, to raise their points of view on the House floor. The session saw Prajapati engage in heated exchanges with Leader of Opposition Gopal Bhargava and other BJP legislators.

Also, the Speaker has often pulled up ruling party legislators and even ministers, warning them against creating a commotion by talking among themselves and occasionally asking them to return to their seats.

Prajapati often cites the rule book to discipline the legislators. "I will go by the rule book," was his first reaction after receiving resignation letters from Congress legislators close to Jyotiraditya Scindia, who has left the Congress and joined the BJP. On Wednesday, Prajapati said the MLAs will have to appear before him personally. He said he would look into "evidence" before deciding each case on merit. Known to be confidant of Chief Minister Kamal Nath, the Speaker enjoys equally good relations with senior Congress leader and former CM Digvijaya Singh. He served as Energy Minister in Singh's first tenure as CM from 1993-1998. "He is jovial and rarely serious," said a former Congress spokesperson who studied with him at Indore. BJP leader Kailash Jatav, who has once defeated Prajapati and has lost to him once, refers to him as "bade bhai". "My campaign against him was never negative. I always sought votes on my performance," he said. The floor test will happen after the budget session begins on March 16.

## RAJYA SABHA NOMINATIONS



MAHARASHTRA



ODISHA

Association elections. The Congress also circulated a video of Chouhan who, while addressing a rally in Bhind in April 2017, had slammed the erstwhile Scindia dynasty for siding with the British. That was the first time a senior BJP leader had publicly accused the erstwhile royal family of betraying Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi. The attack had upset BJP MLA and Scindia's aunt Yashodhara Raju, who said she was unable to bear the insult.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, himself stuck in a battle for one-upmanship with his deputy Sachin Pilot, called Scindia an opportunist. He tweeted, "The sooner opportunists leave, the better. Congress party gave [Scindia] so much, [he] held various posts for 17-18 years, was made an MP, a Union Minister. Despite all this, what came out was just an opportunist..." Pilot was relatively muted in his response: "(It is) unfortunate to see Scindia parting ways with the Congress. I wish things could have been resolved collaboratively within the party."

In Raipur, Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel said those who quit after raising a hue and cry eventually return silently to the party.



Kinship: A 2018 image tweeted by Vasundhara Raje.

## Good to be on same team: Raje

Jaipur: Rajasthan's former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje on Wednesday welcomed her nephew Jyotiraditya Scindia's decision to join the BJP, saying he has followed high ideals of the legacy of Vijaya Raje Scindia.

"Jyotiraditya has followed the high ideals of the legacy of Vijaya Raje Scindia... I welcome this decision personally and politically," Raje said in a statement here.

She also tweeted, "If Rajmata Sahab was here today, she would be elated to see you put the nation first. I admire your strength of character and courage. It's good to be on the same team. Welcome to the BJP." **PTI**

## Bengaluru: MLA who missed minister berth guards MP rebels

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
BENGALURU, MARCH 11

A THREE-TIME BJP MLA from Bengaluru, who recently lost out on a ministerial berth in the B S Yediyurappa-led cabinet and the post of the Karnataka BJP chief last year, has emerged as the central figure in the BJP's efforts to safeguard a group of 19 Congress MLAs from Madhya Pradesh in a bid to topple the Kamal Nath government.

Arvind Limbavali (53), MLA from Mahadevapura and a general secretary in state BJP, has played a key role in looking after the interests of the Congress MLAs who were moved to Bengaluru on Monday on chartered flights, sources associated with the MLA said.

The BJP leader from a Scheduled Caste, who enjoys the confidence of Home Minister Amit Shah, was called to Delhi around 20 days ago and briefed about the possibility of sheltering rebel Congress MLAs, the sources said. "He has played a central part in keeping the MLAs in Bengaluru," a source said.

The three MLAs who reached Bengaluru in the first week of March were housed at a gated community in Limbavali's constituency in east Bengaluru. The premises, it is learnt, belongs to a builder also closely associated with the family of Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa. A second batch of 19 MLAs who arrived on Monday were housed at Prestige Golfshire resort near Bengaluru airport. BJP leaders in Karnataka have maintained silence on these developments. Limbavali has shared information only with Chief Minister Yediyurappa, sources said.

A protege of the BJP leader government was spreading lies in order to create confusion. Congress leaders P C Sharma and Shobha Oza had said that some rebel legislators were in touch with them.

## Opposing Cong claims, MLAs confirm allegiance to Scindia

Bhopal: Following Jyotiraditya Scindia's move to join the BJP on Wednesday, several Madhya Pradesh ministers and legislators currently in Bengaluru released videos confirming their allegiance to the former Congress leader.

The videos were released in response to the Congress party's claims that the Scindia's "flock was not together" and some legislators wanted to return to the party fold because they don't agree with their leader's decision to join the BJP.

Scindia confidant and former Congress spokesman Pankaj Chaturvedi said the Kamal Nath

late H N Ananth Kumar, Limbavali was widely tipped to be the state party chief last year on account of the rapport he enjoyed with BJP central leaders like then party chief Shah and Rajya Sabha member Rajeev Chandrashekar.

However, he lost out on the post, apparently due to the emergence of a video depicting a homosexual act — the video was later found to be fake in forensic analysis. Limbavali had alleged that his rivals were behind the fake video.

The row over the video is also believed to have cost the former state minister a position in the cabinet.

Limbavali had played a key role in organising defections of 17 Congress and JDS MLAs which eventually helped the BJP get a majority and form the government, but did not find a place in the cabinet.

Last month, when Yediyurappa expanded the BJP cabinet following the victory of defectors from the Congress and JD(S) in bypolls, Limbavali's name had featured among the two senior BJP leaders likely to be inducted into the cabinet along with 11 rebels. The names of senior BJP leaders Umesh Katti and Limbavali were, however, dropped in the final list.

Ahead of the bypolls, Limbavali had asserted that he was the party leader in-charge for the elections. "I will be the person in charge of the polls and there will be 15 persons in charge of each constituency," he had said.

Aides of Limbavali said that by helping the BJP regain power in MP, the MLA is looking at a ministerial berth in a state cabinet expansion speculated to take place next month.

## Cong-AIUDF announce joint candidate in Assam

**ABHISHEK SAHA**  
GUWAHATI, MARCH 11

THE CONGRESS and the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) on Wednesday announced veteran Assamese journalist Ajit Kumar Bhuyan as their joint candidate for the forthcoming Rajya Sabha elections.

The BJP, meanwhile, announced Bhubaneswar Kalita — the former Congress Rajya Sabha chief whip who resigned from the party last year over its stand on Article 370 — as its candidate.

The Bodoland People's Front's Biswajit Daimary, too, filed his nomination for the Upper House on Wednesday. Daimary is a current Rajya Sabha MP and his party is in alliance with the BJP in the state government. Daimary was accompanied by chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, state finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and BJP state unit president Ranjeet Dass.

Bhuyan is a renowned scribe who has been vocal against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, taking part in numerous protests against it. He was arrested during the Hiteswar Saikia-led Congress state government in 1992 and 1994 under the under NSA and the erstwhile TADA, respectively. He was also arrested in 1997 by the Prafulla Mahanta-led AGP government — again under the NSA.

Earlier this year, he resigned as the editor-in-chief of Assamese news channel Prag News, with media reports speculating that it could be related to his vehement criticism of the BJP and the CAA.

"Bhuyan had submitted a written request seeking support from the Congress and the AIUDF," said state Congress president Ripun Bora, describing Bhuyan as "neutral". The AIUDF described him as a "secular and anti-CAA" person who has always spoken up for Assam's interests.

Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma hit out at Bhuyan for taking support from the AIUDF.

"If Bhuyan wants to stand on the same stage as Badruddin Ajmal, then it is very sad news for the jati (community). Did the intellectuals take part in the anti-CAA protests only to become Rajya Sabha MP? Bhuyan was criticising the BJP for so long. Was he doing it only on Ajmal's directions?"

The AIUDF is led by perfume baron and MP Badruddin Ajmal. The party enjoys a large support base among Bengali Muslims in Assam.

Targeting Ajmal and his party has been an important part of the BJP's political rhetoric in the state. The BJP had previously claimed a Congress-AIUDF alliance in Assam multiple times, even though the Congress denied it vehemently.



# 9 EXPRESS NETWORK

## CORONA WATCH

### WEST BENGAL



Students at an awareness session in Kolkata on Wednesday. PTI

### MEGHALAYA

## Isolated suspect tests negative for Covid-19

**Shillong:** A 38-year-old man who was admitted to a hospital's isolation ward here for suspected COVID-19 infection has tested negative, an official said on Wednesday.

The samples collected from him were sent to Kolkata-based ICMR and the results were negative, the Meghalaya government said in a statement.

The man had returned to

the state from Delhi on Sunday and was admitted to the isolation ward at North Eastern Indira Gandhi Institute of Health and Medical Sciences as he had fever and cough.

The district administration had asked people not to panic and stay calm, and strictly follow the state health department's advisory. **PTI**

### KARNATAKA



Health officials and activists demonstrate procedures for sanitisation to commuters in Bengaluru on Wednesday. PTI

### GOA

## Woman among two quarantined in Panaji

**Panaji:** Two Goa-based people — a man who had travelled to Italy and Finland, and a woman who returned to the state from Dubai — were quarantined here on Wednesday for possible novel coronavirus exposure as they complained of cough and fever on their arrival.

Goa Health Minister Vishwajit Rane told this to reporters here on Wednesday. "A 27-year-old man and a 23-

year-old woman were admitted to isolation ward of the state-run Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) near here," he said. The woman was in Dubai from November 30, 2019. She left that city on March 8 and arrived in Goa, the minister said. "She landed in Goa in an Air India flight. After she complained of cough and fever on Tuesday, she was quarantined," he added. **PTI**

### TAMIL NADU

## 45-year-old suspected patient tests negative

**Chennai:** The 45-year-old man who tested positive for coronavirus has recovered with results of his samples coming out negative and as of now there are no confirmed virus cases in Tamil Nadu, State Health Minister C Vijayabhaskar said on Wednesday. The speedy recovery was possible only because of meticulous treat-

ment and expertise of the state health department to handle exigencies, the minister posted on social media. The man had recently returned from Oman. "As of now, there are no confirmed coronavirus cases and there are no more pending samples for testing at labs as all have tested negative," the minister wrote further. **PTI**



At a market in Mumbai on Wednesday. Maharashtra has so far recorded 11 coronavirus cases. Prakash Nadkar

# Elderly couple test positive for coronavirus in Mumbai

**TABASSUM BARNAGARWALA**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 11

**TWO PERSONS** from Mumbai on Wednesday tested positive for Covid-19 on Wednesday. An elderly couple, who are admitted at Kasturba hospital, had visited Dubai with a Pune couple, who had tested positive for coronavirus on March 9. Maharashtra now has 11 coronavirus cases: eight in Pune, two in Mumbai, and one in Nagpur.

State health secretary Dr Pradeep Vyas said, "The two cases in Mumbai have tested positive for Covid-19. There is no need for a confirmatory test at National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. These patients will be discharged only after two tests within a gap of 24 hours come negative."

Those who have tested positive in Mumbai and Pune are either passengers of the March 1 Dubai-Mumbai flight or came in close contact with them.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said people living within a 3-km radius of confirmed patients will be screened for suspected symptoms as a method of cluster containment of the virus. BMC officials said six residents of Mumbai, who were part of the Dubai tour, approached Kasturba hospital on Tuesday after the Pune couple travelling with them tested positive for coronavirus. This included two couples and a senior citizen and her granddaughter.

"An elderly couple tested positive... while one had mild symptoms, the other is asymptomatic. They are stable and undergoing symptomatic treatment," Additional Municipal Commissioner Suresh Kakani said.

Civic officials said the couple has not travelled in a local train since they arrived in Mumbai on March 1. "They have travelled by car... this limits viral transmission," an official said.

The BMC began tracing close contacts of the couple. The couple has three members in their family, including a male domestic help. They have been quarantined at home. "We are tracing doctors they met before approaching us, also people they met in the last 10 days since they arrived," Kakani said. The BMC is trying to procure the list of passengers who flew in the Dubai-Mumbai flight, officials said.

The housing society where the couple stayed will be advised home quarantine with civic officials reaching out to the neighbourhood to check for cases of cough, cold, pneumonia and breathlessness. The local nursing homes and hospitals have been advised to refer all symptomatic patients, in the 3 km radius of the couple's house, to the government hospital.

Dr Archana Patil, additional director in Directorate of Health Services, said the 37 people from Maharashtra who were part of the Dubai tour have been traced. "Of the 40, three are from Karnataka. The rest have been quarantined at home."

Maharashtra has screened 1.38 lakh people so far at airports in Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur. Of them, 349 people with symptoms have been isolated.

## Three from Pune, one from Nagpur test positive

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS & VIVEK DESHPANDE**  
PUNE, NAGPUR, MARCH 11

**THE DAY** Mumbai reported two cases of Covid-19 cases, three persons from Pimpri-Chinchwad and one from Nagpur tested positive for the virus on Wednesday, taking the total number of infected persons to 11 in Maharashtra. Five persons had tested positive in Pune earlier.

So far, eight patients have tested positive in Pune but they are stable, said District Collector Naval Kishore Ram. Dr Archana Patil, Additional Director of Health Services, told The Indian Express that all patients were stable. Officials said 51 people have been admitted to the Naidu Hospital in Pune, and test results of 44 persons were awaited.

The three new Covid-19 patients from Pimpri-Chinchwad and have been admitted to Yashwantrao Chavan Memorial Hospital's isolation ward, said officials.

Nagpur, meanwhile, registered its first case of coronavirus on Wednesday. "A middle-aged patient got admitted to the hospital on Wednesday. We did necessary tests on and he was found positive for coronavirus," Nagpur Civil Surgeon D V Patil said.

"The patient had returned from the US on March 6. He

came to Indira Gandhi Government Medical College with symptoms akin to that of coronavirus. We have put him on hospital quarantine and started treatment," he added.

Asked if his family, too, is under observation, Patil said, "We are gathering information about his travel and people he had contact with after returning to India. His family has been put on home quarantine."

In Pune, at a press conference with Divisional Commissioner Deepak Mhaisekar, District Collector Naval Kishore Ram, Police Commissioner K Venkatesham and others, authorities urged local residents to not panic over unnecessary rumours. There is a need to avoid crowded places and promote best handwashing and hygiene practices, Ram said. He added that there is no need for schools or colleges to remain shut.

The Pune district administration, meanwhile, has imposed the Disaster Management Act, 2005, to tackle the outbreak of Covid-19. The Act has been invoked as the law helps the administration in better utilisation of available resources and manpower, not only in the various government departments but also in the private sector. The Disaster Management Act 2005 gives ample power to the district administration under sections 33 and 34 to deal with any disaster-related situation.

## Third coronavirus case confirmed in Rajasthan

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
JAIPUR, MARCH 11

**IN THE** third case of coronavirus in Rajasthan, an 85-year-old man in Jaipur who had returned from Dubai on February 28 has tested positive for coronavirus, government officials said Wednesday.

Rohit Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary, Medical Health and Family Welfare, said, "The Jaipur person who travelled to Dubai, has un-

fortunately tested positive - it has been confirmed now. We have also got the manifest of the Spicejet flight he took from Dubai to Jaipur and are doing due diligence on that."

The 85-year-old had arrived in Jaipur on February 28. After being treated at three different private hospitals, the man was admitted at the government-run Sai Man Singh Hospital here around 3 am on March 9. He was found presumptive coronavirus positive after the first test came

positive. The doctors then proceeded with a fresh sample, which also came out positive. He is now being kept at the hospital's isolation ward.

Those who were on board the flight from Dubai have been asked to contact the nearest health institution. Government officials said that all those who came in touch with the person will be screened, including all those living within three kilometres of the patient's residence. The man's 78-year-old

wife and a 50-year-old son have also been kept in isolation and their samples have been sent for examination. The ACS said that over 200 persons, who came in contact with the man, have been identified.

Before the 85-year-old, only an Italian couple had tested coronavirus positive in Rajasthan. So far, as many as 335 samples have been tested at SMS. Of these, three have returned positive, 328 have come out negative while the result of four others is awaited.

### KERALA

# 2 critical, state warns of action for flouting quarantine norms

**SHAJU PHILIP**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 11

**A DAY** after eight fresh positive Covid-19 cases were reported, the Kerala health department on Wednesday strengthened screening at airports and begun strict enforcement of home quarantine rules.

No new positive cases were reported on Wednesday even as the number of persons under observation rose to 3,313 — the highest since the third week of January when the state began monitoring those arriving from China with suspected exposure to Covid-19.

Of those under observation, 969 are contacts of the three-member family which returned from Italy on February 29 and later tested positive, marking the second bout of the virus in the state. On Wednesday, 83 people were hospitalised, most of them passengers from Italy, taking to the number of those in hospital isolation to 293.

Health Minister K K Shailaja said of 129 primary contacts of the Italy-returned family in Pathanamthitta, 13 per cent are above the age of 60. Special care is given to these group. Two persons aged 91 and 88 have been tested positive on Tuesday and they are in very critical stage. We are doing our best to save the lives of these two persons," she said.

"3313 persons are placed under surveillance, of which 3020 are under home isolation and

293 are admitted in designated isolation facilities. Till date 1179 samples of suspected cases have been sent for testing, out of which the results of 889 samples have been negative," she tweeted later.

As several persons under home quarantine in Pathanamthitta district were found not following the guidelines, the district administration geo-tagged all those persons under observation. "This is meant to ensure that the persons under observation remain at home. Many persons under home quarantine have been found moving out. Hence, they were geo-tagged. This would also help the local administration to ensure supply of provisions and address other non-medical needs of those in isolation at home," said district collector P B Nooh.

At Kochi international airport, 52 passengers from Italy reached on Wednesday early morning. Considering the prevailing situation in Italy, all of them were isolated at the airport and later in a government hospital at Aluva near Kochi.

Ernakulam district collector S Suhas said all the passengers were isolated.

"They were allowed to proceed to home in sterile ambulances after getting a written assurance that they would stick to the home quarantine guidelines. They would be under surveillance of primary health centres as well as police stations in their respective areas to ensure that they follow the regimen," he said.

# Indians in Italy wait for corona-negative certificate to leave

**SHAJU PHILIP**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MARCH 11

**CAUGHT BETWEEN** corona-ravaged Italy and a direction from India's civil aviation regulator to get a tested negative for Covid-19, hundreds of Indians in Italy are facing uncertainty over their return to home country.

On Tuesday, after Italian government slapped nation-wide curbs to arrest the outbreak which has taken a heavy toll, Indians in batches have been rushing to Fiumicino International Airport in Rome. However, they could not fly out of Italy for want of the certificate that they had been tested negative for Covid-19.

On March 10 that DGCA had issued a circular mandating that those travelling from Italy and Korea to India should get a certificate that they had tested negative for Covid-19. As several Indians, including those from Kerala, have been held up in Rome for want of this certificate, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Tuesday had written to PM Narendra Modi seeking his intervention to get this direction withdrawn.

Meanwhile, the government said in Parliament on Wednesday that it is preparing to send a medical team to Italy to test Indians stranded there ahead of their evacuation.

On Wednesday, a group of Kerala residents stranded in Italy

since Tuesday morning said in a video, "we have been languishing at the airport for the last one day. Residents of other countries are leaving Italy in front of us. We have no food and have been exposed to crowd at the airport for last 24 hours. We haven't got any help from anywhere. Where else we can go, other than returning to our country. We are not going to trouble even our family with corona. We are ready for isolation for home quarantine for any number of days," said a woman, wearing mask. As per information from Italy, many from Kerala have cancelled their tickets and are struggling to find temporary accommodation.

Jeji Mathew, who has been working with a travel firm in Rome from 11 years, told *The Indian Express*, "it is not Covid-19 alone that has made Indians queue up at airports. For most Indians working in hospitality and homecare sectors, their annual vacation starts in March... I have come to know that around 2,000 Indians have already booked tickets to India in this month. Many began their journey after vacating their rented residential premises. They cannot go back if the travel plans go awry."

"Local people have blocked residential areas in south and central Italy... fearing infections. Many Indians cannot go back to their homes," he said.

**FULL REPORT ON**  
[www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

### CHHATTISGARH

# Officer suspended for 'misinformation'

**GARGI VERMA**  
RAIPUR, MARCH 11

**A BLOCK** resource coordinator (BRC) in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district was suspended on Wednesday after he was found to have sent messages bearing misinformation about the coronavirus situation in the state.

The BRC of Narharpur in Kanker district, Himan Korram had allegedly forwarded a message on social media regarding a person dying due to coronavirus in the state. The message

claimed that he had consumed chicken and thus contracted the illness. In his letter, the district collector said, "He has spread incorrect information which is against the civil services rule-book. Thus he is immediately suspended."

Korram couldn't be reached for a comment. "We have set up hotlines for effective dispersion of information. As of now, there are no cases detected in the state. We request everyone to be careful in the information they spread," a senior health department official said.

# J&K shuts schools, colleges as quarantine cases go up

**ARUN SHARMA**  
JAMMU, MARCH 11

**WITH THE** number of quarantined people in Jammu and Kashmir doubling over the past 24 hours, the administration Wednesday ordered the immediate closure of all educational institutions across the Union Territory till March 31. However, Board and other competitive examinations will be conducted as per schedule, said National Health Mission Director Bhupinder Kumar.

A total of 980 people were placed under quarantine by Wednesday evening, against

500 the previous evening. Of them, a dozen were kept under hospital quarantine on Wednesday, which was three times more than Tuesday. Similarly, the number of people kept under home quarantine also rose to 968 from 491 in the past 24 hours. A total of 1,211 people were listed for observation on Wednesday.

Principal Secretary Planning and Monitoring Department Rohit Kansal, also the spokesperson of the UT administration, tweeted that cinema halls and anganwadi centres in five districts—Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur and Reasi—will be closed till March 31.

# Tussle breaks out over J&K school shutdown

**ADIL AKHZER**  
SRINAGAR, MARCH 11

**DRAMA UNFOLDED** in Srinagar on Wednesday after Mayor Junaid Azim Mattu's decision to shut down educational institutions in the city was challenged by Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Baseer Khan.

Mattu cited a "special set of statutory provisions" while issuing the order, but Khan questioned his power to issue it and said educational institutions would continue to function.

By the evening, however, the J&K administration stepped in, announcing the shutdown of educational institutes across the Union Territory.



Students in Srinagar on Wednesday. PTI

On Wednesday morning, Mattu's office tweeted: "Under a special set of statutory provisions, SMC has ordered closure of all educational institutions, public

clubs, sports clubs, indoor and open stadiums, coaching centers within #Srinagar City Limits till further orders. The order within SMC limits takes effect from to-

morrow." Soon after, Khan said no order to close schools had been issued by the administration.

"I have no idea how he can issue orders [to close the institutions]. There is no such order from our side," he told *The Indian Express* in the afternoon.

Mattu, then, responded to Khan's statement on Twitter: "That's fine. Divergent views are OK. However, the steps officiated by SMC (after discussion and voting in special session of the Council) are under the full purview of law. Within Srinagar City Limits, the measures directed have to be enforced under Section 285 of the JK MC Act." Hours after the tweets, the Mayor addressed a press conference in Srinagar to justify his announcement.



Tender Notice

Sr. No.: 1. Name of Federation: The Haryana State Coop. Supply and Marketing Federation Ltd., Panchkula (HAFED). Name of Work/Notice/Tender: e-Tender for Empanelment of Private Atta Chakki Mills/ Flour Mills for Production of Fortified Whole Wheat Chakki Atta for PDS, ICDS, MDM Schemes of Haryana for One Year. Opening Date/Closing Date (Time): 11.03.2020/ 20.03.2020 (10.00 Hrs.). Amount/EMD (Approx.) in Rs.: Rs. 2.00 Lac. Website of the Department: www.hafed.gov.in. Nodal Officer/Contact Detail/E-mail: (0172)2590497 hafed@hry.nic.in. Tender Refr. No./Tender No.:

G.M. (Marketing), Hafed Panchkula.

सूचना:-

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि दिनांक 15.02.2020 को बच्चा आकाश (12 वर्ष) हरियाणा राज्य बाल भवन, मधुवन संस्था से भाग गया था। बच्चे का रंग गेहूँआ, चेहरा गोल, कद करीब 4 फुट 4 इंच, शरीर हट्ट-पुष्ट है। बच्चे ने नीली व सफेद चैकडार कमीज, नीली जैकेट व नीली पैंट व पैरों में जूते पहने हुए हैं। यदि उपरोक्त बच्चों की कोई भी सूचना है तो निम्न पते पर प्रातः 9 से सायं 5 बजे तक संपर्क करें।



जिला बाल संरक्षण सोसाईटी, महिला आश्रम कॉम्प्लेक्स, नजदीक DAV School, बस स्टैण्ड के पीछे करनाल फोन नं. 0184-2272020 0184-23801122 (हरियाणा राज्य बाल भवन, मधुवन)

हस्ता./- जिला बाल संरक्षण अधिकारी, करनाल।

सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि दिनांक 22.02.2020 को बच्चा सावित्र (14 वर्ष) एम.डी.डी. बाल भवन, फुसगढ़ संस्था से भाग गया था। बच्चे के पिता का नाम कुबुवदीन व माता का नाम शिव जहान है। बच्चा मुसलमान, जिला यमुनानगर का रहने वाला है। बच्चे का रंग सांवला, कद करीब 4 फुट 5 इंच, बालों आँख पर चोट का निशान है। बच्चे ने नीली व स्लेटी रंग की जर्सी, नीली रंग का लोअर व पैरों में क्रीम रंग की लेडिज चप्पल पहने हुए हैं। यदि उपरोक्त बच्चों की कोई भी सूचना है तो निम्न पते पर प्रातः 9.00 से सायं 5.00 बजे तक संपर्क करें।



जिला बाल संरक्षण सोसाईटी, महिला आश्रम कॉम्प्लेक्स, नजदीक DAV School, बस स्टैण्ड के पीछे, करनाल फोन नं. 0184-2272020 0184-2284935 (एम.डी.डी. बाल भवन, फुसगढ़)

हस्ता./- जिला बाल संरक्षण अधिकारी, करनाल।

Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (A JV of Ministry of Railway and Government of Haryana) SCO No. 17-18-19, 3rd Floor, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh, Ph. 0172-2715644 No. HRIDC/OM/08 Dated 06.03.2020

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW Walk-in-interview for engaging the services of Sr. Executive (Civil), Executive (Civil/Electrical) & Executive Assistant on contract basis for one year at HRIDC Project Office, Gurugram.

Table with 3 columns: Designation, Posts, Qualification. Rows include Sr. Executive (Civil), Executive (Civil), Executive (Electrical), and Executive Assistant.

Date of Interview: 17.04.2020 Time: 11:00 AM Venue: Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd, Plot No. 143, 5th Floor, Sector-44, Rail Test Tower, Gurugram. For further details of qualification, experience, age and other terms & conditions etc. please visit our website www.hridc.co.in (email ID: hridc2017@gmail.com)

Sd/- DGM/HR/HRIDC

HC hands over investigation into Jagan uncle murder to CBI

Hyderabad: The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Wednesday handed over the investigation into the murder of former MPYS Vivekananda Reddy to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Reddy, who is the uncle of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, was found stabbed to death on March 15, 2019, at his home in Pulivendula, Kadapa district.

His daughter Sunitha had filed a plea seeking a CBI probe into the killing. The HC had sought the opinion of the AP Government, which submitted it had no objection to the probe being handed to the CBI. The police had questioned several people including Reddy's assistant M Krishna Reddy, who found the body and filed the police complaint stating there were injuries on Reddy's forehead and the back of the head. ENS

HC notice to Centre, Twitter, Google, FB on hate speech plea

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE DELHI High Court on Wednesday sought to know the Centre's stand on a plea by former RSS ideologue K N Govindacharya seeking removal of fake news and hate speeches being circulated on online platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Google.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice C Hari Shankar issued notice to the ministries of Home Affairs, Finance, and Information Technology as well as Facebook India, Google India and Twitter India and sought their replies within four weeks.

The court listed the matter for further hearing on April 14, when all of them will have to spell out their stand on Govindacharya's plea seeking directions to the three platforms to disclose information about their designated officers in India, as required under the IT rules.

Advocate Virag Gupta, representing Govindacharya in the case, has contended that social media companies are required to have designated officers in India as per rules made in 2009 under



The plea was filed by ex-RSS ideologue Govindacharya.

the IT Act. He submitted that while the government interacts with social media firms, the latter claim to have no presence in India and maintain that they do business through their foreign parent company.

"In such a situation, it is necessary for the government to disclose details of designated officers. Such designated officers are vital for combating hate speech in times for riots," he said, adding that both the government and social media companies can remove content only as per law.

"Any suo moto action by either is violative of the fundamental rights under Article 19 and 21, and thus designated officer is a very important element," Gupta argued.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

No. NWR/E-Tender/11/2020 Following E-tenders are invited by DRM (WA) NWR/Ajmer at 15.00 HRS on the mentioned date. 1. Tender No.: 43/2020, Name of work: ADEN-Bhilwara Sub Division: Hiring of One Truck (10MT Capacity) for transportation of Railway Material for 24 months. Approximate Cost: Rs 201775.97, Earnest Money: Rs 40400/-, Tender closing Date: 03.04.2020, 2. Tender No.: 44/2020, Name of work: Renewal of SEs in Ajmer- Chittorgarh Section. Approximate Cost: Rs 2961635.80, Earnest Money: Rs 592307/-, Tender closing Date: 03.04.2020, 3. Tender No.: 45/2020, Name of work: ADEN (Line)- All sub div. Deep Screening of Points & Crossings and Yard Lines in Madar- Haripur section. Approximate Cost: Rs 6299560.64, Earnest Money: Rs 1260000/-, Tender closing Date: 03.04.2020, 4. Tender No.: 47/2020, Name of work: ADEN-Bhilwara Sub Division: Replacement of Asbestos Sheet from existing Platform Shelter at Platform No. 12 and FOB by Galvanium Sheet at Bhilwara Station. Approximate Cost: Rs 5913398.41, Earnest Money: Rs 118300/-, Tender closing Date: 03.04.2020, 5. Tender No.: 48/2020, Name of work: ADEN-Bhilwara Sub Division: Reconditioning of Wheel burn, scubbed rails & Cup Joints. Approximate Cost: Rs 3158875.26, Earnest Money: Rs 632000/-, Tender closing Date: 03.04.2020, 6. Tender No.: 49/2020, Name of work: ADEN (Line) Ajmer Sub Division: Reconditioning of Wheel burn, scubbed rails & Cup joints. Approximate Cost: Rs 5916695.28, Earnest Money: Rs 118300/-, Tender closing Date: 03.04.2020. The detailed information of the above tender is available on website www.ireps.gov.in and tender notice board of DRM Office, NWR/Ajmer 264-SR/20. Please join us on file /NWRRailways

TAMIL NADU HOUSING BOARD - MADURAI CIRCLE

AMENDMENT TO TENDER NOTICE No: 10/2019-20 Due to administrative reasons, the due date for submission of tender documents mentioned in the advertisement published on 13.02.2020 in the NEWS paper namely, The New Indian Express has been Postponed 18.03.2020 to 27.03.2020.

Table with 4 columns: Sl.No, Actual Tender due date, Revised due date (Postponed), Revised Period of sale. Row 1: 1 to 3, 18.03.2020, 27.03.2020, 20.03.2020 to 26.03.2020.

The tender schedule can also be downloaded from the web site from 20.03.2020 www.tenders.tn.gov.in at free of cost. All other conditions remain unchanged.

Madurai Circle, Ellisnagar, Madurai - 46 Phone : 0452 - 2600 991 DIPP/1387/TENDER/2020 Superintending Engineer, Madurai Circle

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD, SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (CHENNAI CIRCLE-II)

NOTICE INVITING SHORT-TENDER For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, one separate short tender consisting of four separate sealed covers one for pre-qualification with EMD to be enclosed in A cover and another for price schedule with name of work only supervised to be enclosed in B cover are invited from the registered contractors of TRGCD under Class - 4 and above or Government Departments / Government Undertaking / Public Sector Undertaking registered as a legal entity in India by the Superintending Engineer, Chennai Circle-II, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No.5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai - 600 005, upto 3.00 PM on 27.03.2020 and the same will be opened at 3.30 PM on same day in the presence of the Tender Security Committee.

Table with 5 columns: Sl. No, Name of work/Estimate No., Approximate Value (including GST) (Rs. in lakhs), EMD (in Rs.), To whom EMD (Tender) Schedule cost to be drawn. Rows include construction of 216 Nos of tenements, 340 Nos of tenements, 276 Nos of tenements, 162 Nos of tenements, 139K Nos of tenements, 139K Nos of tenements, 194 Nos of tenements.

J&K HC dismisses plea against pellet gun use

BASHAARAT MASOOD SRINAGAR, MARCH 11

DISMISSING A petition seeking a ban on the use of pellet guns in Jammu and Kashmir by security forces, the J&K High Court on Monday reiterated its 2016 decision that said it is "not inclined to prohibit the use of pellets guns".

"So far as the first (seeking a ban on the use of pellet guns) and the second (seeking a registration of FIR against officials using pellet guns) prayers made in the petition are concerned, the court has already recorded a finding in its order dated 21.09.2016, particularly in paras 22 to 27 thereof, quoted herein above," a division bench comprising of Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey and Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur said in its judgment on Monday.

In the 2016 order the division bench referred to, the court had said, "Thus, it is manifest that so long as there is violence by unruly mobs, use of force is in-

evitable. What kind of force has to be used at the relevant point of time or in a given situation/place, has to be decided by the persons in-charge of the place where the attack is happening. This Court, in the writ jurisdiction, without any finding rendered by the competent forum/authority cannot decide whether the use of force in particular incident is excessive or not."

In Wednesday's judgment, the court also reiterated its decision on the prayer seeking action against security force officials for injuring people with pellet guns. "With regard to the contention about non-adherence of SOP, it has to be noted that the Director General of Police on 25.10.2010 issued the SOP which was circulated amongst the lower formations with a direction to adhere to the guidelines in letter and spirit... In the concluding part of the SOP, the right to private defence is also given to police officials..." the bench said.

HC dismisses Rajiv case convict Nalini's plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHENNAI, MARCH 11

THE MADRAS High Court Wednesday dismissed a petition by Nalini, a life convict in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, seeking premature release based on a Tamil Nadu Cabinet decision, holding that the state governor's consent was mandatory to give ef-

fect to it. The Supreme Court has held that under Article 161 of the Constitution, the Governor is bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers, but yet, it is obligatory that the signature of the Governor is mandatory to authorise the pardon, commutation or release, the court said.

A bench of Justices R Subbaiah and Pongappan rejected the arguments of counsel for Nalini that the Governor's approval was not necessary and the petitioner can be released on the basis of the advice given by the Cabinet. Nalini has filed the habeas corpus petition contending that since the Tamil Nadu Governor had failed to order her release based on the September 9, 2018 recommendation of the state cabinet, she was in illegal detention.

TAMILNADU CEMENTS CORPORATION LIMITED short e-TENDER NOTICE. e-Tender Ref No.50/19-20, Transportation of Clinker through Open Trucks from Ariyalur Cement Works, Ariyalur Dist. to Alangulam Cement Works, Virudhunagar Dist. Value Rs.5.08 Crores, EMD Rs. 1,00,000/-.

Bank of India Relationship beyond banking. RFP for Corporate Agency Arrangement for General Insurance Business. Bank of India invites RFP from eligible General Insurance Companies with a view of entering into Corporate Agency arrangement for distribution of General Insurance products in India.

TNPL TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED. NOTICE INVITING TENDER. Tender No. 192023/002793, Ply Wood Pallet of various sizes for TNPL Unit - II. Due Date: 27.03.2020.

HARYANA GOVERNMENT TENDER NOTICE

Table with 6 columns: Sr. No., NAME OF DEPARTMENT, NAME OF WORK/NOTICE/TENDER, OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE, AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT, NODAL OFFICER. Rows include PWD B&R, JIND; SPECIAL REPAIR OF URBAN PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRE; IMPROVEMENT BY PROVIDING STRENGTHENING ON GOHANA SAFIDON ROAD; S/R TO E.I. INTERNAL AND STREET LIGHT IN CHC AT NAHAR; S/R OF MAIN BUILDING, OLD TOILET AND ROOMS CONSTRUCTION; SPECIAL REPAIR OF BUS STAND; 2 NO. WORKS SOLID LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT PROJECT; PDG. E.I. IN KNOWLEDGE CENTRE; CONST. OF BRICK PAVED RASTA; 1 NO. WORK SOLID LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT PROJECT; CONSTRUCTION OF SLWM PROJECT; ANNUAL MAINTENANCE ESTIMATE OF SEWERAGE SCHEME; FATEHPUR-PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY SCHEME; FOR CONTRACT FOR OUT SOURCING OF SERVICE/ACTIVE FOR DRIVING OF CAR/JEeps; GOVT. ITI MAUJABAD; LAYING PIPE LINE FROM RD 0 TO 7850 OFF TAKING FROM RD 35800M; SUPPLY ERECTION & COMMISSIONING OF VT PUMPS; EARTH FILLING INCLUDE LOADING/ UNLOADING AND CARRIAGE.

Coal India Limited (A Maharatna Company). All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd www.coalindia.in/ respective Subsidiary Company. CIL e-procurement portal https://coalindiatenders.nic.in and Central Public Procurement Portal https://eprocure.gov.in.

उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना. संसल रेल प्रवक्ता इजीनियरिंग, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर डायर भारत से राष्ट्रियता के लिये एवं उनकी ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रचलित निचियों के अन्तर्गत निविदा प्रकृत में निविदा निम्न कार्य के लिए ज्ञानानुसार आवेदित की जाती है - 1. कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Provision of Machine Siding along with testing facilities at Nokha station of MTD-BKN section under ADEN/Merta Road अनुमानित लागत: Rs. 7285411.15/- बयाना राशि: Rs. 145700.00/- निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि: 03.04.2020, 2. कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Provision of Track Machine Siding along with testing facilities for TMC staff, Platform for machine siding including watering arrangement at Raniwara station of SMR-BLDI section under ADEN/Samdari अनुमानित लागत: Rs. 9335914.64/- बयाना राशि: Rs. 186700.00/- निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि: 03.04.2020, 3. कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Improvement of staff quarters of Bhagat ki Kothi & old Bhagat ki Kothi railway colonies of Jodhpur by replacement of damaged sewerage system, drainage system, water supply arrangements, etc. अनुमानित लागत: Rs. 7201195.92/- बयाना राशि: Rs. 144000.00/- निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि: 03.04.2020, 4. कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Earth filling include loading/ unloading and carriage + 2 other works. अनुमानित लागत: Rs. 75 LACS. निविदा प्रस्तुत करने की तिथि: 15.03.2020.

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS. The Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division No. II, Irrigation & Flood Control Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, I&FC Wing, Vikas Bhawan-II, Civil Lines, Delhi-110054, invites on behalf of the president of Indian vendors empanelled/ registered with Authorized Department/ Ministry, Govt. of NCT of Delhi/ Govt. of India for the following works: N.O.W.- R/M of Hydraulic Excavators for the year 2019-20. Sub Work- Providing of Operators and Khalasi cum Chowkidar for 04 Nos. Hydraulic Excavator (BEML 220G) for the period of 12 Month. (H.O.A.- MH 2711 (NON PLAN) Estimated Cost: Rs. 40,21,896/- Earnest Money: Rs. 80,438/- Period of completion: (365) Days Last date & time of submission of tender: upto 3:00 p.m. on 12.03.2020. (Tender I.D. No. 2020\_IFC\_199168\_1) N.O.W.- R/M of Pump Houses & Dozer for the year 2019-20. Sub Work- Providing of Operator and Khalasi-cum Chowkidar/Helper for Backhoe Loader, Pump Houses & Dozer etc. at various sites of MD-II in Delhi for the period of 06 Months. (H.O.A.- MH 2711 (NON PLAN) Estimated Cost: Rs. 17,62,668/- Earnest Money: Rs. 35,253/- Period of completion: (180) Days. Last date & time of submission of tender: upto 3:00 p.m. on 12.03.2020. (Tender I.D.No.2020\_IFC\_189173\_1) Note 1) The Tender forms and other details can be obtained from the website http://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in DIP/Shabdarth/1450/19-20

ODISHA SKILL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Engagement of Statutory/External Auditors for Odisha Skill Development Project. No. OSDA/EOI/ 2019-20/ 18 Date: 11.03.2020 Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) Bhubaneswar, Odisha is implementing Odisha Skill Development Project with Financial Assistance from Asian Development Bank. Hence OSDA invites Expression of interests (EOIs) from CAG Empaneled CA Audit firms of India for the External Audit Assignment for three financial years (2019-20, 2020-21 & 2021-22) The details regarding eligibility criteria, scope of work to be taken up, Eoi schedule, terms and conditions and the ToR for Audit are available on the website www.skillodisha.gov.in & www.odisha.gov.in, which may be downloaded for use. Hard copy of the EOI can be collected by the intending applicants from the office of OSDA, Bhubaneswar between 11 A.M. to 4 P.M. on any working day between 11.03.2020 to 26.3.2020. Interested applicants may send their offers containing all the requisite details in sealed covers to the undersigned by 4 P.M. of 26.03.2020 through Registered Post/Speed Post/ Courier only and the same will be opened at 4.30 P.M. on the same day. The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the offers without assigning any reason thereof. Sd/- Chief Executive Officer Odisha Skill Development Authority OIPR NO-14027/11/0022/1920



## Vice Chairman of Scheduled Caste panel appointed TN BJP president

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, MARCH 11

L. MURUGAN, Vice Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), was Wednesday appointed as the president of the Tamil Nadu BJP unit, which had been without a head for six months.

Murugan, 43, is a graduate from the Dr Ambedkar Government Law College in Chennai and practised in the Madras High Court for 15 years. He also served as the Centre's standing counsel before his appointment to NCSC.

Murugan was largely an unknown face in the state party until being made NCSC Vice Chairman.

"If at all he was close to anyone in the state party, it was the former president Tamilisai Soundararajan," said a senior BJP leader, adding that in Delhi, "he was known as a man close to President Ram Nath Kovind for his official assignments at NCSC."

Former state BJP president Soundararajan was appointed as the governor of Telangana last September. Both Soundararajan and Murugan come from backward castes.

Last January, Murugan had stirred a controversy by attributing a "love jihad" angle to the killing of a Dalit BJP functionary in Trichy despite a police probe pointing to personal enmity.

## Minor sexually assaulted in Unnao, dies in hospital: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, MARCH 11

A NINE-YEAR-OLD girl, who had gone out to play Holi, was raped by an unidentified person at an Unnao village on Tuesday afternoon. She later died while undergoing treatment at a Kanpur hospital, police said on Wednesday.

The girl was found unconscious by residents. She had suffered excessive bleeding.

"Around 3.40 pm Tuesday, we were informed that a girl, who was raped, was found in a serious condition. A team of policemen reached the spot and took her to a hospital. From there, she was referred to a hospital in Kanpur and was taken in an ambulance with a life support system. Unfortunately, the girl could not survive," said SP (Unnao) Vikrant Vir, adding that he along with Additional SP had inspected the spot where the girl was found.

"As per our investigation so far, the girl had left her house to play Holi on Tuesday afternoon. It is suspected that she was lured by someone to the spot where she was found. The place is around half a km from her house," he said.

"The girl was first seen by a group of three or four boys who were passing by and informed the village pradhan. Injury marks suggested that the accused tried to kill by strangulating her. Either the assailant thought she had died or he panicked when he saw someone coming and fled. I have not yet received the postmortem report, but have been told that both sexual assault and killing by strangulation have been confirmed," he added.

"We have registered an FIR against an unidentified person. We have also formed four teams under the supervision of Additional SP (North) to identify and arrest the accused," he said.

Initially, the FIR was registered under sections 376 (rape), 307 (attempt to murder) and relevant sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, but after her death, IPC section 302 (murder) was added.

The SP, meanwhile, said, "We are talking to local residents if they had seen the girl with anyone before the incident."

# In four years of a national mission, total supercomputers built: three

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW  
AN EXPRESS RTI APPLICATION

ANJALI MARAR  
PUNE, MARCH 11

INDIA HAS produced just three supercomputers since 2015—less than one a year on average—under the National Supercomputer Mission (NSM), a dedicated programme aimed at boosting the country's overall computing facilities and launched that year, according to information obtained under the Right to Information Act from the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) and Department of Science and Technology (DST).

The MeitY and DST handle the National Supercomputer Mission, and the mission's nodal agencies are the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune, and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. According to the RTI reply, monetary grants to the tune of Rs 750.97 crore, or just 16.67 per cent of the total budget of Rs 4,500 crore, was disbursed during the last four-and-a-half years to these two agencies. The NSM was conceived as a seven-year mission ending in 2022.

The NSM envisaged setting up a network of 70 high-performance computing facilities. These were to be installed at many of India's top academic institutions and scientific establishments like IITs, the Indian Institutes of



Param Shivay, the supercomputer at IIT-BHU. File

Science, Education and Research (ISERS), National Institute of Technology (NITs) among others. It was also an effort to improve the number of supercomputers owned by India viz-a-viz the global leaders.

However, skewed funding for the NSM during the initial years slowed down the overall pace of building supercomputers.

"In the initial years, funds were limited and the mission was making slow progress. That has improved now and the mission has gathered momentum now with government support," said an official involved in the NSM, who did not wish to be named.

The initial phase, experts say, took additional time as they had to design newer systems in the complete absence of any readily usable one to assemble softwares on. "As the technology was not available, a lot of work had to be done during the initial months. Later, the servers and networks were built after which the soft-

wares were stacked on to them, thus putting together a super-computer," the official explained.

Globally, China continues to lead the supercomputer race. It added eight more supercomputers in the last six months taking its existing numbers to 227. This giant leap helped China retain its top position, followed by the US (119 supercomputers), as per the TOP500 report of November 2019. Other countries in this league are Japan (29), France (18), Germany (16), The Netherlands (15), Ireland (14) and the United Kingdom (11). All other countries, including India, own only one top performing supercomputer, the report said.

NSM's first supercomputer—PARAM Shivay installed in IIT-BHU, Varanasi, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February 2019, nearly four years post the mission-launch. This 837 TeraFlop capacity HPC was built at a cost of Rs 23.50 crore, the RTI reply said.

The second supercomputer with a capacity of 1.66 PetaFlop was installed at IIT-Kharagpur, and cost Rs 47 crore. The third system, PARAM Brahma, installed in September last year at IISER-Pune, has a capacity of 797 TeraFlop, and cost Rs 23.50 crore, the RTI reply said.

This Rs 94 crore has been spent so far for three advanced computing facilities. The balance allotted budget, experts said, was used in building assembly for components and developing indigenous systems to put together these massive High Performance Computing (HPC) systems, officials involved in the NSM, said.

The budget disbursement by both DST and MeitY towards this mission has been uneven during the last four years, the RTI reply revealed. Twice during the last four-and-a-half years, DST failed to sanction any budget either to IISc (2015-16) or C-DAC (2017-18).

So far, C-DAC has received Rs 144.47 crore between 2015 and September 2019 while IISc has been awarded Rs 265.50 crore by DST alone during the period. MeitY has sanctioned Rs 341 crore to C-DAC alone.

"There will soon be 11 super-computers; expected to be installed by 2020 or latest by March 2021. All will be indigenously manufactured. Besides, the next phase will involve developing capability building, which is an ongoing process," the official said. Three supercomputers are expected to be installed in the near future, one each in IIT-Kanpur; Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru and IIT-Hyderabad, the RTI reply said.

There will soon be 11 super-computers; expected to be installed by 2020 or latest by March 2021. All will be indigenously manufactured. Besides, the next phase will involve developing capability building, which is an ongoing process," the official said. Three supercomputers are expected to be installed in the near future, one each in IIT-Kanpur; Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru and IIT-Hyderabad, the RTI reply said.

## Rajini to meet fans' outfit today, may announce party launch details

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, MARCH 11

AFTER HIS recent statements on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act irked the entire Opposition and many people in Tamil Nadu, and remarks expressing "disappointment" and confusion after a recent meeting with district level fans' association leaders, actor-politician Rajinikanth has called for an impromptu meeting of the association's top office-bearers in Chennai on Thursday.

## Two rape minor in Banswara

Jaipur: A minor girl was allegedly raped by two men in a village in Banswara district, police said.

The incident occurred around 2 am on Tuesday when the accused took the girl from her house to a nearby farmland and allegedly took turns to rape her, police said.

The victim underwent medical examination and the accused are absconding. The police said efforts were on to arrest them. PTI

## PUBLIC NOTICE

TAKE NOTICE that my client Kaizen Domestic Scheme 1 & Kaizen Private Equity have filed O.M.P. (ENF) (COMM) No. 26 of 2020 before Hon'ble Delhi High Court against the Judgment Debtors viz. (1) Your Kids 'R' Our Kids (India) Education Private Limited, (2) Bharat Kapoor, (3) Suman Kapoor, (4) Harbans Lal Kapoor & (5) Neelam Kapoor all residents of 4B, Palm Drive, DLF Farms, Chattarpur, New Delhi - 110074, restraining them from creating any third-party rights with respect to 3 properties i.e. (i) N-39, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110017, (ii) 4B, Palm Drive, DLF Farms, Chattarpur, New Delhi - 110074 and (iii) 17, Jorbagh, Opp. Lodhi Garden, New Delhi-110023 in the said matter the Hon'ble Delhi High Court vide its Order dated 17.02.2020 has passed Injunction Order restraining the said Judgment Debtors to create any third-party rights with respect to the said properties. The general public is hereby informed not to deal with the said properties and not to enter upon the said properties under any arrangement of whatsoever nature. Gaurav Goel Advocate for Decree Holders Chamber No.882 - 883, Patiala House Court, New Delhi - 110001. Tel.: 99104083633

Sources close to Rajinikanth said he is likely to make a decisive announcement about the date of launching his political party after the meeting. A close associate said it has become a necessity for the superstar to do something urgent on the political front as a "damage-control" measure after his fans, who are supposed to be part of his upcoming political party, were upset with his reluctance to contest the next election. "In the last meeting of district secretaries (of fans' associ-

ation), he indicated that he doesn't want to promote himself or family members as election candidates, unlike (other leaders of) mainstream political parties," the associate said. "It was a hint that he doesn't want to contest elections and will only head the party. District secretaries opposed this and made it clear that there is no point in launching a party without Rajinikanth being the Chief Minister candidate."

A district secretary from southern Tamil Nadu said the

decision for a "massive membership drive" for the upcoming party had come from Rajinikanth, and they began earnestly. "But eventually we realised that there were questions on whether the membership drive was for the fans' association or the party. There were people who made it clear that they do not want to join the party but only the association. He was unhappy with this feedback and we were told to temporarily stop the membership drive," the office-bearer said.

## Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.

Regd. Office: Plot No. 5A-5B, Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, South West Delhi - 110070, E-mail: secretariat@ongc.in Website: www.ongcindia.com | CIN No.: L74899DL1993G01054155

### NOTICE OF LOSS OF SHARE CERTIFICATES

NOTICE is hereby given that the equity Share Certificate(s) of the following shareholders have been reported as lost/misplaced and they have applied for issuance of duplicate Share Certificate(s).

Name of Share Holder	Folio No.	No. of Shares	Share Cert. No.	Distinctive Nos.
Toskia Begum	77296	450	4794	3012147 To 3012596
		450	479955	4280757207 To 4280757656
		450	966352	8557431439 To 8557431888
Sanjay Bhattacharya	36385	1836	964701	8556842548 To 8556844383

Any person(s) who has/have any claim in respect of the said certificate(s) could lodge such claim with the supporting documents with the Company or its Registrar - **Anankit Assignments Limited**, 1E/13 Jhandewalan Extension, New Delhi - 110055, within 15 days of the publication of the notice, after which no claim will be entertained and the Company will proceed to consider issuing duplicate share certificates to the above mentioned shareholder. Further, public is hereby warned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above mentioned share certificate(s). Any person dealing with the above share certificate(s) shall be doing so, solely at his/her risk as to costs and consequences, and the Company shall in no way be held responsible for such dealing(s).

New Delhi  
11 03 2020

For Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.  
M E V Selvam  
Company Secretary

**The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library** cordially invites you to a Talk on "Queer Citizens and the Contemporary Indian English Writings" by **Dr. Kuhu Sharma Chanana** Fellow, NMML

Friday, 13 March 2020 at 3:00 pm  
Venue: Seminar Room, Library Building  
Nehru Memorial Museum and Library  
Teen Murti House, New Delhi-110011

For More info, please visit: Website: <http://nehrumemorial.nic.in> or Contact us on: [ccs2nmml@gmail.com](mailto:ccs2nmml@gmail.com)  
For live webcast, please visit: [www.facebook.com/NehruMemorialLibrary/](http://www.facebook.com/NehruMemorialLibrary/); [www.youtube.com/user/nehrumemoriallibrary](http://www.youtube.com/user/nehrumemoriallibrary)

**All are Welcome**

# After Scindia jolt in MP, Cong appoints DKS as Karnataka president

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
BENGALURU, MARCH 11

A DAY after the Congress suffered a jolt, with senior leader Jyotiraditya Scindia quitting and sparking questions on the central leadership's ability to take timely decisions and inability to keep its flock together, the party on Wednesday moved fast to set its house in order in two states—Karnataka and Delhi.

The high command went against former chief minister Siddaramaiah's wishes and appointed D K Shivakumar president of the Karnataka unit.

Three working presidents were also named, ending nearly three months of indecision on the issue of party leadership in Karnataka.

In Delhi, All-India Congress Committee (AICC) secretary Anil Chaudhary was appointed the unit president; and five vice-presidents were also named.

Incumbent Karnataka Congress working president, Eshwar Khandre, was retained and Satish Jharkiholi and Saleem Ahmed were named as additional working presidents.

Jharkiholi, a Scheduled Tribe leader, is said to be close to Siddaramaiah. While Siddaramaiah is learnt to have recommended Lingayat leader MB Patil and Zameer Ahmed Khan for the post of working presidents, the AICC retained Khandre, a Lingayat, and appointed Ahmed, a long-time party hand.

In a balancing act, Siddaramaiah was retained as the Leader of Opposition in Karnataka Assembly as well as leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP).

Shivakumar, a Vokkaliga community leader, was in the lounge of the Assembly when news of his appointment emerged on Wednesday afternoon. Moved to



DK Shivakumar

tears, he said, "I knew this was happening. I visited Delhi last week to meet (senior) leaders and we discussed the issue."

Shivakumar, 57, has the reputation as a troubleshooter for the party—he safeguarded 44 Congress MLAs from Gujarat in August 2017 to facilitate Rajya Sabha election of senior AICC leader Ahmed Patel. His appointment comes at a time 19 Congress MLAs from Madhya Pradesh are being safeguarded, allegedly by the BJP leadership, at a resort outside Bengaluru to try and topple the Kamal Nath-led Congress government in MP.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, Congress leaders in Karnataka admitted that the decision to appoint Shivakumar was triggered by the crisis in the party-led government in Madhya Pradesh. A young Congress MLA in the state said, "The appointments were possibly triggered by the situation in MP. There were fears of a repeat in Karnataka, with leaders leaving the party. The lack of a decision on leadership left party leaders in doubt about the direction the high command wants to take."

An associate of Shivakumar, however, claimed that the new state party chief does not intend to intervene to try and persuade the Congress MLAs to return to the party fold and save the government in MP. "We have Karnataka issues to handle. We are not going to intervene in the MP issue," the associate said. The leadership issue in Karnataka Congress has been in a limbo since December 2019, when then full-time president

## EXPLAINED: Cong plays practical politics

The decision to appoint D K Shivakumar, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in September last year in a money laundering case and was lodged in Delhi's Tihar Jail for one-and-a-half months, is seen as a signal by the Congress leadership that the party will not shy away from playing practical politics. It indicates the Congress will not let Shivakumar, a popular and resourceful leader, feel dejected and look for opportunities outside, like Jyotiraditya Scindia.

Dinesh Gundu Rao quit along with CLP leader Siddaramaiah after the party's poor show in by-polls to 15 Assembly seats.

All the new appointees are below 60 years.

The party's leadership in Karnataka was seen as being allowed to drift for several weeks on account of a tussle within the state Congress between leaders aligned to the old guard in the AICC such as D K Shivakumar and those close to former party chief Rahul Gandhi and organising secretary K C Venugopal—leaders such as Siddaramaiah and Gundu Rao.

The race for the post of Karnataka Congress president had seen intense lobbying for several months, with top leaders, including Siddaramaiah, visiting Delhi several times. Leaders such as K H Muniyappa and Rajya Sabha B K Hariprasad were said to be interested in the post.

WITH INPUTS FROM ENNS, NEW DELHI

**PIONEER HORTICULTURIST PRIVATE LIMITED**  
CIN: U01122DL3005PTC138349  
Registered Office: B-113, Harjan, West Jyoti Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi - 110093  
Phone: 0120-4317173, Email id: [phplindia2005@gmail.com](mailto:phplindia2005@gmail.com) Website: [www.nurserysuper.com](http://www.nurserysuper.com)

FORM NO. INC-26 [Pursuant to rule 39 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014] Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the company from one state to another Before the Central Government (Power Delegated to Regional Director) Northern Region

In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 AND In the matter of PIONEER HORTICULTURIST PRIVATE LIMITED, having its registered office at B-113, Harjan, West Jyoti Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi - 110093

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the Company proposes to make application to the Central Government (Power Delegated to Regional Director) under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra ordinary general meeting held on 01st February, 2020 to enable the Company to change its Registered Office from "NCT of Delhi" to "State of Uttar Pradesh". Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal ([www.mca.gov.in](http://www.mca.gov.in)) by filing insolvency complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Hon'ble Regional Director at the address B-2/WING, 2nd FLOOR/PARYAVARAN BHAWAN, CGO COMPLEX, NEW DELHI - 110003, within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company with a copy of the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned above. For and on behalf of the Applicant Pioneer Horticulturist Private Limited Sgl. Snehlata Tomer Managing Director DIN- 01295550 Place: New Delhi, Date: 11.03.2020

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, TIRUPATI**  
(An Autonomous Institution under Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India) Karakambadi Road, Tirupati - 517 507

Admission to Integrated Ph.D & Ph.D Programs: August 2020  
IISER Tirupati ([www.iiser Tirupati.ac.in](http://www.iiser Tirupati.ac.in)) invites online applications for admission to the Integrated Ph.D. and Ph.D. programs for August 2020 Session. For details of educational qualifications, eligibility criteria, selection procedure, online application and last date of submission discipline wise please visit: <http://www.iiser Tirupati.ac.in/admissions/> Advt.No.11/2020(F)/IISER-T/Admissions/11-03-2020 Sd/- Director

**पंजाब नैशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank**  
...पसंसे क र पूरने...  
SASTRA Division, Head Office: Plot No.4, Sector 10 Dwarka, New Delhi - 110 075  
**Sale of Financial Assets to ARCs/NBFCs/BANKS/Fls**  
"Punjab National Bank offers sale of 9 NPA accounts to the ARCs/NBFCs/Banks/Fls etc. For details please visit Bank's corporate website [www.pnbIndia.in](http://www.pnbIndia.in)." Assistant General Manager

Government of India  
**Public Enterprises Selection Board**  
invites applications for the post of **Director (Technical)** in **BHARAT COKING COAL LIMITED.**  
Last date of receipt of applications in **PESB is by 15.00 hours on 12th MAY, 2020.**  
For details login to website <http://www.pesb.gov.in>

**NATIONAL HANDLOOM EXPO, NERTPS**  
Attractions: North East Handloom Products, Silk Stoles, Bags, Dupattas, Summer Waist Coat, Handloom Accessories  
Eri Silk Stole, Assam Silk Mix Stole, Kantha Peacock, Embroidered Stole, Naga Print Cushion Covers, Naga Motif Necktie, Handloom Home Furnishing Products & Many More Handloom Items from all over India  
**Come and witness the uniqueness of Handloom**  
at IGNCA, Rajpath Lawn, Gate No. 1, Janpath, New Delhi  
03rd March to 17th March 2020, Time: 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM

All are invited Entry Free

Organized by: Directorate of Industries & Commerce Govt. of Nagaland  
Funded by: Development Commissioner Handlooms Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India







TDP LEADERS ATTACKED AHEAD OF POLLS

# YSR Congress accused of hounding Opp candidates

GREENIVAS JANAYALA  
HYDERABAD, MARCH 11

AMID CHARGES that the ruling YSR Congress Party in Andhra Pradesh is trying to stop Telugu Desam Party candidates from filing nominations for the March 21 local body elections, two more TDP leaders came under attack on Wednesday afternoon in the state.

Former TDP MLA B Umamaheshwara Rao and MLCB Venkanna and a lawyer with them were assaulted by alleged YSRCP men at Macherla town in Guntur district while on their way to accompany party leaders for filing of nomination papers. In Guntur, the nomination papers of TDP candidate Arvind Babu were torn up in front of the Revenue Divisional Officer at Narasaraopet on Wednesday. At Pudipatla in Tirupati, the TDP's A HariPriya reported tearing of her nomination papers on Tuesday.

Andhra Pradesh has been on the edge since the elections were notified last week, with similar attacks, including on BJP leaders, being reported from over a dozen places. "They even beat up women candidates," TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu said Wednesday, adding that party

leaders Rao and Venkanna could have been lynched.

Naidu has written a letter to State Election Commissioner Dr N Ramesh Kumar requesting for security to TDP candidates. Accusing the YSRCP of violation of the election code of conduct, he said, "YSRCP leaders and cadre have run amok amok in villages, threatening opposition leaders and intimidating voters."

One man who was part of the Macherla attack, and who hit Rao, has been identified from videos as YSRCP Macherla Town Youth President Turaka Kishore. Guntur Rural Superintendent of Police C Vijay Rao said a case had been registered at Macherla Town Police Station. "We have identified some persons," he said.

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister Botsa Satyanarayana, however, denied the YSRCP's hand in the incident. "The TDP leaders were travelling in a convoy of over 10 cars and creating nuisance. Some people got angry and attacked them. TDP leaders know they will lose the municipal elections and so are resorting to such tricks."

Videos of the incident, however, show the TDP men travelling in only one car. The attack seems pre-planned with the car being

chased, and finally attacked near a roundabout where some men are standing next to a road blockade made with two-wheelers. Former MLA Rao and Venkanna have said the mob was raising slogans of "Jai Jagan". Videos show the TDP leaders' car being pelted with stones, having its windshield smashed, and the men being hit with sticks. The driver, who managed to run away, is chased down and assaulted.

Nursing injuries, Rao accused the local police of tipping off the YSRCP about their travel plans, though the TDP has said the police party with them was attacked as well. "A team headed by a Deputy SP provided us escort but the YSRCP goons attacked them. We do not feel safe. YSRCP thugs are looking to lynch us. If we come out alive, it would be luck and God's grace," Rao said.

Gurazala Division Deputy SP RSrihari Babu said police are scanning the videos to identify the culprits, while adding that they had done everything to ensure the safety of TDP leaders.

Naidu demanded swift action against the attackers. "There is total lawlessness in the state. Police are not taking any action as YSRCP thugs rule the streets and attack anyone, especially TDP leaders."

# SC to hear UP govt plea against Allahabad HC order on posters

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MARCH

THE SUPREME COURT will on Thursday hear the Uttar Pradesh government's appeal against the Allahabad High Court's order directing the Lucknow district administration to remove banners and hoardings carrying photographs and details of more than 50 people accused of violence during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

The plea will come up before a vacation bench of Justices U U Lalit and Aniruddha Bose.

Allahabad HC had taken suo motu cognisance of the matter and, in its March 9 order, had called the state's action an "unwarranted interference in privacy of people" and a "shameless depiction". The order said that "placement of personal data of selected persons reflects colourable exercise of powers by the Executive".

The HC bench of Chief Justice Govind Mathur and Justice Ramesh Sinha directed the Lucknow District Magistrate and Commissioner of Police "not to place such banners on roadside containing personal data of individuals without having au-



The Allahabad High Court had ordered the immediate removal of the roadside posters in Lucknow. Express

thority of law". The court said that "no law is in existence permitting the State to place banners with personal data of the accused from whom compensation is to be charged", and that the accused are people from whom some compensation is to be recovered, and are "in no manner" fugitives.

It also asked the Lucknow DM to submit a "report of satisfactory compliance" to the HC Registrar General on or before March 16. "On receiving such compliance report, the proceedings of this petition shall stand

closed," the bench ordered. The HC rejected state Advocate General Raghvendra Singh's contention that it had "erred" in invoking public interest jurisdiction in the case and that it was available to "underprivileged section of the society only" and observed where there is "gross negligence on part of public authorities and government" or where the "law is disobeyed and the public is put to suffering" and where "the precious values of the Constitution are subjected to injuries", a Constitutional court "can very

well take notice of that at its own".

"The Court in such matters is not required to wait necessarily for a person to come before it to ring the bell of justice. Courts are meant to impart justice and no court can shut its eyes if a public unjust is happening just before it. The concept of 'standing' has acquired a new shape in our justice delivery system," the bench said.

It said that in the present case, there is "valid apprehension of causing serious injury to the rights protected under Article 21".

The High Court said the suo motu action was justified as "...in the instant matter, the act of the district and police administration of Lucknow is alleged to be in conflict with the right of life and liberty". The bench rejected the state's contention that the court did not have jurisdiction over the matter, as the cause of action had risen in Lucknow.

It said that in the matter, "the cause is not about personal injury caused to the persons whose personal details are given in the banner but the injury caused to the precious Constitutional value and its shameless depiction by the administration".

# HC stays probe against band accused of hurting religious sentiments

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
PANAJI, MARCH 11

THE BOMBAY High Court at Goa on Wednesday stayed the police investigation against members of the music band 'Dastaan' who were arrested on December 18 last year and released on bail in a case hurting religious sentiments while they were performing at the Serendipity Arts Festival.

The court also granted them interim relief from any action by the Goa Police.

The band members had been arrested on the basis complaint filed by advocate Venkatesha Krishna Kunduru. In the complaint, Kunduru had alleged that a rendition of 'Mantra Kavita'—written by poet Nagarjun—performed by the band had hurt his religious sentiments. A day after the performance, the police had booked the members under section 295-A of the Indian Penal Code.

On Wednesday, hearing a petition filed by the band members, the High Court sought responses from the Goa government and asked the police to refrain from further investigation.

# Govt asks UGC if 2 institutes which got IoE tag were eligible

RITIKA CHOPRA  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE CENTRE has sought an explanation from the University Grants Commission (UGC) on whether the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) in Odisha and Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) in Tamil Nadu are eligible for the 'Institution of Eminence' (IoE) status.

On March 3, *The Indian Express* had reported that KIIT and VIT, which were declared IoEs on August 2, 2019, do not meet the eligibility criterion on the net worth of the sponsoring organisation members.

According to the UGC's regulations on the IoE scheme, the sponsoring organisation is a "charitable or a not-for-profit Society or a public Trust or a Company incorporated under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013" applying to upgrade an existing private institution or a new one to an IoE.

The eligibility criterion states the collective net worth of the members of the sponsoring organisation should be Rs 3,000 crore for existing institutions and Rs 5,000 crore for new ones.

However, the applications filed by VIT and KIIT show that both have provided the market value of current assets, such as land and building, as the net worth of the sponsoring organisation.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, N Gopalaswami, head of the expert committee that recommended names of institutes for IoE status, said, "As EEC (Empowered Expert Committee), we are not involved in this (checking eligibility). It was the government which sent us the names in the first instance (stating) that these (institutions) are fulfilling the (eligibility) criteria. We were given a list of institutions that fulfil the criteria and we were to make a selection out of that. Our position is very clear."



The Indian Express report on March 3

"If in forwarding (the list) to us, there has been some lacunae, it's for them (UGC and Ministry) to look at it and take a view on what is to be done," he said.

The above eligibility clause was at the source of a lot of heartburn among many private higher education institutions as it had left them out of the application process.

On September 24, 2019, at the official inauguration of Symbiosis International's (SI) Noida campus, Vidya Yeravdekar, pro-chancellor of the deemed university, spoke on the issue from the stage, in the presence of HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal, and requested him to reconsider it. Stating that SI's Trust members are dedicated educationists and not worth Rs 3,000 crore, Yeravdekar made a pitch for tweaking the criterion to consider the Trust's value instead of its members.

The IoE scheme, a pet project of the Prime Minister's Office launched under the NDA-II government, is aimed at creating an enabling architecture for 10 public and 10 private institutes to emerge as world-class institutions.

The IoEs are proposed to have greater autonomy, including on deciding the fee, and course duration and structure. Their academic collaboration with foreign institutions will also be exempt from approvals. The 10 government institutions, in addition to autonomy, will get Rs 1,000 crore each from the HRD Ministry.

# JD(U) student leader killed by friend over Holi picture row

Patna: A JD(U) student leader in Patna was shot dead on Tuesday evening by a friend who was upset over his picture not being used for a Holi banner.

Kanhaiya Kaushik (27), who had been elected vice-president of the students wing of Patna's AN College in March 2018, was shot dead from close range by his friend Kush in Mahesh Nagar in the city, the police said. Patna SP (Central) Vinay Tiwari said: "We have ar-

rested two people and are looking for the main accused Kush. On prima facie, poster row looks to be the reason. But we are investigating it further".

The incident took place at around 8 pm Tuesday. Kush had been upset at his photo not being used in a Holi banner that had pictures of several student leaders. Kaushik, a resident of Madhubani, was staying in a rented accommodation in Patna with two brothers. ENS

## NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

### IF YOU HAVE:

1. Direct close contact with Laboratory confirmed positive COVID-19 case
2. History of travel to COVID-19 affected countries\* like China, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea, Japan, Italy, Thailand, Singapore, Iran, Malaysia, France, Spain and Germany

### THEN YOU ARE MANDATED TO :

1. Undergo self-imposed isolation at home (quarantine) for a period of 14 days from the date of your arrival.
2. Self-monitor your health and follow required Do's and Don'ts as detailed below:
  - Observe good personal hygiene.
  - Monitor your health.
  - Practice frequent hand washing with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
  - Follow respiratory etiquettes - cover your mouth with tissue or handkerchief while coughing.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are unwell or showing symptoms of illness, such as cough, difficulty in breathing etc.
  - Wear a mask if you have symptoms such as cough, fever or difficulty in breathing.
  - Contact local doctor immediately if you have cough, fever or difficulty in breathing.
3. Immediately contact health Authorities on following numbers, if you develop symptoms of fever, cough, cold, breathlessness etc.

### Control Room Numbers at State and District level

State DGHS (HQ)	011-22307145, 22300012, 22300036	South-West	011-25066674
North	011-27708768	South-East	011-26476410
South	011-29531277	North-East	011-22115289
East	011-22050908, 22051234	New Delhi	011-23385743
West	011-25195529	Central	011-23270151
North-West	011-25951182	Shahdara	011-22111077

24\*7 Control Room has been established at DGHS (HQ), may be contacted for any query related to COVID-19 Ph: 011-22307145, 22300012, 22300036

\* List of affected countries is at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>  
Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi







The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## MR SCINDIA'S EXIT

This is a royal kick in the Congress shin. But also a reminder of the party's Scindia problem

THE EXIT OF Jyotiraditya Scindia from the Congress party is a momentous event that was foretold. Scindia may not be a mass leader — he isn't. He may have only a sub-regional support base which would not even save his own seat in parliamentary polls — it didn't. But his exit packs a punch strong enough to send the Kamal Nath government in Madhya Pradesh scurrying for survival. He was hand-picked by Rahul Gandhi, then party president, to lead the charge, alongside Priyanka Gandhi, in the crucial state of Uttar Pradesh in the 2019 election. He has been a prominent face of the Congress's next gen, commanding a high visibility and profile. But Scindia's exit sends ripples larger than his own political weight merits — because of the state of the Congress party. It affirms the sense of unchecked drift, which has only sharpened and deepened since Rahul Gandhi stepped down as president and no one has taken his place. The Congress seems gripped, simultaneously, by crises of organisation, leadership and ideology that continue to fester and grow, unaddressed. In such a party, it is not surprising that the young and the ambitious — Scindia seems ambitious, if not-so young — should chafe and become impatient. In such a party, the future seems blurry or, worse, held hostage to the discretion and whim of the high command, which itself seems lacklustre and disengaged. From such a party, exits such as Scindia's are foretold.

At the same time, the Congress predicament that Scindia's exit points to, is also made of the fact that leaders like Scindia occupy its upper echelons. The political trajectory of Jyotiraditya Scindia is one of entitlement, privilege, family legacy and name — more than the hard labour and pay-your-dues long haul of politics. Part of the crisis that has overtaken the Congress today, part of the affliction that has been thrown into sharp relief by the BJP's rise and rise, is that the Congress has become a collection of leaders who have not earned their spurs by long and hard work at ground level, but have become famous for being famous, or for being loyal. It is telling that Scindia quits the party he has belonged to for 18 long years at an extraordinary moment for the party and polity. He crosses over to the BJP at a time when, even though the Congress seems unable to hold up its end, ideological polarisation is at its sharpest, when the BJP is weaponising its mandate to bring in its core agenda, and when that agenda, as illustrated in the divisive citizenship law, is sparking protests, resistance and even communal violence.

That a prominent leader of the Congress does not just exit the party at a moment such as this one, but does so to join the BJP, is a vote of no-confidence in the party that it would do well to seriously reflect on in more ways than are immediately obvious. And as for Scindia in the BJP, he will soon have to defend what he just weeks ago called the indefensible. That's between him and his conscience — or, to be precise, his most recent conscience.

## ABUSE OF POWER

Allahabad HC ruling against public shaming of anti-CAA protesters is enormously welcome. UP government must heed it

THE UTTAR PRADESH government's recent move to put up hoardings and banners with photographs and personal data of the citizens who had protested against the new citizenship law compromised their privacy and reeked of vindictiveness. It imperiled the safety of protesters, who have been vilified by top functionaries of the government as "anti-national". Hence, it is reassuring that the Allahabad High Court took suo motu cognisance and called the government's move illegal. The government has decided to challenge the order of the two-member bench of the HC, led by Chief Justice Govind Mathur, in the Supreme Court. The insistence of the Adityanath administration in persisting with its unlawful move underlines its intolerance of protest and dissent.

The new citizenship act (CAA) has been contested by large sections of the citizenry on the legitimate ground that it discriminates against the Muslim minority. Protests have been organised across the country against the CAA and the proposed National Register of Citizens. Many non-BJP governments have responded positively to these mostly peaceful mobilisations, which invoke the Indian Constitution and feature the national flag and anthem. In contrast, the UP government has been visibly and viciously hostile to the anti-CAA protests. The state saw large-scale violence last December and a brutal police crackdown — in which at least 18 people died — and hundreds of people were arrested on charges ranging from inciting violence and arson to sedition. Many were released on bail since the police could not produce the evidence in court to corroborate its claims. The administration has been indiscriminately issuing notices to persons suspected of vandalism during the anti-CAA protests and seeking compensation for the loss of public property. It is in this toxic environment that the government has sought to publicly name and shame the dissenters — among the 50-plus persons highlighted in hoardings are retired IPS officer S R Darapuri, civil rights activist Mohammed Shoaib, and theatre personality Deepak Kabir.

In a state that has witnessed public lynchings and where the police is accused of violating due process by encounters, the government's act of branding people in this manner is fraught with danger. As the Allahabad HC said, the measure "reflects colourable exercise of powers by the Executive", "is nothing but an unwarranted interference in privacy of people", and, hence, "in violation of Article 21 of the Constitution". The government must listen to the HC's censure and retrace its steps.

## THE CORONA CATCH

Those who can come up with solutions on how to deal with the pandemic are secluded by it

HERE'S THE CATCH 22 with the coronavirus spreading rapidly across the globe. The crisis, literally of pandemic proportions, requires that the best minds across fields come together to find solutions, or at least try to find ways to minimise the impact of the disease. But "coming together" is precisely what COVID-19 is preventing.

The friendly doctor seen on Indian news channels advising citizens to shun the western handshake for "corona namaste" is not alone in his fear of human contact. Nido2020, the official meeting of the International Nidovirus (of which the coronavirus is a subset) Symposium, to be held in May in the Netherlands, has been postponed to 2021. The experts, it seems, would rather exchange emails. Even those at the helm of the wheels of the global economy, slow to react to such minor issues as disease among the poor, climate change, inequality, are caught in the corona catch-22: The US Council of Foreign Relations has cancelled a roundtable on "Doing Business Under Coronavirus".

The spread of the virus does seem to have brought the world to a standstill: Like deer in the headlights, the germophobia has frozen public life. Even the last refuge in dire times, the opium of the masses, is out of stock. The Pope is holding his sermons via video — Italy is among the worst affected by the disease — and congregations in public squares hardly provide solidarity as parishioners maintain a "one-arm-distance". In Ireland, St. Patrick's day parades, often accompanied with booze-fuelled revelry, are on hold. But there is one final way out of the catch-22, the experts say. The ostrich approach could well pay off — the virus will run its course.

# Scindia is only a symptom

The larger challenge of a unipolar ideological universe stares our democracy in the face



SUHAS PALSHIKAR

MUCH IS BEING said about the mishandling of the Scindia affair by the Congress party. The snubs, the neglect and the impotent arrogance are well-documented. Assuming, therefore, that Jyotiraditya Scindia was indeed sidelined, the episode brings into sharp focus the state of affairs within the Congress party. Groups and factions are not unknown to any party, much less the Congress. The question is how a party evolves mechanisms to handle them and, in the last instance, whether the leadership is able to assure all groups that there is a possibility of fair share in power. Clearly, the Congress has repeatedly failed in this respect, because organisational structures are contingent and intra-party decision-making processes are hardly in place. When a party is out in the wilderness, it is particularly handicapped because it can offer little by way of crumbs to factions. Therefore, what has happened in Madhya Pradesh is a story foretold.

In fact, this is an overdue development — and it is not just about one leader quitting the party. A full-blown internal war needs to explode in the party. More than leadership crisis, it is an identity crisis and that can be solved only through a painful process of "in-fighting" and possible fragmentation. Portents of that have been in the air when many Congress leaders began to publicly express their concern about the leadership vacuum. But loud complaints over the leadership issue, though necessary, are not sufficient.

They are necessary for two reasons. One, in the backdrop of the second debilitating defeat in 2019, the party has failed to settle the question of its leadership. The idea of "interim" arrangement is self-delusional, and months after that arrangement came into being, a long-term solution is not in sight. The murmurs on the leadership issue are also justifiable as they recognise that in this time of leader-driven politics that Narendra Modi has ushered in, the party would need a dynamic and popular leader. However, they are insufficient because they elide the crucial question of organisational structures. What the Scindia affair shows is that the party lacks an organisational mechanism and the fact that many Congresspersons have had to publicly talk about the leadership issue means that there is no organisational room left for such deliberations.

But the obsession with the question of leadership and the related question of what its critiques have popularised as "dynastic" rule, is woefully insufficient also because it

ignores another key element that the BJP has brought into play — ideology. The emphasis on intra-party routes of communication and sharing of power, though important, should not stop at saying how the Congress should have accommodated Scindia. Such analysis does not tell us why politicians like him change parties and what political alternatives they choose subsequently.

It is not at all extraordinary that ambitions of political actors don't fit in with the functioning of the party. Therefore, there is nothing to be scandalised if there is disgruntlement and a parting of ways. Scindia's actions should invite attention less because he left the Congress party and more because he has chosen to tie the knot with the BJP. Let us, therefore, for a moment, not lament about the loss he may inflict on the Congress, but focus on the larger message his action carries.

The short and crisp resignation letter by Scindia is instructively symptomatic of our contemporary politics: It is absolutely short on questions of ideology and frankly articulate about the nature of politics being pursued — not just by Scindia, but by most political actors today. The letter simply mentions, as a vice president of some company might say, that he is "moving on". When politics becomes a career, politicians become commodities that can be easily procured and parties become baggage that can be disposed of. As Sahir Ludhianvi wrote, "talluk bojh ban jaye to usko todana achcha".

There are two ways in which Scindia's action of cosying up with the BJP can be understood. One, he and others like him are so obsessed with power that they are ready to ignore or adopt the BJP's ideology. So long as a party offers power commensurate with one's expectations and sense of self-importance, ideology does not matter. In this sense, Scindia represents the genre of politics that is ideology-neutral. His language of "moving on" supports this hypothesis. He is not alone in thinking in this way; many others before him have done this and many will follow suit. This is not only about political morality. It is about the division that is taking shape in Indian politics.

With the Left parties almost extinct, the simple and clear division in our politics consists of the BJP's Hindutva versus an ideological blankness. It is this non-ideological character of most parties that allows their workers or leaders to join the BJP without engaging with the question of what the BJP stands for and how they can reconcile their own ideo-

logical predilection with that of the BJP. Being the dominant party currently, the BJP would not mind such non-ideological elements joining it and then reining them in with its ideological rigour and hegemonic hold.

Ever since the Mandal and Mandir controversies broke out, the Congress has avoided taking clear ideological positions. The language of social justice and secularism, which helped many political forces emerge and reconfigure during the Nineties and later in the first decade of this century, did not carry ideological conviction nor did it have popular resonance across the country. With the agenda of social justice being formally accommodated in the political system, most parties turned into non-ideological enterprises subsisting on limited electoral gains. Once the BJP re-emerged with its shrill ideological expression, this weakness of other parties has become even more evident. Now, political actors from most non-BJP parties can join the BJP due to their weak or non-existent ideological backgrounds.

Then there is another, related possibility — the retreat of ideas. The two handsome victories of the BJP must have told the political class that the tide of popular sentiment is turning in favour of a particular set of beliefs. Broadly identified as Hindutva nationalism, this new political culture does not have much patience for ideas of inclusion, diversity, compassion and co-existence. So, in hard realist terms, it makes sense for political entrepreneurs like Scindia to abandon those values and ideas which the average voter does not seem to relate to. He may have quit the Congress only now, but Scindia indeed veered to this option much earlier when he welcomed what the BJP did with Article 370. He was not alone in doing that. This only means that momentary excitement over his quitting the Congress apart, the larger challenge of a unipolar ideological universe stares our democracy in the face.

Scindia's move thus needs to be seen not merely from the prism of selfishness but that of giving up on dreams and possibilities and attending to the routine task of maximising political gains. As more and more political actors in their search for power give up politics as the realm of ideas, they end up adopting the dominant ideas, and in the process, add to the dominance of those ideas.

The writer, based in Pune, taught political science and is currently chief editor of Studies in Indian Politics

It is not at all extraordinary that ambitions of political actors don't fit in with the functioning of the party. Therefore, there is nothing to be scandalised if there is disgruntlement and a parting of ways. Actions of Scindia should invite attention less because he left the Congress party and more because he has chosen to tie the knot with the BJP. Let us, therefore, for a moment, not lament about the loss he may inflict on the Congress, but focus on the larger message his action carries.

## DON'T BOTTLE IT UP

Students, parents must recognise higher education pressures, seek help when needed



AMITA TAGARE

IT IS BECOMING increasingly difficult for students to maintain positive or healthy emotions. Negative emotions are surfacing to the point that they cannot be ignored. Many students suppress their emotions as opening up would make them even more vulnerable. Unfortunately, in our society, the importance given to mental well-being is nowhere close to that given to physical well-being. Committing to a healing process can seem daunting and hopeless.

Having worked as a clinical psychologist at the Student Wellness Centre (SWC) with IIT Bombay for over three decades, I have witnessed massive changes in the socio-cultural environment, academic choices and pressures, belief systems, and the impact of technology on students; as well as the perception and reactions by parents. No doubt, these have been rapid and difficult changes.

Coaching for competitive exams prepares one for academia and not necessarily emotional stability. Sometimes, managing this along with academics becomes too much to handle. We have heard of several cases of young people taking extreme, unfortunate steps. Parents, too, in such cases, get confused and are unable to help much. They get apprehensive about the well-being of their children.

Life keeps challenging us at every moment, but there are many ways to tackle them. The first necessary step is to acknowledge and understand the pressing concerns. The subsequent approach is to create a judgement-free space for conversations for the students. Being empathetic is the key.

Of late at the SWC, we have seen many students crumbling under pressure due to multiple reasons: Bottled-up pressure to clear the JEE, which is imposed on the aspirant from every quarter; and, once past that hurdle, contending with the reality that clearing the JEE is not the end but only a beginning that leads to further pressure to perform.

Going through ongoing evaluations, a student may realise that he/she would be better off on a different career path. This realisation may evoke more guilt, lead to avoiding parents, seclusion and social anxiety, to name a few things.

Life keeps challenging us at every moment, but there are many ways to tackle these challenges. The first step is to acknowledge and understand the pressing concerns. The subsequent approach is to create a judgement-free space for conversations for the students. Being empathetic is the key.

Far from being passive recipients of such help, students must understand that avoiding problems isn't an option. Maintaining self-control and regulating habits, and not hiding things from your parents and friends, will help address some concerns. Do not hesitate to

seek help.

Students often ask: Will my parents understand this? Here, parents need to introspect. A peculiar pattern has been observed that needs urgent attention — the complacent attitude of parents who may think their role is only restricted to the competitive exam phase. But can you see your children as more than intellectual achievers? Undoubtedly, their well-being is more important than any salary "package".

If your child reaches out to you, or the institute or college contacts you on their behalf, please listen without judging. Denial of legitimate concerns will invariably cause your child to feel invalidated. Seek appropriate help and follow through.

These days, most institutes of higher learning have a strong and proactive support structure for students. Practically all of the IITs have established student wellness or counselling centres. It remains for the students and their primary caretakers to reach out, take an active part in these efforts, and accept their share of responsibility.

The writer is in charge, Student Wellness Centre, IIT Bombay



## MARCH 12, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

### BUDGET DEFICIT

CENTRAL FINANCES WILL be in the red by Rs 1,235 crore in 1980-81. This is the size of the overall deficit envisaged in the interim general budget presented to Parliament by the finance minister, R Venkataraman. The unpleasant task of levying taxes to cover all or part of this budgetary gap will be completed in "a few weeks" when Venkataraman will come forward with the "regular budget". The finance minister explained the need for an interim budget saying that the government needed more time to assess the damage done to the economy by 33 months of Janata and Lok Dal rule, and to evolve a "coherent medium-term strategy" to revive its health.

### NO PRESIDENT'S RULE

THE OPPOSITION MEMBERS in the Rajya Sabha staged a walkout protesting against the government's refusal to commit itself to a firm date for seeking the approval of the House on the imposition of President's rule in nine States. Pranab Mukherjee, who is the leader of the House, said the government would seek the approval of the House for the presidential proclamation under Article 356 at an "appropriate time." Earlier, members belonging to all the opposition parties had criticised the government for dissolving nine state assemblies despite the concern shown by the House when it passed an amendment to the motion of thanks to the President.

### ASSAM DEADLOCK

THE DEADLOCK ON the complex question of identification and deportation of foreign nationals from Assam continued as the Union government and leaders of the All Assam Students Union and the AU-Assam Gana Sangram Parishad failed to reach any understanding. The two sides met twice and the discussions lasted several hours. The home ministry officials and the AASU and AAGSP leaders, however, agreed to meet again on March 12 when fresh efforts will be made to evolve a consensus. Two drafts spelling out the terms of agreement were discussed — one prepared by the leaders of the movement and the other by the officials.



# 15 THE IDEAS PAGE

## Corona, crude and credit

The global market mayhem reflects an unprecedented intersection of worldwide demand destruction, an adverse supply chain shock from China, and a positive oil shock



SAJJID Z CHINOY

GLOBAL MARKETS HAVEN'T witnessed such panic and dislocation since the global financial crisis of 2008. Global equity markets have collapsed, the US's 10-year bond is at its lowest level ever, and crude prices underwent their largest single-day fall in 30 years. What's going on? The market mayhem is the upshot of three global shocks interacting with each other.

First, a negative demand shock around the world. As the coronavirus proliferates globally, households and businesses are understandably becoming risk averse, and the consequent "social distancing" is expected to exert significant demand destruction around the world.

Second, a negative supply shock emanating from China. The widespread industrial closures in China on the back of the COVID-19 outbreak will impact imports and supply chains in other countries, and thereby constitute an adverse supply shock for the rest of the world. The 20-point drop in manufacturing output in the February PMI and the 17 per cent contraction in Chinese exports across January and February, suggests that the shock was large and immediate. That said, with the virus gradually being contained in China, this supply shock is likely to fade even as the demand shock in the rest of the world widens and deepens.

Third, a positive oil supply shock. The failure of oil producers to agree on production cuts has led to a price war with production increases on the anvil. Cumulatively, crude prices are down almost 50 per cent — about \$30/barrel — since January. While the first leg of the decline reflects virus-related demand destruction fears, the second leg reflects a positive supply shock, which even adjusting for the concentrated stress in the oil sector, is growth-additive for the world and particularly for India.

As if these cross currents aren't enough, there is a fourth India-specific force at play. The resolution and reconstruction of YES Bank was inevitable, but, at least temporarily, it is likely to result in a "flight to quality" in India's financial sector, with resources moving from the financial periphery to the core. To the extent that the periphery — smaller private banks and non-bank financial companies — will find it harder to mobilise resources, financial sector risk aversion could rise again. With private banks responsible for a bulk of the incremental credit offtake in recent months, a redistribution of resources is likely to dampen credit offtake, at least temporarily.

So, how will all this impact India's macros? India is a much more open economy than is widely believed with exports constituting almost 20 per cent of GDP. Therefore, the impact of the demand destruction around the world will not be trivial. If global growth is marked down by 100 basis points in 2020, which increasingly appears to be the case, we estimate that this would shave off about 40 bps from India's growth through the export channel alone. Furthermore, foreign tourism was down 20 per cent at the peak of SARS. If foreign tourism were to fall



CR Sasikumar

by, say, 30 per cent this year — since COVID-19 is proving to be a bigger deterrent than SARS — the cumulative drag to growth from the exports and tourism would be a meaningful 60-70 bps.

But this is where the importance of the large crude price decline on India's macros becomes evident. The near \$30/barrel decline since January constitutes a large positive terms of trade shock for India — equivalent to about 1.3 per cent of GDP even accounting for reduced remittances from the Middle East. It, of course, remains to be seen whether the current oil price equilibrium can hold given the game of chicken being played by oil producers. But if it does, it would constitute a meaningful mitigant to India's macro headwinds, boosting activity, dampening prices, creating fiscal space and reducing external imbalances. We estimate that every \$10 reduction in crude prices, boosts growths by about 20-25 bps. Therefore, the \$30 decline in crude, if it holds, should boost growth by about 60-70 bps, thereby largely offsetting the negative hit to growth from external trade and tourism. Furthermore, crude at \$35-40, along with the global demand destruction is expected to generate large disinflationary forces, opening up space for monetary easing. Finally, India's current account deficit would virtually disappear, for the first time since 2003-04.

The growth offset, however, assumes that the coronavirus does not spread within India. If India witnessed a rapid domestic proliferation, heightened risk aversion by economic agents could meaningfully hurt domestic demand. Here's a thought experiment. Discretionary services constitute about 35 per cent of GDP and have been growing at 8 per cent a year. If that growth rate were to halve, that alone would deduct 140 bps from growth, and swamp any growth tailwinds from lower oil prices, especially since heightened consumer risk aversion would also reduce the marginal propensity to spend out of any fuel savings. Furthermore, a "sudden stop" of demand to certain sectors may necessitate fiscal/liquidity support to ensure these don't magnify into more disruptive credit events for the financial sector. All told, the best antidote to a prolonged growth hit would be to aggressively contain the virus

Here's a thought experiment. Discretionary services constitute about 35 per cent of GDP and have been growing at 8 per cent a year. If that growth rate were to halve, that alone would deduct 140 bps from growth, and swamp any growth tailwinds from lower oil prices, especially since heightened consumer risk aversion would also reduce the marginal propensity to spend out of any fuel savings.

domestically, as authorities appear to be doing. The experience from other countries suggests aggressive containment early in the process (isolation, quarantines, contract tracings, cancelled gatherings) reduces the growth rate of the virus from exponential to linear. All told, therefore, the key to India's macro outlook is whether the crude price decline can sustain and whether India can avoid a sharp domestic proliferation of COVID-19.

What are some other policy implications? Should any oil windfall be largely absorbed by the government (through higher excise duties) or be given to the private sector? Given current fiscal pressures, it's tempting to advocate that the public sector appropriate much of the windfall. But with consumption under such pressure, there's a strong case to pass this on to households. A sharp cut in domestic fuel prices will boost household purchasing power and aggregate demand thereby creating contemporaneous counter-cyclical pressures. Instead, if the government were to absorb it, it's hard to see how authorities could immediately ramp up spending. Instead, higher excise revenues are likely to translate into fewer expenditure cuts in the last quarter of 2020-21, if other revenues don't materialise. That would help activity in the last quarter, whereas passing it on to households would help activity now, when it's most needed.

Further, while the turbulence in equity markets could understandably delay the government's asset sale programme, it should not be allowed to derail it, given the criticality of asset sales to this year's fiscal math. Absorbing all the oil windfall through higher taxes as a substitute for asset sales would be a suboptimal mix. More fundamentally, the salutary effects of falling crude prices — which would boost India's macros relative to other emerging markets — should not mask the imperative to continue with reforms, particularly recognising and resolving any further financial sector stress proactively. Global markets are witnessing their most acute volatility since 2008. All we can do is mind our own house amidst the gathering global storm.

The writer is chief India economist at JP Morgan. Views are personal

### WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"What must be understood is that the coronavirus spreads among people. Stockpiling on essentials deprives fellow citizens from having access to preventative measures like proper hand-washing." — THE DHAKA TRIBUNE

## Predators and the prey

We may need to overturn normalised spectres that govern our relationship with insects



BIBEK DEBROY

LAST MONTH, THERE was a news report about scientists in a Belgian university experimenting with larva fat in waffles, cakes and cookies. Their idea is to replace butter. Insects are more sustainable than cattle. They use less water and less land.

The idea of entomophagy (eating insects), however is hardly new — though larva fat isn't entomophagy, at least directly. For instance, there was the 2013 FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) paper, 'Edible insects: future prospects for food and feed security'. A few years earlier, in 2010, there was another FAO publication, with the catchier title, 'Forest insects as food: humans bite back'. The 2010 publication is a collection of papers presented at a workshop in Thailand in 2008 and it's only about edible forest insects.

Since the second is a diverse collection of papers, let me quote from the first paper in the volume — it's a bit like an introduction. "Insects offer particular benefits to those who want to reduce their environmental footprint, because they are exceptionally efficient in converting what they eat into tissue that can be consumed by others — about twice as efficient as chicken and pigs, and more than five times as efficient as beef cattle. Factoring in their astounding reproduction rates and fecundity, the actual food conversion efficiency of insects may be 20 times that of cattle. Moreover, insects feed on a far wider range of plants than conventional livestock. Insect consumption may also help to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of livestock production as insect rearing requires far less space and generates less pollution. As a food source, insects are highly nutritious. Many insect species contain as much — or more — protein as meat or fish. Some insects, especially in the larval stage, are also rich in fat and most insects contain significant percentages of amino acids and essential vitamins and minerals. Insects that are collected from forest areas are generally clean and free of chemicals, and in some areas are even considered to be 'health foods'... Even with only a relatively few species being eaten by humans, the incredible numbers of insects in the world — by some estimates, there are as many as 10 quintillion individual insects alive at any given time — add up to massive quantities of potential food." The collection also had papers on individual countries, local entomophagy practices, so to speak. Not unexpectedly, there was no paper for India. (There was one for Sri Lanka.)

With global population headed towards nine billion, humans will perforce seek out other sources of food. Food habits aren't

constant over time. Before the advent of agriculture — even monoculture, and animal husbandry — food habits were different. Social norms change over time, a fact worth remembering, before saying "ugh" at the sound of a bug. Most of us would know about Nirad Chandra Chaudhuri. At one point, in the 1940s, he lived in Delhi. His wife Amiya Chaudhuri (born Amiya Dhar) was an author in her own right and published two installments of her autobiography in the early 1990s (she died without completing the third). I don't know whether these have been translated into English (from Bengali). In the second of the two volumes, she spoke about her life in Delhi in the 1940s. At that time, Delhi used to be frequently visited by locusts. That's the reason the East Punjab Agricultural Pests, Diseases and Noxious Weeds Act, 1949 applied to Delhi. If you were a male Delhi resident, aged more than 14, the Collector could requisition your services to destroy locusts. (This legislation still exists on the statute books, though there have been suggestions for repeal. It features in the list of Delhi laws the Centre for Civil Society has identified for repeal.) To get back to Amiya Chaudhuri's autobiography, when Delhi was invaded by locusts — typically in the evening — it was routine to have a feast of fried locusts.

The 2013 FAO publication said: "It is estimated that insects form part of the traditional diets of at least two billion people. More than 1,900 species have reportedly been used as food... Globally, the most commonly consumed insects are beetles (*Coleoptera*, 31 per cent), caterpillars (*Lepidoptera*, 18 per cent) and bees, wasps and ants (*Hymenoptera*, 14 per cent). Following these are grasshoppers, locusts and crickets (*Orthoptera*, 13 per cent), cicadas, leafhoppers, planthoppers, scale insects and true bugs (*Hemiptera*, 10 per cent), termites (*Isoptera*, 3 per cent), dragonflies (*Odonata*, 3 per cent), flies (*Diptera*, 2 per cent) and other orders (5 per cent)." Insects are a good idea as human food and animal feed. The word "insects" is used in a broad sense, to cover arachnids (spiders/scorpion). Technically, arachnids are not insects. However, from the culinary and cuisine point of view, they are no different.

I suspect a major constraint is that we still gather insects (hence forest insects), not rear them. (Bees for honey are different). Insects haven't been domesticated, at least not consciously. No doubt we will get there eventually, starting with larva. Broadly, the FAO's agenda on entomophagy covers mass-production technology, food and feed safety legislation (codes, regulation, standards) and consumer education. Even though two billion people eat insects today, for many, insects are not part of the mainstream diet. Think of the innumerable horror films on insects. We don't feed on them. They feed on us. They are the predators. We are the prey. However, we have now started to waffle a bit.

The writer is chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the PM. Views are personal

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### UNFAIR AND WRONG

THIS REFERS TO the report 'BJP Chief Again: Coronavirus is God's revenge against China' (IE, March 10) The BJP leader's statement is irresponsible and totally contrary to basic common sense. The COVID-19 epidemic is the common enemy of mankind. It is still unclear where the virus is originated. China's bold measures to control COVID-19 have been widely praised by the international community. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO's Director General, has pointed out that China's strong measures not only controlled the spread of the epidemic in China, but also prevented it from spreading to other countries. China has provided medical supplies to affected countries such as South Korea and Japan, and sent medical experts to Iran and Iraq to help these countries control the epidemic. In recent years, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi have reached broad consensus on issues of bilateral importance. We hope Indian friends, regardless of political parties, follow the instructions of leaders of our two countries, and cherish the friendship that doesn't come easily.

Zhou Yaoyao, Protocol officer and Press secretary, Consulate General of People's Republic of China, Kolkata

#### VALLEY'S NEW PARTY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Deja Vu Party', (IE, March 11). The formation of a new political party in Kashmir is a gimmick that has been enacted several times in the Valley. The process was

#### LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

started by none other than Jawaharlal Nehru. This time, the choice of carrying out the agenda of the ruling party at the Centre would fall on a person who is bereft of political acumen. Those who boast that they would resolve the Kashmir issue by repeating communally what the Congress did in a "secular" manner are simply pushing Kashmir towards deeper uncertainty.

MY G Nairang, Kulgam

#### VIRUS AND MARKETS

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Markets infected: Blood bath on global markets as oil plunges, virus impact spreads' (IE, March 10). Stock markets have been thrown into disarray by COVID-19. The crashing of crude oil prices by around 30 per cent can, however, provide relief. The reduced prices should be passed on to the consumers.

Yugal Kishore Sharma, Faridabad



ANIL DHARKER

## A Gandhi-mukt Congress

Congress leaders abandoning ship is a function of the High Command's apathy

IT'S NOW BEEN eight months since Rahul Gandhi's resignation as Congress president. In the long and eventful months since then, supine Congressmen (also known as "loyalists") have done nothing but wait for Rahul to change his mind.

If nothing else, what happened with Jyotiraditya Scindia should wake them up. Not only did the party lose one of its prominent young leaders, it could lose the state of Madhya Pradesh. The writing should have really been on the wall in bold letters after the Delhi elections — where the Congress not only got zero seats, but 63 of its 66 candidates lost their deposits and the party's vote share was a mere 4.26 per cent. But for the Congress' so-called High Command, it was business as usual, which is party-speak for doing nothing at all.

The recent violence in Northeast Delhi, where 53 people, mostly Muslims, were shot, burnt or bludgeoned to death were killings waiting to happen: The sectarian divisiveness propagated by Hindutva forces had to explode somewhere; it just happened to be Delhi. Tomorrow, it could be elsewhere. The lawlessness of the UP government of Ajay Singh Bisht, the open expressions of hate in the name of religion all over the country, the venom spewed daily by BJP spokesmen and leaders, all keep the communal pot boiling: When sane voices express dissent at such points, they are branded anti-nationals and

told to go to Pakistan. As a result, India's delicate social fabric is being torn, and its international image has taken a beating. It doesn't help that our important institutions have been compromised, and the highest courts in the land have become timid. It is, therefore, important for the Congress to rejuvenate itself, not just for its own sake but for the sake of the nation: Despite its depleted numbers, the Congress remains the only national party other than the BJP.

It is instructive to look at the results of state elections from December 2018. The BJP lost power in five states: Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Jharkhand. It was routed by the AAP in Delhi recently, while in Haryana it just scraped through to form a coalition government. If this is happening despite a moribund Congress, how much more could a revived Congress achieve?

What Narendra Modi has managed to accomplish is to solidify in the voter's mind the "TINA factor". Even those who were disenchanted with the party's dismal governance record from 2014 to 2019, invoked this: "There is no alternative", they said. No objective person can doubt Rahul Gandhi's earnestness and his essential goodness. But he has never come across as a strong alternative to Modi.

It's heartening, therefore, that many Congressmen have defied the "loyalist" cul-

ture and have called for a new leadership to take over. There are, predictably, some who seek Sonia Gandhi's continuance as president, although it's clear that the party needs a new, dynamic leadership. Sonia Gandhi saved the party when it was in dire straits, and led it to two election victories, but even the best leaders cannot go on forever. Perhaps, out of respect for her, they should invent a new title — President Emeritus. There's also talk of Priyanka Gandhi. This is downright absurd: It not only gives the BJP the opportunity to continue its "dynasty" attack, but it also ignores the sentiment of meritocracy which is now driving young India. Here Priyanka fails miserably: In UP, where she has been in charge, the Congress vote share was 6.3 per cent, even below that of the BSP and Samajwadi Party, and where the Congress now has just one MP! Scindia's defection is no doubt unprincipled and self-serving, but it is said that he couldn't get an "audience" with Rahul Gandhi for almost a year. A prominent Congressman, supposedly close to the party's leader, can't even get to see him!

After the Congress defeat in the 2014 general election, the party has been abandoned by three former chief ministers, six state party presidents, seven former Union ministers and many other prominent members. Some of these were undoubtedly due to opportunism, but much has to do with the High

Command's apathy and imperiousness.

It's time to recognise that there are far better Congressmen outside the Gandhi family who could fill the role of Congress president. There's Shashi Tharoor who has gone beyond his international experience at the UN to become a highly effective MP from Thiruvananthapuram since 2009; Mallikarjun Kharge, leader of the Congress in the last Lok Sabha and a former minister; Captain Amarinder Singh, the CM of Punjab, Sachin Pilot, who has shown his mettle in Rajasthan. Who knows, given the chance, which of them may emerge as the leader? A precondition for that, though, is a scrupulously fair and well-conducted secret ballot involving all the members of the AICC in which they will vote to elect members of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and the Congress president. It's quite an anomaly that a political party, which is such a strong advocate for democracy, doesn't practice it internally.

Whoever emerges from these elections as the Congress president will have to work towards a national agenda which unites opposition parties. The new leader will, therefore, have to be a consensus builder. But first, let that leader emerge, and as soon as possible. Otherwise, the Congress will just be a sad, distant memory.

Dharker is a writer and columnist





**CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK**  
 YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED DAILY

**Should you swim, or play sport with body contact?**

ON WEDNESDAY, when Bhuvneshwar Kumar was asked whether Indian pacers would limit the use of spit on the ball, he said the team would follow doctors' instructions. Amid the coronavirus outbreak, many are asking whether to pursue a sport that perhaps requires physical contact, and even recreational swimmers are wondering whether they should stay away from the pool.

In an advisory on March 5, the Health Protection Surveillance Centre of Ireland said that if recommended chlorination standards are maintained, then swimming pools are safe. "Please note also that the minimum recommended free chlorine residual depends on the type of pool or chlorination chemical used — for example spa pools ('jacuzzis') need a higher residual... Regardless of the type of pool, adherence to the appropriate guidelines will control risk from waterborne COVID-19 virus."

Illnesses of this kind do not usually spread by water. "The important thing is to deal with COVID at a community rather than an individual level; having said that, I would say that swimming pools are relatively safe," Dr Anand Krishnan, professor of community medicine at AIIMS, said. "I cannot say whether chlorination is effective

in killing the virus because this is a new virus. However for most respiratory illnesses and influenza, swimming is not a primary source of infection. You have to understand that except in old people with co-morbidities, the individual's risk of getting an infection is quite low." Dr Krishnan said 60 cases in a country of 135 crore is a clear indication that the actual risk of infection is low unless one has come in contact with a person who is unwell or has travelled to one of the areas where the infection is rampant.

Skipping sports is not necessary either. That three young students from Kerala, who were evacuated from Wuhan, recovered and went home, showed that being young and fit is an advantage in the battle against coronavirus. "The bottom-line is that anyone with symptoms of the disease should isolate himself or herself. They should be in home isolation. If you do that no matter what you do, the disease won't spread," Dr Krishnan said.

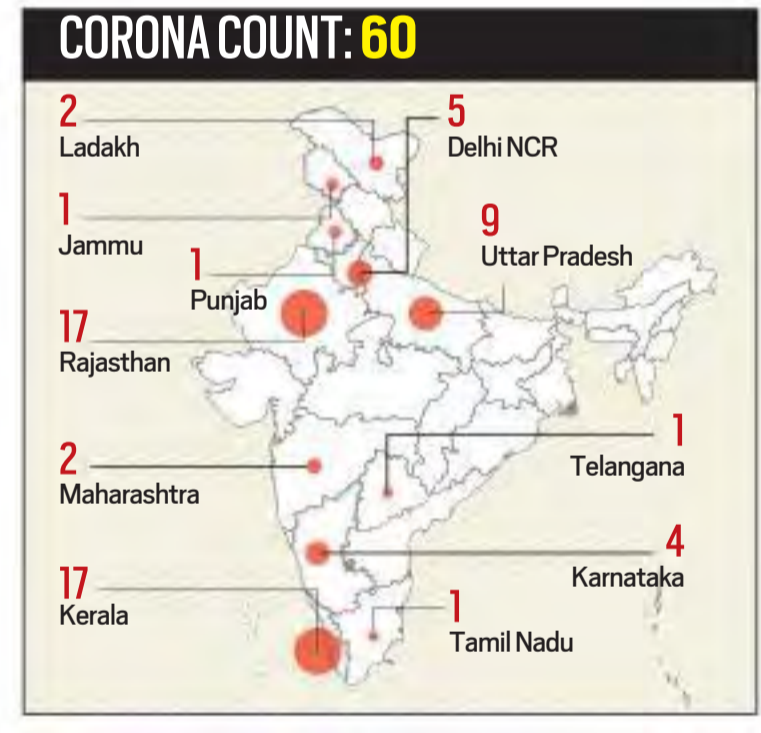
Obviously, regular handwashing/sanitisation precautions would also apply to locker rooms and dorms for swimmers and sports persons. The disease may not come from the pool, but lowering your guard once out of it isn't advisable.

**How safe is public transport?**

THE CONFIRMATION of coronavirus cases from Maharashtra has raised concerns about using public transport, particularly in Mumbai where huge numbers travel by local trains daily. In an interview earlier this week, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan had told *The Indian Express* that public transport is an area of concern. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has issued an advisory asking that all necessary steps be taken in public transport vehicles to ensure sanitation of seats, handles & bars. "The hygiene and sanitation may be stepped up at all the Bus Terminals and the dis-

play of public health messages may be ensured on public transport vehicles, Bus Terminals and the Bus Stops. The Ministry has requested that States/UTs to take expeditious action and mobilize all necessary support in this regard," said a government statement.

As India has recorded community transmission, the time will soon come to include railway compartments in this list. Since the feasibility of this step in Mumbai locals is untested, for an individual, hand-washing/sanitisation before touching the face, and coughing/sneezing etiquette remain the best weapons against COVID-19.



Map from Health Ministry data, some state govts may have reported more

**QUARANTINE**  
 Travellers including Indians will be quarantined for 14 days if they return after Feb 15 from these countries:  
 ■ China ■ Italy  
 ■ Iran ■ S Korea  
 ■ France ■ Spain  
 ■ Germany

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

**IAS MOCK INTERVIEW**  
 India's Most Experienced Interview Panel is Here!

**GS SCORE** 9953595114  
 An Institute for Civil Services [www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)

SIMPLY PUT **QUESTION & ANSWER**

**The hunt for corona treatment**

It will take months before a line of treatment or vaccine against the disease can be developed. How are scientists worldwide collaborating? A look at what genetic information is being studied, and why

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS**  
 PUNE, MARCH 11

SCIENTISTS ACROSS the world are trying to develop a line of treatment and a possible vaccine for COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, which has infected over 100,000 people and claimed over 4,000 lives. Even the most optimistic timelines, however, don't see a line of treatment or vaccine arriving before next year. Meanwhile, a global effort is on to collect and analyse the genetic composition of the new virus, which would be key to developing a cure and a vaccine.

**What kind of genetic information is being studied?**

Laboratories in various countries have been isolating and sharing the genome sequences of the virus on an international platform. Whole genome sequencing is the process of determining the complete DNA sequence of an organism's genome at a single time. Genome sequence is the unique code of genetic material of any organism, and determines the characteristic of any organism. The gene composition of novel coronavirus, for instance, is different from that of the influenza virus. Every organism has a unique genome sequence.

So far, 326 sets of data have been shared. India has so far reported two sets of genome sequences, both of which are very similar to the original sequences collected from patients in Wuhan. Scientists say this is expected since the sequences were extracted from the first positive cases in Kerala, who had returned from Wuhan. China has contributed 120 sequences.

**So, why are so many genome sequences being isolated?**

When viruses multiply, or reproduce, there is a copying mechanism that transfers the gene information to the next generation. However, no copying mechanism is perfect. When the virus multiplies, there will be small changes, which are called mutations. These mutations accumulate over time, and after prolonged periods, are responsible for evolution into new organisms. Within a single reproduction, the changes are extremely minor. More than 95 per cent of the gene structure remains the same.



At National Institute of Virology, Pune, where genome sequencing is done for final confirmation of coronavirus. Pavan Khengre

However, the small changes that occur are crucial to understanding the nature and behaviour of the organism. In this case, for example, the small changes could provide scientists with information about the origin, transmission, and impact of the virus on the patient. It could also hold clues to the differing effects the virus could have on patients with different health parameters.

**What explains the huge difference between the number of genome sequences contributed by China (120) and India (2)?**

India has far fewer positive cases compared to China, South Korea, Iran, Italy, or even the United States. Every day, about 20-30 genome sequences are being shared from different laboratories across the world. Patients who have been infected with the virus in similar conditions are unlikely to show any significant changes in the genome sequences. For example, the positive cases in a group of 40 from Maharashtra, who visited Dubai last month, are likely to have sim-

ilar genome sequences, and therefore, one or two representative sequencing could be adequate from the group. Patients with existing medical conditions could be other candidates from where genome sequences of this virus could be isolated. This could help scientists to look for clues to possible impact of virus amidst those existing medical conditions.

Some countries have been reporting genome sequences much faster than others. China has contributed 120 sequences so far, but has not been sharing any more for the last few days. The US has shared 43 genome sequences, while the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have contributed 25 each.

Scientists say new technological tools have made it easier to isolate full genome sequences. Traditional techniques used to take weeks for the extraction, but new machines are able to do it within two to three days.

The two Indian sequences have both come from patients who had returned from Wuhan where the outbreak began in December last year.

**Currently, what is the most effective medication?**

As of now, scientists do not know. The ideal way of testing a drug to show that it is effective is to compare no-treatment to new-treatment in a clinical trial. Using a drug or drugs in one or two persons provides anecdotal evidence.

In trials, data is accumulated from many people. Although several efforts to develop drugs are going on, scientists say success is unlikely to come immediately.

Right now, drugs are being repurposed, meaning old drugs for similar diseases are being checked for their efficacy against COVID-19. These drugs, if they work, will require clinical trials, and then can be made widely available for people. In most cases, symptomatic treatment for fever, body ache, and cough will be sufficient. More severe cases will require oxygen and respiratory support. New drugs will be useful particularly for severe cases, but we will have to wait to see how long it will take to get repurposed drugs and new drugs.

**How a Saudi-Russian tussle tanked oil prices**

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

SAUDI ARABIA and the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday announced they would raise crude oil output by the equivalent of 3.6% of global supplies, adding 3.6 million barrels per day (bpd) to a market that is already massively oversupplied.

Saudi Aramco, Saudi Arabia's national petroleum and natural gas company, said on Tuesday that it would boost output to 12.3 million barrels per day (bpd) from the current 9.8 million bpd from April 1. On Wednesday, the company said it had been asked by the Saudi Energy Ministry to raise capacity further to 13 million bpd, and it was "exerting its maximum efforts to implement this directive as soon as possible".

Soon afterward, Abu Dhabi's oil and gas company ADNOC said it was boosting output by 25% to 4 million bpd.

This extraordinary flooding of the market will take place at a time when the coronavirus outbreak has severely impacted businesses and travel, and global demand is predicted to shrink for the first time in nearly 10 years. Brent crude was trading at around \$36 on Wednesday, up from the week's low



Saudi and Russian Energy Ministers at a meeting of OPEC+ in 2019. Reuters file

of about \$31, but still some 45% lower since the beginning of 2020.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE have taken a united stand in their ongoing battle with Moscow, which last week rejected a demand by Riyadh that the OPEC+, an informal alliance of OPEC and Russia, should cut production sharply to arrest crashing prices. In retaliation, the Gulf allies have decided to scrap all limits on production.

At the meeting of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries — a cartel of 14 oil producers led by Saudi Arabia — in

Vienna, Riyadh proposed that OPEC+ should pump about 1 million bpd less, with Russia cutting 500,000 bpd, so that revenue streams do not narrow further for oil export-dependent economies. The crippling of industrial production in China and other Asian countries such as South Korea has resulted in a sharp reduction in their import of crude oil.

But Moscow argued that production should not be cut until the full impact of the COVID-19 outbreak is assessed in greater detail, and that any attempt to shore up prices would only benefit the costlier US shale industry, which has raised production to levels higher than both Saudi Arabia's and Russia's.

It did offer to continue talking, but Riyadh said there was no point — and announced on Tuesday plans to boost production by 300,000 barrels beyond Aramco's current maximum sustained capacity. *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Russia too, was ready to raise production.

The Saudi-Russian fight signals an end, at least temporarily, to the truce between these two large oil producers that had brought Moscow a seat at the OPEC high table, and held off a potential price war for more than three years now. Russia had benefited from the deal not only in terms of oil revenues and expanding business networks, but also in foreign

policy — improving relations with Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, the *de facto* ruler of Saudi Arabia, has given President Vladimir Putin greater influence over developments in countries like Syria, Iraq, and Libya.

However, the OPEC+ deal to control production also helped the American frackers. To many Russian economic nationalists, the rise of shale at the cost of state-controlled energy giant Gazprom and Russia's biggest oil company Rosneft was difficult to accept. Analysts have said that in walking out of its marriage of convenience with OPEC and the Saudis now, Moscow may be trying to drive prices below the break-even point of shale oil production.

"The Kremlin has decided to sacrifice OPEC+ to stop US shale producers and punish the US for messing with Nord Stream 2," a Bloomberg report quoted Alexander Dynkin of the state-run thinktank, Institute of World Economy and International Relations in Moscow, as saying. "Of course, to upset Saudi Arabia could be a risky thing, but this is Russia's strategy at the moment — flexible geometry of interests." Nord Stream 2 is a Gazprom-owned pipeline to supply Russian gas to Germany, whose completion has been stalled due to US sanctions.

**35 yrs after transistor blasts in Delhi, how prosecution's case fell**

**PRITAMPAL SINGH**  
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

LAST WEEK, a Delhi court acquitted 30 of the 59 individuals chargesheeted for a series of transistor bomb blasts that took place in 1985. Of the remaining 29, five are proclaimed offenders who never appeared for trial, five had been discharged in 2006, and 19 are now dead.

The blasts had killed 49 people and injured 127 in Delhi alone. On May 10, 1985, bombs fitted in transistors went off in buses and other places in Delhi and adjoining areas of UP and Haryana. On the next two days, two more live transistor bombs were found in Delhi.

**The police case**  
 FIRs were lodged under the Explosive Substances Act against unknown persons. During their investigation, police received

information about transistor bombs being manufactured in a house in Delhi's West Patel Nagar, from where they arrested three men — Kartar Singh Narang, Mohinder Singh Oberoi, and Manmohan Singh.

Police claimed that searches of the men and Narang's house had unearthed a piece of paper on which the formula of gunpowder was written, and another containing names and telephone numbers of others (who were subsequently made accused); items used for making bombs, live .22 cartridges, and gunpowder; and documents showing that the blasts were carried out in protest against the killing of Sikhs following Indira Gandhi's assassination, and against Operation Blue Star.

A Special Investigation Team under A K Kanth, then DCP (Central) of Delhi, was set up in 1985.

**The trial**  
 Cases registered in UP and Haryana



Series of transistor bombs went off in May 1985. Express Archive

were transferred to Delhi, to be tried together, on orders passed by the Supreme Court in 1986, 1989 and 1991.

On July 31, 2006, the Delhi court framed charges under various sections of the IPC including murder, attempt to murder, crim-

inal conspiracy and waging war against the government of India, under the Explosive Substances Act and the Arms Act.

After the charges were framed, a fresh FIR was registered regarding documents having gone missing. In August 2006, a departmental inquiry was initiated against officials responsible for the disappearance of court documents. The original police chargesheet too was misplaced and police filed a reconstructed chargesheet.

The defence counsel contended that the accused had been falsely implicated.

**The grounds for acquittal**

On March 5, Additional Sessions Judge Sandeep Yadav ruled that the investigation "was defective, lopsided, unfair and suffered from various lacunae".

■ The court said the prosecution failed to prove which of the accused was involved in which blast, and what was the fate of five other cases registered in South Delhi. It was

not even proved that these accused knew each other and thus, the court said, the very foundation of charge of conspiracy is shaken. It said it was not proved which of the accused was an expert in making transistor bombs, which were not used in any blasts earlier.

■ The court noted there is hardly any evidence on record against the accused besides their own disclosure statement. It said police had picked up various persons and made them approvers after pressuring and torturing them. A number of witnesses deposed about the manner in which they were pressured by police, "so as to create a false edifice of the alleged conspiracy".

■ Documents including disclosure statements, seizure memos, statements under Section 164 CrPC, pamphlets/letters, are not on record. The court said it cannot even be said that these documents were missing; the prosecution did not establish that these documents existed.

■ About the alleged recoveries, the judge

observed that no effort was made by "investigating officers to associate public witnesses to recovery/search proceedings rendering the same doubtful". In some cases, public witnesses were associated with the investigation but they were not examined in court. The prosecution examined 354 witnesses out of 1,399 cited in their chargesheet.

■ The court referred to *Tomaso Bruno and Anr vs State of UP* (2012), in which the Allahabad High Court held that where a case is based on the circumstantial evidence, proof of motive will be an important corroborative piece of evidence. In the Delhi case, while the prosecution's version was that the accused had hatched a conspiracy to create disharmony amongst various communities to take revenge for Operation Blue Star and the riots of November 1984, the prosecution "miserably failed to prove that any relatives, friends, near and dears of the accused persons died in the 1984 riots or in Blue Star Operation", the court said.



## KENYA POACHERS KILL 2 RARE WHITE GIRAFFES

A white female giraffe and her 7-month-old calf, whose rare pigmentation mesmerised wildlife enthusiasts around the world, have been killed by poachers in Kenya, officials said. The deaths of the giraffes left just one of the unusually coloured animals in the country's wild, a bull, out of a family of three, conservancy officials said.



### TOP OF THE WORLD



#### RUSSIA

### Parliament backs changes allowing Putin to run again for president

Moscow: Constitutional changes allowing Vladimir Putin to run for president again in 2024 sailed through Russia's lower house of parliament on Wednesday, opening the way for him to potentially stay in power until 2036. Putin, 67, who has dominated the Russian political landscape for two decades as either president or prime minister, made a dramatic appearance in the chamber a day earlier to argue that term limits were less important in times of crisis. Putin, a former KGB officer, is currently required by the constitution to step down in 2024 when his second sequential and fourth presidential term ends. But the amendment would formally reset his presidential term tally to zero.

### PAKISTAN F-16 jet crashes in Islamabad, pilot killed

Islamabad: A Pakistan Air Force pilot was killed on Wednesday when his F-16 fighter jet crashed in Islamabad while carrying out rehearsals for the country's Republic Day parade to be held on March 23. Wing Commander Nouman Akram died in the crash in a jungle near Shakarparian area of the capital, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) said in a statement. The US-built F-16 fighter plane was carrying out routine exercises for the Pakistan Day parade when it crashed, it said, adding that the PAF has ordered an inquiry into the cause of the crash.

### WEST ASIA Israeli soldiers kill Palestinian teen at protest

Ramallah: Israeli troops killed a Palestinian teenager in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday during a protest against feared Israeli land confiscation, the Palestinian Health Ministry said. The Israeli military had no immediate comment. A Reuters cameraman at the scene said protesters threw rocks at soldiers, who opened fire and shot tear gas canisters while trying to clear them from a hilltop near the Israeli settlement of Itamar. The Palestinian Health Ministry said one youth, aged 15, was killed by a live bullet, and another 18 protesters were wounded by rubber-coated metal bullets fired by the troops.

### BANGLADESH Thousands left homeless after huge fire in slum

Dhaka: A massive fire ripped through one of Bangladesh's largest slums here on Wednesday, leaving hundreds of shanties gutted and thousands of people homeless, according to media reports. The fire broke out on Wednesday morning at the Shialbari Jhilpar Slum in Mirpur's Rupnagar residential area where some 20,000 people lived in around 2,000 shanties. Fire Service and Civil Defence Director (Operations) Zillur Rahman told reporters that no casualty was reported immediately.

## 'ALL COUNTRIES CAN STILL CHANGE THE COURSE OF THIS PANDEMIC'

# WHO: Coronavirus a pandemic

Normal life increasingly upended; 168 more die in Italy; multiple European countries report 1st cases

NICOLE WINFIELD, COLLEEN BARRY & JOHN LEICESTER  
ROME, MARCH 11

EXPRESSING INCREASING alarm about mounting infections, the World Health Organisation declared Wednesday that the global coronavirus crisis is now a pandemic.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who heads the UN agency, said the WHO is "deeply concerned by the alarming levels of spread and severity" of the outbreak. He also expressed concern about "the alarming levels of inaction".

"We have, therefore, made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterised as a pandemic," he said at a briefing in Geneva.

"All countries can still change the course of this pandemic. If countries detect, test, treat, isolate, trace and mobilise their people in the response," Tedros said.

In Italy, Premier Giuseppe Conte said he would consider requests from Lombardy, Italy's hardest-hit region, to toughen the already extraordinary anti-virus lockdown that was extended nationwide Tuesday. Lombardy wants to shut down nonessential businesses and reduce public transportation.

China's new worry is that the coronavirus could re-enter from abroad. Beijing's city government announced that all overseas visitors will be quarantined for 14 days.

In France, the government's weekly Cabinet meeting was moved to a bigger room so President Emmanuel Macron and his ministers could sit at least 1 meter (more than 3 feet) apart.

Normal life was increasingly being upended.

Deaths soared among Italy's aging population. Authorities said Italy has suffered 631 deaths, with an increase of 168 fatalities recorded Tuesday. In Spain, the number of cases surged past the 2,000-mark on Wednesday. Belgium, Bulgaria, Sweden and Albania announced their first virus-related deaths.

"If you want to be blunt, Europe is the new China," said Robert Redfield, the head of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Dozens of cases have been tied to a conference in Boston, and leaders in multiple states were announcing curbs on large events. Colleges emptied their classrooms as they moved to on-line instruction and uncertainty surrounded the upcoming opening of the major league baseball season and college basketball's championships. AP



People wearing masks as a precaution against the COVID-19 illness in Hong Kong Wednesday. AP

## UK, Iran ministers test positive

AGENCIES  
TEHRAN, LONDON, MARCH 11

IRAN'S SENIOR vice president and two other Cabinet members have contracted the new coronavirus, a semi-official news agency reported on Wednesday. In Britain, a minister in the health ministry said she had tested positive for the virus.

A report by Iran's Fars news agency, believed to be close to the Revolutionary Guard, comes as President Hassan Rouhani took control of the country's much-criticised response to the virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes.



UK minister Nadine Dorries

Authorities announced that there were some 9,000 confirmed cases of the virus across Iran.

The Fars story also comes amid days of speculation about the health of Vice President Eshaq

Jahangiri. Jahangiri has not been seen in pictures of recent meetings, raising concerns. Fars said the others sick are Ali Asghar Mounesan, minister of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism, and Reza Rahmani, minister of industry, mines and business.

The death toll from the outbreak in Iran rose by 62 to 354.

In Britain, MP Nadine Dorries minister in the health department, has tested positive for coronavirus, she said in a statement on Tuesday. "I can confirm I have tested positive for coronavirus... and have been self-isolating at home," said the Conservative MP.

## Merkel: Likely 70% of Germans will be infected with coronavirus

REUTERS  
BERLIN, MARCH 11

UP TO 70% of the population is likely to be infected with the coronavirus that is currently spreading around the world, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said, adding that since there was currently no cure the focus had to be on slowing its spread.

"When the virus is out there, the population has no immunity and no therapy exists, then 60 to 70% of the population will be in-



German Chancellor says current focus is on slowing down virus

fect," she told a news conference in Berlin. "The process has to be focused on not overburdening the health system by slowing the virus's spread... It's about winning time."

Merkel spoke after mass-selling daily *Bild* lambasted her for her handling of what it called "the corona chaos": "No appearances, no speech, no leadership in the crisis," it wrote.

Germany has reported 1,296 cases of the virus, and two deaths, the Robert Koch Institute said late on Tuesday.

### EXPLAINED

## By declaring it as a pandemic, WHO seeks greater action

#### WHAT IS A PANDEMIC?

According to the WHO, a pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease. An epidemic is defined as a regional outbreak of an illness that spreads unexpectedly, and a pandemic is an epidemic that spreads over several countries and continents.

#### W.H.O.'S RELUCTANCE

The WHO has been reluctant to call the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic, fearing that it would give an impression that it was unstoppable. The organisation had said it no longer officially declared when an epidemic became a pandemic.

#### WHY NOW?

The head of the WHO has expressed his worry about "alarming inaction" by many countries to contain the spread of the virus. This, combined with the extend of the spread, likely forced the WHO to declare it a pandemic.



Joe Biden with his wife Jill in Philadelphia on Tuesday. Reuters

## Biden inches towards nomination, winning three more states

DELEGATE COUNT			
<b>JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.</b>	<b>BERNIE SANDERS</b>		
1,848,376	Votes	: 1,235,464	
177	Delegates won Tue	: 111	
857	Total delegates	: 709	

ALEXANDER BURNS & JONATHAN MARTIN  
MARCH 11



### PRIMARIES: THE DEMOCRATS

JOE BIDEN took command of the Democratic presidential race in decisive fashion on Tuesday, marshaling a powerful multiracial coalition in the South and Midwest that swept aside Sen. Bernie Sanders and completed Biden's rapid transformation from a sometimes-fumbling underdog into his party's likely presidential nominee.

Replicating the combination of voters that delivered him broad victories a week ago on Super Tuesday, Biden won Michigan, Missouri and Mississippi with overwhelming support from African Americans and with large margins among suburban and rural white voters. Sanders was more evenly matched with Biden in the West, where Idaho and Washington were too close to call. But there was

little doubt by the end of the night that Sanders had lost his recent status as the progressive front-runner in a race defined for months by factionalism in the moderating wing of the Democratic Party.

Addressing supporters in Philadelphia, in a tone that was more sober than celebratory, Biden said voters had put them "a step closer to restoring decency, dignity and honor to the White House" and moved to unify the party with an appeal to supporters of Sanders. "We share a common goal," Biden said, "and together we'll defeat Donald Trump." NYT

## Taliban reject Afghan President's conditional prisoner release plan

JIBRAN AHMAD  
KABUL, PESHAWAR, MARCH 11

THE TALIBAN said on Wednesday a plan from the Afghan president to stagger the release of Taliban prisoners violated an accord they struck with the United States and they would not talk with the Afghan government until all 5,000 prisoners were freed.

A Feb. 29 pact between the Taliban and the United States has cleared with way for the withdrawal of US-led international forces after more than 18 years of war, but peace has to be negotiated between the militants and the US-backed government.

The Taliban have promised to open talks with the government as part of the accord but say the release of their 5,000 comrades held by the government was also part of the deal, and they won't talk until all are freed.

President Ashraf Ghani has declined to release all 5,000 in one go. Instead, he has ordered the release of an initial 1,500, with the other 3,500 to be set free in parallel with progress in the peace talks.



Ghani has declined to release all 5,000 in one go. Instead, he has ordered the release of an initial 1,500

"We never agreed to any conditional release of prisoners," Suhail Shaheen, spokesman for the Taliban based in Doha, told Reuters by phone.

"If someone claims this, it will be against the peace accord that we signed on February 29." The main element of the US withdrawal agreement is a Taliban promise that they will not let Afghanistan be used by terrorists to attack the United States and its allies.

The pact will let US President Donald Trump fulfil his promise to end the war and bring all of the troops home within 14 months. REUTERS

## Harvey Weinstein sentenced to 23 years in prison

BRENDAN PIERSON & KAREN FREIFELD  
NEW YORK, MARCH 11

FORMER MOVIE producer Harvey Weinstein was sentenced on Wednesday to 23 years in prison for sexual assault and rape after giving a rambling court statement sympathising with men accused of sexual misconduct during the #MeToo era.

The sentence was handed down in Manhattan criminal court by Justice James Burke — a prison term that Weinstein's lawyer Donna Rotunno denounced as

"obscene" and "cowardly" and promised to appeal. A jury on Feb 24 found Weinstein — once one of Hollywood's most powerful men — guilty of sexually assaulting former production assistant Mimi Halesy and raping former aspiring actress Jessica Mann.

Weinstein did not testify during his trial, but spoke during a sentencing hearing in which his accusers described the emotional trauma they have endured thanks to his actions.

"I feel remorse for all of the men who are going through this fight," Weinstein, 67, told the court before he was sentenced,



sounding unrepentant.

More than 100 women, including famous actresses, have accused Weinstein of sexual misconduct stretching back decades, fuelling the #MeToo

movement against sexual abuse and harassment.

"I'm totally confused," said Weinstein, addressing the court from a wheelchair behind the defence table. Weinstein said he was worried about the "thousands of men who are losing due process" during the #MeToo movement just as people in the past had their careers destroyed when they were accused of being communists. "I think that's what's happening now all over this country," he said.

Defence lawyer Rotunno called the 23-year sentence "obnoxious" and said there are mur-

derers who will go free sooner than Weinstein will. "I am overcome with anger at that number. I think that number is a cowardly number to give. I think the judge caved, just as I believe the jury caved," Rotunno said.

Weinstein had faced the possibility of a maximum sentence of 29 years in prison.

"I'm not going to say these are not great people. I had great times with these people," Weinstein said, referring to the women he was convicted of attacking. He said he had put too much pressure on himself, adding, "I'm really trying to be a better person." REUTERS

## ONE OF SEVERAL TACTICS GREECE IS USING TO PREVENT REPEAT OF 2015 CRISIS

# 'We are like animals': Inside Greece's secret site for migrants

MATINASTEVIS-GRIDNEFF, PATRICK KINGSLEY, HALEY WILLIS & SARAH ALMUKHTAR  
POROS, MARCH 11

THE GREEK government is detaining migrants incommunicado at a secret extrajudicial location before expelling them to Turkey without due process, one of several hard-line measures taken to seal the borders to Europe that experts say violate international law.

Several migrants said in inter-

views that they had been captured, stripped of their belongings, beaten and expelled from Greece without being given a chance to claim asylum or speak to a lawyer, in an illegal process known as refoulement. Meanwhile, Turkish officials said that at least three migrants had been shot and killed while trying to enter Greece in the past two weeks.

The Greek approach is the starkest example of European efforts to prevent a reprise of the 2015 migration crisis in which more than 850,000 undocu-



A group of Syrians walk barefoot on a highway in northwestern Turkey, after being sent back by Greek border guards. NYT

mented people passed relatively easily through Greece to other parts of Europe, roiling the Continent's politics and fuelling

the rise of the far right.

A spokesman for the Greek government, Stelios Petsas, did not comment on the existence of

the site, but said that Greece detained and expelled migrants in accordance with local law.

But through a combination of on-the-ground reporting and forensic analysis of satellite imagery, *The Times* has confirmed the existence of the secret center in northeastern Greece.

When Turkish officials began to bus migrants to the Greek border on Feb. 28, a Syrian Kurd named Somar al-Hussein had a seat on one of the first coaches.

A trainee software engineer, he spent that night in the rain on

the bank of the Evros River, which divides western Turkey from eastern Greece. Early the next morning, he reached the Greek side in a rubber dinghy packed with other migrants.

But his journey ended an hour later, he said in a recent interview. Captured by Greek border guards, he said, he and his group were taken to a detention site.

The site consisted principally of three red-roofed warehouses set back from a farm road and arranged in a U-shape. Hundreds of other captured migrants

waited outside. Al-Hussein was taken indoors and crammed into a room with dozens of others.

His phone was confiscated, he said, and his requests to claim asylum and contact UN officials were ignored. "To them, we are like animals," al-Hussein said of the Greek guards.

After a night without food or drink, on March 1 al-Hussein and dozens of others were driven back to the Evros River, where Greek police officers ferried them back to the Turkish side in a small speedboat. NYT



## REGULATION IN BANGLADESH

## Rules are made to be broken

A new mobile-money firm in Bangladesh is benefiting from special treatment



In 2019 more than \$51bn of transactions were made via mobiles in Bangladesh, up from \$27bn in 2016. Reuters

THE FABRIC shops are far more eye-catching, but the business that attracts the most customers in Islampur market, Bangladesh's biggest textile bazaar, is a drab hole in the wall. A long queue of young men, all clutching mobile phones, wait patiently to hand the shopkeeper faded notes to top up their bKash accounts.

Since mobile money took off in Bangladesh nearly a decade ago, bKash has dominated the industry. It has done so well that the company's name has become a verb, notes Biru Paksha Paul, a former chief economist of Bangladesh Bank, the central bank: "I'll bKash you some money," the kids say, instead of transfer. "When Mr Paul first heard that a new firm, Nagad, was entering the business, he was pleased: "Some healthy competition at last." Alas, Nagad's success is a sign of just the opposite.

Mobile money is a big business in Bangladesh. Three-quarters of Bangladeshis have a mobile phone, but less than half have a bank account. Migrants from rural areas to the cities are eager to send remittances back to their villages, many of which lack banks, says Mamun Rashid of PWC, a consultancy. Even in the capital, Dhaka, he notes, "The traffic is so bad, sending money using a phone makes much more sense."

In 2019 more than \$51bn of transactions were made via mobiles, up from \$27bn in 2016. Almost 60% goes through bKash, which is owned by BRAC bank, a local financial institution, and several grand foreign investors, including the World Bank's private-sector arm; an affiliate of Alibaba, a giant Chinese e-commerce firm; and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, an enormous American charity. It has more than 30m customers.

But Nagad is catching up fast. Since Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the prime minister, attended its launch a year ago, its turnover has risen rapidly, to 1bn taka (\$11.8m) a day, about a seventh of bKash's total. It has also amassed lots more customers than bKash on paper — 60m — although many of these are signed up automatically, thanks to a deal with a mobile-network operator, Robi.

Tanvir Mishuk, Nagad's managing director, cites three reasons for the firm's success. First, it has simplified the cumbersome and expensive paper-based registration and anti-money-laundering checks used by other mobile-money firms. Second, it charges 1.45% of each transfer, compared with bKash's 1.85%. Third, Nagad is a joint venture between Mr Mishuk's company, Third Wave Technologies Limited (TWTL), and the post office. This arrangement is benefi-

cial for both firms, he argues. Thanks to Nagad, he says, the post office's "balance-sheet is looking better". TWTL, meanwhile, can capitalise on the post office's big network of branches and familiarity to rural Bangladeshis.

The rewards Nagad reaps from its close relationship with the government, however, go much further. Unlike other mobile-money services, Nagad is not regulated by the central bank and therefore ignores many of the regulations that bind its competitors. The limit on daily transactions for a Nagad account, for instance, is 250,000 taka. The central bank limits its rivals to 30,000 taka. This has helped Nagad attract higher-spending customers, especially business-owners, and thus bring in more revenue with fewer transactions.

Nagad's deal with Robi also bypasses the central bank's "know your cus-

tomers" rules, intended to curb money-laundering. All of Robi's customers are automatically registered with Nagad, without providing any paperwork beyond that needed to take out a mobile subscription. By the same token, Nagad does not have to provide daily settlement data to the central bank.

Mr Mishuk argues that the central bank does not need to oversee Nagad because the post office, which owns a 51% stake, already has a banking arm. The central bank disagrees. In a series of letters and inter-governmental meetings since the beginning of last year, it, along with the ministry of finance and the anti-corruption commission, have called for Nagad to be brought under central-bank control, arguing that neither the regulations on mobile money nor the laws governing the post office allow a service like Nagad to be run without nor-

mal supervision. Nagad's current status, officials have argued, provides opportunities for money-laundering, corruption and unfair competition. So far, these protests have been ignored.

"Why should one private company enjoy different rules than the others?" asks Mr Paul. The answer may lie in its ownership. Mr Mishuk says his fellow shareholders are businessmen in engineering and telecoms. But in 2017, according to documents seen by *The Economist*, Kazi Monirul Kabir, a telecoms magnate, transferred his stake in twtl to Razee Mohammad Fakhrol and Nahim Razzaq, both members of parliament, and Rezwana Nur, the wife of the prime minister's deputy press secretary, Ashraf Alam Khokon. Five months later, the partnership with the post office was signed.

Mr Razzaq was the only one of the three to respond to *The Economist's* questions about their ties to the company, saying he was no longer a shareholder. Neither he nor Mr Fakhrol declared any shares in TWTL when they took their seats in parliament last year. Mr Mishuk says they were all once shareholders, but are not anymore, although he cannot remember when they sold their shares. He also says that he has some other partners in the business, via a company in Singapore, although he cannot disclose who they are.

The government of Bangladesh has a habit of doling out favours to the well-connected. State-owned banks are rotting because of out-of-control lending to favoured businessmen, who are seldom inclined or obliged to pay back loans, says Michael Puli, an analyst covering Bangladesh at Standard & Poor's, a rating agency. Members of parliament from the ruling Awami League party have also recently urged the central bank to hand out licences for new banks to friends and relatives.

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), in government from 2001 to 2006, was no more virtuous, Mr Paul says. City-cell, the country's first mobile-phone company, whose largest stakeholder was a BNP lawmaker called Morshed Khan, thrived on the back of skewed government policies in the early 2000s. But his company's fortunes waned with his party's.

Nagad's fortunes look set to rise. It does not face "the conventional impediments" of working with the public sector because it is fulfilling the government's vision of "digital Bangladesh", says Mr Mishuk. The key to making such a public-private partnership work, he explains, is "transparency": "We make sure there is no shady request, there is no shady manipulation."

©The Economist Newspaper Limited 2020

**The government of Bangladesh has a habit of doling out favours to the well-connected. State-owned banks are rotting because of out-of-control lending to favoured businessmen, who are seldom inclined or obliged to pay back loans, says Michael Puli, an analyst covering Bangladesh at Standard & Poor's, a rating agency**

## UIGHURS

## From slammer to serfdom

What happens when China's Uighurs are released from re-education camps

AT THE end of last year the Communist Party decided to deflect some of the international opprobrium it was earning because of its vast network of detention facilities in the western region of Xinjiang. Since 2017 perhaps 1m Uighurs, a predominantly Muslim group indigenous to the area, have been thrown into the prison camps, which are officially referred to as vocational-training centres. Offences include even the most innocuous forms of piety, such as sporting long beards. The party had claimed the centres were necessary to "deradicalise" potential terrorists. Few outsiders accepted this implausible argument. So in December Xinjiang's government declared that "all trainees" in the camps had "graduated".

Where are they now? A report published on March 1st by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), a think-tank in Canberra, reveals that some former detainees in Xinjiang have swapped one form of coercion for another, and have been obliged to go work in other provinces. In 2017-19, the study found, more than 80,000 Uighurs were shipped out of Xinjiang to take jobs in factories across China under conditions that "strongly suggest forced labour". An analysis of government documents suggests that many prisoners were transferred directly from the detention centres to their

**Since 2017 perhaps 1m Uighurs, a predominantly Muslim group indigenous to the area, have been thrown into the prison camps, which are officially referred to as vocational-training centres. Offences include even the most innocuous forms of piety, such as sporting long beards**

new workplaces.

Vicky Xu, the study's lead author, found that at least 27 factories in nine provinces benefit from this labour-transfer scheme. Many are links in supply chains of prominent Western brands like Apple, Dell, Mercedes-Benz and Nike. Not all such companies may be aware of this, since big multinationals are unlikely to deal directly with every subcontractor.

China's government openly admits that it arranges for the transfer of "surplus" Uighur workers in Xinjiang to the rest of China. The scheme, meant to reduce poverty, is known

as "Xinjiang Aid". Factories in wealthy coastal provinces, which tend to be short of labour, offer higher wages than most forms of manual work in Xinjiang, a poorer region. The government insists that participation in the programme is entirely voluntary. The foreign ministry impugns the integrity of ASPI, accusing it, without evidence, of ties with the "US government and arms dealers".

Ms Xu acknowledges that there may be a "genuinely" voluntary component. Even so, her research indicates that once Uighur workers arrive on factory sites, their freedoms are severely curbed. Satellite imagery and first-hand accounts compiled by Ms Xu and her co-authors paint a disturbing picture. Uighur workers live in segregated quarters and eat in separate canteens from their ethnic-Han comrades. In some factories Uighurs are paid less for the same work. Relatives back in Xinjiang are said to face threats lest Uighur workers think of resigning before their contracts end.

A recent online ad for "government-sponsored" Uighur labour posted by an agent affiliated to Xinjiang's government extols the benefits of hiring Uighurs. One such benefit is the "semi-military style of management", says the posting. That is because a "government-appointed companion" is required to live on-site for every 50-100 Uighurs, the



Workers walk by the perimeter fence of what is officially known as a vocational skills education centre in Dabancheng in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, in September 2018. Reuters

agent explains. The function of this "companion", whose salary must be borne by the prospective employer, is ostensibly to prevent cultural misunderstanding between

Uighurs and Han Chinese. In all likelihood, however, they are really there to snoop and to enforce discipline. "If one Uighur misbehaves, they all get sent back." It may be a

while yet before criticism of the party's conduct in Xinjiang dries up.

©The Economist Newspaper Limited 2020



# 19 ECONOMY

<b>GOLD</b>	<b>RUPEE</b>	<b>OIL</b>	<b>SILVER</b>
₹44,517	₹73.68	\$34.52	₹47,234

\*Indian basket as on March 10, 2020

SENSEX: 35,697.40 ▲ 62.45 NIFTY: 10,458.40 ▲ 6.95 NIKKEI: 19,416.06 ▼ 451.06 HANG SENG: 25,231.61 ▼ 160.90 FTSE: 5,951.25 ▼ 8.98 DAX: 10,526.77 ▲ 51.28

\*International market data till 19:00 IST

## VISA SUSPENSION, POOR DOMESTIC OUTLOOK MAY ADD TO AIRLINES' WOES

# COVID-19 cloud: IndiGo says earnings to be 'materially impacted', others cancel flights

**PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

DURING A period that is usually deemed to be the leanest in a year for Indian airlines, the added impact of the COVID-19 outbreak has carriers bracing for impact from plummeting demand, mounting flight cancellations and a consequential grounding of a part of their fleets. IndiGo, India's largest airline which handles nearly half of the country's domestic passengers, said on Wednesday it expects its quarterly earnings to be "materially impacted" because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"In January and February 2020, IndiGo experienced modest impact from the coronavirus. We cancelled our flights to China and Hong Kong and reduced frequency to certain other Southeast Asia markets. This capacity was redeployed in other markets without having a material impact on our revenues," IndiGo said in a notice to the exchanges. "Over the past few days, however, week-on-week, we have seen a 15-20 per cent decline in our daily bookings. Please note that the numbers could change from here based on how the situation evolves," it said.

The International Air Transport Association has estimated global revenue losses for airlines of up to a maximum \$113 billion, excluding impact on cargo operations. IndiGo, which ferried 6.79 crore passengers last year, said: "We expect our quarterly earnings to be materially impacted because of the above. In addition, the rupee has also depreciated sharply which will have an adverse impact on our dollar denominated liabilities primarily on account of capitalised operating leases".

Airlines	Origin	Destination	Flight Status	Till
Air India	Delhi	Milan/Rome/Singapore	Reduced Frequency	March 27
	Delhi	Shanghai/Hong Kong	Cancelled	June 30
	Delhi	Doha	Cancelled	NA
Air India Express	Ahmedabad/Mumbai/Goa/Hyderabad	Kuwait City	Cancelled	NA
	Mumbai/Mangalore/Kozhikode/Kannur/Kochi	Doha	Cancelled	NA
	Mangalore/Kannur/Kozhikode	Kuwait City	Cancelled	NA
IndiGo	Delhi	Chengdu	Cancelled	June 14
	Bengaluru	Hong Kong	Cancelled	June 14
	Kolkata	Guangzhou	Cancelled	June 14
SpiceJet	Delhi/Mumbai/Hyderabad/Kozhikode/Kannur/Kochi/Bengaluru/Chennai	Doha	Cancelled	March 17
	Delhi/Mumbai/Kochi/Chennai	Kuwait City	Cancelled	NA
	Delhi	Hong Kong	Cancelled	March 31
Vistara	Delhi	Bangkok	Reduced Frequency	March 31
	Delhi/Mumbai	Singapore	Reduced Frequency	March 31
Mahan Air/Iran Air	Delhi	Tehran	Cancelled	NA
Jazeera Airways	Delhi/Ahmedabad/Mumbai/Kochi/Hyderabad	Kuwait City	Cancelled	NA
Kuwait Airways	Delhi/Ahmedabad/Mumbai/Kochi/Thiruvananthapuram/Bengaluru/Chennai	Kuwait City	Cancelled	NA

Note: As of 10 pm IST; Sources: Airlines, DGCA, Flightradar24

However, IndiGo is not the only airline to run into headwinds developing from the coronavirus outbreak. Almost all major Indian airlines including Air India, Air India Express, SpiceJet and Vistara have cancelled flights to several Southeast and West Asian destinations on account of weak demand. "Future passenger loads are expected to be down. Typically, between March 10 and April 15, worst loads of the year are witnessed because of exam period, which also curtails business travel. While it will be unfair to blame everything on coronavirus, some impact is being seen. People have not really started booking for summers," said Ameiya Joshi, a former

aviation industry professional dealing with network planning and founder of NetworkThoughts. Further, with cases in Europe rising daily, Air India — currently India's only long-haul operator — could be faced with excessive capacity of wide-bodied aircraft. The national carrier, which operates Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner and Boeing 777 aircraft for its medium- and long-haul international flights, has already curtailed its operations to Rome, Milan and Singapore, in addition to operating smaller aircraft to some destinations like Jeddah. "Due to the prevailing situation of coronavirus in different locations across the globe, there are many destinations, which are

expected to face a drop in foreign tourist arrivals because of the advisories issued by various governments. Customers are wary of making fresh bookings to the affected locations and airfares to these destinations have dropped by over 40 per cent. We have received nearly 35 per cent cancellation queries from travellers planning their trips to foreign locations in holiday season," said Sabina Chopra, co-founder of Yatra.com. Vistara took delivery of its first Dreamliner aircraft earlier this month, and the airline's officials said they were "perplexed" about deployment of the plane on one of its planned destinations — London, Paris, Moscow and Tokyo

— given the current situation. To begin with, Vistara will operate the aircraft on domestic routes. International traffic accounts for a considerable share of air traffic for domestic airlines. Airline officials said after the Centre's latest move to suspend visas for a month, the carriers would have redeployed capacity to domestic routes, but the situation is not too good either locally.

"To deploy wide-bodied planes on domestic routes will be overkill. Operating costs for two-hour flights on Dreamliners are very high. If loads are also not very good, it will be worse. Airlines will have to factor in a possible grounding of their aircraft, even narrow-bodies. There is a limit to which redeployment can happen," Joshi pointed out.

Notably, Air India is expected to see some relief on its routes to the US, where the Federal Aviation Administration has relaxed the minimum slot-use rules through May 31, allowing airlines to operate less than the minimum threshold of 80 per cent of their scheduled flights to maintain slot rights for the future. However, any respite for Air India is contingent on Indian authorities reciprocating the FAA's move for US carriers flying to India. Air India flies directly to Washington, New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The FAA has previously relaxed the minimum slot-use rules at the time of 9/11 attacks in 2001, outbreak of SARS in 2003 and the global financial crisis in 2008.

Meanwhile, Kuwait has suspended all commercial flights to and from Kuwait International Airport starting Friday. Kuwait is connected to 12 Indian airports via flights operated by IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Jazeera Airways and Kuwait Airways.

# Non-payment of dues by discoms: Private developers, gencos may move NCLT

Power Minister RK Singh: 'Always this possibility'

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE FESTERING problem of non-payment of dues by power distribution companies (discoms) could lead to private project developers and generating utilities moving the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to recover payments. Power producers' total outstanding dues owed by distribution firms was pegged at Rs 88,177 crore in December 2019 — a source of continuing stress in the sector. "There is always this possibility now," Union Power and Renewable Energy Minister RK Singh said, when asked about whether generation companies can seek recourse by moving the NCLT in light of the mounting dues. This is a precedence in place for this, with the electricity generating company of Andhra Pradesh — AP Genco — dragging the distribution companies of Telangana to the NCLT, seeking payment dues in July 2018.

Singh said his Ministry is working on improving adherence to prudential norms in the sector and that a new scheme is in the works that could, effectively, deny discoms failing to bring down AT&C (aggregate technical and commercial) losses as per target by denying them access to funds from the state-run PFC-REC combine, the principal source of finance for most electricity sector discoms. The Power Ministry is also setting up an electricity tribunal to resolve disputes over payment between state distribution companies and generating companies in a time-bound manner. An amendment of the Electricity Act, 2003 to provide for a dedicated mechanism for faster dispute resolution is also in the works, Singh indicated.

In order to give relief to electricity generation companies, the Power Ministry has already enforced a payment security mechanism from August 1, 2019, under



**Power and Renewable Energy Minister RK Singh**

which, discoms are required to open letters of credit for getting power supply. Then, in October, the Ministry urged the chief ministers of a number of defaulting states to issue directions to their respective power discoms for clearing the dues of renewable energy firms and pointed out the power producers are likely to default on their payment obligations due to non-clearance of dues, specifically pointing to the "danger" of generation companies approaching the NCLT for recovering the pending amount.

"Due to the non-payment of dues, it is likely that many of these RE (renewable energy) power producers would default in making payment to Ireda (state-owned Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency) and other financial institutions. Any default would make them NPAs (non-performing assets)..." There is also a danger of RE power producers approaching the NCLT against distribution companies (regarding non-payment of dues)," the minister from the Power Ministry to states had said.

In December 2019, the total overdue amount of generation companies, which had not been cleared even after 60 days of grace period offered by generators, stood at Rs 78,174 crore as against Rs 44,464 crore in the same month of the preceding year.

Power producers give 60 days to discoms for paying bills for the supply of electricity, beyond which outstandings become overdue and generators are entitled to charge penal interest on the amounts.

Discoms of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu accounted for a majority of the outstanding dues to power gencos.

Among the central public sector power generators, NTPC has dues of Rs 15,695.65 crore on discoms till December, followed by NLC India, NHPC, THDC India and Damodar Valley Corporation. Among private generators, discoms owed the highest overdue to Adani Power, Bajaj Group-owned Lalitpur Power Generation Company and GMR.

One of the reasons for the mounting dues is the piling up of discom losses, which had progressively reduced in the first couple of years since the Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana's rollout in November 2015. The losses rebounded in FY19 to nearly double the losses recorded the previous year as the scheme started floundering and adherence to norms recorded marked slippages.

Book losses of discoms, which reduced from Rs 51,562 crore in 2015-16 to Rs 15,132 crore in 2017-18, have nearly doubled this financial year to Rs 28,036 crore, according to the data updated till September-end. The data also pointed to discoms lagging behind in eliminating the gap between the average cost of supply and realisable revenue (ACS-ARR gap). Given the faltering achievements, officials indicated the possibility of a new scheme being rolled out to address UDAY's shortcomings. The primary reason for failure, as being recognised in policy circles, is the failure of discoms to collect the full cost that they pay for power — the same issue that had led to the floundering of the previous two schemes.

## BANKING WATCH

### YES BANK CRISIS

# FinMin sees no legal hurdle to RBI's AT-1 bond write-down plan

**SUNNY VERMA**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE OBJECTIONS of Additional Tier-1 bondholders of Yes Bank, who will be written down fully as per RBI's reconstruction plan, are not tenable since these contracts provide for a full write-down after core common equity of banks falls below a certain threshold and triggers point of non-viability, a senior government official said on Wednesday. The entire plan had been legally vetted and there were series of discussions among the government, the RBI and potential investors, the official said, indicating that AT-1 bonds write-down "will stand the test of legal scrutiny."

The RBI's reconstruction plan puts nearly Rs 9,000 crore of AT-1 bonds exposure at risk, affecting bondholders including Nippon Life India AMC, Franklin Templeton, UTI Mutual Fund, SBI Pension Fund Trust and Indiabulls Housing Finance. While bondholders have mounted a legal challenge to the scheme, they are reportedly planning to negotiate with the RBI regarding conversion of these instruments into equity shares, after taking a haircut of over 80 per cent.

"The (Yes) Bank has been made party to a Writ Petition filed by Axis Trustee Services Limited, Debenture Trustee for one of the series of Additional Tier 1 capital bonds (on behalf of bond holders), in the Hon'ble Bombay Court... No relief has been sought against the Bank nor any claim(s) has been made against the Bank under the Writ Petition," Yes Bank said. Finance Ministry sources indicated that there is "no legal lacunae" in the RBI's move as these bond contracts have provisions for write-down or conversion into equity.

## EXPLAINED

### Hybrid products

THE CENTRE believes the RBI's proposal to fully write down AT-1 instruments of Yes Bank will stand test of legal scrutiny despite challenges by bondholders. These are essential hybrid instruments having principal loss absorption features, which can cause a full write-down or conversion to equity on breach of a pre-specified trigger of common Tier 1 capital ratio of a bank falling below 6.125 per cent.

As per RBI rules based on the Basel-III framework, AT-1 bonds have principal loss absorption features, which can cause a full write-down or conversion to equity on breach of a pre-specified trigger of common Tier 1 capital ratio falling below 6.125 per cent. The Finance Ministry and the RBI did not reply to queries from *The Indian Express* seeking comments.

The aggregate amount to be written-down/converted for all such instruments on breaching the trigger level must be at least the amount needed to immediately return the bank's CET1 ratio to the trigger level or, if this is not sufficient, the full principal value of the instruments, it further states. However, banks cannot use conversion or write-down of AT-1 instruments to support expansion of balance sheet. It is intended to replenish the equity of a bank in the event it is depleted by losses.

The RBI rules require that for a bank — whose total common equity ratio slips below 8 per cent due to losses and is still above 6.125 per cent i.e. trigger point — should expand its balance sheet further only by raising fresh equity.

## 'NBFI challenges may intensify, following Yes Bank restructuring'

India's non-bank financial institutions will likely face renewed pressure on funding and liquidity following the RBI's takeover of Yes Bank this month, Fitch Ratings said



**WORSENING CREDIT SQUEEZE:** The consequences of the Yes Bank restructuring could compound the credit squeeze across the country's financial system, adding to current economic uncertainty

**MODEST DIRECT EXPOSURE OF NBFIS TO YES BANK:** The NBFI sector's direct exposures

**Knock-on effects on NBFIs:** There may also be knock-on effects for NBFIs if smaller private banks start to face deteriorating depositor confidence

**Heightened asset quality risks for financial sector:** An extended credit squeeze will likely exacerbate asset quality risks for the financial sector

to Yes Bank should be modest as a whole

**SPACE FOR COMPANIES TO CUT EXPOSURE:** Yes Bank's issues have been known for some time, and companies have had time to pare back any exposure to the bank over the past year

**CURRENT RISKS FACED BY NBFIS:**  
■ Pressure from general economic slowdown  
■ Downturn in real estate sector  
■ Evolving COVID-19 situation

Source: Fitch Ratings

# ED: ₹20,000-cr loan under Rana Kapoor's tenure declared NPA

Founder says was in talks with govt for bank's revival

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 11

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) said on Wednesday that Yes Bank had sanctioned Rs 30,000 crore during the tenure of founder and former CEO Rana Kapoor, of which Rs 20,000 crore was declared non-performing assets (NPAs).

Kapoor told a special court that the NPAs, before he was asked to step down in 2019, were only 1 per cent of the bank's transactions. Hence the management after him should be held responsible. Kapoor said till a week before his arrest, he was in touch with senior officials of the government and the RBI to take over the bank again "because it was going down". The ED arrested him on Sunday. The ED claimed he had received kickbacks and pecuniary benefits for sanctioning loans. The special court has sent him to further ED custody till March 16.

"Loans worth Rs 30,000 crore were given to various entities during his tenure, Rs 20,000 crore of which already turned into bad debt. There are 78 companies owned by the accused and his family members, and there is an



**Yes Bank founder Rana Kapoor at ED office in Mumbai on Wednesday. Ganesh Shirsekar**

apprehension that the amount has gone to these companies, whether the transactions shown are genuine or not or if the sanctioning of loans is quid pro quo," special public prosecutor Sunil Gonsalves submitted before the court.

"I cannot be held responsible for this, the present management has not been able to perform. All public sector banks declare more than Rs 1 lakh crore as NPAs. I have been made a scapegoat in this case," said Kapoor's lawyer, Satish Maneshinde. He added Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had given a statement that somebody

would be responsible for the bank's current issues and the raid at Kapoor's home Friday was done.

"I was in London for the past four months to pay up my debt... I came back to India as there were some negotiations between me, the RBI and the finance authorities to take over the bank again as it was going down. One week prior to this incident, I sat with several senior people of the government and the RBI. Thereafter, the moratorium on withdrawals was given by RBI and I was arrested," Maneshinde argued on behalf of Kapoor.

# SBI trying to bring in other major lenders to be part of bailout plan

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 11

STATE BANK of India (SBI), which is finalising a reconstruction plan for Yes Bank, is negotiating to rope in leading institutions, including HDFC, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and two others, for capital infusion in the private sector lender. This may lead to lifting of moratorium in the coming days.

However, sources said the final decision on who will bring in equity will depend on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which will decide the infusion plan. SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar had already indicated that if other investors are in the picture, the capital infusion can go up to over Rs 20,000 crore. SBI will then hold at least 26 per cent stake — of 49 per cent — in Yes Bank, while the rest will be picked up by other institutions. Though there was speculation about some private equity players and high-net-worth investors keen to join the reconstruction plan, the RBI is unlikely to approve their inclusion, said a source, adding there is also the possibility of other banks pitching in with bulk deposits of around Rs 30,000 crore to ease the liquidity crunch in the bank. The moratorium is likely to be lifted once the RBI approves the names of investors and their contribution.

Yes Bank administrator Prashant Kumar, on Monday, assured customers that the moratorium period could end by this weekend. On March 6, the RBI unveiled a reconstruction scheme indicating the possibility of SBI acquiring a 49 per cent equity stake in the private sector lender.

Meanwhile, Yes Bank on Wednesday said its inward real-time gross settlement (RTGS) services have been enabled to allow customers to make payments towards their credit card dues and loan obligations from other bank accounts. The announcement comes a day after

## 'Entire debt from Yes Bank is secured'

New Delhi: Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group Wednesday said its entire debt from Yes Bank is fully secured. The group said it is committed to honouring repayments of all its borrowing from Yes Bank through its asset monetisation programme. PTI

its customers were allowed inward IMPS and NEFT services for the same purposes.

RTGS is used for payments of over Rs 2 lakh, while payments below this amount can be made using NEFT. Besides, loan and credit cards repayments to the bank can also be done through IMPS from other bank accounts. However, Yes Bank said outward online remittances, including RTGS and NEFT, are still suspended. "All clearing activities are suspended as of now."

"Your EMIs (equated monthly instalments) will be honoured up to the prescribed limit, subject to reinstatement of clearing activities," it said.

"Inward RTGS services have been enabled. You can make payments towards YES BANK Credit Card dues and loan obligations from other bank accounts," the bank said in a tweet on Wednesday.

In 'moratorium-related FAQs' posted on its website, Yes Bank has said services such as online remittances, clearing of cheques and demand drafts as well as outward payment of EMIs will continue to remain under restriction during the moratorium period.

However, if an employer has a current account with Yes Bank and wants to pay salaries to employees, there will not be any problem in doing so. The bank on Tuesday allowed inward IMPS and NEFT services to enable its customers to make payments towards Yes Bank credit card EMIs

and loans through other bank accounts.

Besides, within the limit of Rs 50,000, the lender has also allowed its customers to withdraw money from its own as well as other bank ATMs. In the FAQs, Yes Bank said, "all clearing activities are suspended as of now as per the directive. Your cheques already issued will not be honoured till the clearing activities are restarted or further directive from regulator."

"Yes Bank DD/cheques will not be presented in clearing till further instructions or till reinstatement of clearing activities," it said. "Yes Bank current account can be debited for more than Rs 50,000 towards disbursement of salaries in the accounts maintained with Yes Bank only," it clarified. Further, it also said transfer from one Yes Bank account to another will be allowed without any restriction.

"However, customers can withdraw in a sum up to an aggregate of Rs 50,000 from all these accounts in the moratorium period till April 3, 2020," it added.

If one wishes to liquidate a standalone fixed deposit in Yes Bank, it said the branches can liquidate standalone fixed deposits (FDs) amounting less than Rs 20,000 along with interest and pay in cash as per process. "For FDs equal to or above Rs 20,000 (along with interest) but less Rs 50,000 (along with interest), branches can issue demand draft (DD) to customers, however that DD can be presented for clearing only once the clearing services are re-instated," it said.

The RBI, last Thursday, superseded the board of directors of Yes Bank for 30 days, "owing to serious deterioration in the financial position" of the bank and capped the deposit withdrawals at Rs 50,000 per depositor. The central bank said "this has been done to quickly restore depositors' confidence in the bank, including by putting in place a scheme for reconstruction or amalgamation."



**BHARATNET DELAYED BY OVER 92 MONTHS SO FAR**  
**Gram panchayat net connectivity project deadline pushed by 17 months to Aug '21**

**AASHISH ARYAN**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

THE DEPARTMENT of Telecommunications (DoT) has pushed the deadline for completing the gram panchayat (GP) internet connectivity scheme, BharatNet, by 17 months to August 2021. The current deadline for the completion of phases one and two of the scheme was March 2020.

The deadlines for the BharatNet project, which initially began as the National Optical Fibre Network in October 2011, have been pushed for the fifth time now. In 2011, the Centre had initially said that project to connect all the 2.5 lakh GPs would be completed within the next two years. The deadline was later pushed back by 24 months to December 2015. Between 2011 and 2014, barely any work was done as the government had managed to lay down only 350 km of optical fibre against a target of 350,000 km.

With a change of government in 2014, the project — re-christened as BharatNet — aimed to

connect with internet all 2.5 lakh GPs and make them service ready by 2018. In 2018, the target for completion of BharatNet was pushed back by 12 months to March 2019, and later revised to March 2020. The project, initially conceptualised in 2011, has been delayed for over 92 months now.

As reported earlier by *The Indian Express*, while the Centre aimed to connect via internet and make 2.5 lakh GPs service ready by March 2020, under all phases of the BharatNet project, only 1.34 lakh GPs had been made service ready as on January 31, 2020.

In his reply to a question in the Lok Sabha Wednesday, Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad confirmed the report that as of February 28, only 1.34 lakh GPs had been made service ready.

He also said that while Right of Way issues had so far delayed the Centre-led project, delay in the state-led model was "adversely affecting the completion of the project".

To cover up for the lag in the scheme, the DoT has now roped in the private sector in a public-private-partnership model.

**39TH GST COUNCIL MEET TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY**  
**Change in inverted rate structure, payment to states to be key issues**

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

RATE RATIONALISATION for mobiles, textiles, footwear, fertilizers to correct inverted rate structure, compensation cess shortfall to pay to states, and compliance related measures are expected to be the key issues to be taken up for discussion during the 39th Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council meeting scheduled for Saturday.

Though revenue shortfall and delayed compensation payments to states are expected to dominate the meeting, apart from correcting the inverted structure, any major rate increase either across tax slabs or for cess is unlikely to be formalised, given the concerns about the overall economic slowdown, officials said.

Inverted duty structure for many items such as mobile phones, man-made yarns and fibres, footwear as of now attract a lower rate on the final product and a higher rate on the inputs, creating a need for payments of input tax credit (ITC) refund. Over Rs 5,000 crore has been claimed as ITC refund from mo-

**Any major rate increase either across tax slabs or for cess is unlikely to be formalised, given the concerns about the overall economic slowdown, officials said**

bile industry since July 2017 GST rollout, with cellular phones being taxed at 12 per cent GST slab, while its parts are in 18 per cent and 28 per cent slabs. Rs 6,000 crore have been claimed as ITC refund on fertilizers since GST rollout.

The committee of officers set up to suggest ways to augment revenue had earlier suggested several measures to remove anomalies such as inverted rate structure, which causes an annual revenue loss of Rs 20,000 crore.

"Some items for which inverted duty structure is creating an issue, their rate change will be taken up in the meeting. But other than that, no major rate change is anticipated. States are aware of the compensation cess shortfall situation and the delay in compensation payments, but there is very less room for tweaking the cess rates since they are already quite high and

hiking cess rates further may not be feasible amid the overall economic slowdown," a state government official said.

Central government officials maintain that the compensation payment will be met out of the cess collected in the compensation fund, a point which has already been stressed upon in the Budget 2020-21. The point was reiterated by central government officials at the third national level meeting of GST officers from states and Centre held on Friday last week.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Union Budget in February, had said transfers to the compensation fund would be limited only to collection by way of GST compensation cess.

States are already facing revenue constraints in view of the delayed compensation payments under the indirect tax regime. In the previous GST

Council meeting held in December, states had strongly raised their concerns about the revenue shortfall, but it was decided that changing slabs and rates will be a knee-jerk reaction and rather the Council should opt for plugging loopholes in GST structure for augmenting revenues.

GST Council in its meeting on Saturday is also expected to take up further input tax credit restrictions, especially for new companies. Some other measures which are in the proposal for the meeting include an extension of the deadline for filing the summary GSTR-3B return for January till March end as the issue of levy of interest on delayed GST payment will come up for discussion.

Moreover, due to regular technical glitches, Infosys has been asked to make a presentation in the meeting and the Council is likely to defer the new return filing system from the earlier proposed date of April 1. Also, mandatory generation of invoice for business-to-business (B2B) transactions for businesses with a turnover of over Rs 100 crore is likely to be deferred by three months till July 1.

**SBI cuts interest rate on SB accounts to 3%; min balance criteria removed**

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 11

STATE BANK of India (SBI) on Wednesday reduced and rationalised interest rate on all savings bank (SB) accounts to a flat 3 per cent, in a move that could hit its 44.51 crore account holders. Simultaneously, it also decided to waive off maintenance of average monthly balance (AMB) for all SB accounts. SBI also announced a reduction in its marginal cost-based lending rate (MCLR) by 10-15 basis points (bps) across all tenors.

The bank currently pays 3.25 per cent interest on SB accounts with balance up to Rs one lakh and 3.25 per cent on accounts with balance above Rs 1 lakh. Now, SBI will pay a uniform 3 per cent interest rate on all SB accounts.

Currently, the bank's SB customers need to maintain AMB of Rs 3,000, Rs 2,000 and Rs 1,000 in metro, semi urban and rural areas, respectively. SBI used to levy a penalty of Rs 5 to Rs 15 plus taxes on non-maintenance of AMB. Other nationalised banks too are expected to waive off AMB maintenance and cut SB deposit rates in the coming days. The AMB waiver is a "major initiative to bring "customer delight and a hassle free banking experience", SBI said. Further, SBI has reduced the

**'Tax cuts may lift consumption'**

*New Delhi:* Amid calls for the RBI to cut policy rates to boost growth amid the coronavirus scare, SBI economists doubted the efficacy of rate cuts in reviving demand, saying a better tool can be cutting indirect taxes which can automatically lift consumer sentiment. **PTI**

one-year MCLR to 7.75 per cent per annum from 7.85 per cent, with effect from March 10.

Consequently, EMIs on eligible home loan accounts (linked to MCLR) will get cheaper by around Rs 7 per Rs one lakh on a 30-year loan. EMIs on car loans will also be reduced by Rs 5 per Rs one lakh on a 7-year loan. The state-owned lender also cut the three-year MCLR from 8.15 per cent to 8.05 per cent and three-months MCLR from 7.65 per cent to 7.50 per cent.

SBI also cut interest rates on term deposits (TDs) with effect from March 10. Retail TD interest rates have been cut by 10 bps for 'one year & above' tenor and 50 bps for deposits up to '45 days'. Bulk TD interest rates have been reduced by 15 bps for deposits in '180 days & above' tenors.

**FPIs pull out ₹7K cr in Monday's crash**

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
MUMBAI, MARCH 11

FOREIGN PORTFOLIO investors (FPIs) pulled out over Rs 7,000 crore from equity market on Monday when the Sensex crashed by 1,942 points, in the face of a price war for oil and the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak. Meanwhile, despite rebounding over 386 points during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex on Wednesday pared most gains to settle 62.45 points, or 0.18 per cent, higher at 35,697.40.

The broader NSE Nifty closed 6.95 points, or 0.07 per cent, higher at 10,458.40, as investors went for bottom fishing in recently battered counters. Yes Bank rallied by 35.53 per cent to Rs 28.80 on expectations of a quick bailout.

With heavy withdrawals on Monday, total FPI withdrawals from the equity market in March stood at Rs 19,491 crore. Total FPI withdrawals in March were at Rs 21,733 crore, including Rs 3,111 crore from the debt market.

The rupee, meanwhile, recovered by 49 paise to settle at 73.68 against the US dollar on Wednesday, amid positive domestic equities and weakening of the American dollar in the overseas market. The domestic unit had plunged to a 17-month low of

**Rupee recovered 49 paise to settle at 73.68 against US dollar**

74.17 against the dollar on March 9 amid mounting fears of an economic slowdown.

After the 1,942 point crash in the Sensex on Monday, markets ended modestly higher on Wednesday, propped up by value buying in index heavyweights RIL, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank, even as risk sentiment remained subdued amid rising coronavirus cases in India. Top gainers included Hero MotoCorp (4.08 per cent), Reliance Industries (3.60 per cent), ICICI Bank (1.80 per cent) and HUL (1.51 per cent). Meanwhile, Tata Steel, IndusInd Bank, ONGC, SBI and Infosys declined.

Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services, said, "The global impact of coronavirus which is still spreading at high rate in countries other than China and collapse of oil prices are having a catastrophic effect. Rate cuts and stimulus measures are not working at the time being. Even though risk concerns continue to remain elevated, inflow into domestic equity mutual fund surged to highest level in 11 months indicating investor confidence on a long term perspective."

**CORONAVIRUS CAUTION ACROSS GLOBE**  
**Fed taps epidemiologists in hunt for policy clues**

**REUTERS**  
WASHINGTON/SAN FRANCISCO, MARCH 11

THE ESCALATING coronavirus outbreak is giving the US Federal Reserve a policy headache like never before: how to judge the potential impact on the economy in the absence of reliable data on how fast the flu-like illness is spreading across the US.

The central bank slashed interest rates by half a percentage point a week ago in a pre-emptive bid to shield the United States economy from the fast-evolving global epidemic. But Fed Chair Jerome Powell also said it was too early to tell the impact it would have, with most of the data the Fed typically relies on being too backward-looking to be of use.

Instead, the Fed is turning to new methods to assess the likely spread and get a read on local responses as policymakers weigh

what further action may be needed in the days and weeks ahead. "I am talking extensively to epidemiologists and healthcare experts across the country... to try and interpret what we are seeing and what we are likely to see," Dallas Fed President Robert Kaplan said in Chicago last week.

For real-time impacts, the Richmond Fed has reached out to city and county executives "to understand what this might look like in our cities," research director Kartik Athreya told *Reuters*. Minneapolis Fed economists are monitoring credit card transactions while San Francisco Fed researchers are now tracking a daily measure of consumer sentiment published by Morning Consult.

These snapshots could quickly show whether the American consumer, the engine of US growth, is pulling back.

But assessing how long that could last relies on a good grasp of the outbreak's escalation.



**RATE CUT, BUDGET BOOST IN UK**  
Britain Chancellor of Exchequer Rishi Sunak (left) with Bank of England Governor Mark Carney in London Wednesday. **AP**

■ Bank of England Wednesday cut interest rates by half a percentage point to 0.25%, with Carney saying the economic shock caused by coronavirus should be temporary.

■ In his first Budget as the Chancellor, Sunak unveiled a £30-billion package, as a stimulus to cope with the "temporary disruption" caused by the coronavirus. **REUTERS**

**Wall Street slides as pandemic tag rattles investors**

**REUTERS**  
NEW YORK, MARCH 11

US STOCK indices extended their fall on Wednesday after the World Health Organization classified the coronavirus outbreak as a pandemic.

Expectations that US President Donald Trump would announce "major" support measures helped Wall Street claw back losses on Tuesday from a bruising sell-off at the start of the week on

**On Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 4.94 per cent, the biggest decliner among the major indexes**

the back of a collapse in oil prices.

But there have been no announcements, even as the administration discusses measures ranging from tax relief, loan

guarantees, reimbursing workers for lost pay and support for the hard hit industries.

The benchmark S&P 500 index is nearly 19 per cent below its all-time peak hit on February 19. If it ends 20 per cent below its record closing high from just three weeks ago, the index would confirm a bear market. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 4.94 per cent, the biggest decliner among the major indexes.

At 1:17 pm ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down

1,235.69 points, or 4.94 per cent, at 23,782.47 and the S&P 500 was down 131.09 points, or 4.55 per cent, at 2,751.14. The Nasdaq Composite was down 357.38 points, or 4.28 per cent, at 7,986.87.

Meanwhile, Benchmark US 10-year Treasury yields was last at 0.711 per cent, down from 0.752 per cent at Tuesday's close.

Brent crude was down \$1.01, or 2.7 per cent, at \$36.21 per barrel by 17:12 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was off \$1.05 or 3 per cent at \$33.31.

**After six days of fall, retail fuel prices stay unchanged**

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

PETROL AND diesel prices remained unchanged Wednesday after falling for six consecutive days in response to an international fall in the price of crude.

Oil marketing companies (OMCs) had reduced the retail price of petrol by Rs 1.72 to Rs 70.29 and that of diesel by Rs 1.69 to Rs 63.01 in the national capital in the past fortnight. In Mumbai, prices on Wednesday were Rs 75.99 for petrol and 65.97 down from Rs 80.79 and Rs 71.31 in the beginning of the year.

Fuel prices are set by OMCs on a daily basis, taking into account a 15-day average of international prices of these products as well as the exchange rate of rupee besides refining and marketing costs when they set recommended sale prices for retailers. Central excise duty and state value added taxes also form a major portion of retail prices for end consumers, accounting for around 49 per cent of petrol price in Delhi as of March 11. Experts said that retail prices would likely fall further if crude prices stayed at current levels as it would bring down the average used to arrive at the recommended price for retail.

**BRIEFLY**

**Biocon, Mylan win patent case against Sanofi**

*New Delhi:* Biotechnology major Biocon on Wednesday said a US court has invalidated a Sanofi patent on the insulin glargine device, thus removing a legal hurdle to commercialising Semeleg co-developed with Mylan in the US market. The US District Court of New Jersey found the device patent claims asserted by Sanofi against Biocon and Mylan's insulin glargine product 'not infringed' and 'invalid' for lack of written description, Biocon said in a filing to the BSE. As previously announced, Sanofi's formulation patents were earlier affirmed to be invalid by the Federal Circuit, it added.

**RBI continues to be net buyer of dollars**

*Mumbai:* The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) continued to be a net purchaser of the US dollar after it bought \$10.27 billion in January on a net basis from the spot market, recent RBI data showed. **PTI**

**Airtel chairman asserts having 'paid full' AGR dues at about ₹13,000 cr**

*New Delhi:* A week before Supreme Court-mandated deadline for payment of past dues ends, Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Mittal on Wednesday said that the company has paid Rs 13,000 crore to the government to clear all its dues as per its self-assessment.

Emerging from the meeting with Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash on Wednesday, Mittal, to a specific question, said, "They had said pay full... we have paid full dues." **PTI**

**KUMBAKONAM MUNICIPALITY**  
Roc No. 6256/2020/H1 TENDER NOTICE Date: 06.03.2020  
The Commissioner, Kumbakonam Municipality inviting the Bids for

NAME OF THE WORK	Engaging 415 Sanitary workers under Outsourcing for Municipal Solid Waste Management scheme in Kumbakonam Municipality
ESTIMATE AMOUNT	Rs. 723.11 Lakhs
TENDER DOCUMENT CAN BE DOWNLOADED FREELY FROM	http://tntenders.gov.in
Date and Time for the Bid documents available (it can be downloaded at free of cost)	From 16.03.2020 to 15.04.2020 upto 5.45 PM (Both online and off line) (Two cover system)
Due date and time for submission of the bids	16.04.2020 upto 3.00 PM
Date, time and Venue for pre-bid conference	24.03.2020 at 3.00 P.M. in the Office of the Kumbakonam Municipality
Date and time of opening	16.04.2020 at 3.30 PM
PLACE OF OPENING OF BIDS	Kumbakonam Municipality

**PEPSU ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION, PATIALA**  
E-TENDER NOTICE  
Bids are invited through E-Tender from the bidders approved by the Government of Punjab/Government of India having valid licence under the provisions of labour department as an agency for providing manpower to the Government departments/Institutions as per the requirement of PRTC and to take over the existing manpower on the following terms and conditions :-

- Place of providing the manpower :- Patiala, Sangru, Kapurthala, Faridkot, Ludhiana, Barnala, Buhdada, Bathinda and Chandigarh
- Earnest Money deposit:- Rs. 10 Lacs to be deposited online.
- Validity of Contract Period :- Initially for three years which can be further extended for another two years with mutual consent.
- Important dates :-

Online sale of tender	13.03.2020
Last date for receiving the Bids	07.04.2020 at 15:00
Date and time for opening of Technical Bids	07.04.2020 at 16:00
Date and time for opening of Financial Bids	08.04.2020 at 11:00 A.M.

For detailed Terms and Conditions of the notice inviting tenders refer to our website [tenderwizard.com/PUNJAB](http://tenderwizard.com/PUNJAB)  
For participating in the above e-tender, the interested parties/bidders/ firm's etc. Shall have to get themselves registered with [tenderwizard.com/PUNJAB](http://tenderwizard.com/PUNJAB) and get user ID & password, Class 3 Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering process. For any clarification/difficultly regarding e-tendering process flow, please contact I.T. help desk on +91-81466-99866 earnest money, Tender fee & Tender processing fee will be paid through e-payment only.  
Managing Director P.R.T.C. reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the bids without assigning any reason.  
Managing Director,  
Pepsu Road Transport Corporation, Patiala  
Making Travel Safe & Comfortable

**TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF TELANGANA LIMITED**  
e - PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE  
The TSTransco invites sealed bids for the following works: Spec. No.-a-14/ICE/Construction/TST-a-14/2019. (i) Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 132/33kV GIS SS at Manikonda with 2x80 MVA PTR Capacity in Ranga Reddy District. (ii) Making LLO of existing 132kV Shivarampally - Erragadda SC OH feeder between Loc. 80 and Loc. No. 81 with 132 KV XLPE DC UG cable of 1200 Sq.mm (2.5 KM). Date and Time of availability of bid document: 11.03.2020 at 5.00 PM. Further details can be seen & Bidding document is available on <http://www.eprocurement.telangana.gov.in>, Ph: 040-23396000, Extns: 3356 / 3758/ 3370, Fax No: 040-23336171. R.O.No. 5719 Sd/- Chief Engineer, Construction (OSD)

**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT TRUST**  
(Mechanical & Electrical Engineering Department)  
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 27001:2013, ISO 45001:2018 CERTIFIED  
TENDER NOTICE  
Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust invites E-tenders under two cover system from reputed and experienced contractors for the work of "Operation and Maintenance of 220 KV Master Unit Sub-station and 33 KV Sub-stations inside Port Area, at JNPT, Navi Mumbai". Detailed tender notice can be accessed on [www.jnport.gov.in](http://www.jnport.gov.in) Chief Manager (M&EE)

**BRIDGE & ROOF CO. (INDIA) LTD.**  
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)  
CIN No.U27310WB1920G01003601  
"KANKARIA CENTRE", (4TH & 5TH FLOOR), 2/1, RUSSEL STREET, KOL-71  
Notice Inviting eTender (eNIT) No. : B&R / HO / MSP / 61010 / INSTRUMENTATION / HMEL / NIT / 01 Dated 12.03.2020  
ONLINE SINGLE PERCENTAGE RATE OFFER(S) IN TWO PART BID SYSTEM ARE INVITED FROM REPUTED, RESOURCEFUL AND EXPERIENCED AGENCIES FOR CARRYING OUT VARIOUS INSTRUMENTATION WORKS AS PER EIL STANDARD & SPECIFICATION AT DFCU UNIT-PART A & B FOR GURU GOBIND SINGH POLYMER ADDITION PROJECT AT GURU GOBIND SINGH REFINERY OF M/S HMEL AT BATHINDA, PUNJAB.  
INTERESTED BIDDER(S) WILL HAVE TO BE ENROLLED & REGISTERED WITH THE GOVERNMENT E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEM, THROUGH LOGGING ON TO <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>  
LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF OFFER IS 26.03.2020 UP TO 16:00 HOURS.  
ADDENDUM / CORRIGENDUM IF ANY, SHALL BE HOSTED IN COMPANY'S WEBSITE: [www.bridgeandroof.co.in](http://www.bridgeandroof.co.in), AND CPP PORTAL: <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> ONLY.

**RITES Limited**  
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)  
REGIONAL PROJECT OFFICE, LUCKNOW  
CIN:- L7489DL1974G0007227  
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER  
The CMP, RITES Limited, RPO-Lucknow on behalf of Uttar Pradesh Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (UPRVNL) invites online percentage rate tenders on single track/ system in connection with construction of Railway network for UPRVNL, Odra-C TPP (2 x 650 MW), Odra District, Sonbhadra, State: Uttar Pradesh, for the following work:  
E-Tender No.: RITES/RPO-LKOUPRVNL/00813/Odra-C/60Kg Rate/OTR, Date: 09.03.2020. Name of work: Supply of 60 Kg Prime Quality rail conforming to IRS T-12-2009 (With Latest Amendment) at Odra-C, Distt- Sonbhadra (UP) in connection with construction of Railway Network for Coal Transportation for 2x650 MW Odra-C Thermal Power Project at Odra District Sonbhadra (UP). Estimated Cost: Rs 9.83 Crore. Earnest Money: Rs 9.83 Lac. Period of Completion: 03(Three) Months. Last date of submission: 24.03.2020 at 15:30 Hrs. The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <https://tenders.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Addendum/Corrigendum if any shall be hosted online only.

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU**  
**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
BUILDINGS (C&M) CIRCLE, COIMBATORE - 1.  
TENDER NOTICE LUMP SUM CONTRACT (ITEM RATE TENDER SYSTEM)  
TENDER - TWO COVER SYSTEM  
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE No.NIT : 33/BC/C&M/CBE/2019-20, Dt: 09.03.2020  
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, Two cover system sealed Tenders viz., Pre-qualification Tender and Price Tender in separate covers both inserted in single cover will be received upto 3.00 pm on 27.03.2020 from the PWD Registered Contractors by the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (Construction & Maintenance) Circle, Coimbatore-641 001 for "Construction of Combined Court building consisting of 10 Nos. of Court Halls and construction of 5 Nos. of Judicial Officer's Quarters at Pollachi in Coimbatore District" at his office and Prequalification Tender will be opened on the same day at 3.30 P.M.  
All other details are available in the website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in). If any changes/corrections etc., to the tender, it will be published on the above website only.  
Superintending Engineer, P.W.D.,  
Buildings (C&M) Circle, Coimbatore.



# 21 THE RURAL TRACKING THE CHANGING INDIA IN ITS VILLAGES

## CORONAVIRUS IMPACT



A backyard Kadaknath poultry farm in Dahod; (below) farmer Mahesh Hatila holding one of his birds. Photos by Bhupendra Rana

**PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS**  
PUNE, MARCH 11

URJA FOODS and Agro's hatchery unit spread over 10 acres in Gawadewadi village of Pune district's Ambegaon taluka wears a deserted look. Not surprising at all, when its production of day-old chicks was 5.4 lakh in February but is unlikely to cross 2 lakh this month. This is against the hatchery's normal monthly capacity of 6 lakh.

"In February alone, we lost Rs 10 crore. The only way not to sink further is to produce less," says Pramod Hinge Patil, the owner of the Rs 100 crore-turnover private limited company that "places" its day-old chicks with some 500 farmers. Urja Foods also supplies poultry feed and medicines to farmers within 50-km radius of Ambegaon, mainly in Pune and some in Ahmednagar district.

Patil's woes are a result of a misinformation campaign, especially over WhatsApp, Facebook and other social media, linking the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) to chicken meat consumption. These messages — declared as "fraudulent and fake news" by the Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying — have resulted in both demand and prices tanking.

In early January, farmgate prices of broiler birds in Maharashtra were ruling at over Rs 80 per kg. By February 10, these had dropped to Rs 40-42 and further to Rs 30-32 levels at the start of March. The Maharashtra Poultry Farmers' and Breeders' Association has stopped declaring prices in the last few days, but there are reports of sales happening now at Rs 5-10 per kg.

Urja Foods is an integrated poultry company that maintains around 45,000 parent birds — 10% cocks, with the balance 90% hens — that produce fertilised eggs. These eggs — not the unfertilised ones that are used for table consumption — are hatched in incubators and the day-old chicks resulting from them given to farmers. Urja Foods also has a 200 tonnes-per-day poultry feed plant. The feed from the mill, along with medicines and vaccines, is supplied free to the company's 500 or so contract farmers. The latter are paid Rs 8-10 charge for rearing the 35-40 gm chicks into 2-2.5 kg birds over 35-40 days. This charge is subject to adherence to a stan-

## Chickenening out

The Indian poultry industry is going through its worst crisis, this time from unsubstantiated fears linking the spread of COVID-19 to chicken consumption



(Top) Fertilised eggs being collected at a hatchery near Pune; (above) day-old chicks being inoculated. Photos by Arul Horizon

standard feed conversion ratio (typically 3.5 kg of feed is required for a 2-2.5 kg live broiler). Once the broilers attain the minimum weight, Urja Foods takes them back for selling in the market. The farmers basically only provide the labour, electricity and water for these birds housed in their poultry sheds.

"The current broiler realisations will just about cover the fixed rearing charges that I am paying to my farmers. It does not take care of the feed, medicines and vaccines that I am giving, apart from the costs being incurred at the hatchery. And from where do I pay the salaries for my 120 employees?" asks Patil, who has been in the poultry integra-

tion business since 2015.

India's poultry industry comprises 450-500 "integrators" such as Urja Foods and an estimated 15 lakh farmer-rearers. The integrators source the chicks of their parent birds, in turn, from the bigger poultry majors that own the pedigree or pure lines of specific breeds. Roughly 65% of the country's broiler market is accounted for by the "Vencobb 400" parent variety (the common white-feather bird) belonging to the Pune-headquartered Venkateshwara Hatcheries Pvt Ltd. Other major pureline/grandparent breeds include 'Hubbard' and 'Ross', which are owned by the German poultry sciences

giant Aviagen.

The hit from a price crash, triggered by unsubstantiated fears over poultry meat posing the risk of COVID-19 infection, is currently being largely borne by the integrators. They are the ones that lift full-grown broiler chickens from poultry farms and sell to traders, who further supply these to retail shops in urban as well as rural markets. Since late last week, Hinge Patil's company has taken the extreme step of transporting live birds from farmers' poultry sheds in pick-up vehicles for selling directly in retail markets in and around Ambegaon.

In the event of the integrators slashing production of day-old chicks — which is already taking place — poultry farmers are the ones going to feel the heat, because of their sheds housing fewer birds. These farmers are mostly smallholders: A single bird occupies about 1.24 sq feet, which translates to 8,000 of them in 10,000 sq ft or just quarter of an acre.

If the present situation continues, the problem can extend next to maize, the major ingredient in chicken feed. Since mid-January, maize prices at Davangere in Karnataka have fallen from Rs 1,850-1,950 to Rs 1,550-1,600 per quintal. With the rabi maize crop in Assembly election-bound Bihar set to arrive in the markets from mid-April, there is the danger of prices going down further in the absence of demand from the poultry feed industry.

India's weekly production of broilers is reckoned in the range of 7.5 crore live birds or 30 crore a month. With average production cost of Rs 75 per kg and realisations at Rs 25, the losses now work out to Rs 100 per 2-kg bird or Rs 3,000 crore per month. This kind of a crisis was last witnessed in 2006-07, when chicken consumption was affected by the H5N1 avian influenza. The Maharashtra government, at that time, paid farmers Rs 40 for every bird culled in order to prevent the spread of the highly infectious virus to humans.

"This crisis is worse. The government should instruct banks to come immediately to the industry's rescue. There is a case for even allowing a one-year interest holiday, as opposed to mere restructuring of loans through rescheduling of payments," feels Prasanna Pedgaonkar, general manager of Venkateshwara Hatcheries.

## The black alternative

Adivasi farmers in Gujarat are rearing native Kadaknath chicken breeds that give more returns than regular broilers and layers

**AISHWARYA MOHANTY**  
DAHOD (GUJARAT), MARCH 11

AT MUNAVANI, about 50 of the village's 250-odd households have backyard poultry farms, each with about 30 fowls. These aren't the Rhode Island Red or other regular broiler birds, but the premium native Kadaknath breeds, distinguished by their black plumes and meat that is said to have extra protein and iron content along with lower cholesterol levels. For the families in this remote tribal village of Dahod district's Singvad taluka, rearing them seems to make good business sense.

"A fully-grown seven-month-old Kadaknath chicken weighing 2 kg can fetch up to Rs 2,000-2,500. I myself sold a bird for Rs 1,800 in end-January. The rate could have been better, but I needed the money then," says Mahesh Hatila, one of Munavani's 50 farmers to have attended a six-day training programme of the Gujarat animal husbandry department's poultry branch for raising Kadaknath hens last July. At the end of the session, they were all given 25 chicks (less than a month old) and Rs 2,200 worth of poultry feed, apart from a Rs 2,000 stipend.

According to Hatila, even the eggs from Kadaknath hens are sold at a "minimum of Rs 30 per piece". The 45-year-old Adivasi farmer — Dahod, Gujarat's easternmost district, has 74.1% tribal population, mostly from the Pateliya and Bhil communities — cultivates four acres that he jointly owns with seven brothers.

"Given the uncertain yields from erratic rainfall, regular farming isn't viable here. My wife and I, till recently, went to cities for work and spent hardly three months in the village. This scheme, for which I had applied online, has given me hope," he adds.

In 2016, the state poultry branch had developed a parent stock of the Kadaknath breed from chickens sourced from the neighbouring Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh. After establishing Gujarat's only parent stock centre for the premium fowls at Dahod, it initiated the scheme to train farmers for small-scale commercial rearing of these birds. While the initial lot of 25 chicks and feed are given free, farmers have to buy these from the centre at non-subsidised rates to ex-

pand their poultry farms or even start a new cycle.

The Kadaknath breed is raised both for meat and eggs. Regular broilers take just over 35 days to attain 2-kg weight, while Kadaknath chickens take about seven months. Modern layer poultry birds produce eggs from when they are about 4.5 months old. Over the next 15 months or so, they lay upwards of 300 eggs. Kadaknath hens begin laying only from six months and yield 100-120 eggs in an annual cycle.

But the difference is in quality, price and maintenance cost. Kadaknath birds are reared in the open and farmers don't need to invest in any shed or lighting systems. The chicks can be fed maize and other products from the farm itself. Neither do they need compound poultry feed for weight gain or vaccines and medicines that are compulsorily administered to the regular broilers and layers. This is because of the breed having evolved through natural selection under indigenous agro-ecological environments.

"The production costs in both come to the same Rs 70-80 per kg, but the price realisation in Kadaknath is at least twice normal poultry meat's," says Mahesh Damor, veterinary officer in the poultry branch at Dahod. For Hatila, selling a full-grown hen at Rs 1,500-plus is like an income reserve that can be encashed any time.

"Kadaknath chicken has more protein and iron content, with lower levels of fat and cholesterol. We recommend it to heart patients and those suffering from respiratory illnesses," says Mehul Prajapati, an Ayurveda practitioner based in Dahod.

At Hadmat village in Dahod's Fatepura taluka, Harish Charel is rearing his second batch of Kadaknath fowls numbering around 200 now, multiplied from the initial 25 availed under the scheme and also chicks he procured from Jhabua. "From my first batch, I earned Rs 1 lakh. I have a few regular customers every month. However, since this village is in the interiors, I get only Rs 15 for the eggs and Rs 500-700 for hens. But it is still good money and I no longer have to migrate for work," he says.

Says Dinesh Mevatiya, Assistant Director at the state animal husbandry department, "Earlier, people used to travel to Jhabua for eggs and meat. Once more farmers here take up Kadaknath rearing, both availability and consumption will rise."



## TECHNOLOGY AND FARMING

# Flight to Safety: The case for drones in spraying agrochemicals

India can learn from China, Japan in use of UAVs for improved pest management and crop productivity



ASITAVA SEN

INDIAN FARMERS are yet to reap the full benefits of the economic reforms initiated in 1991. Besides, they face structural challenges that include fragmented landholdings, lack of adequate market access, rising costs (especially of human labour), poor/below par yields in most crops and — not the least — low usage of modern technology relative to their counterparts in the US, Europe, Brazil, Argentina or China.

Satellite-driven technology, big data analytics and digital solutions are helping farmers in many countries today make more informed cropping decisions with regard to weather, soil nutrient application, and pest and disease control. Many of these technologies are likely to be introduced in India over the next few years.

One area that we believe can have a major impact on our farms, and needs quick govern-

ment intervention, is the use of drones for spraying of agrochemical products.

The main benefits of drones are increased efficiency and precision of agrochemical applications, in turn, leading to improved pest management and crop productivity as well as significant reduction in operator exposure during spray operations. The field capacity of drone-assisted spraying is about 20 times higher than that of manual spraying. The other benefits are lower water consumption (as the material is sprayed in concentrated formulations) and development of licensed applicators. These include community spraying professionals who may provide application services to farmers similar to combine harvester operators, thereby creating new skilled employment potential in rural India.

The investment banker Goldman Sachs has forecast the agriculture sector to be the second-largest global commercial/civil user of drones, after construction, by the end of this year. Drones in agrochemical application have, in just a few years, grown in sophistication and scale, boosting the ease and affordability of use. The good news is that this innovation is being driven largely by Asia. The adoption of drones in farms is the highest in countries such as China, Korea and Japan, which are also con-



Pesticides being sprayed by drones at a trial field in Andhra Pradesh. Express

fronting growing labour shortage challenges from urbanisation and ageing populations.

In China, the world's biggest civilian drones manufacturer, the number of these machines deployed in agriculture is estimated to have doubled to around 13,000 between 2016 and 2017, with the total unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV)-treated acreage, too, doubling to reach

roughly 7 million hectares. The economies of scale in usage have meant that the per-hectare operating costs in China are now equivalent to just Rs 100-150 for field crops (rice, wheat and maize) and Rs 250-400 in orchards.

Our farmers, too, can immensely benefit through swift adoption of this nascent technology by taking a leaf from China's book. However, for this, the government, both at the Centre and states, must respond in a timely manner through a sound regulatory framework, so as to prevent uncontrolled and inappropriate use. The focus should be to minimise the potential risks that come with the unfamiliarity and rapid adoption of an emerging technology.

The first step in establishing a robust policy framework is to identify the various risks associated with drone application and the processes to deal with them. These cover the specifications for the drones/UAVs and the agrochemical formulations being used, the capabilities of the spray operators and training standards, and environmental variables. Based on these, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) should be put in place for spray operators, drone manufacturers and agrochemical companies to comply with.

Here, it is worth looking at Japan and borrowing from the requirements — both for the licensing of UAVs and operators, as well as product registration for drone spraying — stipulated in the country's most recent revised

2019 guidance document. Having a long history in the use of UAVs — especially remote-controlled helicopters or RCHs — for spraying of agrochemicals and with over 30 years of data generation, Japan provides the strongest point of reference for framing the appropriate rules and SOPs. As an industry association representing around 70% of India's crop protection market, we recommend that the government develops a regulatory framework for deploying drones in agrochemical spraying based on the experience and best practices of a country such as Japan.

The necessary regulations should take into consideration (1) civil aviation laws (both local and umbrella) and the setting of vehicle specifications, (2) SOPs and piloting requirements for safe use, and (3) product approvals and permissions for spray operations. In addition to the general regulations, we would recommend at least four other criteria to be met for obtaining permission: (1) approval of vehicle needs, (2) licensing of pilots/operators and training for agrochemical application by drones, (3) registration of agrochemical products sought to be sprayed, and (4) strict adherence to label instructions on products.

More specifically, we propose the setting up a system for certification or licensing of drone operators to ensure their capability for piloting the UAV machines safely. Such certification/licensing should be subject to regular renewals and conducting of refresher courses.

The authorities should also accredit training facilities to put in place a standardised programme for all agricultural drone operations.

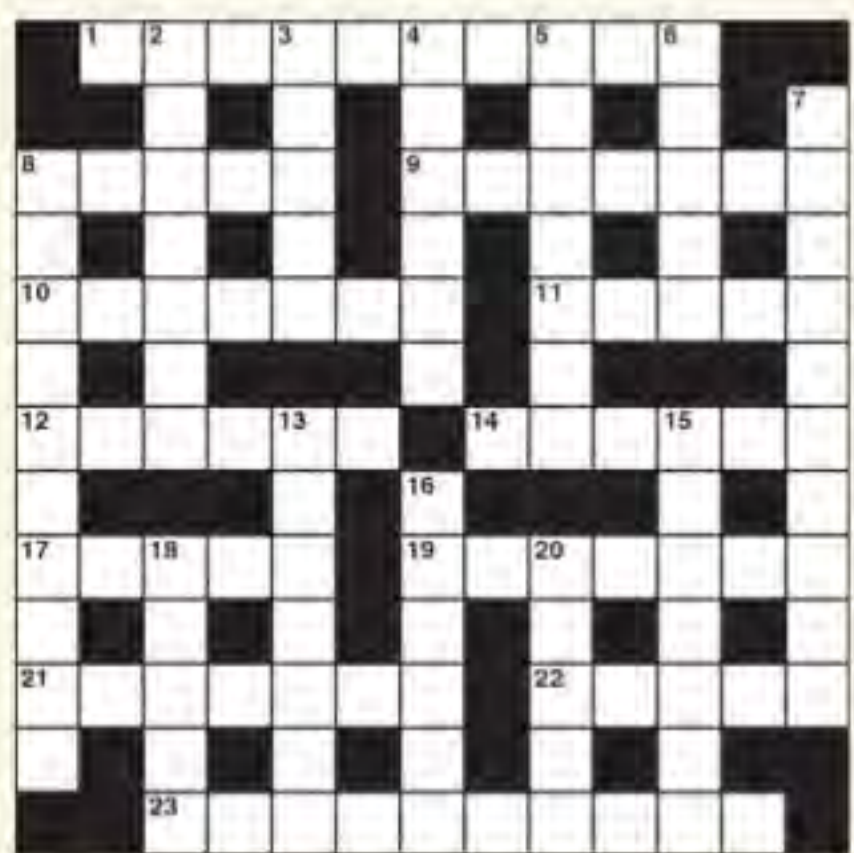
The product registration process must be simplified and not duplicated from scratch, more so if the drone use is just an extension for a formulation that is already approved for conventional manual spraying. The idea is to reduce registration timelines and make available the same crop protection products to farmers through a new spraying technology, without compromising on safety. The Japanese guidelines stipulate that the bio-efficacy and maximum residue limits (MRL) data for drone/UAV applications be considered equivalent to that of conventional spraying, so long as the critical parameters (active ingredient dose per hectare, pre-harvest intervals and number of applications/sprays) are within a determined range. There is no need, therefore, for any separate UAV bio-efficacy and MRL trials, even if additional crop safety studies might be required in some cases.

It would be in the interest of farmers and even the industry if UAV/drone technology can be deployed for agrochemical applications. This should be supported by a robust and pragmatic science-based policy framework, with Japan's revised guidance document serving as the most suitable point of reference for drafting our regulations.

The writer is Chief Executive Officer, CropLife India



## CROSSWORD 4063



- ACROSS**
- Tasty dish, or picture of one? (10)
  - He provided music for the network with some hesitation (5)
  - Make up pet term for the Devil (7)
  - Idle chatter has teeth on edge (7)
  - Some vestige of sanctity? (5)
  - They hold an alternative view of things (6)
  - Blurt out the article included is vicious (6)
  - Measures for those that want to go straight (5)
  - Irreverence shown by the little devil I have yet to reform (7)
  - You want to be this (7)
  - It provides academic standing (5)
  - He has no right to be on land (10)
- DOWN**
- He often resorts to a piece in colour (7)
  - A means of current escape which sustains us (5)
  - Eastern country which one may willingly leave (6)
  - Married eccentric lover (7)
  - Praise for former duty, we hear (5)
  - He naturally works his way up (10)
  - Strive to command union action (4,2,4)
  - Note given to the ill will get a rest (7)
  - Between a dozen and a score of youngsters so described (7)
  - Record a sale of jewellery at a high price (4,2)
  - Solicitors hold it to be permissible (5)
  - Space out steps (5)

Solutions Crossword 4062: Across: 1 Job lot, 4 Second, 9 Vinegar, 10 Greta, 11 Aroma, 12 Carnage, 13 Good manners, 18 Outpost, 20 Saddle, 22 Thole, 23 Serpent, 24 Dakota, 25 Closed. Down: 1 Jovial, 2 Banjo, 3 On guard, 5 Elgar, 6 Open air, 7 Diadem, 8 Crucial test, 14 Outlook, 15 Nostril, 16 Bolted, 17 Pelted, 19 Overt, 21 Dregs.

## OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



## CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



## MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



## JUMBLER 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 clue.

Of those who say \_\_\_\_, few are \_\_ - Thomas Neill (7...6)

DVEIO                      DEILNN  
 TINTS                      ATUGHN

SOLUTION: VIDEO, SLIM, LINEN, NAUGHT. Answer: Of those who say nothing, few are silent - Thomas Neill

## Difficulty Level 2s

**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.

SUDOKU 4146

**Difficulty Level**  
1s = Very Easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

5				3	2	6
1	6			4		
7	3			5		
8	6	1				
2	3	9	6			
		4	2	3		
6				2	9	
3	7	1				
1	9	4				8

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4145

2	7	3	4	5	9	8	6	1
6	8	5	1	7	2	3	9	4
9	1	4	6	8	3	5	7	2
4	2	6	8	9	7	1	3	5
1	9	8	5	3	4	6	2	7
5	3	7	2	1	6	4	8	9
8	4	2	9	6	1	7	5	3
7	5	1	3	2	8	9	4	6
3	6	9	7	4	5	2	1	8

### SALEM CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

ROC. No. SSC/L/2070/2020      INVITATIONS FOR BIDS      Date: 10.03.2020

- Re-Construction of Damaged Culverts (235 Nos) in the ABD Area. Estimate cost Rs. 550 Lakhs
- Establishment of 0.4 MW Solar PV Power plant on the rooftop on the Building of Salem City Municipal Corporation. Estimate Cost Rs. 235.00 Lakhs
- Re-Development Amusement Galleries in Anna Park in the ABD Area. Estimate Cost Rs. 900.00 Lakhs
- Formation of Diversion Channel to avoid mixing of sewage water in Kumaragiri Lake. Estimate Cost Rs. 1485.00 Lakhs

Commissioner, Salem Corporation

### SALEM CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

ROC. No. SSC/L/7860/2018      INVITATIONS FOR BIDS      Date: 11.03.2020

- Consultancy assignment for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) for omitted area in the prevailing Underground Sewerage Scheme and Added Areas in Salem City Municipal Corporation
- Bid document and other information available at [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in), [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in), [www.salemcorporation.gov.in](http://www.salemcorporation.gov.in)
- Date, Time and Venue for Tender Procedures. Submission of bids - 16.04.2020 up to 3.00 P.M. Opening of bids - 16.04.2020 at 3.30 P.M.

COMMISSIONER, SALEM CORPORATION

### NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
DRM (Electrical) NWR Ajmer on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tenders for the following work up to 15.00 Hrs on the mentioned date: Tender No. DRM-Elect-75-2019-20, Name of Work: All Div. Schedule maintenance of Cummins Diesel Engines of Power Cars of All-CDG Garib Rath train (Train no. 12983/84) for two years. Approximate cost of work: Rs. 3413100/-, Earnest Money: 68300/-, Tender No. DRM-Elect-76-2019-20, Name of Work: All Div. Schedule maintenance of Cummins Diesel Engines of Power Car (17865) in UDZ-MYS Humsafar exp (19668/67) & Raj Humsafar exp (22985/86) for two years. Approximate cost of work: Rs. 2246963/-, Earnest Money: 44900/-, Date & Time of Closing E-Tender: 31.03.2020 at 15.00 Hrs., Date & Time of Opening E-Tender: 31.03.2020 at 15.30 Hrs. The details of above E-tender are available on website [www.nwrps.gov.in](http://www.nwrps.gov.in) 369-SR/20. Please join us on [fibre.nwrailways](http://fibre.nwrailways)

### Bank of India

Relationship beyond banking  
Head Office : Star House, C-5, G-Block, Bandra - Kurla Complex, Bandra East, Mumbai - 51.

RFP for Corporate Agency Arrangement for Standalone Health Insurance Business  
Bank of India invites RFP from eligible Standalone Health Insurance Companies with a view of entering into Corporate Agency arrangement for distribution of Health Insurance products in India  
For details please visit our website at [www.bankofindia.co.in](http://www.bankofindia.co.in). Last date of submission of bid is **March 31, 2020**.

### NORTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Office of the Ex. Engineer (Pr.) City & SPZ  
Room No. 300, 3rd Floor, Old Hindu College Bldg, Kashmir Gate, Delhi-110006 Tel. No. 011-23988845  
No. EE(Project)CSPZ/TC/2019-20/20      Dated: 09.03.2020

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Request of Tender document      16.03.2020 18.00 PM to 23.03.2020 18.00 PM  
Issues of Tender Document      16.03.2020 18.01 PM to 23.03.2020 18.10 PM  
Tender closing Date and Time      24.03.2020 15.00 PM  
Opening Date      25.03.2020 15.00 PM

Sealed percentage rate tenders are invited for the execution of the following works by the North DMC from approved and eligible contractors as per schedule.

Sr.No.1, Name of Work: Solid Waste Management to create Infrastructure for carrying out Primary & Secondary Collection for managing MSW in Karol Bagh Zone of North DMC SH: Construction of 13 No. enclosures for Fixed Compactor Transfer Station (FCTS) (01 in each ward) in Karol Bagh Zone, Head of Account:UDF, Tender Amount: 3.82,55, 682/-, Estimated Cost: 3.82,56,000/-, Earnest Money: 7,65,200/-, Time of Comp.: 06 Months, Rate hold good for: 05 Months, Cost of Tender: 1,500/-

Sr.No.2, Name of Work: Solid Waste Management to create Infrastructure for carrying out Primary & Secondary Collection for managing MSW in Narela Zone of North DMC SH : Construction of 02 No. enclosures for Fixed Compactor Transfer Station (FCTS) in Narela Zone, Head of Account:UDF, Tender Amount: 58,85,000/-, Earnest Money: 1,17,700/-, Time of Comp.: 04 Months, Rate hold good for: 05 Months, Cost of Tender: 1,000/-

Note : Detailed information including Addendum/Corrigendum of the NIT would be uploaded on the website [www.tenderwizard.com/NORTHDMCETENDER](http://www.tenderwizard.com/NORTHDMCETENDER) only.

Ex.Engineer (Pr.) City-S.P. Zone  
R.O. No. 242/North DMC/2019-20

### GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU

#### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

BUILDINGS (C&M) CIRCLE, MEDICAL WORKS, CHEPAUK, CHENNAI - 600 005.  
NIT No. 41/2019-2020/BCMC/MW/CHENNAI Date: 10.03.2020  
FORM OF CONTRACT: LUMP SUM (TWO COVER SYSTEM)  
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D., Buildings (Construction and Maintenance) Circle, Medical Works, Chepaug, Chennai-5 invites tender for the following work at his Office upto 3.00 P.M. on 03.04.2020 in two sealed covers containing, Cover (1) Pre-Qualification details and EMD in a separate inner cover and Cover (2) Price Tender Schedule in another sealed cover and put into one common sealed cover from the experienced and Registered Contractors / Firms in Public Works Department as detailed below. The prequalification will alone be opened at 3.30 P.M. on the same day.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Appx. value of work including G.S.T. (Rs. in Lakhs)	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (In Rupees)	Period of Completion	Cost of tender documents with GST (In Rupees)
1.	Construction of Hospital Buildings for New Government Medical College and Hospital at Kallakurichi in Kallakurichi District.	14400.00	Rs.72,20,000/-	18 (Eighteen) Months	Rs.15,000/- + Rs.1800/- (GST)

Eligible Registration Class of Contractor : Registered in Class-I in State Level (Rs.75.00 Lakhs and above).

Cost of Tender Schedule and EMD to be remitted in favour of : The Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Buildings Construction & Maintenance Division, Medical Works, Vellore.

All other details including EMD, Qualification criteria are incorporated in the tender documents, which are available in the following website and can be download at free of cost. [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)  
The Tender documents can also available in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D., Building Construction & Maintenance Circle, Medical Works, Chepaug, Chennai - 600 005 during office hours upto 05.45 PM by remitting cost of Tender Schedule as furnished as above column 6 by remitting through Challan in State Bank of India, Chennai-1 and any Clarification will be entertained during office hours on working days upto 02.04.2020.  
Superintending Engineer, P.W.D., Building Construction & Maintenance Circle, Medical Works, Chepaug, Chennai - 600 005.

### GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU

#### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

BUILDINGS (C&M) CIRCLE, MEDICAL WORKS, CHEPAUK, CHENNAI - 600 005.  
NIT No. 43/2019-2020/BCMC/MW/CHENNAI Date: 10.03.2020  
FORM OF CONTRACT: LUMP SUM (TWO COVER SYSTEM)  
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D., Buildings (Construction and Maintenance) Circle, Medical Works, Chepaug, Chennai-5 invites tender for the following work at his Office upto 3.00 P.M. on 03.04.2020 in two sealed covers containing, Cover (1) Pre-Qualification details and EMD in a separate inner cover and Cover (2) Price Tender Schedule in another sealed cover and put into one common sealed cover from the experienced and Registered Contractors / Firms in Public Works Department as detailed below. The prequalification will alone be opened at 3.30 P.M. on the same day.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Appx. value of work including G.S.T. (Rs. in Lakhs)	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Period of Completion	Cost of tender documents with GST (In Rupees)
1.	Construction of Residential Buildings for New Government Medical College and Hospital at Kallakurichi in Kallakurichi District.	5490.00	Rs.27,60,000/-	18 (Eighteen) Months	Rs.15,000/- + Rs.1800/- (GST)

Eligible Registration Class of Contractor : Registered in Class-I in State Level (Rs.75.00 Lakhs and above).

Cost of Tender Schedule and EMD to be remitted in favour of : The Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Buildings Construction & Maintenance Division, Medical Works, Vellore.

All other details including EMD, Qualification criteria are incorporated in the tender documents, which are available in the following website and can be download at free of cost. [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in)  
The Tender documents can also available in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D., Building Construction & Maintenance Circle, Medical Works, Chepaug, Chennai - 600 005 during office hours upto 05.45 PM by remitting cost of Tender Schedule as furnished as above column 6 by remitting through Challan in State Bank of India, Chennai-1 and any Clarification will be entertained during office hours on working days upto 02.04.2020.  
Superintending Engineer, P.W.D., Building Construction & Maintenance Circle, Medical Works, Chepaug, Chennai - 600 005.

### TAMILNADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER CHENNAI CIRCLE-1  
NOTICE INVITING SHORT-TENDER

Tender Notice No. SCB /183 /HD/SE/CC-1/2020      Date: 11.03.2020

For and on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, one sealed tender consisting of two separate sealed covers one for Pre-qualification with EMD to be enclosed in A cover and another for price submitted to be enclosed in B cover are invited from the registered contractors of TNSCB under Class-I and above or Government Departments (Government undertaking / Public Sector Undertaking, registered as a legal entity in India by the Superintending Engineer, Chennai Circle-1, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, No.5, Kamarajar Salai, Chennai - 600 005 upto 3.00 PM on 27.03.2020 and the same will be opened at 3.30 PM on same day in the presence of the Tender Scrutiny Committee.

Sl. No.	Name of Work / Estimate No.	Approximate Value including GST (Rs. in lakhs)	EMD (in Rs.)
1)	Reconstruction of 60 Nos. of tenements as per T.D. 59/2019 (G+4 storied) including internal water supply, sanitary, electrification arrangements at Ekambaram Pillai and Munsamy Pillai Street Phase-II scheme at Mylapore Taluk in Greater Chennai Corporation On 125 under Vertical - III Housing For All (PMAY). CER No.60/HFA/2019-20	Rs.566.30	Rs.2,94,000/-
2)	Reconstruction of 384 Nos. of tenements adopting T.D.04/2020 (G+5 storied) including internal water supply, sanitary, electrification arrangements and development works at Kull Thottam scheme in Corpn.On 125 under Vertical - III Housing For All (PMAY). CER No. 66/HFA/2019-20	Rs.3328.33	Rs.16,75,000/-

The EMD should be drawn as Demand Draft or Banker's Cheque or Bank Guarantee from any Nationalised/Scheduled Banks, payable at Chennai in the prescribed form in favour of the Executive Engineer, Marina Reconstruction Division, T.N.S.C.B., Chennai - 600 005. The tender documents can be obtained from the office of the Superintending Engineer, Chennai Circle-1, TNSCB, No.5, Kamarajar salai, Chennai - 600 005 on written requisition along with cost of the tender documents to a value of Rs.16,900/- (Non-Refundable) in the form of Demand Draft or Banker's Cheque upto 3.00 PM on 26.03.2020 drawn in favour of Executive Engineer, Marina Reconstruction Division, T.N.S.C.B., Chennai - 600 005.

Note:  
1. Detailed tender notice, conditions for participating in the tender can be had from the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Chennai Circle-1, TNSCB, Chennai - 600 005.  
2. Detailed tender notice, conditions for participating in the tender and the tender documents are also available at [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) in which can be downloaded at free of cost. The tenderers shall keep a watch over the web site till the proceeding date of tender for any modifications.  
The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons therefor. No.5 Kamarajar salai, Chennai-600 005. DIPR/1365/Tender/2020

### भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग DEPARTMENT OF SPACE

इसरो नौदन कॉम्प्लेक्स ISRO PROPUSSION COMPLEX  
महेंद्रगिरि जी आ MAHENDRAGIRI PO  
तिरुनेलवेली जिला TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT- 627 133, तमिलनाडु TAMILNADU

क्रय व भंडार प्रभाग/PURCHASE & STORES DIVISION      दिनांक /DATE: 10.03.2020

निविदा सूचना सं. आईपीआरसी/प्र.क.व.पं/पीई/प्र-प्राण/04/2020-21 /TENDER NOTICE NO.IPRC/HPS/PTG-PROC/04/2020-21

भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिए और उनकी ओर से प्रमाण, क्रय व भंडार, इसरो नौदन कॉम्प्लेक्स (आईपीआरसी), महेंद्रगिरि निमित्त निविदा के आयुक्त हेतु आन्ताराष्ट्र निविदाएं आमंत्रित करते हैं। For and on behalf of the President of India, Head, Purchase & Stores, ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri invites online tenders for supply of the following:

क्र. सं. /Sl. No.	निविदा संदर्भ सं. /Tender Ref. No.	संक्षिप्त विवरण /Brief Description	निविदा प्रस्तुतिकरण की अंतिम तिथि व समय/ Last Date & Time for Tender Submission
1.	आईपीआरसी/क्र/2020/0412001 (दो-भाग) IPRC/PUR/2020E0412001 (Two-Part)	वायुल प्रवर्तित ग्लोब वाल्वों की आपूर्ति /Supply of Pneumatically Actuated Globe Valves	Upto 27.03.2020 10:00 बजे/hrs. तक
2.	आईपीआरसी/क्र/2020/0413501 (दो-भाग) IPRC/PUR/2020E0413501 (Two-Part)	केंद्रीकृत डी.ए.ए.ए. संयंत्र की स्थापना के लिए आर.ए.ए.सी. RFP for Establishment of Centralized DMW Plant	Upto 13.04.2020 10:00 बजे/hrs. तक (Pre-Bid meeting on 13.03.2020)
3.	आईपीआरसी/क्र/2019/0383801 (दो-भाग) IPRC/PUR/2019E0383801 (Two-Part)	रेखक शक्ति की आपूर्ति /Linear Power supplies	Upto 06.04.2020 14:00 बजे/hrs. तक

सूचना विक्रेता हमारे इसरो नौदन कॉम्प्लेक्स विक्रय प्रभाग <https://eprocure.isro.gov.in> पर जाएं और केवल ऑनलाइन द्वारा अपने कोटेशन अर्पित करें। इस निविदा सूचना के प्रकाशन के पश्चात जारी कोई भी सुधार केवल हमारे वेबसाइट में ही देना जा सकेगा। आप कृपया वेबसाइट पर सूचना सं. देना करें। The interested vendors may visit our ISRO PROPUSSION COMPLEX Link in URL <https://eprocure.isro.gov.in> and upload your quotations through online only. Corrigendum if any, issued after publication of this Tender Notice, will be hosted in our web site only. You may please visit the site regularly. प्रमाण, क्रय व भंडार/Head, Purchase & Stores, फोन सं./Ph. No: 04637-261599/1552/1553/1554



# 23 TALK

ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD

## SNAP SHOTS



### Caught on Camera

TWO ARTISTS — Nikos Valsamakias, a painter from Athens and Kyung-hwa Choi-ahoi, a draftsman from Seoul (pictured) — who have been living in Hamburg for over 20 years are presenting the result of their collaboration in the exhibition titled 'Eye of Mobile', where they bring out scenes from everyday life in Hamburg and Berlin. But the catch is that all the pieces are recorded by iPhone 6s as a moving picture. All of them are "one minute, short stories". They direct their intercultural view on the image of Germany and the landscape, and for both of them, the videos are a way to relive the memories they have created. "The purpose of the exhibition is mainly to show the kind of life that common people will see through any device and it is interesting to see the kind of environment that was there while they were recording and then show the result in a different place like New Delhi," says Sumitra Chauhan, Director, Gallery ONKAF, where the works are on display. Beside the iPhone 6s film project, their independent artistic positions, drawings and paintings are also presented. The exhibition highlights the colorful paintings made by Valsamakias and the dark drawings made by Choi-ahoi. While Choi-ahoi believes in capturing everyday life in her memory and spilling it on paper in the form of sketches, Valsamakias is a painter and derives inspiration from light. His main motive is to know how he can paint light on paper in the present form. The exhibition is on at Gallery ONKAF in Delhi's SDA till March 12.

GAFIRA QADIR & ZENAIRA BAKHSH



### Sneak Peak

AMERICAN ACTOR-PRODUCER Mark Wahlberg will once again give a sneak peek into his life through the docuseries titled *Wahl Street*, which will be screened on HBO Max. It will trace Wahlberg's journey as a rapper-turned-actor who straddles his acting job with many other business ventures. The eight-episode docuseries "will follow Wahlberg as he navigates his expansive business portfolio, spanning all sectors of commerce ranging from a line of activewear, all-natural, high-performance sports nutrition supplements, television and film production companies, and even a Chevrolet dealership". Another HBO show, *Entourage*, was loosely based on the actor's life.



# A Home for Hope

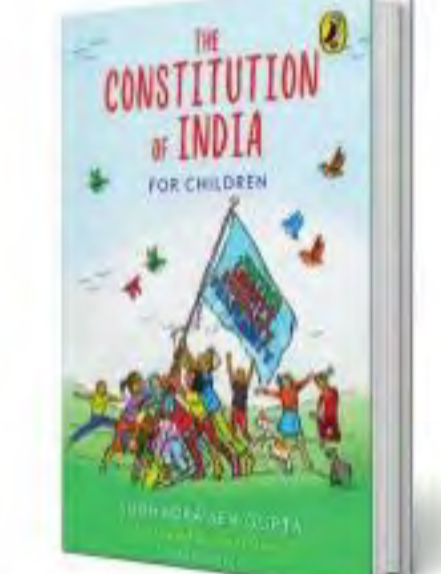
Subhadra Sen Gupta's new book makes the Constitution accessible to children

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI

HER BOOKS on Indian history often have Subhadra Sen Gupta's email address in them for children to be able to reach her with their queries. A new book usually means a deluge of emails, flush with questions. "The smart ones try to make me write the projects for them. The mail starts with a paragraph of profuse praise and then a quick list of questions starting with, 'Do you know anything about...?' They have been trying to con me for years," says the Delhi-based writer, with a laugh.

Yet, over the course of the last few years, the letters, and the queries that have come up during school visits for author interactions, have spoken of something else. "I meet children at schools, where I talk less and listen more. In the last five years, I have sensed a confusion about history, and, also, human values. They are taught something in school, and, in some cases, are exposed to very different ideas at home. After reading my book, *A Children's History of India* (Rupa, 2015), one girl wrote to protest at my calling (Mughal emperor) Akbar 'Great'. She was convinced that he raped Hindu women," she says. In another instance, Sen Gupta recalls a student asking her what Jawaharlal Nehru had done for the nation. "As the history of independent India is not taught in school, they know little of Nehru's achievements or his role in the writing of the Constitution," she says.

Long before the nationwide protests broke out over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed National Register of Citizens, Sen Gupta had begun work on a book that she hoped would dispel this confusion that she'd sensed — an accessible children's version of the Indian Constitution, a book fundamental to the idea of the country's composite identity. By the time her *The Constitution of India for Children* (Puffin Books, Rs 299), illustrated by Tapas Guha, came out ahead of the Republic Day, the protests had, through public readings of the Preamble, brought the Constitution firmly back into public consciousness. "I had no inkling that things would pan out the way they did. But, if you think of it, the moment was just right, and, in reading out



(Top) Subhadra Sen Gupta (right) with Tapas Guha Tashi Tobgyal; the cover of her book *The Constitution of India for Children*

**As the history of independent India is not taught in school, they know little of Nehru's achievements or his role in the writing of the Constitution**

SUBHADRA SEN GUPTA

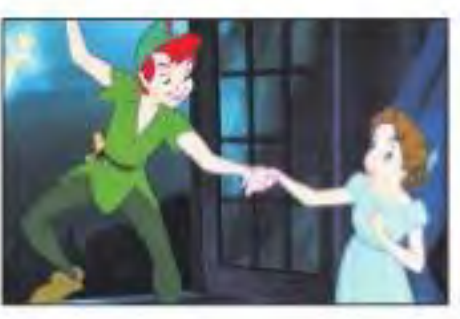
the Preamble at protests and discussing fundamental rights, people were really finding their way back to how the members of the Constituent Assembly had thought of this country — as accommodating and respectful of each other's differences," says Sen Gupta, when we meet at Guha's residence in Chittaranjan Park.

Since its publication in 2010, former chief justice of Himachal Pradesh Leila Seth's *We The Children of India: The Preamble to Our Constitution* (Puffin Books) has been the benchmark for a primer on the Indian Constitution. Illustrated by Bindia Thapar and peppered with black-and-white historical photographs, Seth's book is a classic. Sen Gupta acknowledges her debt to it but her book holds its ground. She packs in rigorous research — her source materials, among other things, include books by Granville Austin, Bipan

Chandra, Ramachandra Guha and Derek O'Brien — and throws in lesser-known nuggets of information. In one of the most interesting segments of the book, called *The Backroom Boys*, Sen Gupta gives a glimpse of the massive scale of operations required to put together the Constitution and the people in the Constituent Assembly Secretariat, who helped the Drafting Committee, headed by BR Ambedkar. She speaks of how Rajendra Prasad, India's first President, transformed the Rashtrapati Bhavan into an Indian establishment and of the mutual trust shared by Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. From the 15 women members — that included Ammu Swaminathan, who advocated equal rights for women, and Dakshayani Velayudhan, the only woman Dalit leader — to Munda leader Jaipal Singh, who spoke on behalf of the country's tribal people, the fascinating account of the diversity of the Constituent Assembly, that debated, discussed and worked for a road map for an equitable future, comes alive in the book.

While Sen Gupta references historical photographs through her narrative, the book steers clear of the use of any. Instead, Guha's cheery illustrations hold it together (One illustration to demonstrate the right to equality, for instance, has a tongue-in-cheek reference to 'WhatsApp University'). "As I struggled to try to make fundamental rights and directive principles interesting to a 12-year-old, ... Tapas came to the rescue with his cartoons. Using illustrations instead of photographs was a conscious decision as, instead of a hazy black-and-white photograph of say, Sarojini Naidu, if she is speaking to you in rhyme and wearing a bright sari, they will remember it," says Sen Gupta. "I wanted the illustrations to make the narrative contemporary, so that was a driving principle in using cartoon-like sketches," says Guha.

It took Sen Gupta about nine months to finish the manuscript. By the time the book came out, people had taken to the streets to uphold the democratic ethos of the Constitution. In hindsight, Sen Gupta wishes she had done a segment on citizenship. Perhaps, that will be grist for another book.



## WELCOME TO NEVERLAND

Newcomers Alexander Molony, a native New Zealand actor, and Ever Anderson, daughter of actor Milla Jovovich, will play the title roles in Disney Studios' live-action movie titled *Peter Pan & Wendy*, a reimagining of the 1953 animated classic.



Members of The Bluegrass Journeymen during their gig

## Back to the Roots

Patrick Fitzsimons, founder of US-based band, The Bluegrass Journeymen, on Indian music and how bluegrass is about a sense of community

SURBHIGUPTA

IT WAS Friday evening at the Roosevelt House, residence of the US Ambassador to India Kenneth J. Juster, and the agenda was to celebrate American folk. The tunes transported those present for the concert in Delhi to the American countryside as The Bluegrass Journeymen belted out the popular folk song, *Hand me down my walking cane*. "I sang this song at my grandfather's 90th birthday, and he told me he had heard his grandfather sing it too," announced the mandolin player and vocalist Patrick Fitzsimons. But what took many by surprise was when Fitzsimons and ukelele player Nabanita Sarkar, a law student from Kolkata, sang *Ektu golpo boli*, a Bengali song composed for regional theatre in the '70s, fusing it with the fiddle tune *Ashland breakdown*. The audience cheered and swooned as the band switched to the popular *Tujhe dekha toh yeh jana sanam* — "the song that popularised mandolin in India".

This was The Bluegrass Journeymen's fifth visit to India, and they were invited by the US Embassy on a grant titled "Building Bridges through Bluegrass," which includes performances and engagements in Uttarakhand and Tamil Nadu. But the band had first come to India in 2017, and over the years has performed at various music festivals, jazz clubs, schools, government programmes, and in remote villages. They have recorded a live album at The Piano Man Jazz Club in Delhi and also jammed

with Baul musicians in Santiniketan. It's not hard to spot touches of Indian classical music in their music. Apart from Fitzsimons and Sarkar, the eight piece band includes Billy Cardine on slide guitar, Shaun Nicklin on banjo, Andrew Conley on cello, Coleman Smith on fiddle, Summers Baker on guitar and Jean-Luc Davis on the bass.

Fitzsimons founded the band to popularise bluegrass music beyond America and Europe. "It's not really well-known in America anymore. In Europe maybe a little bit, but certainly not in Asia, so I really wanted to form a tight band that represented the music to the world," he says.

An orchestral form of folk music, bluegrass music developed in the Appalachian region in the US in the '40s. Once called hillybilly music, it derives its name from the band Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, and has roots in traditional English, Scottish and Irish ballads and dance tunes. One will also find touches of traditional African-American blues and jazz in it. What's unique about bluegrass is that it is string band music and doesn't have percussion. "The mandolin is known to be the drum of the bluegrass band," he says.

It was in college that Fitzsimons got the bluegrass bug. "Bill Monroe started it," he says. What also has always drawn people to the music has been its participatory nature. "Most of the people who listen to bluegrass also play the music. So it is really about building a community and people getting together and having a good time," he says.

## Corona Effect

A NUMBER of events in the Capital are getting postponed in the wake of the rising cases of coronavirus in India. The Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META), which was to take place between March 13 and 19 at Delhi's Kamani Auditorium and Shri Ram Centre has been moved ahead. Jay Shah, VP, Head-Cultural Outreach at the Mahindra Group, said, "Given the serious health concerns, the safety of our audiences and artistes remains our top priority." The organisers added that META will return with new date and schedule soon. Two dastangoi performances were to take place at the centenary celebration of Jamia Millia Islamia on March 12, but have now been cancelled. Writer Ajeet Cour has postponed the annual SAARC Festival of Writers that she organises. Her daughter and artist Arpana



From an earlier edition of SAARC Festival

Cour said that the festival may take place either in April or October. AIFACS in Delhi has decided to postpone all forthcoming exhibitions and activities. South Asian Festival of Sufism, Buddhism, Bhakti and Jainism, to be held from March 13 to 15 at Sahitya Akademi also stands postponed.

# Design For All

An online collection highlights how a design movement in Germany influenced the modernist language of expression in art and architecture in India

SHINY VARGHESE

THE DEVASTATION of World War I saw the rise of technological innovations. Against this backdrop, German architect Walter Gropius presented his manifesto of a school that would meld different art streams including industrial, design, and interior design with architecture, and turned the tide towards technical crafts and skills. Bauhaus, which translates as 'house of building', started as a movement in 1919 and went on to become the world's most accessible design movement. Headquartered in Weimer, Germany, the movement completed 100 years at the close of 2019. To mark the centenary, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation partnered with Google Arts & Culture to present an immersive online collection of archival sketches, photographs and stories around the movement and its exponents. India, too, was influenced by the movement. We speak to designer Divya Thakur, Founder and Creative Director, Design Temple, who has initiated the India series. Excerpts:

MoDE is an attempt at helping India restate its cultural identity. Promoting design is a long-cherished dream that manifested in many design exhibits that we showed around the world. From 'India Indigenous' at Loggia de Mercanti, Milan, in 2004 and 'India Now' at V&A, London, in 2007 to 'India Past Forward' at Millesgarden, Stockholm, in 2015 to 'India: The Design Story' at CSMVS and Max Mueller Bhavan, Mumbai, in 2016, each of these exhibits was aimed to promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of design in India to global and Indian audiences. The overwhelming response to these exhibits prompted me to set up MoDE. It is a natural extension of the efforts of the past decade, prompted by a sincere desire for India to take its rightful place in the world, for its intellectual capital.

### How and why did you connect with the 'Bauhaus Everywhere' initiative?

I was looking for a way to catalogue and archive the stories. The partnership with Google Arts and Culture came about as a result of this. 'Bauhaus Everywhere' is an initiative by the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, which was looking for partners in different countries to tell their individual stories.



### What were you looking for when you curated the India 'chapter'?

We had hoped to see where this strain of modernism had found expression, and how and to what degree. It was an insightful journey into pre-independent India. It gave us a glimpse into the aspirations of its young

artists and architects, and into the impactful minds of its great thinkers such as Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru. Santiniketan in Kolkata was the first place that Bauhaus artists exhibited outside Europe alongside modernists of the Bengal School. This kind of cultural dialogue between two different countries, and schools of art and thought was unprecedented at the time.

Some of the young architects who worked towards building modern India included Achyut Kanvinde and Habib Rahman, who studied in the US, and were directly trained under Bauhaus masters like Gropius and Mies Van der Rohe. We learned that Ahmedabad's National Institute of Design consciously studied the curriculum of Bauhaus, and incorporated that into their course. One of our key learnings was that while Bauhaus found its way to India and



(Clockwise from above) Divya Thakur; Walter Gropius and Harry Seidler Max Dupain; Habib Rahman's design of the Maulana Azad Mazhar in New Delhi

gave momentum to the modern movement here, India, too, had impacted Bauhaus masters such as Johannes Itten and Kandinsky.

### The Bauhaus Movement was about making design accessible to all, somehow we in India have turned it into an elitist symbol. How did that happen?

Contemporary India has the unique problem of addressing many basic issues. Education, food, clothing, shelter, employment, infrastructure — all these need to be raised to a level that allows for equal opportunity. Until that happens, certain aspects of design, naturally, take a back seat and become the priority or indulgence of only a few. Design, of course, can be used as an invaluable tool to aid the development of the country and bring it to a point that allows it to find larger fruition.

## THE GENESIS

DR CLAUDIA Perren (pictured), Director of the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, on the new approaches that Bauhaus followed

"In the traditional curriculum of art schools, the main aim was to study established art forms by copying them. The Bauhaus rejected this. Bauhaus architecture is actually very diverse — it played with colours, surfaces, and materials. The goal was to educate personalities. Swiss artist-teacher Johannes Itten set up the



innovative preliminary course at the Bauhaus, introducing to each student, basics of material knowledge, composition, and colour in an experimental way. He later invited German musician Gertrud Grunow to teach a course of harmony with him, involving music and relaxation techniques to further encourage the students' individual creativity. Josef Albers took a more abstract approach. He had materials explored, without any aspects that depicted or imitated reality. His folding exercises became famous, and are still taught in some art schools."



# BCCI asks for strategic timeout

Despite government's strict visa advisory, Indian board bullish of conducting IPL on schedule; asks for time

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY  
KOLKATA, MARCH 11

WITH THE participation of foreign players in this year's Indian Premier League in serious doubt after the government suspended all existing visas till April 15, the BCCI is likely to take a call on the tournament in the next two days.

"Allow us some time till tomorrow or day after. Allow us a couple of days. Let us speak to the ministry, if the players can be given visas or not. These things need to be sorted out," a BCCI official told The Indian Express suggesting the Board still hasn't given up on the idea of hosting the tournament this year.

The World Health Organisation on Wednesday declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic, and the government suspended all existing visas – except diplomatic, international organisations, official and employment – till April 15. The IPL features players from all around the cricketing world.

Meanwhile, the BCCI medical team has told India players to avoid eating out and mingling with fans seeking selfies. The Board's medical team held a briefing for them ahead of the first ODI against South Africa at Dharamsala. "The BCCI medical team has been monitoring the current coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. All the players, team support staff, State Associations have been briefed about the standard guidelines issued by WHO as well as the Ministry of Health & Welfare - Government of India," BCCI said.

The players have been given a list of Do's and Don'ts on personal hygiene and the list includes but is not limited to telling them to "avoid eating out at restaurants where hygiene standards are unknown or compromised."

The players have also been told to "avoid close contact and interaction with individuals outside the team environment (to avoid cross-infection from unknown individuals)." The guidelines also ask players to avoid handshakes and handling unknown phones for selfies. The BCCI has also asked airlines, team hotels, state associations and medical teams to sanitise facilities before and during team use. "All the public washrooms at the stadium will be stocked with hand-wash liquids and sanitisers. The medical staff and first-aiders at the stadiums will be keeping a record of all patients seeking treatment and follow-up as may be necessary," BCCI said. The coronavirus outbreak has far led to the postponement of the shooting World Cup and the Indian Open golf tournament in India. There is also a big question mark on the India Open badminton tournament scheduled for March 24-29.

## Shining with saliva: Bhuvu to follow doctors' instructions

**Dharamsala:** Out of the six questions that the returning medium-pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar had to field in his first media interaction after recovering from sports hernia injury, three were on the coronavirus outbreak and precautions taken by the Indian players, both on and off the field.

This was not surprising considering that 52 positive cases have been reported so far in the country and the general sense of panic it has instilled on the general public.

Bhuvneshwar, though, took on these questions with a refreshing sense of poise. First-up, he was asked whether Indian bowlers would limit the use of saliva on the ball in the first ODI against South Africa in Dharamsala. The 30-year-old admitted that a decision in this regard would only be taken after consultation with the team doctors later in the day.

"Look, we have thought about this issue of



The IPL gets underway in Mumbai on March 29. However, Maharashtra government is considering to impose a ban on ticket sales. File

## INSTRUCTIONS TO PLAYERS

- Avoid eating out at restaurants
- Avoid close contact and interaction with individuals outside the team environment
- Avoid handshakes and handling unknown phones for selfies

not using saliva) but I can't comment right now because if we don't use saliva and if the ball doesn't swing, then we will get hit and you guys will say that India are not bowling well," he said. He then added: "But it's a valid point and everything depends on the team meeting that we are scheduled to have today with the doctors. We will just follow their instructions."

Bhuvu was then asked whether the virus fears would limit the Indian team's interactions with their fans.

"There are a few dos and don'ts that have been prescribed to us... things like maintaining our personal hygiene and washing our hands regularly. But we cannot stay away from our fans because they love and support us, so these things are unavoidable. Having said that, we will still try to maintain our distance by wearing masks during our interactions with them and while signing autographs," the pacer explained.

However, on the field, when the two captains walk out for the toss on Thursday, Virat Kohli and his South African counterpart Quinton de Kock are unlikely to shake hands.

Finally, the Meerut lad refused to get drawn into speculations surrounding the cancellation of the upcoming Indian Premier League. "I really don't want to comment on such things right now. It's a pretty dangerous situation in India, but at this moment, all I can say is that we hope this doesn't spread any further," he concluded.

VISHAL MENON

# Arsenal players quarantined, match postponed

AFP/AP/REUTERS  
LONDON, MARCH 11

ARSENAL'S GAME at Manchester City on Wednesday was postponed after players from the London club were put into quarantine, making it the first Premier League football fixture to be called off because of coronavirus. Arsenal said players and four staff had been isolated at their homes after coming into contact with the owner of Greek club Olympiakos, Vangelis Marinakis, who has since tested positive for COVID-19.

"We are strictly following the government guidelines which recommend that anyone coming into close contact with someone with the virus should self-isolate at home for 14 days from the last time they had contact," an Arsenal statement said. "As a result, the players are unavailable for tonight's (Wednesday's) match against Manchester City and the Premier League has decided the game should be postponed."

The first postponement in the Premier League, which has a huge worldwide following, follows widespread disruption to football and other sports across the globe.

Arsenal were knocked out of the Europa League by Olympiakos on February 27. Marinakis, owner of the Greek club and English side Nottingham Forest, announced on Tuesday that he had tested positive for the coronavirus.

But Arsenal said the players and staff, who met Marinakis after the game at the Emirates Stadium, will return to work on Friday ahead of Saturday's trip to Brighton.

"The medical advice we have received puts the risk of them developing COVID-19 at extremely low," it added.

## TRACKING THE VIRUS: FOOTBALL TAKES A HIT

### HANOVER PLAYER INFECTED

Hanover 96 footballer Timo Huebers has tested positive for the coronavirus, the German second division club said on Wednesday, prompting checks for all players and staff. "Pro player Timo Huebers tested positive for coronavirus," the club said in a statement. "Because the 23-year-old did not have any contact with his team mates since his infection it is not to be assumed that other players have been infected by him." The club said Huebers was likely to have been infected on Saturday evening and has had no contact with players or staff since then. All his team mates and staff have been tested.

### PLAYERS PROTEST

Spanish players' association don't want matches to be held if entry to spectators is not allowed. The global

The Premier League called the move a "precautionary measure" and said there were no plans to postpone any other games. Arsenal's opponents on Saturday struggling Brighton tweeted that their game was still on. "Albion's match against Arsenal this Saturday remains scheduled to go ahead as planned, in line with government advice, and following consultation with the Premier League and medical advisors. #BHAFAC," they tweeted.

Football's Serie A and all other sports have

### FINANCIAL BLOW

£6bn

According to the *Independent*, it is estimated that Premier League clubs could lose anywhere between one billion to six billion pounds for each match that is conducted behind closed doors.

football players association FIFPRO backed the Spanish player association and said, "We ask that employers and competition organisers respect the wishes of players to take short-term precautionary measures including suspending training or competitions."

### SERIE A SEASON IN LIMBO

Italian football federation conceded

been put on hold in Italy, while the top two divisions in Spain and France will be played in empty stadiums for at least the next two weeks. UEFA's Champions League and Europa League have also been both forced to arrange matches behind closed doors as the epidemic spreads.

### Getafe to skip Europa game

The president of Spanish soccer club Getafe said his team will not travel to Italy to play Inter Milan in the Europa League on

# Virus threat overshadows F1 season start

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
MELBOURNE, MARCH 11

Lewis Hamilton believes his all-conquering Mercedes is even better than last year as he begins his bid to equal Michael Schumacher's record seven world titles at an Australian Grand Prix given the green light despite rising coronavirus fears.

The British driver has been the dominant force in recent times, winning five of the last six drivers' championships, including in 2019 when he passed legendary five-time Argentine champion Juan Manuel Fangio on the all-time list. "It's been intense, with a huge amount of work from everybody at the track and back home at the factories," the 35-year-old said of preparations overshadowed by concerns about the virus and its impact on the sport.

"The car's feeling like a step forward from last year," Hamilton added after pre-season testing. "But it's clear we've still got a few issues we need to iron out," said the driver who won 11 of last season's 21 grands prix.

There were fears the Melbourne race may be ditched due to travel restrictions affecting team personnel, particularly from Italy-based Ferrari. On Wednesday, two Haas team staff and one from McLaren were isolated while tests are conducted to see if they have coronavirus after they showed symptoms at the track.

"We expect to receive the results overnight. The team is operating as per our normal schedule," a McLaren official said.

It is not clear what it might mean for the grand prix if the test results come back positive. F1, like many other sports, is already reeling from COVID-19 with next week's Bahrain Grand Prix set to be held behind closed doors, and the Chinese Grand Prix in April postponed.

that their league football season might not finish because of the coronavirus outbreak. FIGC resident Gabriele Gravina's suggestions for an abrupt end to the season included 'staging playoffs', 'not declaring any champion for 2019-2020' or 'declaring the current standings as final'.

### EURO MAY GO ON?

Despite the coronavirus outbreak, UEFA has asked European governments to ensure that Euro 2020 goes off smoothly in three months time. Based on advice received from the WHO, UEFA believes a city can host Euro 2020 games if it has the medical infrastructure to treat COVID-19 patients while still providing the necessary facilities to cope with tens of thousands of fans, a person with knowledge of the planning told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Thursday because of the coronavirus outbreak. Angel Torres said he does not want to risk his players' health by traveling to an area struggling to contain the spread of the virus. He also said he was concerned the team would not be able to return to Spain because of travel restrictions. "If we are eliminated because of that, so be it," Torres told Spanish radio station Ona Cero late Tuesday. "I'm not going to be the one taking any risks. I'm not going to go to a place where I don't want to go."

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

# Out of All England, Tokyo looks too far for Srikanth

SHIVANI NAIK  
MUMBAI, MARCH 11

THERE'S BEAUTY in breakdown, and Kidambi Srikanth can look perfectly exquisite dancing around the court and lunging to the net while he's bang in the middle of his most wretched string of results, plummeting to his darkest phase.

Most times on Wednesday in his opening round of the All England, Srikanth looked like a teenager standing ashore, looking forlornly towards a brightly-lit party boat slipping quickly away. That was the Olympics slipping out of his grasp.

But in a handful of moments, the Birmingham arena seemed to be lit up by an imposing Srikanth rising like a seashore lighthouse. Between 2-7 and 11-all in the opening game, his opponent - reigning Olympic champion Chen Long, nearing the end of his four-year title-hold - was made to look pedestrian.

Then Srikanth resumed looking ordinary.

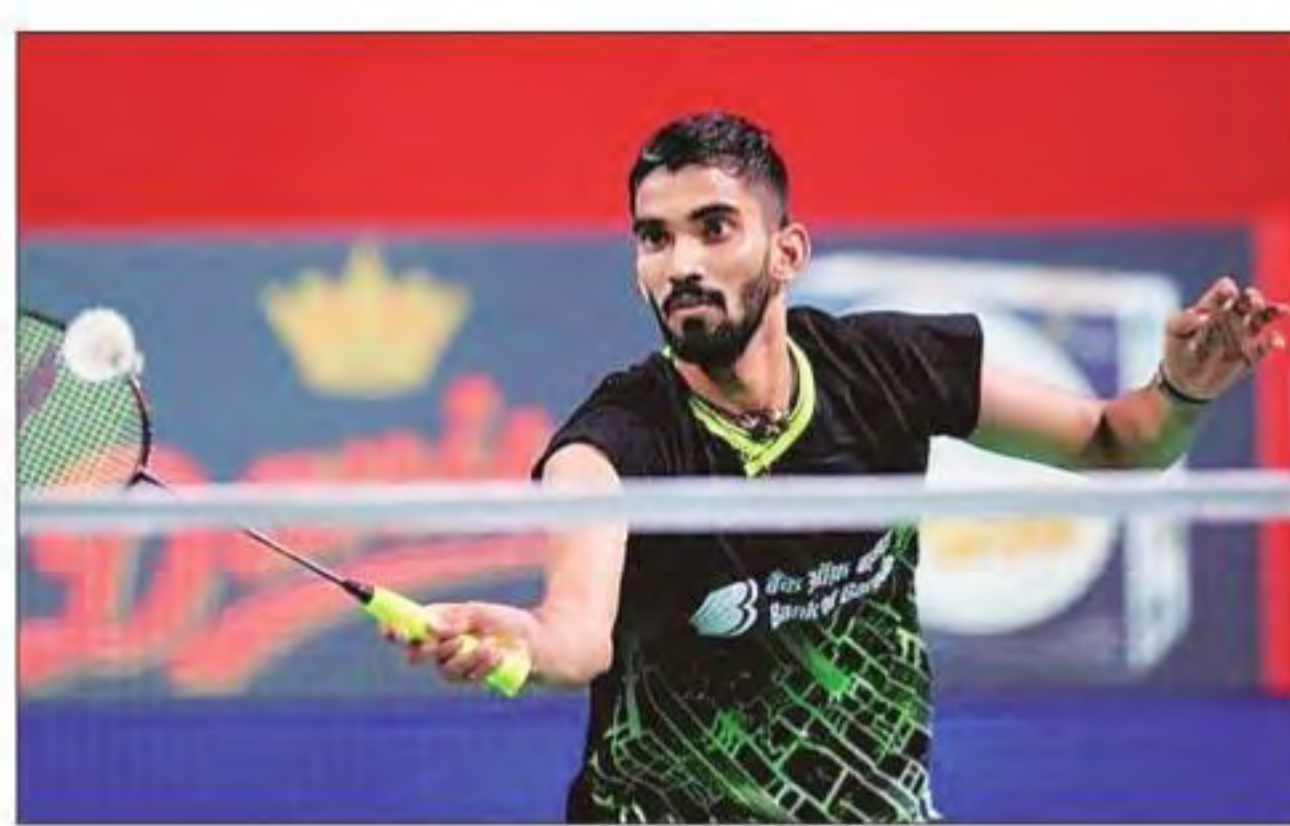
It wasn't confidence flitting in and out of his body during a 21-15, 21-16 loss - for there's nothing to rhapsodise in errors so banal, like lobs floating long on both clumsy flanks or a net-push falling limp in the mesh. He played plenty of rubbish returns that allowed Chen Long his signature beastly kill - which is nothing more than a

steep thwack, a swat.

The 31-year-old Chinese is all things boring and brilliant - controlled, accurate, swift in throttling the shuttle and filled with endless patience for retrieving in long, ponderous rallies. He made Srikanth's creative construction of points look prettier than they actually might be, by using his strength and precision like an automation. World no.5 and on his way to challenging another stiff genius allergic to errors - Kento Momota - at the Olympics that hopefully take off in July, the Chinese was everything Srikanth wasn't - effective, reassured and a certainty for such situations in India, but at this moment, all I can say is that we hope this doesn't spread any further," he concluded.

Srikanth, to his credit, wasn't playing fearful percentage badminton - he was expansive in plotting out beautiful points for himself - like Arsenal before their fans' patience with Wenger ran out. So there were the trademark set-ups: a big booming smash and a pouncing follow-up kill at the net with the quick leap of a jungle cat. Only with Srikanth do kills get described as 'beautiful'.

The Indian started his vanguard early with a down-the-line smash and at 7-5, he whisked his wrist over an acute net winner that evoked nostalgia of a time when he was looked at as an Olympic potential. There was a reverse slice he seemed to have picked up on his recent travels and a punch clear that ended a point.



Kidambi Srikanth lost 21-15, 21-16 to China's Chen Long.

But amidst all this was a bunch of unforced errors that came in waves. Gritting his teeth, scratching his head in frustration and looking grumpier than he normally does, Srikanth would show authentic disappointment infuriating his fans even more. But then there was always the anticipation, after he levelled at 11-11, of another phase of beautiful badminton.

Twice the commentators, Steen Schleicher and Gill Clark, would launch into "you know... But you never know" hopeful preambles to a comeback that never came. For before they could end the sentence, Srikanth would leak errors. Trailing 11-19 in the second, he once again masterfully set up a trap for the hulking Long. He sent two lollipops on the Chinese man's back forehead

corner, drawing him to commit to one side. And then sent down a cross-court smack to the other flank, to everyone's delight.

Soon the talkers were attesting that Srikanth hadn't lost his skill after all, just the accuracy of it all. He left the stage leaving a Srikanth-sized gap in the Olympics (though miracles in the coming month and a half can push him into the Games). Tokyo will have speed and pinpoint accuracy and control and physicality. The beauty of shuttle might be sulking somewhere in Guntur at the same time.

### Jerry-Sikki give No.1s a scare

Pinching a game off the top Chinese pair Zheng Si Wei and Huang Ya Qiaong, the Indian World No. 26 Pranav Jerry Chopra and Sikki Reddy couldn't keep the same composure in the decider. The Indians went down 21-13, 11-21, 21-17 to the No.1-ranked Chinese though there were many moments when they knew they controlled the rallies.

With national coach P Gopichand sitting behind the players, the Indians took their chances poking holes into the Chinese game.

The plan involved catching the woman player Huang Ya Qiaong at the net and going for the male player Zheng's forehand with menace.

"We played well, Gopi sir was sitting behind us giving good tips. I was feeling very positive on court because Gopi sir was like,

'you are good at the net and can challenge her. Just trust me and challenge her on the forecourt,' the left-handed Sikki said.

The Indians worked up some rhythm in the opener, with Jerry showing good control in his attack. Keeping the shuttle away from their opponents, controlling it to the corners, the Indians really came into their own in the second after lagging 21-13.

"Coach kept telling us to not finish the rally until we were 100 per cent sure and that patience helped in the second. Catching Zheng's forehand was the tip that really helped," she said.

However, the Indians would run out of steam after staying in the hunt at 10-all, chasing down a 9-3 deficit. "In the decider, wrong choice of strokes did us in," Sikki added. Hurrying to finish after levelling the match also flat-lined them at 17-17. "We should have stayed calm and taken little more time," she sighed.

The Indians knew their opponents well but needed constant urging to maintain the intensity. "We have played them before and know their game pretty well, so coach said 'don't try getting quick points. Play everything far and keep moving you legs. Enjoy the game, there is nothing to lose,'" she said.

The Chinese, adept at finishing, would race to the finish and leave India's second-best pairing to mull over their misses.





# From Devsar to Olympics, Kaushik traces his idols' route

NITIN SHARMA  
CHANDIGARH, MARCH 11

TWO DAYS ago, when Manish Kaushik lost to Chinrozig Baatarsukh—who he had beaten at the World Championships last year—in the quarter-final of the Asia/Oceania Olympic Qualifier in Amman, the Haryana boxer had a chat with his eldest brother Vipin Kaushik.

The brothers recollected the day they saw Vijender Singh, Akhil Kumar and Jitender Kumar receiving a warm reception at their village Devsar near Bhiwani, before the Kaushik brothers led Kumar to his home. With the 63-kg category offering six spots from Asia/Oceania qualifiers, Kaushik had one chance left in the play-off against reigning Commonwealth Games champion Harrison Garside of Australia, to whom he had lost in the 2018 Commonwealth Games final. As the 24-year-old scored a split 4:1 win over Garside to bag the ninth Olympic quota for India and became a part of the biggest ever Indian boxing contingent to ever head to the Olympics, the youngster remembered the day his Olympics journey started.

"I still remember the day Vijender bhai, Akhil bhai and Jitender bhai were brought to our village on a Gypsy and people were chanting their name. At that time, I did not know about the Olympics but I asked my brother and told him that I will also get a reception like that one day. This was going through my mind, *Jaise bhi ho yeh bout jeetna tha agar Olympic medal ka sapna pura karna hai* (Come what may, I had to win this bout to realise the dream of winning an Olympic medal)," Kaushik told *The Indian Express*.

Young Manish would spend a lot of time on 12-acre farmland his family owned, helping the family during the harvest of wheat, barley and cotton. When Kaushik joined the Bhupender Singh's boxing academy in Bhiwani in 2008, the brothers would cycle more than 15km every day, a journey which would sometimes offer them a chance to spot Tiwary running on the village roads. The training also meant that Manish's uncle Pawan, who also ran a vegetable shop, took the responsibility of his diet.

"But he was shy to disturb him. In 2009, when Manish won bronze medal in sub-junior nationals in Pune, he got a cash award of Rs 20,000 and we spent the whole amount on getting him gloves and shoes. Our uncle promised my father that he would give money for Manish's diet and juice every day. He does it even now and Manish still takes it even though he is earning a salary (laughs)," remembers Vipin.

Kaushik reached the quarter-finals of the World Junior Championships in Kazakhstan in 2011, but it was a silver medal in the 60-kg category at the 2015 Nationals that helped Kaushik make his way into the Indian camp. He then won the silver medal at the 2016 Nationals, losing to Shiva Thapa -- a fellow boxer with whom his paths would cross many times.

The following year, Kaushik avenged his loss to Thapa in the 60kg final at the senior nationals before defending his 60kg title against World Championship bronze medalist Gaurav Bidhuri the year after. That same year, Kaushik booked his ticket to the Commonwealth Games and won a silver.

But the Bhiwani boxer once again lost to Thapa in last year's trials for Asian Championship before avenging that loss once again, this time at the trials for the World Championships and then went on to become India's fifth medalist at the World Championships in Russia.

National coach CA Kuttappa remembers Kaushik's early days in the national camp and



Kaushik scored a split 4:1 win over Garside to bag the ninth Olympic quota for India, their highest ever squad. File

**Manish has a good long-distance range, but needs to improve his close-range fighting. Sometimes, he stands still while fighting from close and medium range and it can signal passiveness to the judges."**

CA KUTTAPPA

the improvement and wins against Thapa, a two-time Olympian in his own right.

"When Manish came to the national camp, we had to work on his strength and also told him to try a combination of punches. He had a good straight punch but did not have any answer when the opponent counter-attacked. So we made him train extra while sparring. Against Shiva Thapa too, Manish would face problems initially as Shiva is good on counterattacks. So we told Manish to work on his long range and to throw a combination of 3-4 punches before Shiva tried to counter," remembers Kuttappa.

## Fighting injury

On Wednesday, Kaushik had suffered a muscle cramp in his right elbow after Garside caught him there. While Kaushik's strength has been his left punch, the cramp caused him trouble and the coaches came out with a strategy after the opening round. "A muscle cramp hampered Manish's movement but we told him to focus on his left punches. We told him to show the right hand to Garside and hit with the left and it worked for him. When he had shifted to 63kg last year, he had worked a lot on adding more power to his left punches and it helped him today," said Kuttappa.

The national coach believes that Kaushik has to iron out some flaws before the Tokyo Olympics to realise the medal dreams. In the last round against Garside, Kaushik looked tired but managed to hold his edge and Kuttappa believes that the youngster needs to add more to his defence. "Sometimes, he stands still while fighting from close and medium range and it can signal passiveness to the judges," added Kuttappa.

On Wednesday evening, former boxer Jitender Kumar praised Kaushik and hopes he would win his village's first Olympic medal, which he had missed in 2008. "Manish has the game to win medals at the world level and he showed that in last year's World Championships. I am waiting for him to end our village's wait for an Olympics medal, a thing which I missed narrowly," Kumar said.

## OF LAUGHTER & FORGETTING

Ravindra Jadeja and Co. would look to banish the memories of the trip to New Zealand in the ODI series against South Africa. AP

# India look for return gifts

The return of Pandya and Bhuvneshwar may provide India much-needed boost against South Africa

VISHAL MENON  
DHARAMSALA, MARCH 11

WHEN SEEN in isolation, the three-match ODI series between India and South Africa offers little context, especially since the shortest version of the game has gained more importance in the run-up to the T20 World Cup that's just seven months away. However, there's a lot on the line for two key India players — all-rounder Hardik Pandya and pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar — whom are making comebacks after long injury layoffs.

Pandya had been ruled out since September 2019 with a back injury. Bhuvneshwar suffered a side strain in July 2019, recovered, and was included for the T20 series against West Indies last year. But the Uttar Pradesh bowler broke down again, this time due to a groin injury, following which he underwent a sports hernia surgery. Over the last two months, he has spent considerable time at the National Cricket Academy in Bangalore, where he underwent a rehabilitation programme.

Both Pandya and Bhuvneshwar know that this short series assumes utmost importance for their respective careers. Robust performances against the Proteas will not only get them back into the groove, but also serve as a confidence-booster with the Indian Premier League starting later this month and the T20 World Cup later in the year.

Pandya attended an optional practice session, where he bowled at full tilt for close to half an hour, to show that the problem with his back is a thing of the past. A little while later, when he turned up to bat, he sent everyone scampering for cover with his belligerent hitting. From the outside, it looked like the all-rounder had hit his straps. It's not as if he is coming into this series absolutely cold. In fact, at the DY Patil T20 tournament



Hardik Pandya, who hasn't featured in an international game since a T20I against South Africa in September last year, will make a much-awaited comeback. AP

in Mumbai last week, the 26-year-old smashed a 55-ball unbeaten 158, which included 20 sixes. That innings came on the heels of a 39-ball 105 two days earlier.

Captain Virat Kohli and head coach Ravi Shastri will breathe a huge sigh of relief after Pandya's return. He adds balance to the playing XI as a seam-bowling all-rounder. His sharp, incisive medium pacers give Kohli the cushion to play five genuine bowlers, and his big-hitting prowess the flexibility to utilise him either as a finisher in big chases, or prop him up the order to boost the run rate while setting targets.

In essence, Pandya's success in the two roles would solve the twin issues of the lack of batting depth and a quality fifth bowler, something that came to the fore during the

ODI series in New Zealand. In Pandya's absence, the team management experimented with the likes of Vijay Shankar and Shivam Dube, with little success, since neither Shankar nor Dube possess Pandya's ability to alter a match through bowling, batting or athleticism on the field. Simply put, Pandya brings energy and dynamism to this team.

## Memorale venue

The all-rounder couldn't have asked for a better venue than the scenic HPCA Stadium to make a comeback. He will have fond memories of the ground, where he made his ODI debut in October 2016 against New Zealand. Back then, neither the sense of occasion nor the big stage seemed to rattle Pandya. He bagged three wickets that day to

walk away with the Player of the Match award.

Like Pandya, Bhuvneshwar is a vital cog in India's limited-overs plans. To know how arduous it is for a pacer to make a comeback after an injury, he needs to look no further than Jasprit Bumrah, who has not quite looked the irresistible force he was after recovering from a stress fracture in the lower back at the end of last year. Bumrah's lacklustre performances in New Zealand — he went wicketless in the three ODIs before finding some of his rhythm in the final Test in Christchurch — are a useful case study.

Ahead of the series opener, Bhuvneshwar opened up on his insecurities as a bowler returning from an injury.

"It's difficult to maintain your pace when you're returning from an injury since the possibility of getting injured again remains at the back of your mind. The best option is to play matches like I did before returning (he also played in the DY Patil T20 tournament). In doing so, you gain confidence from playing matches before stepping it up," he reasoned.

Bhuvneshwar would be relishing the prospect of sharing the new ball with Bumrah again. For a brief time, the two had forged a great partnership together, with their vastly contrasting bowling styles. Bumrah with his slinky, unorthodox action and Bhuvneshwar with his swing made it a match-winning combination.

Bhuvneshwar's return comes at a time when the confidence of India's famed pace attack seems to have taken a hit. Mohammed Shami looked jaded, while Navdeep Saini and Shardul Thakur conceded plenty in the series in New Zealand. However, like Pandya, Bhuvneshwar will not mind bowling at Dharamsala. It's a venue that tends to aid swing, and if stars align, he could be quite a handful on this pitch.

## RANJI TROPHY FINAL

# Limited DRS has teams fretting; BCCI says full version too expensive

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
RAJKOT, MARCH 11

THE INDIAN cricket board, the richest in the world, chose to go with a sub-par limited use of Decision Review System (DRS) in the Ranji Trophy final because the full system was too expensive, it is learnt. The technology in use doesn't have ball-tracker, snickometer, and hotspot. The absence of snickometer/hot spot affected the detection of edges and the lack of ball-tracker affected the lbw decisions.

Only the pitch map and stump mic are in use in the semi-finals and the final of Ranji Trophy. Since the cost of other tools were high, the Committee of Administrators (COA) last year had given permission to use of limited DRS. Saba Karim, the general manager cricket operations for BCCI, stated that intention of BCCI behind limited DRS was to eliminate howlers and assess umpires.

He pointed out that teams were given four reviews per innings (two more than usual). "We have limited DRS that is why we allowed four reviews. All this is explained to both the teams before the game is started. It will help players and umpires to get right decision. The positive sign is that players have started to understand how to use it," Karim told *The Indian Express*.

The decision has already thrown up problems. On Wednesday, Abhimanyu Easwaran went for the DRS to try reverse the lbw decision given by the on-field umpire Yeshwant Barde. While replays suggested the ball might have missed the leg stump, the absence of the ball-tracker made the third umpire SRavi to stick with the original decision.

**We have limited DRS that is why we allowed four reviews. It will help players and umpires to get right decision. The positive sign is that players have started to understand how to use it."**

SABA KARIM  
GENERAL MANAGER OF CRICKET OPERATIONS

Apart from the cost to use ball-tracking and hotspot, it also requires more operators and some equipment has to be hired from abroad. Since all the Ranji games weren't telecasted, the BCCI opted for the sub-par route.

The absence of technology meant teams weren't satisfied with the decisions made. In the final session, Saurashtra's prolonged appeal for a lbw decision against the Sudip Chatterjee was upheld by the on-field umpire but the batsmen was confident that he had got an inside edge and successfully overturned it through DRS.

The third umpire arrived at the decision through split-screen replays and visual perception of deviation. Some in Saurashtra camp felt the evidence wasn't conclusive; Bengal were confident the right decision was taken.

On the first day, Chetan Sakariya was ruled out after a caught-behind appeal. When Bengal went for DRS, the TV umpire C Shamshuddin reversed the decision, going by the sound he heard on stump mic. But the woody sound doesn't crank up all ways and things could heat up in the coming days.

# Saurashtra nudge ahead in crawl-fest

DEVENDRA PANDEY  
RAJKOT, MARCH 11

ON A pitch that has consistently tilted each day's final session towards the seamers and demanded a cautious crawl for the rest of the day, Saurashtra moved ahead in the contest at the end of day 3. Bengal need 292 more runs for the all-important first-innings lead while Saurashtra seemed better poised to take seven wickets first.

Two key events transpired in the final session where Bengal didn't get a run off the bat in the last 59 minutes of play: Manoj Tiwary, their best batsman, was taken out and the final 30 minutes threw up reverse swing and invariable bounce more than before in the game, hinting more trouble awaits the batsmen.

Bengal have Sudip Chatterjee, under pressure after two lacklustre seasons but on a tenacious 45, and Wriddhiman Saha at the crease with Anustup Majumdar to bat but it will need grim persistence and a great resolve to get to that lead.

Bengal would take strength from the fact that they lost just one wicket, even if it was of Tiwary, in that intense session. However, the good thing for Saurashtra is that even if the conditions overtly favour bowlers only post tea on the fourth day, enough play has been seen to safely assume that the first two sessions would be a crawl again. It would take immense discipline and skills to survive the next two days to get the lead and it is only going to get tougher out there.

Saurashtra's lower order had hung in there to add 38 runs on the third morning to reach 425 in their first innings. Bengal



Much of Bengal's Ranji-winning hopes hinge on Wriddhiman Saha.

played out 65 overs to get to 134 for 3, 292 runs still adrift of the lead. His batsmen too showed similar determination after the second wicket fell at 35. Chatterjee and Manoj Tiwary showed commitment and smarts to do the job.

With the odd ball keeping low, the pair dead-batted anything that was on the middle-stump line. Since they didn't have to worry about balls bouncing and ricocheting off gloves/edge to short leg, they chose to stretch forward to the seamers. Taking care, not to let the pad get in the way. The

**Bengal have Sudip Chatterjee and Wriddhiman Saha at the crease with Anustup Majumdar to bat but it would need grim persistence and great resolve to snatch lead.**

cover fielder wider towards cover point. Tiwary had played a few good drives earlier and he now tried once, the ball squirted off the edge in the air but didn't carry to the fielder. Then, Jani brought one in, and Tiwary pushed out at it, bat outside the line of the ball, and he was struck on the pads in front of the stumps.

There was a close call when Chatterjee was on 47; for once, he was trapped inside the crease and the ball hit the pad even as he tried to stab it out at the last instant. The umpire ruled it out after deliberating through a prolonged appeal but Chatterjee knew he had got an inside edge during the attempt to keep the ball out. Even without the snickometer or Hot Spot, the replays offered enough evidence to overrule the initial decision. By the end, nearly every ball had the potential to derail Bengal but the pair came through the stern examination. The bad news for Bengal is that they have to show similar intensity for two more days.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Saurashtra 425 in 171.5 (Arpit Vasavda 106, Cheteshwar Pujara 66, Dharamendrasinh Jadeja 33; Akash Deep 4/98; Shahbaz Ahmed 3/103) lead Bengal 143/5 in 65 overs (Sudip Chatterjee 45 batting) by 291 runs.



# Tokyo-bound Shivpal eyes 90m mark

ANDREW AMSAN  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 11

A DAY after qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics, javelin thrower Shivpal Singh is back at the training ground with more rounds added to his running session. The 24-year-old Varanasi athlete lives by a slightly reworked phrase, "party hard, work harder". After throwing 85.47m (85m qualification mark) during a meet at Potchefstroom, South Africa, Shivpal and his mates headed to a local Indian restaurant and stuffed themselves with paranthas, curd, and rasgullas.

"I was full to the neck. I was allowed a cheat meal yesterday and had to make the most of it. While digging in, I told myself that I will run a few extra rounds to burn the calories. Please don't ask what all we ate, I might be tempted to head there again (laughs)," Shivpal told *The Indian Express* over phone from Potchefstroom.

But the athlete isn't joking about the extra rounds. He knows how much fitness matters in his discipline. Since his training began in South Africa last year under coach Uwe Hohn, fitness and core strengthening have been the key areas they have worked on.

"My pullover (an exercise using weights to strengthen the chest and back) capacity has increased from 90 to 110kgs, snatch from 105 to 115kgs. I can take more weight on the bench press and clear all hurdles during my jump training easily now," he said.

Although Shivpal's muscle mass is the same, he has cut down around 4kg on fat alone. "I feel way more confident about myself. I have never been this fit all my life and as promised, I will deliver the 90m throw very soon," he claims.

However, Shivpal's effort didn't particularly enthuse the German javelin legend despite

it booking a ticket to Tokyo. "He told me it's good that I finally qualified but I had to still work on making my throw more fluid. He wanted good technique and not distance," Shivpal said.

The sport runs in Shivpal's blood with every second male member of the extended family having tried his hand at javelin throwing. His younger brother Nandkishore Singh, a national camper, has lived up to the family tradition.

"Everyone is extremely happy at home. We've had dozens of athletes coming from our family but this is the first time anyone has qualified for the Olympics. When he comes to Patiala, we train together and he gives me a lot of tips. This is such a proud moment for all of us," Nandkishore said.

Shivpal feels with the form he is in right now, hitting the 90m mark isn't a distant dream. Compatriot Neeraj Chopra, the Asian and Commonwealth champion, threw 88.06m for the top spot at the 2018 Jakarta Asiad. "If you want to take it in writing, I can confidently give it to you. I will make a 90m throw this summer," he says.

Chopra too is excited about Shivpal making the cut for the Olympics and expects more throwers to earn a berth in the following months.

"There was a time when we had no representation in the Olympics from the country, and now we have two guaranteed to take part in the mega event. It is a very proud moment for the sport and will encourage more youngsters to pursue it," said the former junior world champion who also holds the national record.

What will be the celebrations like if and when he achieves the 90m mark? A few beers perhaps?

"There was a member of the family who drank too much and I decided I would never touch it in my life. *Lassi hai naji!*" Shivpal signs off.

37वाँ राज्या पशुधन प्रदर्शनी 2020

दिनांक: 13-15 मार्च, 2020

स्थान: राष्ट्रीय डेरी अनुसंधान संस्थान, मेला ग्राउंड, करनाल

प्रतियोगिता में भाग लेने वाले पशुओं की श्रेणियों का विवरण	कॉटेगरी	विवरण
1. मुराह नैस की जातीय पशु	1. झोटा 2. युवा झोटा 3. दुधारू नैस 4. शुष्क नैस	व्यस्क झोटा (2 से 4 वॉट)
2. हरयाना गो जातीय पशु	8. साण्ड 9. दुधारू माय 10. शुष्क माय 11. बहडिया 12. बैलों की जोड़ी	(प्रजनन योग्य)  (2 से 4 वॉट)
3. साहीवाल गो जातीय पशु	13. दुधारू माय 14. शुष्क माय 15. बहडिया 16. साण्ड	(2 से 4 वॉट) (प्रजनन योग्य)
4. अन्य देसी गौ जातीय नस्लों की माय (केवल थारपारकर, राठी, गिर, बिलाही)	17. दुधारू माय (थारपारकर) 18. दुधारू माय (राठी) 19. दुधारू माय (गिर) 20. दुधारू माय (बिलाही) 21. अन्य देसी गौ जातीय नस्लों के प्रजनन योग्य साण्ड (केवल थारपारकर, राठी, गिर व बिलाही)	
5. एम्बोटिक / एम्बोटिक क्रॉस	22. दुधारू माय 23. शुष्क माय 24. बहडिया 25. साण्ड	(2 से 4 वॉट) (प्रजनन योग्य)
6. गीसाला के गो जातीय पशु	26. दुधारू माय 27. शुष्क माय 28. साण्ड हरयाना 29. साण्ड साहिवाल 30. बहडिया	(प्रजनन योग्य) (प्रजनन योग्य) (2 से 4 वॉट)
7. अरब जातीय पशु	31. घोड़ा 32. घोड़ी 33. बच्चरी 34. बच्चरी 35. गैलडिंग 36. अंबी भेयर 37. अंबी स्टैलिवन	(2 या इससे अधिक वॉट)
8. क्रॉस जातीय पशु	38. क्रॉस 39. क्रॉस	
9. गेड जातीय पशु (साही नस्ल)	40. गेडा 41. तीन गेडों का समूह 42. तीन युवा गेडों का समूह 43. युवा गेडा	(6 या इससे अधिक वॉट) (2 से 4 वॉट) (2 से 4 वॉट)
10. गेड जातीय पशु (हिंसास्टैल नस्ल)	44. गेडा 45. तीन गेडों का समूह 46. तीन युवा गेडों का समूह 47. युवा गेडा	(6 या इससे अधिक वॉट) (2 से 4 वॉट) (2 से 4 वॉट)
11. बकरी जातीय पशु (किसी भी नस्ल की)	48. बकरी 49. दुधारू बकरी 50. युवा बकरी	(6 या इससे अधिक वॉट) (4 वॉट से अधिक नहीं)
12. शूकर जातीय पशु (केवल योकोशायर तथा लैण्डरैस नस्लें)	51. शूकर 52. तीन शूकरी समूह (बच्चों सहित) 53. तीन युवा शूकरी समूह	(6 मास से अधिक उम्र) (जिसके बच्चे हों) (6 महीने से कम आयु)

**प्रदर्शनी का समापन समारोह**

दिनांक: 15 मार्च, 2020 समय सायं 3:00 बजे

विजेता पशुओं के मालिक पुरस्कर्त होंगे।

पशुपालन एवं डेरी विभाग, हरियाणा



## THE FIXED ASSETS THAT ENSURE BUSINESSES KEEP MOVING FORWARD.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS PRESENTS  
FE CFO AWARDS 2020

Chief Guest

**Dr. Rajiv Kumar**, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog

Celebrating the heavyweights of the financial world. The individuals with the vision to propel the organization to greater heights. Working steadfastly, they maintain a strong command over business by ensuring that the financial performance stays at its peak. Here's to honouring the finest CFOs in India Inc.

18 MARCH 2020 06:00 PM Mumbai

FINANCIAL EXPRESS  
Read to Lead

Associate Partners: Hiranandani, VEENA WORLD

Knowledge Partner: Deloitte

# WELCOME SPRING WITH A WHOLE NEW DRIVE.

THIS MARCH, DRIVE HOME YOUR FAVOURITE MARUTI SUZUKI CAR AND AVAIL FANTASTIC OFFERS.

BS6 compliant

**SAVE UP TO**

**WAGONR ₹37 500\***      **ALTO ₹48 000\***      **S-PRESSO ₹45 000\***

**CELERIO ₹55 000\***      **EECO ₹43 000\***

**WAGONR ALTO S-PRESSO CELERIO EECO**

E-book today at [www.marutisuzuki.com](http://www.marutisuzuki.com) or visit your nearest Maruti Suzuki dealership | For bulk orders, mail at: [anindya.sarkar@maruti.co.in](mailto:anindya.sarkar@maruti.co.in) (NCR); [abhinav.verma2@maruti.co.in](mailto:abhinav.verma2@maruti.co.in) (Delhi)

NORTH DELHI		CENTRAL DELHI		WEST DELHI		SOUTH DELHI		GURGAON		GHAZIABAD		BALASAR		BILASPUR				
D.D. Motors (Peeragarhi)	T.R. Sawhney (Badli)	Rana Motors (Prashant Vihar)	D.D. Motors (Wazirpur)	Krish (Pitampura)	Rana Motors (Tis Hazari)	Krish (GT Karnal Road)	Fairdeal (Budh Vihar)	Saya (Azadpur)	DD Motors (Narela)	T.R. Sawhney (Saraswati Vihar)	AAA Vehicleclades (Malviya Nagar)	Prem Motors (Mahipalpur)	Rohan (Chhatrapur Metro Station)	D.D. Motors (Okhla Ph-1)	Bagga Link (Kotla)	Rana Motors (Safdarjung)	Rohan (Mathura Road)	T.R. Sawhney (Amar Colony)
25963535	9999324333	9711507777	27153999	9999159577	9873477744	7290093711	47088888	9582263509	9873563171	9582263509	9971500011	8745887458	011-65764444	40523000	8826892666	26712222	9560036262	9999563333
Competent (Lajpat Nagar)	Magic Auto (Karol Bagh)	Competent (C.P)	T.R. Sawhney (LP Station)	Magic Auto (Dwarka Sec-13)	AAA Vehicleclades (Mundka)	Competent (Dwarka)	Magic Auto (Palam Dabri Road)	TR Sawhney (Naraina)	Competent (Shivaji Marg)	Rana Motors (Janakpur)	D.D. Motors (Mayapuri)	Magic Auto (Sec-20, Dwarka)	T.R. Sawhney (Rajouri Garden)	Competent (Najafgarh)	Bagga Link (Patparganj)	T.R. Sawhney (Gokulpuri)	Magic Auto (Preet Vihar)	
8377007979	8929268145	9582797749	9999399157	8929268144	9850445555	9582797879	8929400501	9999137164	9582797748	011-47911111	41845000	8929268146	9873781333	9582797763	9818199370	9999399150	8929400502	
Fairdeal (Bhajanpura)	Fair Deal Cars (Shahdara)	Competent (Gazipur)	Vipul (Sec-18)	Vipul (Sec-63)	Fairdeal Cars (Sec-10)	Rohan (Sec-1)	Rohan (Udyog Vihar)	Pasco (Sec-18)	Competent (Islampur Sohna Road)	Rana Motors (SCO Plot No-322 Sec-29)	Pasco (Silverton Sec-50)	Competent (Sec-12)	Prem Motors (32nd Milestone)	Rohan (Sec-54)	Vipul (Ballabgarh)	Rohan (Palwal)		
7290009372	9910894050	8377007977	8800091555	0120-4824000	9999700944	9873501288	9971910523	4395700	9582797739	4260000	7835003300	9582797711	8750487504	4845400	9717073300	01275-304100		
Fairdeal Cars (Piyali Chowk)	Vipul (Mathura Road)	TCS Autoworld (Neelam Chowk)	Auto Nation (Mathura Road)	Platinum Motocorp (Narnaul)	Platinum Motocorp (JMT Chowk)	Platinum Motocorp (Farrukh Nagar)	Platinum Motocorp (Pataudi)	Regent Auto (Meerut Road)	Rohan (Hapur)	Motorcraft (Modi Nagar)	Rohan (Mukund Nagar)	Motorcraft (Sahibabad)	T.R. Sawhney (Mohan Nagar)	Pasco (Alipur)	Auto Vibes (Kosli)	Auto Vibes (Bawal)	Rohan (Delhi Road)	
9582139824	9999994707	0129-4252525	9899598602	9053088437	9953345312	9205192634	9953345311	7065191234	0122-2313204	8057692222	9650100045	9650972222	9582263544	8683000956	01259-275300	7062100290	05732-281900	

\*Terms & Conditions apply. Terms & conditions are subject to change without any prior notice. All Offers are brought to you by Maruti Suzuki dealers only. Total savings include cash discount (on selected models & variants), exchange bonus (on selected models & variants), ISL offer (for select Govt. & Corporate employees on select model & variants). Savings shown above are applicable on WagonR (all variants), New Alto (all variants), S Presso (all variants), Celerio (all variants), Eeco (all variants). Offers/Savings shown above may change without prior notice. \*BS6 compliance available on select models & variants only. Accessories/colors/features shown may not be part of standard equipment and are for indicative purpose only. Car model and accessories shown may vary from actual product. Black gloss on vehicle is due to lighting effect. Images used are for illustration purpose only. Color shown may vary from actual body color due to printing on paper. All offers are valid till stock lasts. All Offers are valid till 31\* March 2020 only.

